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Preface and Methodology

The element of struggle in international English language education exists in two respects. It resides in the need for educators to re-align themselves in the face of the changing ownership of English and culturally divisive ideologies and practices. This book explores this struggle by means of a critical sociology of their worlds and conflicts. But struggle also resides in how it is possible to write about an area of conflict while being situated within it in a position of power and privilege – from an English speaking West which has dominated the TESOL world with its well-resourced institutions of teaching, training and publishing and the residues of a colonial past. I draw on email accounts from 36 ESOL educators from 14 countries, who include 20 colleagues from outside the English speaking West. Their accounts have indeed influenced the direction the book has taken – often to unexpected areas of discussion – but their presence raises the issue of who I am to be able to incorporate their voices. Though it may exaggerate an opposition which does not always exist, one must take seriously Canagarajah's concern about 'white-skinned teacher/researchers from rich communities' who 'visit dilapidated classrooms of brown-skinned vernacular-speaking students in periphery communities' (1999: 51). It cannot be denied that 'Centre' researchers trying to empower 'Periphery' communities to which they do not belong may in the end only strengthen the discourses of the 'Centre'.

There are several factors to consider. First, English-speaking Western TESOL is itself a diverse, divided and complex culture. The focus of this book is the cultural prejudices which emerge from a dominant, though particular ideology which has its origins within this culture but does not govern the thinking of all its members. A British academic critiquing this ideology is not therefore indulging in self-flagellating soul searching, but struggling for independence from thinking with which he and many of his colleagues do not wish to be associated. Second, cultural distance is relative. One cannot necessarily claim insider understanding of people because they come from one's own community. Differences of age, class, institutional culture, gender, personal ideology and so on also mediate in our visions of each other. I am not always in a better position to understand my British colleagues in Canterbury than the Egyptian colleagues I worked with so closely for five years. There is also a broader professional community which

in a multiplicity of ways interconnects ESOL educators of all types. Its ideological, political and economic divisions not so much inhibit cultural study, but characterize the particular coherence of the culture which enlivens my investigation.

The interconnectedness of the broader TESOL community can be appreciated by means of thick description, which is the central discipline of the progressivist paradigm of qualitative research which the book employs. The accounts of my informants are thus set against other examples of professional and academic life, from classrooms, conferences, documents, the 'corridors' of institutional life and so on. The piecing together of a description of the high level of surveillance in a U-shaped classroom in Britain, a Pakistani teacher's statement about how she is discriminated against because of her supposed speakerhood, and a teacher's personal recollection of cultural missionary zeal early in his career in Iran, begin to reveal the interconnecting fault-lines of the profession as a whole.

Thick description alone does not however totally resolve the question of writer versus informant identity. The third factor which enables me to speak about other communities concerns the autobiographical descriptions of my own professional experience, which not only form a further element of the thick description, but set the tenor for the whole book. What characterizes my email informants as a group is not any sense of being a 'representative' sample of World TESOL. What binds them is their relationship to my own professional biography. These are the colleagues and students from whom, because they are different to me, I have learnt to see and at least partially to escape the deep-seated prejudices of a dominant professionalism. The comments of those informants from outside the English speaking West help me to examine myself and my own practices. In taking an autobiographical stance I speak only *for* myself, in my own personal narrative of a multicultured international experience. I do not therefore make any claim to be speaking *for* the TESOL people whom I cite. To do so would be presumptuous. Using Coffey's terms, the narratives from my informants 'offer uniquely privileged data, grounded in biographical experience and social contexts' (1999: 115), which in turn connect with my own 'experience and social contexts' and those represented in my other data, brought together by thick description. 'By incorporating, fragmenting and mingling these texts', the 'intertextuality of ethnography' is reinforced'; and 'writing the self into ethnography' enhances its 'authenticity' (1999: 118, citing Atkinson). The autobiographical descriptions of my own professional past also enable me to make new sense of critical incidents which changed my view of professional life and stayed with me as haunting puzzles, to help me unravel the origins of a dominant culture of practice which has now become normalized. While asserting independence from it, If I am an insider to anything it is to the powerful professionalism of English-speaking Western TESOL which is so implicated in the struggle which I describe.

On a procedural note, throughout the text I refer to my email informants by first name. In some cases these will be pseudonyms or code letters. In other cases, where permission has been given, these will be real names. In a few such cases, where they are also authors whose work I have cited, I use full names. In all cases they will have had the opportunity to see and comment on how I use their accounts; and I have changed my text where they have recommended this. I do however take full responsibility for the way in which I present and draw implications from their words. The locations of their accounts can be found in the index.

Acknowledgements

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Continued discussion and renewed acquaintance with my past colleagues from Ain Shams, Damascus and Pune Universities, Amal Kary, Mona Zikri, Nafez Shammas, Warka Barmada, Grace Jacob and Maya Narkar, have provided immeasurable inspiration and helped me to completely re-assess my professional persona. More recently, Hollo Dorottya and her acutely aware PhD students at Eötvös Lóránd University, and Doug Goodwin, Ingrid Barradas, Troy Crawford, Martha Lengeling and their colleagues and students at the School of Languages, Guanajuato University, took me into a parts of the world with other stories I had not before experienced. Successive cohorts of students from the Hong Kong Institute of Education have also been influential. Sitting in *their* refectory on *their* campus, watching them 'at home', has also played a deeply formative role which is detailed within.

Major contribution to my thinking has been made by critical qualitative researchers who have been students and colleagues in Canterbury, Ge Jin, Pat Grounds, Pembe Delikurt, Tom Duan Yuping, Pam Aboshiha, John Kullman, Martin Hyde, Kimberly Brooks-Lewis, Caroline Moore, Oscar Narvaez, Cecilio Lopez, Hiroko Hayagoshi, Jo Chang and Valerie Ainscough. Angela Baxter, Chris Anderson, Jimmy Tong Woonman and

Trevor Grimshaw are referred to at length. Others are among my email informants. I feel we have pushed forward the boundaries of knowledge of TESOL as cultural and political practice. Tony Booth helped me to realize that all experience is data - moving on from Swales' reference to 'taking tea in laboratory technicians' cubby-holes', hanging out in conferences, noticing things in meetings, classrooms and departmental corridors. Vivien Zamel, Ruth Spack, Ryuko Kubota, Stephanie Vandrick and Aya Matsuda helped me to see greater texture in the ideas I had been ruminating over and writing about more parochially for several years. Paul Taylor, a dear friend who was there in many of my sojourns at *TESOL*, provided a sanity and helped me not to get beyond myself. Chance meetings with Nalina Sutakul helped me to finish the text.

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Chapter 1: The struggle for new relationships

This book is about the worlds and conflicts of educators whose professional lives are both enriched and problematized by the teaching of English as an international language in international settings. Their work is complicated and politicized as they struggle to make sense of the indeterminate foreign Other of students, colleagues, methodologies, texts, behaviours and literatures – and of the cultural and political interfaces created by a language which has a colonial past, but which is no longer connected in a unitary way with an English-speaking West or its cultures.

My major focus is on who we think we are as ESOL educators, and how we behave with each other and with our students within a multicultured TESOL world. On one level, we are all, as individuals, engaged in this struggle all the time as we try to position ourselves within the shifting realities and competing forces of everyday life. On another level, the struggle is located within the specific structures and hierarchies of the TESOL profession, built around uneven resources and uneven relationships with English. Embedded in this struggle, and working against its resolution, coming from the deep fibre of TESOL professionalism, is the ideology of native-speakerism, through which, I shall argue, the 'non-native speaker' Other is seen as culturally deficient.

ESOL educators: the politics of labelling

An immediate aspect of the struggle to make sense is how it is possible to talk about ESOL educators. Two perspectives are that of one global profession with a rich international character, and that of local professions divided by economics, ideology and the spectres of colonialism.

An inclusive *We*

The first perspective suggests a coming together and collaboration. I shall refer to *We* as *all* teachers, academics, curriculum developers, writers, publishers etc who are involved worldwide in the work of what I shall refer to as World TESOL. The diversity is great. This TESOL world is in fact many worlds with many types of people, comprising educators from every part of the globe in every type of educational institution. *We* work with

English for every kind of reason, from providing important skills for getting on in an international world to teaching English as an academic discipline to train the mind and learn about others. *We* also work with a wide range of different educational resources and attitudes to language and education, from classrooms without books or walls, to crowded lecture theatres, to very small groups with technically advanced facilities – all of which work in their own ways with different types of ingenuity. Despite our diversity and differences, *We* share the idea of a common, international professional-academic identity, which is expressed in the way that, from our different backgrounds, we come together in faculties, projects and conferences across the world. At a general level, we are all involved in doing the 'same thing', and share the same purpose of teaching English.

Political division

Where the first perspective depicts TESOL as a shared professional activity, the second focuses on the problematic reality that one very distinct part of the TESOL world is different from and tends to dominate and move out over the rest. There is no doubt that colleagues who come from the English-speaking West have a privileged and dominant position, as has been pointed out and discussed extensively over recent years (e.g. Phillipson 1992, Holliday 1994a, Pennycook 1994, 1998, Canagarajah 1999, Jenkins 2000). This conflict can be characterized in a number of ways.

Influenced by Phillipson (1992), it has been common for writers about the politics of TESOL to focus their attention on the unequal power relationship between different regions of the world - between a well-resourced, politically and economically aggressive, colonizing, Western 'Centre' and an under-resourced, colonized 'Periphery'. This distinction is important as a backdrop and starting point to my discussion; but there are a number of difficulties related to it. To begin with, 'Centre' is too easily associated with a monolithic 'West'. This is misleading for two reasons: firstly, of course, the West is by no means a uniform entity in respect to its sociopolitical and linguistic make-up, and secondly, the political divisions within TESOL are sometimes within the West itself. I will therefore refer to the *English-speaking West* as the source of dominant TESOL thinking, which does not include much of Western Europe. Secondly, associating TESOL power relations with regions of the world is limiting. Many of the people I have come to know during my professional career, some of whom are included among my interviewees, who come from places which would be labelled 'periphery' are far from periphery in their thinking. It is *people*, not places, who have professions, prejudices, and cultures.

BANA and TESEP

Another way of describing the political division within TESOL is in terms not of location but of professional culture. Such is the BANA-TESEP

distinction (Holliday 1994a), which attempts to group ESOL educators in terms of Bernstein's (1971) categorization. BANA comprises an innovative, often predatory culture of integrated skills, which is located in the private sector or in commercially-run language centres in universities and colleges in *B*ritain, *A*ustralasia and *N*orth *A*merica. TESEP comprises a more traditional culture of collections of academic subjects, which is located in state *t*ertiary, *s*econdary, or *p*rimary schools throughout the world. The BANA-TESEP distinction thus provides a picture of types of ESOL educators in terms of their educational occupations and preoccupations. TESEP people are *mainstream* in the sense that they do very similar work, with similar initial qualifications to teachers and lecturers of other subjects, with whom they will share a similar status. Their students will in most cases be their compatriots; and the strongest encounter with the foreign Other will be with the actual language, its texts and its methodology. BANA people come *from* the English-speaking West and are characterized as having an overactive professional zeal connected with the notion that English and English teaching is originally *theirs*. They are *not mainstream* in educational terms in that they often stand outside established academic departments in schools, colleges and universities. In most cases, their students are *not* their compatriots and represent the foreign Other in their classrooms.

There are however problems with the BANA-TESEP distinction. Firstly, the professional cultural distinction is often lost in the way the terms have come to be used. Because the vast majority of people who work within the TESEP culture come from outside the English-speaking West, TESEP has become associated with a region of the world, not unlike 'Periphery'. Because BANA directly refers to the English-speaking West, it has become synonymous with 'Centre'. The fact that the TESEP culture has much in common with teachers of modern foreign languages in the state system and also present within university applied linguistics *in* the English-speaking West has often been overlooked. (Bernstein's original categorization referred only to Western education systems.)

Secondly, there are exceptions to the massive groupings which it characterizes. It does not account for the large number of English-speaking-Western ESOL educators who work in 'special needs' or language support in the state sector, who have much in common with the TESEP group. Outside the English-speaking West there are also many teachers in university language centres who provide language support or initial language training to students of other subjects, and in private sector language schools. They have similar status problems to English-speaking Western colleagues in that they stand outside the established academic faculty. There are also an increasing number of colleagues from across the world who work within the English-speaking West, especially as teaching assistants in North American schools, colleges and universities. An outcome of the large numbers of ESOL educators outside the English-speaking West who go to North America to do masters and doctoral degrees is that

many of them stay either as university teaching assistants or faculty members and suffer status problems (Braine 1999: xiii). Ryuko Kubota notes that:

> Another aspect of marginalization applies to so-called 'non-native' K-12 teachers in North American public school from Latin American or Asian countries. They are hired because the school thought that they would be able to best assist the students because they can speak their language. While they are valued to some extent, they are also marginalized simply because the field of ESL is marginalized. They end up attending a lot of mandatory meetings related to ESL students and cultural diversity on behalf of their native speaking colleagues. (Email interview)

One could interpret this movement as part of the same globalization trend as the colonization of the West by small communities from the rest of the world, which in turn has something to say about centre-periphery issues, where 'the flow of cultural traffic can often be in many directions simultaneously', and 'cultural flows do not necessarily map directly on to economic and political relationships' (Ahmed and Donnan 1994: 3). The foreign Other is thus no longer in distant lands, especially with the increasing movement of different types of people and their multicultural embedding in each other's societies (1994: 5).

'Native' and 'non-native speakers'

Division within TESOL can also be described in terms of 'native' and 'non-native speakers'. There is now however a considerable amount of discussion about the viability of the terms implicit in this distinction. Throughout I place 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' in inverted commas to show that they are as stated by the discourse, and as such are disputed. One problem is that the use of 'non-' usually signifies a disadvantage or deficit. Especially when the terms are reduced, as is often the case in common talk and even writing, to 'native' and 'non-native', the identity of the latter is further weakened by appearing 'not native' to anything. There is also the problem of imprecision in the meaning of the term itself. Braine suggests that 'native speakers' themselves 'do not speak the idealized, standardized version of their language' any more than 'non-native speakers', that both groups are influenced in their speech 'by geography, occupation, age, and social status' (1999: xv, citing Kramsch). Jenkins presents an argument for the notion of 'non-native-speaker' being 'anachronistic':

> The term ... fails to recognize that many varieties of English in outer circle countries, such as Singapore, are spoken not only as official languages but also in the home ... that English is often one of several languages available in the repertoires of the multilingual populations of, for example, India and African countries … [where] it is often difficult to ascertain which

> language is a person's L1 and which is their L2. The term perpetuates the idea that monolingualism in the norm, when, in fact, precisely the opposite is true of the world at large. (2000: 8-9, citing Brown and Bisong)

At the same time, others argue that it does depend where one comes from, and that the native-non-native-speaker distinction exists, for better or worse, as part of our professional discourse and has therefore to be worked with. Ryuko Kubota has the following to say:

> I don't consider myself as a 'native' speaker of English, so I use 'non-native' instead. I don't think it's necessary to do away with these terms; what needs to be done is to reveal politics and ideologies attached to these categories. In fact, getting rid of these terms does not solve the problems but only obscures them. (Email interview)

To get over the difficulties of the native-non-native-speaker issue, Jenkins offers another distinction between 'bilingual' and 'monolingual' English speakers, and a third term, 'non-bilingual English speakers' for people who 'are bilingual but not in English' and likes the sense that the norm is shifted from 'monolingual' to 'bilingual'. She however acknowledges that this distinction also has too many grey areas (2000: 9-10). Nevertheless, one of my email interviewees, Esmat, finds it meaningful though complex:

> I believe that English is owned by the speaker (native or otherwise). I do not consider myself a native speaker but I consider myself bilingual. Note that this (in my perception) does not detract from my ranking of my proficiency but that my English is different. I have my own Egyptian idiomaticity reflected in the language that may not be comprehensible to the 'native' (British, American etc..) exactly as they have their idiomaticity that springs from their usage and may not be comprehensible to me. Now that you ask the question, I do not know who is the "native" speaker? My one-year old grandson only hears English from his father (my son) and Egyptian Arabic from his mother? He is starting to produce English and Arabic words. Is he a native speaker of both? or an Egyptian who has two languages? (Email interview)

An ideology

All the above sets of categories, Centre-Periphery, BANA-TESEP and 'native'-'non-native speaker' are imprecise in one way or another. But what is important for the purpose of this present enquiry is not the objectivity of the categorization but how it is subjectively perceived. This purpose, as Kubota (op cit) puts it, is to 'reveal politics and ideologies attached to these categories'. As far as TESOL is concerned, the key distinction in this respect

would seem to be between 'native' and 'non-native speakers' of the language. It is here that we find the fullest expression of an 'us'-'them' divide.

I am concerned in this book, then, not with who is and who is not a 'native-speaker', but in the ideological associations of this distinction, such as are found, for example in the powerfully evocative comment from Aliya, a British colleague with an 'Asian' heritage, who was educated outside Britain and often categorized as a 'non-native-speaker'. She says that 'labelling speakers as "non-native" silently robs them of the rights to speak in the language they may know best' (email interview). I am interested in the fact that 'native speakership is neither a privilege of birth nor of education, but of "acceptance by the group that created the distinction"', Braine (1999: xv, citing Kramsch). As Jenkins notes, 'it is not possible to label someone as a "foreigner" or a "non-native" and believe that he or she has equal rights to the language' (2002: 11).

With the clear problems with talking about the divisions of our profession in term of regions or types of people, I prefer instead to talk of the divisive fact as being ideological. My discussion therefore has as its backdrop the notion of a general global identity of *We* ESOL educators with a potentially common, though immensely diverse professional identity, but at the same time divided by the 'us'-'them' *ideology of native-speakerism* which works against this common identity; and I shall explore ways of undoing this ideology.

Native-speakerism

For the purposes of this discussion, I wish to define native-speakerism as an established belief that 'native-speaker' teachers represent a 'Western culture' from which spring the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology. Both the divisive nature of native-speakerism and the hope for a more common identity is seen in the formation of the NNEST (Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL) Caucus, by a group of colleagues from outside the English-speaking West in 1998. This is a politically oriented professional organization which has as one of its principles 'to create a nondiscriminatory professional environment for all TESOL members regardless of native language and place of birth' (www.unh.edu-nnest-purpose.html 2002). Jenkins, along with many others, notes that:

> The perpetuation of the native-non-native dichotomy causes negative perceptions and self-perceptions of 'non-native' teachers and a lack of confidence in and of 'non-native' theory builders. It leads to 'non-natives' being refused places on EFL teacher training courses, limited publication of their articles in prestigious international journals. (2002: 9, citing Block)

The labelling of the so-called 'non-native-speaker' is critical here. Although some feel that using the term 'non-native speakers' is to collude with its

conceptualization and is thus 'akin to using the slave-owners' language' (Braine 1999: xvii), others prefer to capitalize on the term:

> I think a good analogy is the notion of race. Many liberals who are concerned about racial inequalities don't want to identify people with racial categories. But this discourse falls into 'colour-blindness' and fails to confront racial inequalities and prejudices that do exist in society. Also, race, like other categories like gender, class, and language, constructs identities for individuals, and the identity construction can be strategic. For example, in the UK, Asians might be positioned as the inferior Other but they might want to construct positive identities for themselves by giving a positive meaning to Asianness. We can say the same thing for native-nonnative. (Ryuko Kubota, Email interview)

I need to be careful that my own use of 'World TESOL' does not become a strategic device to conceal a continuing hegemonic influence. Ryuko also makes it clear that the definition of who is and who is not a 'native speaker' is a political construction of who is 'in' and 'out' within TESOL professionalism, and of how we see ourselves and each other in the light of this divisive fact. Even if we do not refer specifically to the native-non-native-speaker division, we have to acknowledge the political nature of whatever terms we do use. Mona, another of my interviewees, demonstrates this point in the way in which she feels she has to keep the political notion of 'periphery' at the same time as getting rid of the 'non'. She is a Pakistani colleague who has spent most of her career in the Middle East, which places her in some people's eyes in the 'non-native-speaker' category:

> I regard myself as an English language speaker, and would not like to use the terms native-non-native for these words create division where homogeneity should be the norm. However, with a great deal of negativity going on these days, it is really difficult to come up with a term that does away with 'non,' or 'not'. If the distinction between native and non-native speakers has to stay then it wouldn't be wrong to address the 'non-native' speakers as 'Speakers-Educators-Teachers of English from periphery English speaking countries'. (Email interview)

Although native-speakerism *originates* in a very particular set of educational and development cultures within the English-speaking West and is an easy position for those who conceptualize themselves as 'native-speakers', it has had a massive influence and exists to a greater or lesser degree in the thinking of *all* ESOL educators. At the same time, by no means all English-speaking-Western colleagues are native-speakerists. Although it is harder for them to escape the ideology because of their particular professional upbringing, many of them struggle against it, often intuitively, where they do not know that it exists.

There are also colleagues who 'come from' the English-speaking West but who have been professionally socialized elsewhere. An example of this is Aliya, one of my interviewees referred to above, who has spent most of her professional life in the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan. It is this professional socialization, I shall argue, which gives colleagues from the English-speaking West a particular propensity for native-speakerism.

TESOL is configured within government policies and institutional structures within particular countries, which in turn gives rise to particular professional cultures and discourses. Within the English-speaking West these configurations, within which the private sector is a major influence, combine to produce the particular brand of professionalism which has a tendency towards native-speakerism. In the rest of the world there are greater or lesser influences of English-speaking-Western TESOL and native-speakerism upon these configurations. English-speaking-Western TESOL spreads out far beyond its geographical origin as colleagues who are shaped by its discourses travel to work in other countries. Native-speakerism resides largely within the sphere of English-speaking-Western TESOL but also elsewhere. For example, Esmat notes that many of her Egyptian colleagues 'still hold onto native-speakerism and few believe in the local standards' (email interview).

English as an international language

The ideology of native-speakerism is based on the assumption that 'native speakers' of English have a special claim to the language itself, that it is essentially their property. But as Graddol (1997), among others, demonstrates, the majority use of English is now outside the English-speaking West. Widdowson makes the major point that:

> How English develops in the world is no business whatever of native-speakers in England, the United States or anywhere else ... The very fact that English is an international language means that no nation can have custody over it. ... But the point is that it is only international to the extent that it is not their language. It is not a possession which they lease out to others, while still retaining the freehold. Other people actually own it. (1998: 244-5)

Although, with Widdowson (1994: 245-6), there has been continued valuing of the 'native-speaker' use of English in terms of the richness this brings to the 'context of use', there is a growing notion that we should be teaching English *as* an international language, rather than as a language attached to a specific culture from the English-speaking West (Jenkins 2002). This thinking in turn reduces the status of 'native speakers' as models. Indeed, one may ponder that the 'native speaker' may use a form of English which contains essentially parochial features (idioms, slang, quirks of grammar) which are largely irrelevant and unsuitable for international

communication. Anyone who has travelled to, say, Britain and encountered a person who has never before spoken in an international setting, and who has no idea how to communicate with 'foreigners' may well appreciate this. Jenkins (2000) and Seidlhofer (2002) argue the need to recognise, and describe, the ways in which English is now used as a lingua franca.

I do not intend to get into the linguist issues connected with this proposal here, but rather to explore how ESOL educators feel about the shifting role of English in terms of ownership and identity. The following two responses to Jenkins' thesis, from my email interviewees, reveal something of the complexity of people's view on these issues. A very different view to that of Jenkins is expressed by Kuo, a Taiwanese teacher,

> Although I did feel comfortable to be told that I did not have to be native-speaker like, I would definitely feel upset if I could not reach my own expectation in pronunciation. ... I just wanted to draw attention to the psychological part, the feeling, how people feel about themselves in terms of speaking. ... If we take Jenkins's view and tell them to stay where they are – you don't need to twist your tongue this way and that and it's perfectly all right to keep your accent – at some point, we would terribly upset the learners because they might want to. ... It's been clear that I'm a language learner from the periphery and – listen to this – I prefer to speak for myself! (Email interview)

It might be argued that Kuo is simply speaking in favour of the 'native speaker' ideal and thus demonstrating how even 'non-native speakers' can be native-speakerist. On the contrary, the final twist in her statement, in which she declares that even though she is 'from the periphery' she prefers to speak for herself, reveals that there is a deeper issue. Though Jenkins does not intend this, her thesis is interpreted as yet another 'Centre-led' definition of what English should be. Kuo asserts herself as a language learner from the 'periphery' and immediately turns the discussion of lingua franca corpora into a political issue. Similarly, Chris, a British ESOL educator with extensive international experience, wonders if 'this [Jenkins' idea] something that native speakers have thought up to make ourselves feel less "guilty" '.She later added the question:

> Do we [ESOL educators from the English-speaking West] really know much about *why* people are learning English and what *they* want out of it? We were all English teachers sitting there talking about it. While teachers from the Centre don't speak for the Periphery, English teachers from the Periphery are a specialized group too. (Email interview, her emphasis)

What these comments illustrate is how deep rooted native speakerism is in the TESOL psyche, and how difficult it is to eradicate it. They both assume that what is proposed must be somehow motivated by native speakerist interests, in spite of what Jenkins and Seidlhofer have said to the contrary.

Critical perspectives

A second all-pervading development in recent thinking about TESOL, is the linguistic imperialism thesis, the watershed publication for which was Phillipson's (1992) *Linguistic Imperialism.* Phillipson's discussion concerns the ways in which major institutions of TESOL professionalism, publishing and universities in the English-speaking West have been and continue to be instrumental in spreading English and the way it is taught across the world. TESOL professionalism arising in the English-speaking West is thus equated with political power. Two of the major tenets of this professionalism, which Phillipson condemns as fallacious, are that (a) every measure should be taken to ensure that other languages are not allowed to interfere with the learning of English (1992: 185), and that (b) the 'native-speaker' is the best person to teach English world wide (1992: 193). Phillipson's thesis is that English is taught at the expense of other languages and to the exclusion of the majority of English teachers. The presentation of this thesis was important in that, although many disagreed with it, it set up an extremely important discussion. From this point, the *possibility* and *potential* of imperialism was placed firmly on the TESOL agenda *in* the English-speaking West. A second significant publication in the development of the imperialist thesis is Pennycook (1994), and more recently (1998), who extends the discussion to cultural imperialism.

Another area of work, which does not directly look at TESOL, but which bears upon it, looks at power relations less in terms of global cultural blocks and more in terms of smaller discourses. Influenced by Foucault, Fairclough's work on critical discourse analysis (e.g.1995) has demonstrated how ideology is embedded in everyday language, and how 'technologizing' professional discourses can have hegemonic control over the way we think about the world. This will be a recurring theme throughout the book: I will be presenting examples of how native-speakerism is so deep in the way in which we think about TESOL that, in Fairclough's (1995: 36) words, people are 'standardly unaware' of its presence and its impact. Though there are problems with Fairclough's precise methodology in terms of the way in which it looks at particular texts and the degree to which it allows for individualism (cf. Widdowson 2002), his work does provide a means for looking critically at the hegemonic discourse of native-speakerism. It explores the ways in which its prejudices and politics are embedded deeply in every aspect of practice; to the extent that TESOL professionalism may be more to do with the perpetuation of a discourse than with the educational principles which native-speakerists claim to cherish (Holliday 1997b, 1998b, 2001b). Usher and Edwards (1994), writing about adult education in Britain, demonstrate this latter point in their discussion of how 'learner-centredness' has become, in my terms, *control-constructed* and fails to address the real persons of students and

teachers. By control-construction I mean the bureaucratization and technicalization of liberal democratic principles such as learner-centredness by professional discourses so that they can be controlled and accounted for. I will revisit this process in different aspects of TESOL practice in subsequent chapters.

An important development in mainstream education is the educational inclusion movement which concerns 'participation and marginalization in relation to race, class, gender, sexuality, poverty and unemployment' as well as they way in which students are 'categorized as low in attainment, disabled or deviant in behaviour' (Booth and Ainscow 1998: 2). This has influenced my presentation of a mutually inclusive professionalism as the opposition to divisive native-speakerism. However, despite the clear economic and political supremacy of English-speaking-Western TESOL, I stop short of a picture in which students and educators in other parts of the world are seen as powerless and need to be included in the same way as underprivileged groups in the inclusive education movement. My intention is to demonstrate that educators and students from outside the English-speaking West have immense abilities to make English and TESOL what they wish them to be.

Two positions

The table below summarizes what I believe to be the major features of native-speakerism, or Position 1, and how I conceptualize a movement towards a more mutually inclusive identity in Position 2. To try to avoid the danger of over-simplifying the demarcation between native-speakerism and Position 2, I shall demonstrate that there is a gradual and complex movement between the two, and that no one person or practice would fall neatly into one or the other. Also, I am not making a statement about the need for change, a concept which has always been at the heart of native-speakerist professional discourse. On the contrary I wish to emphasize that change is upon us, that the developments in the 1990s have already irrevocably changed the way in which ESOL educators must see themselves. Slowly or quickly, now or in the future, we will find ourselves thinking differently about what we do. The themes in the table will be developed throughout the book; but here I will provide a brief examples of their significance.

Native-speakerism is presented as the more traditional way of thinking. It has been the convention to use 'traditional' to describe the 'non-communicative' practices of 'non-native speaker' colleagues; but this ignores the fact that many such communicative practices have now been established for a long time and have indeed become themselves traditional. Position 2 is presented as the new way of seeing TESOL. It is the position in which We find ourselves as a result of new ways of seeing and

Table 1.1: From native-speakerism to Position 2

	Native-speakerism	Position 2
Orientation	Traditional, 'us'-'them' position. Setting superior 'native speakers' against inferior 'non-native speakers' Cultural difference	Struggle to make new relationships 'We are all in this together' Cultural continuity
Language and context	English is foreign The 'native speaker' is the norm	English is international The local context is the norm
ESOL educator from outside English-speaking West	She is a 'non-native speaker' English is someone else's, with a foreign culture and expertise	She is a teacher at home English is hers She has her own ways of doing things There is an instrumental use of foreign expertise She can also be a teacher 'abroad', like any other teacher
ESOL educator from the English-speaking West	She is a 'native speaker' She brings her English and culture to the uninitiated She has theories of exotic foreign cultures	She is a speaker of a dominant English variety – but perhaps parochial She needs to rethink the normalcy of what she brings, and what she meets

understanding, which may in turn be influenced by new realizations, structures or alignments. It represents the way *We* will have to be. Its over-arching feature is that it is inclusive, not distinguishing 'us' and 'them', and therefore involves new thinking about how we should be together.

'Non-native speaker' identity and ownership

Taking the table as a whole, the two sides represent a movement of identity and what is considered normal. This can be seen in a range of professional instances which reveal some of the fault-lines that both characterize the divide between native-speakerism and Position 2 and the 'struggle to make new relationships' which characterizes the

latter.

The following statement from a Syrian university language centre teacher indicates the deep ambivalence regarding the ownership of a classroom methodology which is strung between her students 'at home' and a dominating 'Western' power:

> 'Sometimes I feel as if I represent the West in the classroom and as if I were telling my students that our methods of learning and thinking are not good and should be replaced by those of the West ... [–] unpaid soldiers of the West. This made me very nervous. I should pay attention to what I say in the classroom.' (Barmada 1994: 175, citing interview)

Perhaps less poignant but equally important is Danai's account, as a Greek language school owner, of how her well-qualified Greek colleagues, working in language schools in their own country, because they are not 'native speakers', 'have to provide credentials of their professionalism on a daily basis', whereas their 'native speaker' colleagues, who come from outside, do not (email interview).

Within native speakerism, the 'native speaker' teacher, as 'the norm', is seen as the dominant force with an almost moral mission to improve the world. Her dilemma is very different to the 'non-native speaker' and is centred around how to deal and work with 'non-native speaker' students and colleagues. Position 2 brings a very different conceptualization. Because English is international, its ownership is shifted to whoever wishes to use it; and the 'normal' location becomes whichever milieu in which it is being taught, rather than being the idealized native-speakerist classroom (Holliday 1994a: 53). This places the ESOL educator who used to be classified as '*non*-native speaker', as a person who, in the majority of cases, is 'at home', teaching a language and using a methodology which belong to her. Teaching methodologies and techniques from the English-speaking West may be of tremendous use; but it is for her to determine this use. The value given to importations thus become instrumental.

Position 2 thus encourages teachers to look into their own histories and literatures for support to their teaching. The Syrian Minister of Education, in his opening address to the 2001 *English language classroom in the 3rd millennium* conference at Damascus University, referred to Ibn Khaldoun, a world-renowned founder of sociology as well as someone he considered part of his own scientific heritage, as one such source. Moroccan English teachers and school inspectors on a residential summer school in Rabat talk about the guidance they get from Moroccan sociologists. At a conference on *Meeting Challenges of ELT in The Arab World* at Ain Shams University, Egypt, El Hadari (2001) reports how each local area can become its own force. Ibrahim et al (2001), at the same conference, demonstrate how

school inspectors can share and develop their own strengths and 'grass roots' strategies.

The new ownership in Position 2 is expressed by Fauzia Shamim, a Pakistani academic, who demonstrates confidence in the development of a profession which is not 'native-speaker' dominated:

> Competent non-native teachers and teacher educators who are also proficient in the language (whatever the variety of English they may be using) are beginning to question the relevance of the ideas imported from the centre. At the same time they are beginning to develop knowledge, skills and experiences to adapt the ideas they have often learnt at Universities in the English Speaking West. More importantly, their skills and competence is also gaining recognition. (Email interview)

In a similar vein, Mona reports that:

> Native speakers are valued but are not considered 'custodians' of English language instruction and the teaching approaches that they bring to Pakistan are welcomed but not followed blindly. Non-native speakers who are able to adapt such 'best practices' to the context in Pakistan are highly favoured. A recent example (from personal communication) is of a university in Pakistan that did not outsource its language programme to a leading British language centre because past experience of the centre's programmes proved that its language enhancement programmes could not relate to the learners' context in Pakistan. (Email interview)

This new confidence enables the more instrumental use of foreign expertise characteristic of Position 2. Lama, a Syrian university teacher, states that she and her colleagues 'follow the new methods of teaching and learning introduced nowadays because we find them effective and interesting, not because we are powerless against them' (email interview). Laila, who teaches at Ain Shams and Misr International Universities in Egypt, speaks forcefully on the way in which TESOL outside the English-speaking West can acquire its own momentum in its own locations, and comments that 'lately, there has been resistance to the use of computers and technology in general in the Egyptian classroom, not because it is 'superior', but because of our 'different' context that makes such use rather difficult and in many cases ineffective. (Email interview). She goes on to talk of the 'common property of both the language and the way it is taught:

> English and English teaching and learning have spread so much that they have become 'common property' and the terms 'centre' and 'periphery' have become irrelevant. Now, people are impressed with good, clear English, no matter what accent it is. ....I personally don't feel very comfortable with

> statements that tend to compartmentalize people, things, etc. I have seen examples of ESOL educators outside the English speaking West with solid ideas and teaching practices. A good example to mention here is Egypt and South Africa, especially in the field of civic education (teaching human rights, democracy, civic values, etc. through English) … [where] the initiative and the work belonged to groups outside the English speaking West. (Email interview)

Her last comment draws attention to educators from outside the English speaking West taking their expertise abroad, beyond the confines of the native-speakerist perception of 'the local'.

Problematizing 'native speaker' dominance

An important implication of Position 2 is that English-speaking-Western colleagues, who become no more than speakers of *a* dominant variety of English must re-think and problematize their entire role and exactly what it is that they can contribute and to whom. In recent conferences I have noted a marked division between papers which expound traditional concerns with how to teach within the confines of established practice and, in contract, papers which reflect on who 'we' from the English-speaking West really are. Vandrick (2002a), a US educator, by deconstructing her relations with childhood playmates in India, while being the daughter of a missionary, explores the way in which 'colonial-like influences' can 'unconsciously affect' the attitudes of people like herself. She uses this to make sense of her teaching of college English in the US. Evidence that this was not simply indulgent self-analysis was seen in the degree to which her experience and analysis clearly resonated with members of her audience when this paper was first presented at the *TESOL* Convention in 1999, generating a broader discussion of 'who are our students, why are they characterized as "non-native speakers", and who are we to be teaching them' – among New York delegates who seemed to me as multicultural as their students (conference notes). Similar critiques of the dominant native-speakerist discourse of were found in at the 2002, American Association of Applied Linguistics and *TESOL* conventions (e.g. Kachru, Widdowson, Carey, Shuck, Norton, Lopriore and Smallwood, Gray, Luk, Sharkey, Hartford et al, all 2002, Vandrick 2002b, and Kubota 2002b). In several of these papers references were made to September 11th and how this event has increased the awareness of the need to address the way we reduce the foreign Other.

Beverly, a US academic, explains how although many of her American colleagues still retain a 'paternalism' toward 'exotic foreign cultures' as 'less literate, less effective in communicating, less important', there is a movement towards Position 2 as they become 'increasingly aware of the

multiplicity of meaning making modes'. She speaks specifically about programmes to develop Egyptian and Chinese teachers:

> What does superior mean to which of us? Does it mean most useful for a particular social context, the most modern (and who defines modern and how important it is), best practices (again, for which settings) , etc, etc. Our approach with the Egyptian teachers ... and the Chinese teachers ... is to wrestle together with these questions … [while] actively engaged in thinking critically about terms like 'best practices' even as we discuss what the TESOL literature says they are! (Email interview)

Similarly, in post-colonial Hong Kong, Florence, a Chinese academic, notes how 'many expatriates seem to have realized that they are not the only people who own English' (email interview).

The sites of struggle

In this chapter I have introduced the notion of struggle in World TESOL, as inhabiting three areas: how we see each other, how colleagues from the English-speaking West must deal with the divisive elements of their professionalism, and how we must all overcome the legacy of native-speakerism. The parameters of this struggle are drawn by a series of factors. First, there is the changing status of English itself, which provides the ultimate imperative for all ESOL educators to see differently how they relate to each other, to their students and to the language. Second, there is the existence of native-speakerism, which cuts into and divides World TESOL by creating a negatively reduced image of the foreign Other of 'non-native-speaker' students and educators. Third, there is the special responsibility of English-speaking-Western colleagues to deal with a professional culture which sets up native-speakerism. The beginnings of a Position 2, which raises the hope of a mutually inclusive *We* in World TESOL, does not in itself *solve* the problems of the divisive native-speakerist position. The principles of Position 2 instead provides the basis upon which the struggle to undo native-speakerism can be based. The struggle is intensified by the fact that the roots of native-speakerism are far deeper in our everyday professionalism than we might imagine, as shall be discussed in the following chapters. I have also tried to show a range of experience and opinion surrounding this struggle. Some of the very subjective evidence I have presented shows that there is indeed a degree of movement towards Position 2. The relationship between English-speaking-Western and World TESOL is itself changing. There is increased discussion between the two sides which is marked by enlightened research and curriculum development; but there is something deeper that has to change.

Chapter 2: Culturist perceptions of 'us' and 'them'

This chapter will take up an issue which runs across the progression from native-speakerism to a more inclusive Position 2, that of how ESOL educators see each other. It will explore and explain the tendency within the dominant native-speakerist ideology to see ESOL educators and their students along an 'us'-'them' divide, and then consider to what extent there is evidence of movement towards a more inclusive Position 2.

The constituents of culturism

While native-speakerism is specific to TESOL because of its preoccupation with speaker-hood, it is an element of the wider social phenomenon of culturism. I use the term 'culturism' to relate to any thought or act which reduces a person to something less than what she is according to an essentialist view of culture. Culturism in turn belongs to wider set of chauvinism which includes sexism and racism, and in order to understand it more fully, it is necessary to consider the broader concept of essentialism.

Essentialism

Essentialism presumes 'that particular things have essences which serve to identify them as the particular things that they are' (Bullock and Trombley 1977: 283). The most common essentialist view of culture is that 'cultures' are coincidental with countries, regions and continents, implying that one can 'visit' them while travelling and that they contain mutually exclusive types of behaviour' so that people 'from' or 'in' French culture are essentially different to those 'from' or 'in' Chinese culture. This psychogeographical picture also presents a hierarchical onionskin relationships between a national culture and elements within it, so that 'Egyptian school culture' is a subset or subculture of 'Egyptian education culture' and so on. At the more macro level, 'Kenyan culture' becomes a subset of 'African culture'. Common variations on this geographical theme are the association of 'cultures' with religions, political philosophies, ethnicities and languages, where 'Islamic culture', 'black culture' and 'English language

culture' take on the same essence of containment. (See for example Keesing 1981, 1994, Holliday 1999a and Holliday et al 2004).

Much of this essentialism will seem natural and normal to many readers, because it is in many ways the default way of thinking about how we are different to each other. It is however problematic because if we think of people's behaviour is *defined* and *constrained* by the culture *in* which they live, agency is transferred away from the individual to the culture itself, so that we begin to think that 'German culture believes that …', and that 'she belongs to German culture, therefore she …'. There is only a short, easy distance from this essentialist way of thinking to the chauvinistic stereotyping inherent in culturism which allows us to arrive at statements like 'in Middle Eastern culture there is no concept of individualized critical thinking'.

A colonialist legacy

The chauvinism inherent in such statements can be traced back to 19th century nationalism, a dominant 'methodological nationalist' sociology (Schudson 1994: 21), the modernist construction of 'national-level "imagined communities"' (Dobbin 1994: 124, also Anderson 1996), and to the way in which 19th century Western anthropology justified colonialism by describing the 'exotic' cultures of the East and the South as deficient and therefore in need of imperialistic development (Asad 1973, Nzimiro 1979, Comaroff and Comaroff 1992, Morawska and Spohn 1994, Sangari 1994, Sarangi 1995, Pennycook 1998, 2000). Kabbani thus connects 'the forging of racial stereotypes and the confirmation of the notions of savagery' as 'vital to the colonialist world view' (1986: 4). The same cultural chauvinism is sustained in modern times, where 'unequal narratives' create an 'unreciprocal interpretation' of 'non-Western cultures' (Sarangi 1995). The work of Edward Said represents this unequal narrative in his orientalism thesis which states that the East is *constructed* by the Western popular and literary psyche as, dark, immoral, lascivious, despotic and so on. Especially after September 11th we have seen a reconfirmation of Said's assertion that the vast complexity of Middle Eastern society is reduced to a simplistic notion of Islam (e.g. 1978, 1993, 2003).

Within modern multi-cultural societies the colonialist legacy of essentialist cultural chauvinism also underlies the way in which we *construct* 'foreign' minority cultures (Sarangi 1995: 11). Thus, in Britain, 'whatever any "Asian" informant was reported to have said or done is regularly interpreted as a consequence of their "Asianness"', their "ethnic identity", or the "culture" of their "community" (Baumann 1996: 1). In this way, government, media and popular discourses 'can easily reduce anybody's behaviour to a symptom of this equation' and can 'even claim to speak "for" them, "represent" them' and 'explain them to others' (1996: 6).

A generalized Other

It could be argued that the essentialist view of non-Western 'culture' was not just a negative construction of lack of civilization to justify colonization, but an inverted image of what the West thought of itself. Kabbani makes the point that since mediaeval times Islam has been characterized an 'Antichrist' and 'Anti-Europe', and, more recently, the 'lewd Saracen' was *the opposite* to Victorian morality. She also suggests that the East provided a domain in which Victorian travellers and Orientalist painters could express sexual fantasies that were inappropriate at home. The European 'myth of Orient' was thus a polemic of a foreign Other which strengthened the identity of an unproblematic Self (1986). The Other, capitalized, can be defined as something which is constructed as opposite to the familiar, with often falsely attributed negative or exotic characteristics which are opposite to the positive characteristics of the Self. Pennycook traces the language educational dimension of the Self and Other to the colonialist narrative in which Robinson Crusoe tutors and culturally changes the uncivilized, foreign Other Man Friday (1998: 10-16). Simplicity and lack of complexity is often the civilized Self's image of the primitive or tribal Other.

Hence, the 'non-native speaker' Other appears, within the native-speakerist narrative, as a *generalized Other* in which we easily speak of *all* 'East Asian students', 'Arab teachers' and so on in very similar ways. Not only are whole swathes of humanity grouped together within the essentialist myth, the characteristics of all of these groupings become remarkably similar to each other as they become not so much the individual characteristics of particular, individual 'cultures', but the generalized characteristics of anyone who is different to the unproblematic Self. This common description of the generalized Other can be summarized by the following list of phrases which are taken from a number of sources (Holliday 2001b: 175, citing a range of language in development articles, Stapleton 1995: 13, Sullivan 2000: 115-9, Kubota 2001:14, Tong 2002):

Unproblematic Self	**Culturally problematic Other**
'native speaker' students and colleagues	**'non-native speaker' students and colleagues**
Independent, autonomous, creative, original, individualist	Dependent, hierarchical, collectivist, reticent, indirect, passive, docile, lacking in self esteem
Respecting privacy, choice, equality, freedom, change	Reluctant to challenge authority, easily dominated, undemocratic
Modern, Western	Traditional, Confucian, Islamic, etc

Analytical, objective, flexible, critical, negotiating knowledge	Uncritical, static, rigid, with a fixed view of knowledge, intellectually interdependent, wishing to preserve knowledge, good at memorizing
Able to manage, research, plan, evaluate, organize, train, make decisions	Need to be trained, treated sensitively, understood, involved, given ownership, empowered
Involved in genuine teacher-student interaction	Find decision-making difficult
	Prefer frontal teaching, exam-oriented

They represent 'the common constructions of difference to be found in applied linguistic and ELT writing' (Pennycook 2002). The list in effect represents a doctrine of the native-speakerist generalized Other which is often recited in the dominant literature of TESOL as evidence of why 'non-native speaker' students and colleagues cannot do what is expected of them.

Because of the current preoccupation amongst English-speaking-Western ESOL educators with students from the Far East, the phrases on the right of the list largely come from texts about Japanese, Vietnamese, Thais, Cambodians, Chinese and so on. This is already ridiculously over-generalized; but they also appear in texts about North Africans, Arabs and Iranians, who one would expect to be very different. To make the point even stronger, they also appear in texts about under-achieving mainstream US students (Kubota 2001: 17-20). Kubota therefore suggests that although the image of, for example, passivity may appear to specify a particular non-US cultural group, it is in fact used indiscriminately to describe the unsatisfactory Other of the day, whatever that may be, and that 'the Othering of ESL/EFL students by essentializing their culture and language presupposes the existence of the unproblematic Self as a monolithic, normative category' (2001: 10-11).The phrases on the left of the list are equally polarized; and, though found in texts generally relating to the English Speaking West, they also represent what Sullivan (2000: 115-9) terms 'quintessential American values'.

The reference to modernity and tradition is also significant. Almost everywhere, not only in TESOL and applied linguistics, modernity is presumed to be a characteristic exclusive to the West. It is rare to hear acknowledgement of the possibility that societies of the East and South might also be able to achieve modernity by themselves and in their own terms – which does not have to be labelled as 'Westernized' (Holliday et al 2004: 8-9).

English-speaking-Western TESOL is not alone in thinking that it is the only force which can bring change and innovation to the foreign Other.

The other side

One must, however, be careful not to read 'Self and the Other' in one direction only. The Selves of language students and their teachers outside the English-speaking West, who need to deal with the Other of English will also be an important factor in developing a more mutually inclusive Position 2. Similarly, I do not wish to give the impression that cultural essentialism is only practiced by the dominant West. People from the East and the South also essentialize their own cultural identities for a number of reasons – to reaffirm that their 'culture' survives, despite Western domination, through the display of traditional dress, dances, rituals of state, art festivals, tourist performances and so on (Keesing 1994: 306-7), to play the 'culture card' to maintain and acquire power (Sarangi 1994: 416), to reinforce nationalist imagery (Kubota1999: 9, Sakamoto 1996: 113) and to appeal to a Western market (Moeran 1996).

In my experience it is indeed often colleagues and students from outside the English-speaking West who talk most enthusiastically about their own circumstances as 'the situation in country X culture'. A Chinese student once told me that some of her compatriots admitted feeding their British tutors with exoticized accounts of 'Chinese culture' because it seemed to be what was expected. On the one hand, I know from experience of being a foreigner in other people's countries, that this sort of exaggeration of Self to suit people's perception of Other can help one to gain acceptance (Holliday et al 2004: 10-15). On the other hand, it seems unfortunate that this desire to assert identity presents an over-simplified reality which both feeds native-speakerism and contributes to its adoption outside the English-speaking West.

I see it as seriously problematic that English-speaking-Western tutors collude with this over-generalized Self othering by accepting such statements as 'true' because they come from people who *must* be authorities on every aspect of their 'culture' *because* 'they' are all the same and know everything about each other. It is part of a general tendency for middle class people from comfortable societies to enjoy the opportunity of 'discovering another culture' and to think that by talking about 'cultures', and admiring their 'exotic' qualities, they are 'accepting' and 'being tolerant' and 'understanding' of them. Jordan and Weedon assert that the 'commodification' of 'racial and cultural difference is a marked feature of the radical twentieth-century avant-garde' (1995: 149-50). 'Other cultures' similarly become objects to be 'nice' about instead of groups of real people with whom we can interact and be equally people. I was once horrified to hear, while working as a curriculum consultant in India, an Indian colleague say that 'we' considered 'them' as

'all Indians together'. This 'liberal multiculturalism', which 'celebrates cultural difference as an end in itself' in terms of superficial 'artefacts, festivals and customs' results in a bland '"cultural tourism"' which obscures 'issues of power and privilege' (Kubota 2004: 35, citing Derman-Sparks).

Reification

Another concept which is important in the understanding culturism in native-speakerism is reification. It means, literally, 'to make real', and is developed by Berger and Luckmann as a basic force in social life in which 'the products of human activity' are conceptualized '*as if* they were something other than human products – such as the facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will' (1979: 107). This process can relate to language, roles, identities and institutions. Reification takes place, for example, in institutions when new practice becomes an established routine. Hence we have the terms 'routinization' and 'institutionalization' (Berger and Luckmann 1979: 108). 'Naturalization' is similarly used in critical discourse analysis when 'ideological-discursive-formations' become established in discourses as 'non-ideological "common sense"' (Fairclough 1995: 28). The reification of culture takes place when it becomes, in people's minds, something that exists over and above human behaviour. A significant characteristic of reification is that the concept in question becomes relatively fixed and ordinary in the people's minds. Hence, the apparent 'patterns and order' of these so-called concrete groups are 'exaggerated or unduly emphasized' at the expense of the 'variations and variability' which might blur their boundaries (Vayda 1994: 320). Baumann suggests that the essentialist reification of culture leads to the belief that there is 'a certain coherence, uniformity and timelessness in the meaning systems of a given group', and that in the same way as 'the earlier concept of "race"', this has led to seeing culture as 'fundamentally different, essentialized, and homogenous social units' (1996: 10-11, citing Lutz and Abou-Lughod).

Reification is not, however, in any way a 'perversion' or 'a sort of cognitive fall from grace', but a natural social process common in theoretical and non-theoretical thought (Berger and Luckmann 1979: 107); and 'our conception of culture almost irresistibly leads us into reification and essentialism' (Keesing 1994: 302). One could say that reification is an inescapable hazard in cultural analysis. 'Many scholars now acknowledge that *any* definition of culture is necessarily reductionist' (Sarangi 1995, my emphasis). Furthermore, in a world in which almost all perceptions are socially constructed, the concept of 'culture' is as real as anything else. To try to eradicate an essentialist view of culture would be impossible. My am is instead to increase awareness of its chauvinistic ideological implications by – repeating again Fairclough's words, 'making visible the interconnectedness of things' (1995: 36).

To summarize, the relationship between essentialism, Self and Other, reification and culturism can be expressed as an equation as follows:

essentialist view of culture	+	colonialist ideology	+	politics of Self and Other	+	reification	=	Culturism

And culturism is realized within the specifics of TESOL as native-speakerism. It is important to note within this equation that although essentialism and reification might be seen as natural social processes, connection with a colonialist intrigue with Self and Other, there is an undeniable political injustice at a deep and psychological level.

A non-essentialist view

In opposition to an essentialist view of culture I therefore propose a non-essentialist view which struggles to avoid the political chauvinism of native-speakerism by questioning the positioning the 'non-native speaker' Other within imagined cultural blocks.

In the non-essentialist view, culture is not a geographical place which can be visited and to which someone can belong, but a social force which is evident wherever it emerges as being significant. This concept of culture falls somewhere within Roberts et al's (2001: 54) critical, constructivist, symbolic and 'verb' views of culture. It is something that flows and shifts between us. It both binds us and separates us, but in different ways at different times and in different circumstances. I am not suggesting that there is no such thing as cultural difference, but that this difference is not locked into essentialist cultural blocks.There are many aspects of our behaviour which are 'culturally different'. It is possible to say that 'there is something culturally different' about the way in which someone might behave, but this may be as much to do with the *small cultures* of family, age, occupation or other social background factors as with *large cultural* differences in nationality (Holliday 1999a: 240). Where cultural difference *is* connected with nationality, it does not necessarily follow that all people of that nationality will behave similarly We must therefore be wary not to use these differences to feed chauvinistic imaginations of what certain national or ethnic groups can or cannot do - as exotic, 'simple', 'traditional' Others to our complex, 'modern' selves.

A non-essentialist, small culture approach considers any instance of socially cohesive behaviour as culture. Cultural significances can thus be found particular football teams, types of restaurants, individual universities and departments, and, indeed, in professional cultures such as TESOL. This conceptualization is not dissimilar to the expression of culture as related to the basic fabric of social activity in discourses, literacies and institutions as expressed by a range of critical writers (e.g. Clark and Ivanič 1997, Fairclough 1995, Lankshear 1997, Gee 1997). In this view,

the world is made up of a vast complex of shifting, overlapping, swirling, combining and splitting cultures; and to imagine that they are organized into regional hierarchical blocks is an ideological, political or chauvinistic act.

My approach to culture and to culturism is concerned with how people construct for themselves the realities of others, and how culture is itself socially constructed. A world in which realities are socially constructed can however work in different ways: either we construct, or we are constructed by the discourses of culture; and if the latter is true, then my thesis falls down because ESOL educators would be inescapably conditioned by native-speakerism. This dilemma is evident in the ambivalence in Berger and Luckmann's discussion of social constructionism. They combine both the sociologies of Weber, in which the social action of the individual dominates, and of Durkheim, in which the individual is dominated by the functions of society (1979: 207) which allows them to arrive at 'a dialectic of individual and society, of personal identity and social structure' (1979: 208). Thus, 'Berger and Luckman's account shows how the world can be socially constructed by the social practices of people, but at the same time experienced by them as if the nature of the world is pre-given and fixed' (Burr 1995: 10). The ambivalence is also present in current critical thinking in applied linguistics. Widdowson (2002), for one, eloquently problematizes the tendency in critical discourse analysis to disregard the possibility of individual voices which counter so-called dominant discourses.

I feel that in Position 2 there is a moral imperative to emphasize the aspect of the dialectic that makes us, as individuals and as creators of discourses, institutions, and culture, socially construct the norms and conventions of society. Although the social pressures from other members of our social groups are great, we need to gain literacies, competences and understandings which enable individual support and agency. While we see that social 'truths' are socially constructed within the politics of discourse, each one of us is in a position to *act* on the basis of this knowledge so that we can *undo* the injustices of chauvinistic discourses such as sexism, racism and culturism.

Culturism in TESOL

Culturism, described in general terms as cultural chauvinism is located within TESOL and applied linguistics by several writers (e.g. Spack 1997a, 1997b, Zamel 1995, 1997). Kubota notes the particular role of culture as 'a site of discursive struggle in which various political and ideological positions compete with each other to promote a certain cultural representation as truth' (2001: 10), and that it is 'important to engage in a critique of cultural difference and reveal power that is exercised in forming and sustaining particular knowledge about culture of the Self and Other' (2001: 11). She traces cultural chauvinism to 'the persistent racism of contemporary society' (2001: 28) which even pervades 'a nice field like TESOL' (2002: 84), which only appears not to be racist

because it conforms to the 'contemporary discourse of liberal humanism' which 'suppresses overt expression of racial prejudice' (2001: 28).

A culturist methodology

Culturism has a very specific methodology in TESOL which can be characterized by a series of steps (Holliday 1999a: 246) which I will exemplify in a presentation I attended at the international *TESOL* conference some years ago. The whole audience seemed to be English-speaking-Western teachers who were working as expatriates in an East Asian country which I will call Ex to protect the identity of the participants.

> The presentation began with a detailed and systematic description of Exian culture', ranging from family life, personal aspiration to government administration and driving behaviour. This was used to explain the difficulties encountered by expatriate teachers – as a means for helping those teachers to rationalize and cope. It was clearly an event *for* expatriates working in Ex. When I questioned the underlying essentialist assumptions of the description at the end of the talk I was accused by others in the room of 'not knowing' because I hadn't 'been there', and also of taking time away from those who wanted to ask questions – presumably to confirm the detail of the description and to share more examples of its application. (Conference notes 1999)

The steps can be located in this event as follows:

> Step 1: See an individual's behaviour as mostly explainable by membership of a foreign national culture

The presenter explained the behaviour of Exian colleagues and students as part and parcel of 'Exian culture'. This may seem unproblematic, except that this dos not result from an open-ended investigation of behaviour from which cultural commonalities are allowed to emerge, but from a prescriptive assertion that an essentialist notion of Exian culture *is* the explanation. The methodology is thus from the outset *positivistic* in the sense that an a priori decision that national cultural difference is important *leads* the investigation. This is seen in the conference presentation where the impression is given that national cultural analysis is the only relevant type of analysis. It is simply *assumed* that everything about Exians is down to their culture being different.

> Step 2: Describe the foreign national culture as a generalized Other, whose main characteristic is difference to Self

The conference presenter described the culture in great detail, with 'scientific' precision and authority, pointing out deficiencies in personal or social competence among Exians, very often related to precision and responsibility,

which conformed to the listing on page 19. The culturist methodology is thus *normative* in that it suggests how things ought or ought not to be against the model of the unproblematic 'native speaker' Self.

> Step 3: Find the details of this difference
>
> Step 4: Explain all behaviour in terms of this difference

The conference presenter elaborated and the audience provided their own examples during questions and comments, confirming that all members of the national culture are the same because they share the characteristics of the culture and are determined by it.

> Step 5: Reify the stereotype

Evidence of this was in the way in which the other people in the room responded to my suggestion from the floor, that the description of Exians was very similar to the features of 'Iranian culture' which I used to store as evidence in my own struggle to cope with the difficulties of a foreign place when I first went to work there. Their argument that I was disqualified from 'knowing' because I had not 'been there' indicated that they were propounding a body of knowledge which was self-evident and unquestionable to those who 'knew'. It also invoked a sense of exclusive professionalism, whereas I was insulting this professionalism by implying that their theory of an exotic culture was a phatic, therapeutic product of culture shock. What I am describing as a prejudiced imagination about Other cultures within the ideology of native-speakerism is for many ESOL educators an important part of professional knowledge.

The politics of professionalism

I will now look at some of the reasons why culturism has developed in a particularly native-speakerist way within our profession. It is first important to note that 'us'-'them' thinking which gives rise to culturism is not only found in TESOL or in professional groups, but is part of the fabric of any human group, where cohesion requires a degree of exclusive behaviour. However, in professional groups exclusivity will focus particularly on superiority of specialized knowledge, practices and discourses. A Foucauldian postmodern take on the formation of professions argues that:

> The formation of a profession from an occupational group takes place through ... an appropriation of a field of expertise as its exclusive area of jurisdiction and expertise. One can use the metaphor of boundary setting whereby occupations claim sovereign control over an area of knowledge. The knowledge of observed 'objects' is not 'out there' to be discovered but is constituted in the knowledge-making practices. (Anderson 2003a: 31, citing Fournier)

There are many ways in which English-speaking-Western TESOL gains professional exclusivity; but there is one feature of this very broad professional group which sets it apart from others. Where professional groups in mainstream education would be more likely to align themselves against other competing groups (e.g. subject areas, disciplines, departments or schools), as is well-catalogued in the education literature (e.g. Bernstein 1971, Hargreaves 1992), a major source of professional alignment for English-speaking-Western ESOL educators is the foreign Other. Baxter (2003: 19) put this very well:

> Any ELT practitioner [from the English speaking West] potentially works in an enormous range of national and cultural contexts. There is a large amount of movement from one situation to another, and relatively fast turnover of students at particular kinds of language institutions. In this kind of professional context, it is perhaps not surprising that it is extremely common for teachers to develop categories of learners, as well as other teachers, as a means of describing and delineating them, as well as other teachers. These categories frequently correspond with nationalities or languages. This way of categorising individuals about whom relatively little is known may be endemic across human experience, but is extremely problematic in a field like ELT where interaction between nationalities, cultures and language speakers is the basis of the profession.

Gaining academic and professional capital abroad

An important factor in turning this confrontation with the foreign develops into an 'us'-'them' relationship is professional status. There is a particular need for English-speaking-Western educators to establish academic and professional capital in research, educational methodology and territory. Despite the excellent teaching resources with which they are associated by the rest of the world, teachers working in Britain and North America suffer from lack of status (Holliday 1994a: 75) and in many cases are a part-time, transient workforce with low academic qualifications and low earning power (Gaies 2002). Inability to pay subscription fees was a major reason for the sudden collapse of the new British Institute of English Language Teaching in 2002, which in itself has damaged the ability of TESOL to gain recognition within Britain. Ryuko Kubota notes that:

> ESOL educators inside of the English-speaking West ... are pretty much marginalized in their own context. ... Kindergarten through 12th grade ESL teachers in North American public schools … [have] poor working conditions (e.g., travelling to different schools each day, teaching in a closet due to space limitation, putting up with cancellation of classes due to regular classroom teachers' schedule change, etc.). (Email interview)

Anderson (2003a), from his own experience as a teacher in the British private sector, as well as from his research into *his* British professional discourse, notes that the occupation's ability to convince the public of its expertise is always compromised by the presence of underqualified or unqualified practitioners. Low academic status in their own countries makes them, in Zamel's (1998) terms, 'strangers in the academy'.

As a result of this, many of them work in other countries where they can gain better academic, financial status and social status. Ryuko Kubota notes a significant race factor here:

> Diaspora from the English-speaking West to the non-West seems to result in a higher social status (particularly when the person is White) but not vice versa. This has a lot to do with the global status of English ... as well as English-Only ideology and racial issues, I think. (Ryuko Kubota Email interview)

Part of this has been a drive to establish physical territory. The days of large government aid-sponsored curriculum projects which proliferated in the 1970s and 1980s (as described in Phillipson 1992) are now very much in decline, and it is business-oriented people, both from the private and university sectors, who travel abroad both to attract students to come to Britain and to set up lucrative teaching outposts. English-speaking-Western TESOL is dynamic and aggressive, and is complemented by an equally commercially aggressive publishing industry which floods the world with influential textbooks. Every English-speaking-Western ESOL educator who works abroad has to associate herself with this need to 'sell' English as a commercial commodity if they are not to be classified as 'migrant workers' or back-packing teachers who have no professional training (Gaies 2002).

'Native speakers' abroad

'Native speaker' status and the professional knowledge and cultural superiority associated with it becomes meaningful in other countries, and is the basis for international recognition of institutions of the English-speaking West as centres of excellence. Mona, as a Pakistani who has spent much of her career in the UAE, describes her experience of 'native-speaker' status and its relationship with an 'us'-'them' divide:

> Part of the reason for the native/non-native divide is to deliberately put 'native speakers' in an advantageous position. ... There is a definite plan of the English-speaking West to monopolize the ELT market. I cannot be wrong in believing this, for why else would some institutions in non-English speaking countries have an unwritten policy to hire only native English speakers? I have worked with different ages of second/foreign language learners and have also worked extensively with ESL teachers. Despite the fact that job interviewers have always been impressed by my

> CV, most of them were sorry that they could not offer me the position applied for because I do not have my university qualifications from an English speaking country. What it boils down to is the fact that having certificates from dominant English speaking countries is far more important than the actual experience gained from working with ESL learners and educators in rich ESL environments. This is certainly discouraging for me as a TESOL professional and I would like to reiterate that 'native speakers' in decision making positions always favour native speakers over non-native speakers because they are guarding the monopoly they have created in the post-colonial era. (Email interview)

When English-speaking-Western educators come into contact with colleagues from other places, it is not as professional equals. Even though there may be no intention on their part to take up superior positions, the facts of employment create divisions. When I asked Kerry, a British teacher who worked in Thailand, if she had any Thai colleagues, she replied, 'Sadly, no. We had different working conditions because we were native speakers and therefore considered more "expert" in our field' (email interview). It is quite common that teachers from other countries may be their students, and may sometimes be their coursemates on teacher development programmes. Because of the speakerhood issue, even when they sit together as coursemates on the same masters course, there will not exactly be a sense of equality (May 1993); and in recent times tensions may be higher where English-speaking-Western masters students find themselves in the minority in their classes.

To summarise this discussion of culturism in English-speaking-Western TESOL, we have a very complex picture of a professional group which: in order to find a status which it cannot find at home, propels itself into the professional domains of other education systems in other countries, while maintaining distance from them; sees itself as liberally humanist even when it blatantly reduces foreign colleagues and students it to a problematic generalized Other.

A lack of awareness of political impact which underlies this complexity is demonstrated in the following incident which took place during a programme evaluation meeting in British University at which I was present as an external examiner:

> There was discussion about an action statement in a programme report – that special care should be taken to help Asian students to reference evidence in their assignments. The quality assurance department had asked for this action point to be removed because it was racist. The majority feeling within the meeting seemed to be that the quality assurance department were not qualified to say this because of their lack of professional knowledge of the cultural difficulties of Asian students from the Pacific rim, whom they had mistakenly thought were 'British Asians'.

As outsiders to TESOL the quality assurance department saw something which my colleagues could not. It makes no difference whether the students were 'Asians from the Pacific rim' or 'British Asians': generalized conclusions about the educational ability of a whole group of people defined by culture or ethnicity is still discriminatory, no matter how many examples of professional experience it is based on, because it denies individuality. The point is that, like the people in the Exian conference presentation above, my ESOL colleagues saw their judgement as professional knowledge which is divorced from the politics of discrimination.

This lack of awareness of the connection between professional knowledge and the politics of discrimination, connects with the feeling of independence from context which has been associated with English-speaking-Western TESOL (e.g. Savignon 1991, Allwright 1988: 51, and Breen 1986, Holliday 1994a: 14, 21). (See also Rampton's 1994 comments on autonomous applied linguistics). This is of course not peculiar to TESOL. Fairclough reminds us of how the knowledge base within many professions in late modern society is deemed 'context free' (1995: 104).

Excavating the strata of culturism

The following examples demonstrate how we may be unaware of culturism within our daily professional discourse. The first, appropriately anonymized, is draft material from Grace's research on Chinese university TESOL. (See also Holliday 2002: 188-9.) It comprises the last two lines of a description of a classroom event, in which students are doing oral presentations in front of the class, followed by a connection she makes with her experience of television and stage in the wider Chinese society:

> It seems most obvious in the case of male-female pairs ... the students are behaving like the comperes whom I have seen in Chinese variety shows!
>
> In Chinese television and stage shows there are usually two comperes: a man in a tight-fitting white blazer and a girl in a large flouncy ballroom gown. They adopt a stiff, ballet-like posture, pinching their buttocks together and puffing their chests out. With their left hands they hold the microphone flat against their chests. Meanwhile they hold their right palms out to the audience in magnanimous gestures of welcome. They both wear fixed cheesy grins and heavy rouge. They take turns to speak with a sing-song intonation, and man in a low dignified tone and the woman in a high-pitched nasal whine. As one speaks, the other looks on lovingly and nods approval after each utterance. The exact same appearance and behaviour are imitated by students in university stage shows. (My underlining)

When Grace presented this extract at a research seminar, it invited considerable comment from other people there, who said that a very probable

reading of this text is that the description of Chinese comperes is sarcastic, as characterized by phrases (underlined) that depict 'clown-like' behaviour. A Chinese research student who was present complained that Chinese comperes do not intend to be clown-like, and that the 'white blazer' and 'ballroom gown' are 'normal' symbols of the formality expected on stage and television. Thus, 'flouncy', 'cheesy', 'heavy', sing-song' and 'high-pitched nasal whine' represent Grace's own derogatory spin on events which are not normally considered to be such. Grace was clearly unhappy about what had been revealed in her writing and said she was indeed unaware of any sarcasm, that she had simply described what she thought she had seen, and had new all along that Chinese compares did not *intend* to be clown-like. It does not matter whether Grace intended to be sarcastic or not, or knew whether or not Chinese comperes intend to be clowns. What is important is that what she actually wrote does include phrases which do make Chinese comperes appear, if not 'clown-like', at least 'ridiculous' – and that now she can see this herself.

What makes Grace's description culturist is the way in which she is attempting to explain what she sees as problematic classroom behaviour by means of reference to a wider, also problematic, Chinese culture. Whether or not the behaviour of the students and the comperes is interpreted well, it is its association with a deficit notion of Chineseness which is culturist. As one of the seminar participants commented, whatever was happening in the classroom was likely to have nothing at all to do with being 'Chinese' or being like 'Chinese comperes'.

The second example is from my own lesson observation notes on the behaviour of my own undergraduate students from Hong Kong. (See also Holliday 2002: 189-90.) It was not until I looked at what I had written in these notes of weeks later, that I saw the ideological implications of the phrases (underlined):

> I was determined to get them into choosing topics for projects by the end of the morning. ... The students arrived in dribs and drabs late. They arranged themselves around the cluster of tables fairly haphazardly. Some of them were beginning to turn on computers and I told them not to, to sit straight down – fearing that they were going to get onto their chat-lines. (I had got the impression previously that they spent every moment of 'free' time on chat lines.) .... Then I left them for 30 minutes to devise ideas for projects. ... When I returned they were remarkably on task. Some of them perkily looked round to say they were 'on-time'.

It may be difficult for the reader to see the traces of culturism here. I can because when I see what I wrote, it enables me to excavate the pre-occupations with a (to me) Other and unsatisfactory Chinese culture, which were there, but too deep for me to notice, at the time of writing. 'To get them' implies a superior teacher trying to change culturally 'inferior'

behaviour of the object other 'them' (rather than 'us'). 'Dribs and drabs', 'fairly haphazardly' and 'they ... chat-lines' implies confirmation of this *expected* behaviour. 'Arranged themselves' implies a sense of degenerate self-indulgence – nothing better to do than to 'display' themselves 'ornamentally'. 'Get them ... by ...' also reveals the objectives-led control element of a so-called 'student-led' pedagogy within which students are in reality operatives to be 'improved' by a controlled treatment. Hence, I found it 'remarkable', on returning to the class after leaving to get something, to find that 'they' were actually doing the things I had set them – whereas there was no reason at all why they should not. Nevertheless, I still refer to them as being 'perky' – like 'children' rather than adult people.

The third example does not concern ESOL educators, but the way in which native-speakerism occurs amongst a group of US university students or mixed linguistic background, and shows its broader base within society as a whole. Shuck interviews 52 students about their experiences with their first year writing course and finds how easily they categorize their fellow students along a binary 'native-non-native speaker' lines. She uses the term 'language ideology', to indicate how these

> 'ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests', are … bound up with social hierarchies, access to political power, and understandings about relationships between language and ethnicity, nationality, gender, class, age, and other categories by which we identify selves and others. (2002: 1-2, citing Irvine 1989: 255)

She sees this amongst the students in the following ways:

> A number of striking patterns emerged, particularly in the talk of white, mostly monolingual interviewees. First, their discussions posited two, mutually exclusive categories – native speaker and nonnative speaker. These categories seemed to entail other binary pairs as well, such as American vs. international student, white vs. nonwhite, and even more overtly hierarchically related pairs such as 'ahead' vs. 'behind', and 'know what's going on' vs. 'don't know what's going on'. (2002: 2)

Ironically, this binary conceptualization also influenced non-American students:

> Even for some international students, English is associated more closely with the US than with the countries in which they spent most of their lives being educated in English. When one of my interviewees, a student from Bangladesh, was asked if he was a native speaker, he quickly and fluently responded, 'Isn't it too early? I just got here'. (2002: 3)

It is not difficult to imagine what deep-seated prejudices might be shared by ESOL educators with these college students. It certainly connects with a phenomenon reported by several of my interviewees whereby the label of 'non-native-speaker' is placed on teachers simply on the basis of their 'ethnicity'. For example, W, from her experience as a Russian 'non-native-speaker' expatriate working in Japan, notes that 'many Japanese returnees who were brought up and educated in the States complained of difficulties in getting employment as "native speakers"' (email interview). This bring us back to the issue raised by Ryuko Kubota earlier of the degree to which the culturism in native-speakerism is indeed racist. This is certainly claimed by Amin, who connects native-speakerism not only to race but also to gender. She states that the profession's:

> response to their minority woman teachers is forged in the structural context of a society in which we communicate the message that important people are White, Anglo and male. In the classroom, we have to address and challenge our students' perceptions of an ideal ESL teacher and thus try to unravel their sexism and racism. (1999: 102)

It is this struggle to unravel what is going on that would bring us to Position 2. And indeed there is evidence that it is taking place in some locations. Lama, for example, observes how, although her Syrian university students have an initial 'preference for being taught English by its native speakers' even where they are untrained, and 'rush to the English or American cultural Centres', they quickly 'develop a different, resistant attitude which indeed involves a more personal ownership of English and a shift in power over the language' by developing 'their own method of internalizing the language and devising it to suit their culture and traditions thus developing a new genre of English … and culture specific vocabulary' with the result that 'English is out of its native speakers' control' (email interview).

Complex Identities

Ethnic and racial factors noted by Kubota and Amin (both ibid) can be seen in this personal account from Aliya. Her biography is also important because it indicates the complex way in which native-speakerism cuts into a particular person's career. Here is an ideology trying to categorize the professional life of someone who does not fit the categories. My own picture of professional categories also proved to be inadequate. When I first met her at a conference in the UAE I presumed she was Pakistani because of her name and appearance and because she told me she had studied and taught at a university in Pakistan. However, I was entirely mistaken:

> I'm British by birth and by nationality and since England is home I'd like to believe I'm English. I'm not Pakistani because I never lived there as

> one. ... I am expatriate when I teach in Pakistan because I have to live there on a visa and that's what qualifies one as an expatriate. After September 11 I was asked to leave Pakistan by the British High Commission just like other expatriates. ... I studied there and worked there but as a foreigner.

However:

> Many would not classify me as a 'native speaker' of English' … because, firstly, I lived in the UK for only seven years and then lived in a third neutral country (UAE, which is not my country of descent) for 16 years before studying and working in Pakistan for seven years. Second, I think its more than language; it's a little more racial – the colour of the skin that matters. My husband was born and raised in England and lived all his life there. He is monolingual (understands only English) but at work he is still treated like an Asian. (Email interview)

Yet unless she had somehow 'lost' the English she was born to speak, there could be no question that Aliya is a 'native speaker', even though knows many other languages:

> I can speak and understand English, Urdu, Arabic, Punjabi, Sindhi, and French (in order of proficiency) but I can only read and write in English and Arabic. I have to struggle with Urdu but if I try I can manage to read and write it. I have studied English as a first language and Arabic as the second language; never studied Urdu in school. I don't know myself what I am. If I'm a 'non-native' speaker of English then I don't know what is my native language. Yet, I'm not a native speaker by many linguists' definitions. (Email interview)

She continues to describe how she feels she has been marginalized in her career by the 'us'-'them' divide. She explains that although she is a 'certified Cambridge examiner', she has found it hard to get a job as one probably because of her 'foreign name'. At the same time, she also falls foul of the other side of the divide:

> When I went to Pakistan to work at a private university I was treated like the only one who knew the English language. Often very experienced teachers would call me to ask what 'sauté' meant, or how was 'vitae' pronounced. I was a walking dictionary that made me very uncomfortable and soon I was scared of being asked something I didn't know. In Pakistan I was the 'them' where 'them' are the 'native speakers' and 'us' are the 'non-native speakers'. (Email interview)

And on a more personal note, she describes the dilemma of being a 'British Asian' rather than a 'real Asian':

> Well, it's frustrating sometimes not because we would like to be called English (I think being British Asians lets you enjoy the best of both worlds) but because we are not fully accepted as Asian by other Asians. You may find this very interesting. 'Pure' Asians do not socialize with us freely because there is this 'language barrier', e.g., … my husband doesn't speak Urdu although he understands and this isolates him from other Indians and Pakistanis at work. My administrator and her assistants are Indians and they know that I can understand and speak Urdu/Hindi fluently but they never speak to me in it although they speak it amongst themselves when I'm around. … So, it all boils down to language – you may eat the type of food Asians in the sub-continent eat, try and dress like them, but you cannot be 'one of them' because of the language you speak. On the other hand, you can try and eat fish and chips every day, dress in Western clothes, even speak English as the first language but still be labelled as 'English of Asian origin'! (Email interview)

The way Aliya sees herself in terms of the English-speaking-Western vs. World TESOL distinction is also significant. Although she perceives that 'England is home', she claims not to be part of the English-speaking-Western professional ethos. She talks about TESOL, as though an insider to the 'non-native-speaker' issue, and aligns herself with, in her terms, 'non-Anglo TESOL'.

She then moves on to talk about her experiences of the 'non-Anglo TESOL' community of teachers in the UAE, and how they are driven to unusual strategies to make their way:

> At a recent conference I was amazed to see the number of talks being given on the notorious native-non-native issue. All such talks were given by non-English-speaking-Western ESOL educators (but educated in the West), as you would call them. The presenters were trying to save their jobs by presenting on the issue and used words like 'hegemonization', '"our" comfort zone' and 'multicompetent' (a word to show their unseen strength over the native speakers) in the presentation titles to show the bias they face everyday at work. In the Gulf most non-Anglo ESOL educators are losing their jobs because the 'native speakers' are preferred. You'll find the bitterest teachers here. (Aliya, email interview)

This observation needs to be set within the wider picture of how 'non-native speaker' colleagues are represented at TESOL conferences. W counters the positive picture, which I present at the beginning of chapter 1, of

international conferences representing the inclusive 'we' of World TESOL in the following way. (I have edited this extract to ease anonymization):

> Organizations which should protect the equal rights of all TEFL teachers, in fact conduct discriminatory policies. A good example is an International organization which holds all its conferences, and most other events, in the English-speaking West, which, of course, makes its attendance next to impossible for teachers in other regions of the world. As a result, probably over two thirds of attendants are British and European, in total disproportion to the regional membership in the organization. … The organization has had problems registering non-European members, sending them information and publications. … The list of invited speakers at centrally organized conferences is also clearly 'pro-native-speaker' and 'pro-central'. Moreover, even at local teachers' conferences … [in Japan], most invited speakers are native-speakers, central and have no or little experience teaching local students. (Email interview)

Kamal (2003) contributes to this picture of complex identities in her account of teaching university students in Kuwait. She describes students who are be viewed as beyond the standard stereotype while searching for identity in a globalizing world. It is not only ESOL colleagues, but also their students who often fail to meet culturist categories. The following extracts are transcribed from the audio-recording of her paper:

> So while the students are sitting in Starbuck's and sipping their lattés, they are still, aware and conscious of the stereotypical imagery of the Arab youth. The stereotype seems to be progressively becoming clad in iron; but then the individual personalities of these students are becoming more and more blurred. So whether these students are dressed in traditional Arab clothing or they are in jeans and M and M tee-shirts, the Arabs do not want to be pigeonholed. They resent the stereotypes including bearded fundamentalist images that represent a lot of what is wrong in the world today; but then they equally resent being seen as products of external influences. They are still looking for this identity; and it is very difficult for them. How do they wish to be seen? How do they see themselves?

She also speaks about herself, an expatriate Bangladeshi, with her own complex identity:

> Even though I am Bangladeshi, another Bangladeshi is not the same as me; and culture to that person might be extremely different from me. And, we could have a group of ten Bangladeshis and all of us would have a different idea of what our culture is and how that applies to me itself.

Not a simple matter

I hope that I have shown how deeply 'us'-'them' threads run though native-speakerist TESOL, and that also this is by no means a simple matter. On the one hand these threads connect with a culturist chauvinism that pervades late modern society and has its roots in a colonialist past and perhaps beyond. Early signs of how we reduce the foreign Other to chauvinistic simplicities are in the struggle between the Greeks and Persians in antiquity, presented always to the Western Self as small individualistic democracy against the overblown decrepit despotism of the Eastern Other. On the other hand, the stories of Aliya and Kamal (op cit) show that the boundaries are themselves complex and highly porous; but that the way in which they can damage identity is definite. These accounts and the hesitant venture into the worlds of ESOL educators outside the English speaking West in the second half of the chapter make it clear that to break the 'us'-'them' divide and dissolve native-speakerism in the quest for a fully inclusive profession we all need to understand and digest the normal complexity of the lives of those who are different to us – and how cultural stereotyping of the foreign Other is *not* useful and hides the essences of who people really are. This is why the voices that come through my email interviews are so important. – not just to explore examples of the Other, but also to understand the thinking of the Self. My accounts of culturism found innocently in conference events and professional writing, set against the experiences of English-speaking-Western educators venturing out into new worlds, shows how we are all trying to make sense; but that we need to do more.

Chapter 3: The legacy of lockstep

This chapter will explore some of the conditions within which native-speakerism has developed and become such a powerful force in World TESOL. To do this I will look critically at major icons of native-speakerist practice – the 'four skills', close monitoring, staged teaching and oral elicitation – and trace them back to their origins in the lockstep of audiolingualism. Despite the desire to break this tradition in the mid 1970s, I will argue, that a desire to correct the cultures of the 'non-native speaker' Other in the disciplined behaviourism of audiolingualism has been sustained well into a more enlightened era of educational practice.

A moving, adapting practice

A way into this discussion is the following account from Robert, one of my British interviewees, about what happened to his practice when he went to work in Hong Kong. Although it is a single, unrepresentative statement, I believe it demonstrates important features of English-speaking-Western TESOL within a world context. He first explains how he was keen to adapt to the ways of doing things he found in Hong Kong while being very aware of what he had brought with him:

> When I first arrived in Hong Kong, teaching English in a secondary school, kids around 13-15, relatively low ability but reasonably keen or willing, I was kind of trying to mix Western and Eastern approaches, within the limitations of my understanding at that time.
>
> I dressed formally, wore suit and tie, (it was winter) that was the practice in the good [British] West Midlands comprehensive [secondary school] where I previously worked, and I wanted to appear serious and reasonably formal, not the caricature of the casual Westerner, I still used some humour, of course.
>
> I tried to teach in Chinese style with Western or 'native-speaker' characteristics, so I talked a lot, drove the lesson, using the microphone, I followed the local style, pupils should stand up to greet the teacher, stand up to answer questions. I did very little of the communicative style pair and group work I had been trained in and believed in. I was worried about discipline and use of Cantonese.

At the same time he preserved key aspects of practice which he had brought from Britain:

> But I didn't follow the textbook slavishly, I wrote my own materials sometimes (none of my local colleagues appeared to do this). When I noticed pupils couldn't use passive voice – I wrote some worksheets to try to remediate the problem. I involved pupils in class a lot, asked questions, patiently encouraged them to speak up even the very weak ones had to say something sometimes, they gradually got more confident. So I think basically I was trying to mediate between a perception of the world of my students/the school and what I had been led to believe was good pedagogy. I was perhaps attempting some kind of compromise form of a communicative learner-centred CLT but with Hong Kong Chinese characteristics. (Email interview)

First of all, the English-speaking-Western practice which he takes with him contains a complex mixture of influences which include, within his particular biography, practices from British state education. Other people would bring other biographies with other influences. Second, It seems evident in the account, that he was trying his best to be sensitive to and understanding of a new and unfamiliar professional environment while negotiating his new identity between a British past and a new, strange setting, he maintained his professional identity by sticking to some aspects of what he considered his own 'communicative' practice (writing his own materials, involving pupils, asking questions, encouraging weak students) while leaving behind others (not talking too much, not 'driving' the lesson, not using a microphone, and generally not being 'teacher-centred').

From these examples, it becomes clear that when English-speaking-Western TESOL travels and establishes itself in other locations within World TESOL, while rooted in the particular but complex set of institutional and commercial circumstances within the English-speaking West, it moves and adapts in equally complex ways. The methodologies it carries with it are never pure and are mediated not only by the circumstances within which they find themselves but also by the biographies of the people who carry them.

In this chapter, however, I will be talking about icons and ideology, rather than methods and specific groups of people, because they are cores of thinking, perhaps unconscious, around which multiplicities of circumstances and behaviour gather. I will start by tracing these cultural icons through their historical development.

Cultural icons

I would like to begin by describing the role which cultural icons play within the ideological structure of the small culture of English-speaking-Western TESOL. By 'cultural icons' I mean social concepts that are venerated by a

particular cultural group and which, in the case of English-speaking-Western TESOL, are sustained. The *Collins English Dictionary* lists a series of definitions of *icon*, all of which have something to do with a picture or person representing something bigger, and in some cases, venerated:

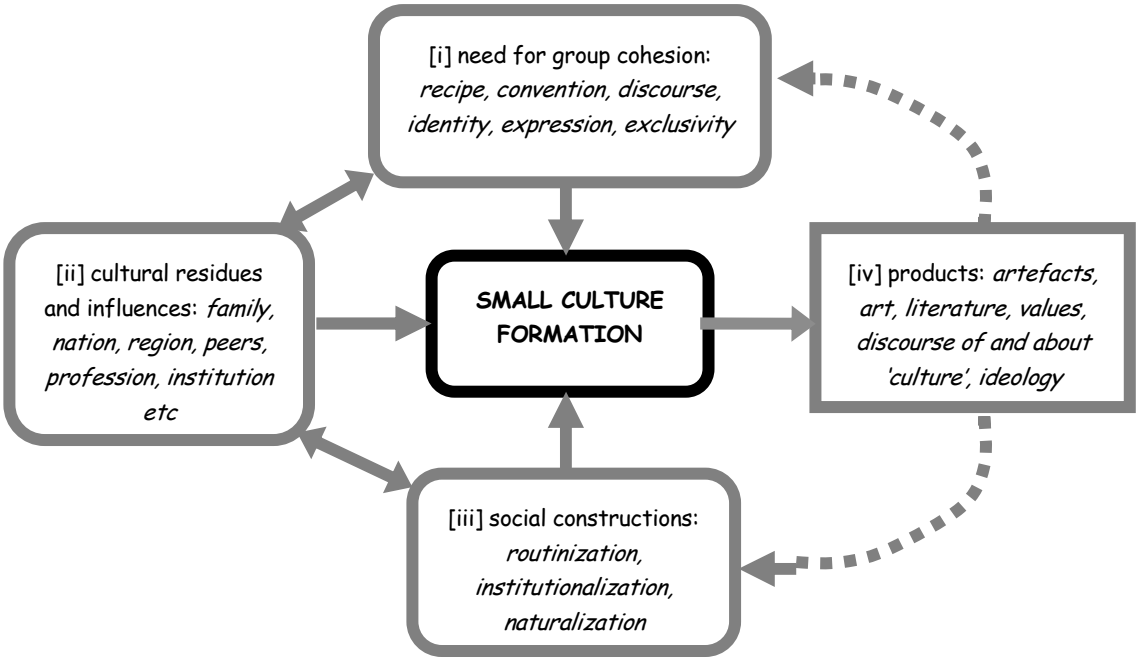
> icon (also ikon) (1) a devotional painting or carving, usu. on wood, of Christ or another holy figure, esp. in the Eastern Church. (2) an image or statue. (3) *Computing* a symbol or graphic representation on a VDU screen of a programme, option, or window, esp. one of several for selection. (4) an object of particular admiration, esp. as a representative symbol of something (*a literary icon of the 1970s*). (5) *Linguistics* a sign which has something in common with that which it signifies (Latin from Greek *eik□n* 'image')

A quick browse on the internet for 'cultural icon' produces barbecues in the Southern US, Barbie dolls, Elvis Presley, famous disc jockeys, examples of architecture and so on – people and objects. Within the culture of English-speaking-Western TESOL the equivalent people and objects might be David Nunan and Jeremy Harmer (as popular writers on teaching methodology) and perhaps coursebooks such as *Headway*. However, the cultural icons of a profession are also likely to be aspects and principles of practice.

Icons as conceptual anchors in small culture change

Icons have a range of important roles within cultures of professional life. Figure 3.1 shows the role of icons in small culture formation and demonstrates

Figure 3.1: Small culture formation



the capacity of the small culture for movement and adaptation. Bubble ii shows the capacity for a wide range of influence from residues of other culture formation as demonstrated in the case of Robert; and the other bubbles show the complexity of disciplines, constructions and products which allow for wide variations of belief and behaviour. One might imagine the embodiment implicit in the diagram as a dynamic force moving along through changing social milieux, changing the way in which the principles of the different bubbles are realized as it goes. Although it has grown out of a particular set of institutional and commercial circumstances, the part of the TESOL profession which emanates from the English-speaking West is not bound within the tight onion skins of a Western, British or North American culture. It has travelled beyond national and continental boundaries to take root in many locations within World TESOL.

Within this dynamics of flux, cultural icons play the role of conceptual anchor around which cores of understanding gather. They are among the products of the culture while at the time rallying points for cohesion through cultural identity, expression and exclusivity (bubble i), and also naturalized into the 'thinking-as-normal' of the culture (bubble iii). As the culture forms and reforms, icons can be maintained as standards or banners which are read in different ways at different times.

'The four skills' as a cultural icon

A long standing cultural icon in English-speaking-Western TESOL is 'the four skills'. although 'the four skills' are not conceptualized and used in exactly the same way as they were in the 1960s or 1970s, they remain as an icon around which are collected behaviours which continue to maintain a powerful ideological force of staging and control. 'The four skills' concept is still evident as an icon in all the areas of culture formation depicted in Figure 3.1. It is a core contributor to the recipe and convention for programme and lesson design, for measuring both students and the 'target language'. It is thus central to professional cohesion in the way in which it helps to consolidate practice, and indeed is a major characteristic of an exclusive TESOL technology A major product of the English-speaking-Western TESOL culture is its vast literature. Here, 'the four skills' plays a major part. Hedge devotes 147 out of the 400 pages (over 30%) of her key reference book, *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*, to the teaching of 'the familiar and traditional four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing' (2000: 2) under the general heading of 'developing the language skills'. In the introduction she explains that, despite 'a vast heterogeneity of activity', it is possible to 'discern a number of persistent concerns in the professional practice of teachers' (2000: 1), of which 'the four skills' is clearly one. Harmer similarly devotes 79 pages out of 365 (almost 25%) to 'the four skills' in his (2001) *The Practice of*

English Language Teaching, which is probably the basic manual of English-speaking-Western TESOL practice. As basic training manuals, these products feed back into the formation and expression of an exclusive group of professionals in bubble i.

This does not mean to say that 'the four skills' is approved as a basis of practice by everyone 'in the culture' (e.g. Clark and Ivanič 1997). I am not talking about mass agreement but about the significance of the presence of such icons. One does not have to approve of, or speak in favour of Marilyn Monroe for her to be a significant icon in our society. There is also a large difference between what an academic fringe might say and write and what practitioners may adhere to in the day-to-day demands of their work.

There are however some grounds for suggesting that establishing 'the four skills' as part of the naturalized routine of the institution of English-speaking Western is a major aim of training programmes which seek to initiate novice teachers into the culture. The success of this is seen in the way in which many competent practitioners use 'the four skills' as the natural, default mechanism for solving curriculum problems. I came face-to-face with this when I tried to get my masters students, who were also experienced teachers, to do an analysis of language behaviour in a social setting while designing an English for specific purposes programme. They automatically analysed the language behaviour in terms of the 'the four skills'; and I found it very hard to convince them that there might be other, sociocultural, skills that they could look for. As a phrase which is often uttered by colleagues, 'the four skills' is central to the discourse of English-speaking Western TESOL professionalism, both as a cohesive shared language as a statement of how 'we' are and how 'we' see things in 'our' culture and also how 'we' intend to see, and indeed construct students and TESOL people from Other cultures (bubble iv).

Nevertheless, when considering cultural residues and influences it is important to note, as with the influences from mainstream education on Robert's TESOL practice above, that the embedding of 'the four skills' concept in a discourse of planning, designing and measuring the needs of students, is rooted in other forces within education, health, and, indeed, personal development, which are characterized by the commodification of social process in state and commercial sectors within late modern society, as described by Fairclough (1995) and others. I shall look at this in more detail in the discussion of learner-centredness in chapter 4.

A modernistic discourse

I now wish to look at how 'the four skills' groups together with other icons to form a modernist dominant discourse within English-speaking Western TESOL. (See also Holliday 1999b: 173.) Discourse plays a particularly

important role in the labelling of cultural icons within the TESOL profession, as is the case in any professional culture which depends on specialist spoken and written communication. Discourse is a mechanism for cohesion, where the group marks its territory and identity with specialist phraseology that will exclude outsiders. Hence, 'the four skills' and the other major icons of the profession are embodied in phrases and are realized in the everyday talk of ESOL educators.

These iconic phrases cluster to make up the dominant discourse. First there are key concepts of *learner-centredness*, *learner autonomy* and *authenticity and genuine language*

Associated with these are two discoursal clusters which form part of the glue that connects the key concepts:

> Accountable learning: training, needs, objectives, 'the four skills', competences
>
> Oral expression, initiation, self-direction, groups and pairs

The whole is wrapped within the overall concept of what I have called the 'standard' notion or 'weak version' of communicative language teaching (see Howatt 1984: 279, 286-7 and Sullivan 2000) which emphasizes classroom talk in small class groups which are organized to allow maximum oral interaction, which I refer to elsewhere as 'the learning group ideal' (Holliday 1994a 167-71).

By modernist I mean an adherence to the principles of efficiency and technology as though they are free of the influence of ideology and tradition. I do not wish to dwell on this discussion here; but, whereas, as 'absolute truth founded on rationality' (Usher and Edwards 1994: 24), modernism might be seen in art and design as a *liberation* from stifling ideology and tradition; as a technological movement it is often seen as a naïve disregard for the more subjective aspects of humanity – hence the postmodern critique that modernism fails to appreciate how far technology is mediated by ideology and discourse.

Modernism is thus implicit in the discoursal cluster of accountable learning which involves an emphasis on designing, measuring and planning, within which 'the four skills' plays a central role. It is also implicit in the discoursal cluster of oral expression, which derives from the primacy of the first of 'the four skills'. This corresponds with what Pennycook describes as the dominant 'phonocentric' prioritization of speech and phonology. Pennycook sees the details of this process through a modernistic 'scientific' linguistics which originates in European rationalization and standardization of language in which writing is seen as the visual representation of speech and has functional and biological priority. Pennycook however makes the point that 'these argument miss the vital point that' the emergence of writing in human development has made 'an irreversible difference to what language is' (1994: 122-3). The ideological nature of the focus on oracy is revealed by the fact that although it may represent 'thinking as normal' to

many educators from the English-speaking West, there are more literature-oriented alternatives, where 'literate English' presents 'a world of things' rather than behaviours, which can be studied critically rather than through cultural integration, and which represent 'a "written world of secondary socialization" which is not threatening to the mainly oral world of primary socialization' (Wallace 2002: 104-4, citing Halliday, and Nakata).

The link between this modernistic discourse and native-speakerism is in the way in which authenticity and 'genuine language' is associated with day-to-day talk within specific cultural settings within the English-speaking West, which in turn imply attitudes about relationships and statuses and the mastery of localized discourses. The emphasis on group behaviour, in the second discoursal cluster, implies specific cultural forms of classroom interaction, autonomy and learner behaviour. This type of approach may be valid as part of the primary socialization of young people in home state education, though there will always be issues of conflict between middle class education and the Other of working class pupils (cf. Bernstein 1971); but it can be problematic for teachers and students in other cultural settings.

As I shall demonstrate below, the real person of the student is in effect excluded from this discourse. When it is delivered by 'us' 'native speakers' to improve the language behaviour of the foreign Other of 'non-native speaker' students it is both native-speakerist, and culturist if the foreign Other is perceived as needing to be changed culturally.

The residues of audiolingualism

Small culture formation is in many ways a factory for the production of ideology. Throughout I regard native-speakerism as one of the products of the dominant culture of English-speaking-Western TESOL. In this chapter I am looking more specifically at how the more focused small culture of audiolingualism contributes to this larger process by producing key elements of native-speakerism in the form of cultural icons which have been sustained into current practice. This has involved a modernistic focus on oral language skills which have been translated into highly organized behavioural training to correct the 'culture' of the foreign Other. I do not mean to say that audiolingualism is a subculture of English-speaking-Western TESOL, but a smaller, interrelated, contributing culture.

Beginning with audiolingualism

I am using the term 'audiolingualism' to refer to basic methodological ideas which were common in the US and Britain from the 1950s until the communicative revolution in the mid 1970s. According to Howatt, 'the American audiolingual method derived from the structural approach' which 'followed the orthodox "four skills"', and 'required a considerable amount

of aural-oral drill work based on the structures selected from a graded syllabus' (1985: 225). Richards and Rogers also associate it with 'the Oral Approach, the Aural-Oral Approach' which 'advocated aural training first, then pronunciation training, followed by speaking, reading, and writing' and where 'language was identified with speech, and speech was approached through structure' (2001: 53). The notion that 'expertise in linguistics was regarded as a necessary and sufficient foundation for expertise in language teaching' and 'the applied linguistic principles on which they were based were thought to incorporate the most advanced scientific approach to language teaching' with 'a commonsense application of the idea that practice makes perfect' (Richards and Rogers 2001: 53) shows the modernistic disregard for social context. The 'behaviourist psychology' of the approach was evidenced in the way in which 'learners are viewed as organisms that can be directed by skilled training techniques to produce correct responses' and 'learners play a reactive role by responding to stimuli, and thus have little control over the content, pace, or style of learning' and respond to 'controlled tasks' in which they learn 'a new form of verbal behaviour' (2001: 62).

By tracing current icons of English-speaking-Western TESOL back to audiolingualism I do not claim to be writing a history of TESOL per se, but simply tracing one thread amongst many. I am also referring to popular practice within the 'standard' weak form of communicative language teaching, as described above, which may differ considerably from academic and theoretical developments. I base my discussion on my own ethnographic experience of working with practising teachers in 'training' programmes, and also on the qualitative studies of teacher and training cultures carried out by Anderson (2003a) and Baxter (2003), which I cite in some detail. I am also informed by Kullman's (2004) study of popular discourses of 'culture' in English-speaking-Western TESOL textbooks.

Table 3.2 plots the sustained trajectory of cultural icons from an audiolingualist origin (column A), through the paradigm changes of the early communicative revolution (column B) to the later communicative approach, in its weak version, which is merging with what has become known as 'task-based learning' (column C).

Staged learning

The oral-first preoccupation in rows 1-2 of the table has remained up to the present, and is a major influence on the way in which the student is perceived. The quality of her participation in the classroom, her share of classroom activity, and subsequently her self-esteem, is measured in terms of oral presence.

This oral-first preoccupation has also had another important impact on the ordering of the way in which language should be taught and subsequently the

Table 3.2: The sustainability of icons

↘ = growing out of above concept

	[A] Audiolingualism	[B] Early communicative approach	[B] Later communicative approach (weak version)
1	oral first	⇨⇨	⇨⇨
2	↘ mastery of pre-scribed oracy	⇨ oracy as evidence of participation	Precise oral tasks
3	↘ 4 skills	⇨⇨	⇨⇨
4	↘ structures	⇨ with functions, notions, concepts	⇨⇨
5	↘ lock-step		
6	↘ PPP	⇨⇨	With ARC etc
7	↘ realia	⇨ magazine pictures	Video
8	↘ eliciting	⇨⇨	⇨⇨
		↘ learner training	⇨⇨
		↘ learner-centredness (equal share of prescribed oral interaction)	Learner choice, autonomy
		↘ groups and pairs	⇨⇨
		↘ reduce TTT	⇨⇨
9	↘ U-shape	⇨⇨	⇨⇨

political makeup of the classroom. In rows 3-6, there is an overall picture of staged learning. The tight behaviourist sequencing required that (1) the students should listen, *then* (2) speak what they have heard, *then* (3) read what they have heard and spoken, and only *then* (4) write what they have heard, spoken and read. Hence 'the four skills' were bound irrevocably into the deep fabric of the lesson; and although this tight sequencing has not survived, the concept has remained as a basic cultural icon. Although 'the four skills' are no longer taught in tight sequence, the primacy of oral tasks over reading and writing has been sustained into current task-based learning.

The sequenced building of 'the four skills' through behaviouristically mastered structures, which should be demonstrated rather than explained, led to the need for a 'lock-step' in audiolingualism (row 5). Lock-step occurs when one action is placed in precise sequential relation to another, so that no step can be taken without being prepared for by the previous step, and each step primarily prepares for the next. 'PPP' became the means where by the lesson could be organized to enable teachers to 'present' each new structure orally, so that the students could listen and then speak, allow the students to 'practice' what they had heard and spoken, and then enter into a slightly freer 'production' stage. Although 'PPP' has lost much of its rigour as

behaviourism has been left behind, it still remains as an essential part of the discourse (row 6); and although there are now alternative ways of ordering lessons, the sustained emphasis on the precise 'stages' of teaching remains. This is evident in what I see as a typical classroom sequence of the 'weak version' of communicative language teaching, which runs as follows:

> (1) The teacher introduces present simple (language structure) – describing habits (language function/notion) – leisure (topic). (2) The teacher then asks students about leisure habits. (3) The students then work on information gap activity in pairs – A has list of likes and dislikes, B has questions. (3) The students then read and discuss descriptions of other people's leisure habits in groups.

Although there is not the same control, as there was in the audiolingual lesson, of how 'the four skills' are sequenced, there remains a recognizable staging from the simple to the more complex.

Anderson notes in his ethnographic study of British university language centre, that 'all the lessons had a similar structure' and which comprised 'a number of *stages* … a linear structure of teaching one area and then moving onto another'. He also recognized how normal this staging was within his own training and practice as a teacher. These stages were so deeply embedded that, without thinking, he 'also used *stages* as an organizing device for writing the classroom observation notes' (2003a: 162, his italics). Indeed:

> In writing the observation notes in this form, I was reproducing a structure from the mainstream discourse; a means of planning and enacting lessons that was not only being reproduced by myself in my notes, but also by the teachers in their practices as well as their own constructions of lessons. (2003a: 162, his italics)

As is the case with many private language schools in Britain, Anderson found that the stages were often very much realized in terms of PPP in that 'the teaching day could be conceptualized as the paradigm writ large with the Language Focus lessons equating with *presentation* and *practice*, while Skills Focus lessons and Options generally equating with *production*' (2003a: 181 his italics). Indeed, PPP seemed to be regarded as an original or 'classic' ideal:

> This 'classic' of 'real TEFL' was not, in the teachers' construction of teaching, a model that was slavishly followed. Rather it was something that was generally implicitly referred to that seemed to function as a template which guided their construction of teaching in terms of seeing the necessity of presenting language and then practicing it in controlled and then freer conditions. (2003a: 213)

Baxter, in her qualitative study of three British certificate and diploma training programmes, also found that PPP was given a special status. This can be seen in the following observation of a training session where:

> a tutor was asked by a participant if it was necessary to do a PPP ... lesson when their teaching practice was observed and assessed. … The tutor thought this was worth addressing to the whole class, and reiterated the question to everyone. She then answered that yes, they should so this type of lesson. Roughly paraphrased, her answer was 'you might never do it again, but you have to show you can do it. We all do it when we're inspected. It might sound prescriptive, but ... at least 2 out of 3 lessons should be PPP. Basically what we're looking for is a straight, structured PPP lesson' (2003: 109)

What we need to do for the 'natives'

The culturist, native-speakerist element in lesson staging can be seen in two cases in Anderson's data, where PPP was referred to by teachers as being particularly important for 'the lower levels' and 'particularly suitable for "Asian" students' (2003a: 181, 213). This implied that PPP had a simplicity which would be easier to follow by 'non-native speaker' students from certain 'other cultures' and 'lower' abilities. I may be reading too much into this to see a culturist, patronizing attitude in providing PPP for people who 'would not be able to cope with something more complex'. This is however an attitude that was evident in audiolingualism. Behaviourism required that the 'non-native speaker' students should only experience what they had to master. Therefore, the teacher's only form of transmission was through demonstration of the precise and specific structure of the day. This encouraged a view that the content of lessons should be tightly limited to what students could master, and the need to define cautiously what they could master, which has been sustained into current practice. As well as leading to a broad underestimation of what people can do, it has fuelled discriminatory notions that people from certain 'cultures' can only do certain things, and generally paved the way for cultural training at the expense of education. It has also influenced an extreme short-termism, where the outcomes of learning should be seen in the same lesson as the inputs, which has been sustained in many aspects of TESOL today, especially in lesson planning and observation in training.

Without any recourse to the mother tongue or explanation, the use of 'realia' was symbolic of the whole audiolingual approach (row 7). 'Realia' were the objects and visual aids used to exemplify the meanings and concepts of language. They were thus the basic stimuli to guide the students' adoption of new behaviour. I can see a parallel here with the trinkets offered by Western explorers to the 'natives' of a foreign shore where there was

thought to be no shared civilization. The institutionalization of their use removed the need to use anything but the target language and further supported the notion of 'native speaker' teacher supremacy – as 'nobody' but a teacher who did not possess the mother tongue of her students could really understand what it was like to 'find ingenious ways' to transmit the essence of the lesson without being able simply to explain in the mother tongue of the students.

Although the audiolingual intensity of realia is no longer necessary, both with more liberal attitudes to explanation and the use of the mother tongue, and the fact that fewer and fewer students begin with no English at all, the realia paradigm has been sustained through continued attention to visual aids. The British Council training film, *Using Magazine Pictures in The Language Classroom*, brought out in 1977 when audiolingualism was well on its way out in English-speaking-Western institutions, marked a major development in the perception of what teachers should be spending their time on – cutting and pasting pictures onto pieces of card to use as visual stimuli in the classroom. Although extremely practical and effective in certain teaching contexts, this image served to emphasize the teacher's role as a non-academic - further supporting the modernist ethos of common sense technology.

Along with the technology of realia comes the technology of eliciting (row 8 in the table). In the audiolingual classroom it was not possible to have a 'normal' exchange with a student within the lock-step network. Instead of asking students something, responses (in the precise target structure of the moment) had to be *elicited* by means of realia or other 'prompts' and a great deal of sign language (pointing, beckoning, directing and so on). Again, although less necessary in the more authentically communicative classroom, this has been sustained to some degree in English-speaking-Western teacher behaviour. The image of the gesticulating teacher, using exaggerated arm and hand movements to signal 'please speak now', 'come on, say ...', 'repeat after ...', 'you can do it', as well as to sign difficult words and concepts, has survived the fads of lockstep. I feel there are parallels here with the raised, slowed voices of the unskilled 'talk with foreigners' one finds outside the classroom. An example of the severity of this rigorous discipline was that:

> To teach a 'successful' lesson for my Royal Society of Arts examination in 1974, my ability to nurture and 'elicit' correct structures amongst my students should be demonstrated by none of my students saying anything outside my lesson plan, and saying nothing incorrect. I conducted them like an orchestra. Good lessons had definite, unbroken rhythms; and good teachers had what one of my colleagues called 'razzmatazz' – the ability to move like a tap dancer with a bag of tricks of 'realia' to keep the lesson going at seamless pace.

Corrective training

The residues of elicitation can also be seen in a range of more recent classroom practice. The notion of 'learner-training' must have its roots in the need to train one's students, as the members of an orchestra, to respond precisely and instantly to the signs and symbols within the elicitation repertoire of the audiolingual teacher. Pace was an important marker of quality in the audiolingual lesson; and 'good' students could not be seen to be hesitant in producing the exactly right structural fragment at the exactly right time. The notion common in a more recent TESOL culture, of students 'knowing how to respond', or 'being responsive', or 'being active' in the lesson which is 'going well', is I think deeply rooted in the audiolingual past. The idea of learner-centredness came after, and in reaction to, the teacher-led lockstep of audiolingualism. However, the version of learner-centredness which one finds in TESOL, which is based on equal share of classroom talk (e.g. Long and Porter 1989), is not so distant from the principles of the audiolingual classroom in which student talk was managed skilfully by the teacher to be rapidly and strategically distributed across the classroom, as I shall show in chapter 4. This preoccupation with the *distribution* of talk continues to be the hallmark of English-speaking-Western TESOL through the equally skilful management of students in controlled groups and pairs. The reduction of 'TTT' (teacher talking time) may have the semblance of a democratic break from behaviourism; but it is in effect part of the same régime of control.

Whereas in the audiolingual classroom the sources of control are very clear and resemble Foucault's description of corrective training, with a clear discipline and hierarchy (2001: 170), in the later communicative classroom, the forces, the icons and the discourse of control have become so normalized by time and apparent change that they have gone underground. But a high level of control nevertheless remains in a more subtle form, as described by Anderson. On the one hand the signs are very obvious:

> The teachers controlled the lesson structure, content, the way the tasks were taught, when each task was taught, the classroom interaction for each task, as well as the teaching materials used: the *what*, *how*, when and *with whom* of the teaching. This was clearly in evidence in the task set part of the stages where the instructions explicitly stated the *what*, *how*, when and *with whom* ..., but it was also implicit to every other part of a stage. (2003a: 201)

On the other hand, the signs of control are hidden beneath an apparent democracy:

> Even when students were asked to form groups of their own volition, it was the teacher who decided that they should work in groups in the first place. Even during task feedbacks when the teachers did not nominate

> which student should give an answer, it was the teacher who decided that there should be an oral feedback. ... There was never a point when the teachers were not in control. Even at those times when the teacher left the classroom, the students stayed on task .... To call the classroom an example of the *panopticon* is by no means a theoretical stretching of the imagination as every aspect of the students learning was under the monitoring gaze of the teacher .... This was helped by the small class size and the horseshoe shape desk arrangement. (2003a: 201)

The notion of the panopticon as described by Foucault is an ambivalent concept because whereas it represents a system, whether penal, military or educational, which provides maximum scrutiny of behaviour to ensure conformity, there is an apparent liberation – 'no more bars, no more chains, no more heavy locks', and:

> It automatizes and disindividualizes power. Power has its principal not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up. ... There is a machinery that assures dissymmetry, disequilibrium, difference. Consequently it does not matter who exercises power. Any individual, taken almost at random, can operate the machine. (Foucault 1991: 202)

This shift from a more obvious to a more subtle form of control is mirrored in teacher training. When I was trained as an audiolingual teacher it was a very simple matter. Audiolingualism was a method with a set series of steps – a razzmatazz which could almost be learned like a dance. The training of the late communicative teacher is far more subtle and indeed riddled with mysteries, as any diploma student who tries to write an essay on the meaning of 'communicative' and finds many conflicting definitions will know. Thus, the simplicity of PPP, as described above, represents a professional arcadia.

Training in corrective training

The depth of the ethos of corrective training in English-speaking-Western TESOL is illustrated in the way in which the training of students is reproduced and mirrored in the training of teachers. Baxter demonstrates this in her observation of the 'loop input' principle whereby the teacher trainer 'employs the same methods she is trying to inculcate in the trainees to teach them' and 'many strategies used' were 'taken directly from the language classroom' (2003: 118). Whereas on the one hand the training sessions mirror how language teaching should be done, on the other hand, in the other direction, the student teachers are treated in the same way, to the same sort of corrective training as the language learners. One of the student

teachers attests to the subtlety of this approach, in which 'We're sort of encouraged to notice' things that have not 'been explicitly said' (Baxter 2003: 119, citing interview). Baxter maintains that the transfer of a pedagogic method from language teaching to teacher training is less to do with language teaching per se than with a reduction of the process of learning to simplified 'discrete tasks which need to be mastered in the same way as language skills', reminiscent of the staging and simplistic PPP referred to above (2003: 120). Some of the student teachers in the study do express some frustration however. One complains about the way in which elicitation is replicated into the training session:

> 'Teachers come in and they try to get from us all this information that we're not quite sure what the aim is, and then eventually they'll tell you what the aim is, and you think, oh, right well in that case … That's what has happened a few times because its done by elicitation and you don't really know what they're trying to get out of you.' (2003: 119-8, citing interview)

She also notes that 'the questions asked by the tutors are largely closed in nature, and served to move the session along a predetermined path' (2003: 123). An example of this is where, in a certificate session:

> The tutor asked the trainees to compare reading and listening, which they had covered the day before. He elicited the answers to his questions by asking either/or questions, thus expecting a 'correct' answer. The 'correct' answer was usually obvious either by his tone of voice or by the order of the alternatives.

She then makes the more general point that 'it seems that the course so far has enabled the trainees to gain a sense of "good" practice, a set of "rules" or maxims that they've started to internalize' and that 'there is no apparent discussion of why something may or may not be "good" practice' (2003: 124). Using Edwards and Mercer's (1978: 97) distinction between ritual ('knowing how to do something') and principled ('understanding how procedures and processes work') knowledge, Baxter suggests that this 'strict generation and channelling of the participants' responses into prevailing cultural views about teaching and learning must exclude the possibility of principled knowledge' (2003: 126).

Looking to the other side of the loop, where the student teachers enter the practice classroom, the ritualistic element of lockstep can be seen where the language learners 'almost take over the organization of the lesson' without the trainee teacher realizing, and 'find their way through the lesson in spite of the trainee teacher's difficulties':

> The students were instructed to find someone with the opposite paper, but mostly misunderstood and exchanged papers instead of starting the

> information gap exercise. The [language] students appeared undisturbed by the confusion and continued with the task as they had modified it. They also apparently solved the problem of odd numbers themselves by forming a three, although the participant [trainee] had had nothing to do with this.
>
> The final phase of the lesson involved individual students coming to the board to write example sentences. This became quite confusing for the participant [trainee], with more than one [language] student standing up – he had to keep reminding them to come one at a time. It seemed to me at that point that at moments when the trainee teacher may falter and lose control, the students who are so familiar with the system, almost take over the 'management' of the lesson – they automatically know what is going to happen, at least they may think they do. (Baxter 2003: 176)

What this may mean within the worlds of the language students, in terms of their own autonomy, will be discussed in chapter 5. The important point to be made here is that whatever is going on, as Baxter argues, 'the learners *are* socialized into the discourse of this form of professional practice, and the degree of this socialization impacts upon the success of the lesson from the trainee teacher's point of view' (2003: 176, my emphasis).

The pervasiveness of the lockstep tradition as ritual in 'modern' notions of communicative language teaching was evident in a Chinese university class which I observed where the students got on with a ritual form of group work without any evidence of it having pedagogic value (Holliday 1997a: [insert]). It must also be noted, however, that there will *always* be a ritual element in *all* classroom, which has its own intrinsic value for the cohesion and identity of all involved parties, as I observed in an Egyptian secondary school class where the students who got on with their question answering and hand raising despite the fact that the student teacher's English language seemed indecipherable (Holliday 1994a: 40).

Corrective surveillance

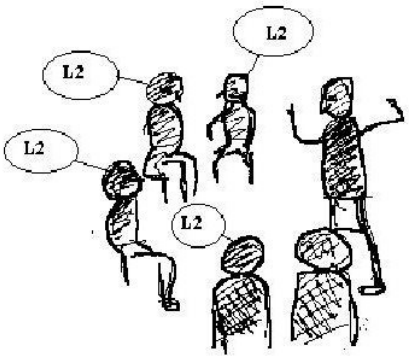
Having predetermined behaviour in what are ostensibly discovery-oriented training sessions (Baxter 2003) reveals a basic contradiction which I see inherent of the so-called communicative break from the lockstep of audiolingualism and the ambivalence of the apparently liberal but in effect deeply controlling panopticon. A major feature of the panopticon, as with earlier forms of 'corrective training', is subtly pervasive observation:

> To induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things

> that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers. (Foucault 1991: 201)

The culmination of the highly controlled classroom which remains from the audiolingual days is characterized by the U-shape of the English-speaking-Western TESOL 'learning group ideal' (row 9 in Table 3.2). The picture set by this classroom in Figure 3.2 is of course extreme. See also Holliday (1997b: 411-2). It depicts an ideal typology of a particular type of classroom culture against which a more complex and varied reality can be seen. The classroom is arranged to give maximum proximity between a standing, mobile teacher and seated students, which enables maximum potential for the teacher to monitor student behaviour and to intervene where necessary. There are the residues of the audiolingual classroom where teachers needed to get rapid face-to-face response to elicitation from individual students (the conductor and the orchestra). The 'good student' participates orally in the target language (L2); and the 'good lesson' is one in which each student has a maximum share of this participation. The result is a *high-surveillance* classroom in the sense that the teacher is on top of the students monitoring every move and utterance. Learning is thus a very visible, audible affair; and in some cases, where students sit on study chairs without a desk to shield them, even the whole person is under scrutiny, with the teacher able to engineer different directions in student interaction. Although the students do have the opportunity to interact orally and with each other in group activities, the teacher can easily remain a tall dominant figure who listens and watches from a safe but close distance.

Figure 3.2:



I saw an interesting example of this during a teaching practice session:

> The teacher had given the students a task to do in groups of three. They were clearly able to get on with this by themselves for some time. The teacher however continued to hover over them, listening to every word. During the fifteen minutes of the task he spoke to three groups about what they were doing, each time approaching them from the front, crouching over their space, with his hands on their desk and entering strongly into their conversation. When I asked him afterwards why he did not let them just get on with their work – perhaps by sitting down at his own desk and getting on with something of his own, or even leaving the room, or talking to me, so that they would have more space – he said that because I was there he presumed that I would expect to see him using every minute of the lesson to 'monitor' the students' work. He said he was worried that I would think he was 'wasting time'.

This incident says several things about the way in which the professional discourse operates. First, I did not think that I had given this student teacher the impression that he had to be standing over students monitoring them the whole time; and I was not aware that this was a message given by our own MA TESOL programme. The origins of his idea seemed to be deeper than this. First, this teacher has already been well socialized into the régime –practising in a private sector language school and already with a TESOL certificate of the type investigated in Baxter's study above.

Second, I felt at the time of my observation of the teacher above, that the professional discourse was acting against the common sense which resided within the social skills the teacher brought from his non-professional experience. He seemed to see the sense in letting his students get on with their work by themselves, and to appreciate the principle of allowing personal space. It was his notion of professionalism which told him to act otherwise. When I asked Kerry, another British teacher who had been through this training process, if there was a conflict between professionalism and common sense, she said:

> I think you may be right, although I think there are expectations about the role of the teacher that allows the teacher to 'eavesdrop' and to sometimes intervene. I believe those expectations come from the students themselves, from the teachers' peers and from the trainers. I also think they are self-validating. The only thing is that different teachers take that 'need to monitor' to varying extremes. From a personal point of view, I find it difficult not to monitor and usually feel it is necessary to keep track of what students are doing. (Email interview)

Here Kerry mentions the very important factor of student expectation, and reminds me that a significant factor in the formation of the English-speaking-Western TESOL culture in Britain is that it is largely market led and needs to respond to students as short-term paying customers – which further feeds the overall short-termism referred to above.

Seeing students as customers has infected several aspects of the English-speaking-Western professional culture, which Anderson (2003a) finds examples of in his study. One is making learning fun; another is making 'personal lives' a dominant feature in lesson content and talk; and another is simplifying the structure of each day into a well-tried separation of focus on language in the first part of the morning and focus on skills in the send half. Making personal lives central to the content of lesson content links with what Fairclough sees as a conversational discourse which is 'colonizing … public orders of discourse' (1995: 19). On one level it seems a common-sense, 'rational' improvement in that such as doctors and managers can be more effective if they talk to patients and employees in a friendly manner. However, on another level it is ideological in that it results in a 'breaking down of divisions between public and private, political society and civil society' (1995: 80). Thus, covertly disciplinary practices such as counselling, appraisal and activity based pedagogies replace 'overtly disciplinary' practices (1995: 81). This creates:

> An apparent democratization of discourse which involves the reduction of *overt* markers of power asymmetry between people of unequal institutional power – teachers and pupils, academics and students, employers / managers and workers, parents and children, doctors and patients ... not as the elimination of power asymmetry but its transformation into *covert* forms. (1995: 79, my italics)

The outcome is 'a hegemonic technique for subtly drawing aspects of people's private lives into the domain of power' (Fairclough 1995: 81). Thus 'the widespread simulation of conversation and its cultural values may lead to a crisis of sincerity and a crisis of credibility and a general cynicism, where people come to be unsure about what is genuine and what is synthetic' (1995: 106). Kullman (2004), in his study of the cultural content of ESOL textbooks, also notes how this personalizing of content, while appearing to be friendly, actually increases the degree to which texts attempt to socialize students into particular ethnocentric values.

What 'our' monitoring requires 'them' to be

One may however ask why, out of all the possibilities of customer pleasing strategies, these particular ones have been chosen. All of them give the

impression of conceding to students who are constructed as people who have to be treated as though they need to be spoon-fed with unchallenging familiarity. The residues of audiolingualism can also be seen here, where students were supposed not to 'need' to trouble their minds with difficult things like grammatical rules. The following sticks in my memory:

> I was 24 years old and beginning my career as a teacher at the British Council in Tehran. In the middle of one of my lessons, an Iranian man who must have been in his 40s or 50s stood up at the back of the classroom, apologized for interrupting in this way and asked me if I could explain the grammar underlying the language structure I was asking him to repeat. I put him down rather abruptly by saying that in '*these* classes' he did not need to think about grammar and that to do so would get in the way of his learning. I thought the request was unscientific and unnecessary, and showed the lack of understanding of 'how to learn' that I expected from Iranian students. More than this, but connected, I though his whole manner was ridiculous because he translated directly from a Farsi expression of politeness and had not even realized that this was inappropriate in English.

I was not only guilty, as the whole audiolingual movement was later realized to be, of failing to appreciate how people need to make their *own* sense of what they are learning, and cannot make learning meaningful without employing and developing their own cognitive strategies (though how far we have been successful in this understanding I shall deal with later). I was also trying to construct a 'learner' who was reduced to my own plan in such a way that I would be able to monitor him. The whole technology of elicitation demands that what the student is likely to say will fit neatly within the teacher's plan. The fear that elicitation of something that has already been anticipated may not be the case is of course the main objection that many teachers have had to more open-ended communicative teaching. That I was also not prepared to accept that students should use forms of expression that did not correspond to my perception of 'British' norms was on the one hand a lack of understanding of the potential relationships between language and culture – that it *is* possible and often appropriately rich for English to express a multiplicity of types of cultural concepts, whether they appear 'British' or not. I am putting 'British' in inverted commas here, and hedging very carefully because Britain is itself a multicultural society which contains a diversity of cultural forms of expression which are probably just as diverse as those found amongst English speakers outside Britain. My lack of preparedness is also related to the issue of monitoring, as the wider the possibility of diversity in what students do or think or say, the less easy it is to monitor against prescribed lesson norms. Thus, any culturist or even racist feelings I had towards this older Iranian gentleman (i.e. 'Iranians do not know any better') are deeply connected with the professional imperative

I carried with me, that 'if I am going to *teach* them, they need to conform to what I am prepared to teach' (and '*these* classes' are very different to anything that 'they' could imagine – a very different ball game).

Giving the ball to them to see how they get on

The 'self-validating' aspect of monitoring tasks to evaluate learning, as Kerry (op cit) puts it, is a complex matter which goes right to the centre of English-speaking-Western TESOL pedagogy. Set against my point that hovering around students while doing group work is a residue of behaviourist corrective training is the commonly understood, common-sense requirement that the teacher needs to listen to what the students say while working in groups and pairs in order to assess their language development. Anderson observes the latter interpretation in the reactions of teachers in his study:

> This [monitoring] could either take place near to or away from the students, but in either case it involved what Roger and Margaret called 'hovering in the background' .... Monitoring, for the teachers, served the diagnostic purpose of ascertaining how the students were coping with a task allowing the possibility for the teacher to implement any necessary changes during the task. However, what appeared to be the principal rationale for monitoring was to diagnose the students' ability to use the language required for a task. Teachers, therefore, often used this time to note language errors and weaknesses for later revision in feedback. (2003a: 255, citing group interview)

One of the teachers in the study describes this as follows:

> 'They're talking so you are free to go and sit, pull up a chair and sit by group and listen to them with a little notebook and a pen and then every time you…you listen to the mistakes they're actually making, make a note and then do the same with the other group and at the end put them all on the board and get them to check it.' (Anderson 2003a: 256, citing group interview)

there is an indication that something deeper is going on when the same teacher says earlier that '"sometimes if you just stop for a minute and just sit back and let them take over, you can just be monitoring and listening for a few minutes and give the ball to them so to speak and let them toss it about a bit"' (2003a: 255, citing group interview). This giving the ball to them reminds me of a comment made to me by an Indian colleague while working on the textbook project at Pune University in the mid 1990s:

> English language lecturers in the undergraduate colleges were helping us develop the new textbook by contributing texts and researching their use

> in each others' classes. I was suggesting that this would 'give ownership' of the textbook development process to the lecturers. My colleague retorted that they did not need to be 'given' ownership because they had the power to take it or leave it for themselves.

The issue of power here is complex. There are definitely situations where people do not have the power to take or leave ownership. Nevertheless, I began to realize that the giving or taking of ownership should certainly not be structured by me – or the curriculum developer, or the teacher – because 'they' have their own means of structuring the event. Thus, giving the ball to 'them' does indeed smack of teacher control not only of the lesson but also of the way in which people should learn. As with the case of my older Iranian student above it is very clear that 'the ball game' belongs to the teacher. I learnt from my Indian colleagues that the only viable aim could be to *allow* space for people to gain ownership in their own terms. The régime of monitoring affects all aspects of English-speaking-Western TESOL professionalism. Another connected area which Anderson notes is that of monitoring students to see how confident they are (2003a: 256), which connects to the issue of autonomy, which I shall deal with in chapter 4.

Control and transportable professional confidence

I have been very critical in this chapter of English-speaking-Western TESOL professionalism. We must not forget that there are many positive aspects to a system which provides modernistic answers to the difficult issue of how to teach a language to diverse people in a variety of locations. A very special factor here is that the professional régime from the onset of audiolingualism to the present is the confidence it has given to a group of educators who otherwise lack professional and academic status, as described in chapter 2. I remember not being taken seriously by my British secondary school colleagues when I told them I was going to Iran to teach English as a foreign language. They had certainly heard of such people, but saw them as escapees from the problems of the 'real classroom'. When I arrived there, rather like Lorraine in chapter 2 and Robert in this chapter, I had something powerful and dependable. I felt supremely confident that I possessed the most up-to-date, systematic method for teaching English efficiently. When the British Council branched out into the 'English for special groups' of the mid 1970s I carried my wares from the élite British Council classroom into the plush companies and banks of booming pre-revolution Iran without the slightest doubt that I would show them all something they had never seen before. There was a small army of young teachers in their twenties armed with the certainty of a knowledge of how language structures could be built. The approach was entirely methodology-centred in that students and business clients alike were expected to submit to its wisdom, as recipients of

a superior treatment. The older Iranian in my class, to whom I denied grammar, referred to earlier in this chapter, was one of many whose seniority and experience I was able to ignore. This quickly developed into the technicalization of English for specific purposes with the publication of Munby's *Communicative Syllabus Design* in 1978. The confidence was thus carried beyond the confines of audiolingualism into a wider technology of communicative needs and activities; but I hope that I have shown in this chapter that many of the bases of this technology have remained the same.

As a British teacher proud of my professionalism, it did not occur to me that I might be native-speakerist. Discussions about linguistic and cultural imperialism had not yet reached the domain of language teaching. In pre-revolution Iran, where political discussion in public was extremely dangerous, my world of language drills and structures seemed simply a matter of technical efficiency, and indeed liberating. At the first international English for specific purposes conference held in Isfahan in 1978, where Munby introduced his scientific needs analysis, the opening ceremony was held in Farsi, many thought specifically to alienate the large percentage of English-speaking-Western people in the audience and to accuse them of being imperialist. I still did not make the connection with my technical professionalism. I was the young rapporteur in Munby's session and was totally consumed with making sense of 'communication needs processor'.

Chapter 4: 'Learner-centredness' and 'autonomy'

In this chapter I will look in more detail at two of the key concepts of English-speaking Western TESOL professionalism, of learner-centredness and autonomy, which I introduced in chapter 3. I will argue that they promote native-speakerism by governing the way in which 'we' 'native speakers' both package 'them' 'non-native-speaker' students through a teacher-led process of control-construction, and try to correct their cultures to make them into more effective language learners.

Learner-centredness

Centrality of learner-centredness within the discourse of English-speaking Western TESOL is exemplified in Anderson's study of a community of British teachers:

> Learner-centredness was, for the teachers, a means to rationalize the TESOL ideal as a whole. In a sense, it was the principal driving force of the ideal. ... It can therefore be argued that the teachers' construction of learner-centredness reveals much about their construction of the TESOL ideal as a whole. (2003a: 247)

I will now proceed to explore some of the connections to which he refers.

The original ideal

Within Position 2 is an understanding that language learning is owned by the student – a realization that gave rise to the communicative break from audiolingualism and also to the rise of learner-centredness in the 1970s. However, pulling in the opposite direction, and still influenced by audiolingualism, as described in chapter 2, is the native-speakerist notion that the foreign Other of the 'non-native-speaker' student needs to be culturally as well as linguistically trained. I wish to argue that these constraining forces of native-speakerism have hijacked learner-centredness and pushed it in the opposite direction.

It is a complicated story. There is a subtle difference between the inception of learner-, student- or child-centredness in mainstream education and that of learner-centredness in TESOL, which is summarized in Table 4.3. The TESOL column is based on the seminal paper by Long and Porter (1985); and the education column is based on Stenhouse (1975: 30-33, citing Bruner, Esland and others). I have chosen these relatively early sources to try and capture original intentions. There are clearly overlaps between the two traditions. Long and Porter draw on the work of Barnes (1973: 19-20), whose concern with language spans the two disciplines. Barnes' influential dichotomy between transmission and interpretation teaching (1976:144), where the former is teacher-led formal knowledge and the latter is students discovering from interactive tasks and data, although rarely referred to in TESOL literature, must have had impact on the movement towards groups and tasks with the demise of audiolingualism. Clearly, in both TESOL and education there is a focus on group work as the place where students can enact what is at the centre of their individualism in learning, away from the immediate intervention of the teacher. Where Stenhouse states the importance of understanding learning in terms of skills and student development, I have included on the TESOL side the preoccupation with individual needs and learning styles. Although this does not usually come under the heading of learner-centredness in TESOL, the development of the needs analysis in English for specific purposes in the late 1970s is a parallel development which has become central to 'focus on the learner', now a major discoursal icon in English-speaking Western TESOL.

The basic difference between the two sides is that the TESOL approach is more psycholinguistic whereas the education approach is more sociological. Thus, the education approach is concerned with the politics of the classroom both as it relates to the distribution of power and social relations within and issues of class outside the classroom, whereas the TESOL concern is with the distribution, authenticity and management of oral participation in terms of the psycholinguistics of learning. Hence, whereas teacher-frontedness is criticized in education for its socially reductive view of the child, in TESOL it is criticized for inauthentic talk. I shall return to the conceptualization of authenticity in chapter 5. As such, learner-centredness in TESOL maintains the residues of lockstep in that it is more concerned with organizing learning for the student than with the social position of the student. It is more concerned with the liberation of language than with the liberation of the student; and in this sense, more concerned with the instrumentality of language teaching.

This characterization of learner-centredness in TESOL can be seen in Tudor's discussion of its origins. He traces learner-centred thinking to the humanistic movement which focuses on 'allocating a central place in language teaching to the subjective and personal concerns of learners, and thereby moving away from a view of language teaching in which centre

Table 4.3: Arguments for learner-centredness

	TESOL	Education
Approach	**Psycholinguistic** Derived from second language acquisition hypotheses Concerned with he distribution of oral participation in the classroom Instrumental to language learning	**Sociological** Knowledge approached as an open system and resource Concerned with the distribution of power in the classroom and the disadvantages of working class children
Critique of teachers-frontedness	Teacher-student interaction is highly conventionalised	Lack of respect shown by teachers Child seen as a deficit system, a passive instrument Grouping students for disciplinary control
What needs to be changed	Focus on student needs and individual learning styles	Clarity about skills and information to be learnt Diagnosis of individual stages of development
The value of group work	Equal share of classroom talk Increase in language practice opportunities, improving the quality of student talk Face-to-face communication between students in a relatively natural setting for conversation, where students can take on roles and adopt positions A positive affective climate in which peers can try out embryonic language skills Exploratory talk, 'talking to learn'	Capitalizing on the social psychology of small groups Sub-cultures with communication systems which take responsibility for cooperative discovery learning

stage is held by the language code rather than the messages learners wish to convey' (1996: 6). The sentiment here is laudable. However, I feel that centring on the 'messages learners wish to convey' is not the same as centring on the students themselves, especially where the messages are likely to be the products of teacher-defined classroom language tasks – hence language production rather than people. As Tudor continues to trace the development of learner-centredness through communicative language teaching, despite 'anti-authoritarian' concerns about what motivates people to learn, I feel that once again the onus is on language rather than the person of the student as the discourse collects around the nature of the 'target' language, and how the language can be organized in 'learning situations' (1996: 8-9). We then have, in the 1970s, learning strategy research into the 'behavioural and attitudinal characteristics of "good" (or successful) language learners'. However, the 'attempt to "listen" to learners and to use learners' own insights and preferences' has the purpose of informing 'learner training' (1996: 10-11), which takes us back to the corrective training born within audiolingualism.

Of course it would be too simplistic to say that this division between the psycholinguistic in TESOL and the sociological in education is always the case. The social condition of the language learner certainly featured in some of the more radical thinking in the early days of the communicative revolution, where the student was seen as a major contributor to the classroom process. Breen and Candlin state that 'we need to try to recognize what the learner knows and can do' and that we should therefore 'credit the learner with a highly relevant initial competence of communicative knowledge and abilities' rather than separating her 'from the knowledge to be learnt' (2001: 12). This tradition has now re-emerged with some strength in aspects of constructivism, which also draws its roots from the sociological concerns in education (e.g. Lantolf 2000); but I shall say more about this below.

The control-construction of skills

At the same time, it is the preoccupation with skills which education shares with TESOL which constitutes a major problem with learner-centredness on both sides. There is an irony within the education discourse of learner-centredness. On the one hand there is the genuine, democratic aim in education to allow students a greater share of sociological power in the classroom, and the teaching and learning of *skills* which implies that the content of education becomes meaningful to the needs of the student. However, with deeper analysis, various writers in education, such as Usher and Edwards (1994), following Foucault, argue that learner-centredness and skills-based education might be having the opposite effect. They suggest that the 'humanistic discourse' within which we fought against teachers

disregarding their students as unimportant interactants in the classroom, has been reified into instrumental, administrative routines in which students are reduced to lists of needs or competences which amount to less than the real person. They argue that the real body of both the students and the teacher need to be brought back into the classroom. The 1970s and 1980s brought an increased need for accountability; and a *skills*-based education lent itself well to the measurement of student progress through the achievement of discrete learning objectives. The breaking down of skills into competencies has been instrumental in this. The outcome is a *control-construction* of learner-centredness to serve the professional need to control and account for practice. By control-construction I mean the *bureaucratization* and *technicalization* of liberal democratic principles such as learner-centredness or other professional discourses so that they can be controlled and accounted for. By bureaucratization I mean the breaking up into smaller elements of a process to facilitate accountable management. By technicalization I mean the breaking up of a process into specialized elements to make professional practice appear more scientific. Taking up a similar, sociological argument, which is rare in applied linguistics, Clark and Ivanič assert that:

> 'Skills' ... suggests a set of neutral technologies or techniques that are somehow separate and separable from the social context. ... It has led to the viewing of language and language activities as consisting of discrete, apparently manageable and 'teachable' components, and so appears to facilitate teaching and learning. It implies a normative and prescriptive view of communication. (1997: 84)

The issue is not only with *skills* being a form of control, but with *students* themselves being fragmented into accountable units of bureaucratized learning. What claims to be a sensitivity to the 'learner' has become a breaking up of the student herself into discrete skills which facilitate the accountable management of learning. Usher and Edwards (1994) argue that she thus becomes a set of pre-defined, measurable competencies and skills and is thus *reduced* to a learning automaton. Thus, the 'learner' at the centre of learner-centredness is no longer a full person, but a product of measurable educational technology. This connects with the control of 'learning' through planned tasks that I have described in the ideal English-speaking Western TESOL lesson in chapter 3. See also Holliday (1997b). Usher and Edwards (1994: 50-51) see the bureaucracy of skills as part of a technical discourse of power which underlies social control in certain sectors of education, especially within British adult education (Edwards 1991, Edwards and Usher 1994) in which:

> The notion of learner is constructed within an ideological matrix which is itself a manifestation of power. ... In meeting the needs of individuals,

> therefore, we are part of 'the production of regimented, isolated and self-policing subjects' ... assisting the maintenance of inequality without force. ... Individualism fragments my identity and social experience. I become 'disciplined'. (Edwards 1991: 90, citing Dewes).

This confirms my view that the term 'learner' refers to only certain attributes of the person of the student as they are constructed in the classroom by teacher-designed events. 'Student', on the other hand, has always referred to a role in society which is inhabited by the whole person. One can carry the persona of student anywhere, from home, to the street, to complement other roles in work or leisure. The notion of 'learner' encourages a narrowness in the way in which we think about language learning – reminiscent of what Breen (2001) criticizes as naïve metaphors of the classroom as learning laboratory or discourse, which do not seem to encompass broader social events. See also Holliday (1994: 2, 14, 2001b).

Underpinning the control element of the bureaucracy of skills is the highly technical way with which education represents 'the learner'. Learner-centredness becomes part of what Fairclough (1995) calls a 'technologized discourse', which appears ideologically neutral but in fact represents the ideology of a particular professional group and of the society in which it sits, which serves the need for accountability through countable needs and objectives, skills and competencies. Hence, although we might *claim* learner-centredness, we *construct* an image of 'the learner' within our own professional discourse, which takes attention away from the person of the student, as described in chapter 3.

Bureaucratization and technicalization in practice

The conversion of the broader, humanitarian principles of learner-centredness into bureaucratized and technicalized elements within English-speaking Western TESOL can be seen in both Anderson's (2003a) and Baxter's (2003) studies of the popular discourses of teaching and training within British institutions. In both cases there is a stated claim that the teaching and training practices involved adhere to learner-centredness as a democratic ideal, whereas in practice learner-centredness seems to have become a technique within a professional culture of control. I shall cite particularly from Baxter's study quite extensively because, although a subjective study of just three training programmes in Britain, it does demonstrate in detail how, within this control-construction of learner-centredness, culturist elements of the professional discourse of English-speaking Western TESOL are built by means of a particular type of reference to 'learners' as a generalized Other, thus maintaining the foundations of native-speakerism in the reproduction of ideological practice.

Bureaucratization and technicalization can be seen to take place in these two studies in the following ways:

1. Demoting principles to specific definable activities (usually group work) (technicalization) – so that it is clear when learner-centredness is taking place and there are clear ways to define 'our' practice as different to 'theirs' (bureaucratization)
2. 'Learners' are present as pre-defined cultural types or nationalities (technicalization) – so that activities can be assessed as appropriate (bureaucratization)
3. 'Learners' are presented as cultural problems (technicalization) – so that learner-centredness can be measured as solving problems (bureaucratization)
4. Student teachers, as 'trainees', are placed in the same role as 'learners' (i.e. 'loop input') (technicalization) – for efficient professional socialization, and the replication of 'learner-centredness' in encouraging 'reflection' (bureaucratization)

In the following sections I shall exemplify these four points by summarizing some of Anderson's and Baxter's data and connecting with other experience.

Demoting principles to activities

The technicalization of learner-centredness amongst the group of teachers in Anderson's study can be seen in the way in which it was demoted to the level of a classroom activities. A perception was found amongst the teachers of learner-centredness as a type of student-student interaction located in specific classroom tasks such as group work. This corresponds with the focus on group work as the major solution in the psycholinguistic view of learner-centredness (Table 4.3); but specifying this as a particular activity enabled teachers to treat learner-centredness as something they could *do* and account for in certain parts of their lessons. Anderson found a similar treatment of 'communicative', which was characterized by the teachers not as an approach but as 'a type of oral fluency'. This meant that they could be clear that they were being 'communicative' *when* specific oral communication activities were being carried out. This specification of educational principles in activities of a particular type enabled a tight definition of what needed to happen in individual lessons to make them 'learner-centred' or 'communicative'. Anderson reports that therefore, on the whole the teachers were not only 'concerned with doing as much group work as possible' but that there 'was an emphasis on doing group work even in those tasks which seemed more designed for individual work'. Sight of the fact that learner-centredness and communicative principles might be realized in different ways in different circumstances was thus lost (an issue I shall deal with in chapter 7); and teachers in the study seemed very certain that their

particular practice was learner-centred and 'good', while the practice of teachers in 'other countries' was 'teacher-centred' and 'bad' because 'they' did not do group work and preferred 'whole class teaching'. (Anderson 2003a: 257, 88.) Learner-centredness, in the form of group work thus took on a special iconic value in professional exclusivity.

Baxter similarly observes that teacher trainers talked about 'learner centredness' as 'something the teacher does or does not do, rather than a way of viewing the classroom in a holistic sense' and that 'it relates to classroom moments and micro instances of teacher and learner behaviour' so that particular lesson can be learner-centred some of the time and teacher-centred at other times depending on the type of activity employed (2003: 177). The implication here is that the broader humanitarian principles were not really appreciated or understood, and that the classroom techniques were learnt as part of a repertoire of practice resulting from training.

'The learner' as pre-defined cultural type

There was a contradiction in the training programme between formal statements about learner-centredness and actual practice. In the documentation there was 'a strong emphasis on the learner', on '"cognitive and affective needs"', and '"sensitivity"' to language students from '"different contexts"'; and the student–teachers emphasized how it promoted 'the teacher's understanding of his or her learners' which 'was at the heart of the progression in their teaching'. Responding to students was also praised during teaching practice, especially where it caused the student teacher to deviate from her lesson plan (2003: 164). In contrast to this, the technicalization of learner-centredness meant that the student as an individual was in effect 'absent from the equation'.

The language student was depicted in the training programme as an abstracted construction for the purpose of evaluating activities:

> There is no discussion about particular learners, or even learners in particular; the activity is not linked to a context or situation. The question is simply, can it be used or not. Also, the choice about the usage lies with the teacher; the learners would have no input into the decision, they are objects in the process. ... References to learners are generalized to the extent that they strip the individual learner of any sense of identity in relation to a given language task or activity, and imply a packaged solution to any complex teaching and learning situation. This disassociation of task or activity from specific learners suggests a view that the learners are individually of little importance in the equation; rather, they occupy a role in the methodological culture. The effect of this generalization here is to imply a universality about the learner within the language classroom, and establishes a relationship between the

> methodology and the learner which is to be assumed and imposed, rather than investigated. (Baxter 2003: 167)

This impression of the student was facilitated by the fact that the student teachers rarely taught real classes in the sense that the groups the practiced with were either volunteer students or other student teachers playing the student role. This is a well-known constraint in many training programmes within a private sector context, where paying students cannot be expected to be taught by unqualified teachers. Nevertheless, the lack of discussion about students as specific individuals did not seem to be a problem, where the validity of the activities themselves seemed to have the prime importance.

Consideration of the students' needs in relation to activities was often realized as the students themselves becoming 'problems' to be solved and 'constraints to the methodology'; and when they are 'perceived to be somehow *not* fitting in … there is a sense that they must change' (2003: 176). A significant issue here was 'quiet' students, which I shall say more about in my discussion of autonomy below; but much attention was also given to students from different national 'cultures'. Here, seeing the students in the abstract led to culturist theorizing based on 'persistent perceptions about national groups and ethnicities' (2003: 179). This is exemplified in a session where:

> The trainees were asked to suggest what kind of students would have problems [with a particular reading passage] … It was stated by the trainer that the text would be problematic for Arabs as they 'wouldn't be tuned in to it', and maybe don't read much even in their own script. (Baxter 2003: 180)

Baxter noted particularly that this grossly over-generalized stereotyping was introduced and encouraged by a trainer and moreover 'appeared to pass unnoticed by the trainees'. Other examples of culturism evoked 'the notion of "disciplined Oriental" versus the "lazy Arab"', and 'sedentary' classrooms in Japan or Korea with the teacher 'up top' and 'very little communication going on' (2003: 182) which conformed with the generalized Other described in chapter 2.

This tendency to pass off learner-centredness as locating teaching methodology within the imagined nature of specific national or international groups can also be seen in mainstream literature, where the tone is nevertheless guarded and sensitive. For example, in Hedge's influential text, there is a discussion of the value of learner training for 'students who have learned passivity from their previous educational experience' and who therefore need to '"shed baggage" in breaking down their resistance', and there is a focus on 'Asian cultures' (2000: 100). She then gives an example of the effectiveness of 'tutor groups in the preparation of mainland Chinese

students for using self-access centres'. The statement that 'these students had a "deep mistrust of anything that does not involve the teacher"' (2000: 11) is thus generalized to the whole nation.

This approach to foreign cultures as methodological problem by technicalizing cultural information and becoming a basis of specialized professional knowledge has already been discussed in chapter 2, whereas in actuality we have a technical system based on a small mount of experience, prejudice and imagination:

> The biggest single influence on their imaginings is the nationality of the learners they have known; in their perception, this interaction with different national groups has provided them with the means to generalize and extrapolate to other situations, *solely* on the basis of nationality, and perceived inherent characteristics. (Baxter 2003: 183)

As with the teachers involved in describing Exian culture in chapter 2, Baxter found this knowledge base was not open to critical discussion or further investigation even though it assumed knowledge of students from diverse world locations of whom they had little or no direct experience. 'This assumed knowledge informs the basis of their pedagogical knowledge, and as this is passed on as information and part of a knowledge base' which 'may become institutionalized as part of a teacher's repertoire' (Baxter 2003: 182).

Baxter summarizes this attitude to learner-centredness, students and knowledge in the following as an 'ambivalent context, where on the one hand, learners seem to be centrally positioned, but on the other no knowledge of individual learners is required. There is a discourse of sensitivity, empathy and understanding, alongside a discourse of the learner as problematic' (2003: 184).

Trainee as 'learner'

There is also a contradiction in the way in which the student teachers themselves were treated in the training programme, which claimed to encourage 'reflective practice'. Whereas the training sessions:

> implied a sort of learner-centredness, in terms of approach and ideology, but seemed to me to be ultimately prescriptive. The trainees were given maxims, tips, without being encouraged to think of the basis of such ideas or even to think of their own, which might contradict 'the method'. (Baxter 2003: 103)

Although the teachers who take the diploma are supposed to have had two years experience, and often far more, Baxter feels that there was sufficient evidence in the three sites she investigated to conclude that not all

experience was valued and embraced if it was not seen as compatible with the discourse. Trainers were seen to use a range of teaching strategies to manoeuvre training sessions in a prescribed direction including eliminated discussion of anything but a British 'private language school model' by claiming that looking at other examples 'would make the organization' of the session harder. In one case where the issue of 'a large monolingual class' was raised it was put down as being 'marginal to the mainstream' of 'the UK' or 'in Europe' (2003: 108).

There was a tight lockstep in many of the certificate sessions which mirrored the staged sequencing of lessons in Anderson's study as described in chapter 3. this is not accidental but corresponds with an established *loop input* strategy in British TESOL training whereby trainees are socialized into the ethos of the language classroom by experiencing similar techniques, as recipients, in the training classroom. This represents a highly technicalized interpretation of learner-centredness, where the 'needs' of the trainee, as learner, to acquire the routine principles of teaching, are calculated to be best met. It represents an effective bureaucratization in that there is an accountable, measured set of strategies which can be used. This may be an extreme example, but should resonate with many people's experience of such events:

> The tutor instructed the participants to look at 1st handout for 10 seconds – she explained that it was for future reference, ideas for use in the classroom. She instructed them to put it under their notes and move to the next sheet. She referred to yesterday's discussion of question and answer techniques. She instructed them to look at the next sheet, which she held up. The participants were asked to chat to someone next to them about what they might do with it. Does it look interesting or boring? The participants read the sheet and discussed in pairs.
>
> The tutor interrupted the discussion by shouting 'Thank you – stop'. The participants were instructed to compare this with the other side of the sheet and to feel free to talk. she sat in front and watched. There was silence when she said stop and talk when she said talk. I was reminded of an orchestra-conductor situation. I think the participants sensed her desire to go quickly and there was no room for frivolous time wasting in this session. (Baxter 2003: 137)

The fact that this sequence contains the cultural icons associated deeply with English-speaking Western TESOL is evident in the way that Baxter, although critical, cannot prevent herself, as a British educator, from 'being extremely impressed by the discipline exhibited by the tutor' (2003: 138). The cultural icons of a controlling professionalism are all there. The point Baxter makes about the above extract is to do with:

> the balance of power and relative value assigned to the contribution of the various people in the situation. Throughout the tutor decides how much

> time will be spent talking about each section, and stops the discussion not when she feels it is no longer useful, but when she wishes to move to the next point. It is clear that all the power over what is worth knowing and what is worth saying lies with the tutor here. The discussions she signals take place privately, between the participants; the tutor cannot hear them and other members of the group cannot hear each other. This suggests that what is being discussed is not debatable in any public sense, but instead assumes an air of truth which is meant to be internalized by the participants rather than challenged or changed by them. … The real power relations are masked … [while] the idea is that the participants are constructing their own versions … [they are] actually being closely led by the tutor's management towards a joint, public version, which coincides with the dominant discourse of the course and the professional culture it serves. (2003: 141)

The power of initiation into the specific professional culture was also strengthened by the way in which teaching practice in the certificate was organized as 'a team performance' in which 'two or three teachers teach and the rest observe, along with the trainer', initially with ten minute teaching slots which get progressively longer. This was organized within a '"jigsaw" pattern, where the individual teaching slot is part of a bigger performance which must be co-ordinated'.

'I'm going to put you into groups'

I have had my own experience of events in which ostensibly I was invited to 'construct my own version' within the learner-centred group-work paradigm, but in effect I felt that I was being driven to a 'public version', not in a training session, but in TESOL conference presentations. In both cases I found myself at the mercy of conference presenters highly skilled in leading my thoughts in the directions they wished. The following description has been appropriately anonymized:

> The presenter punctuated what she had to say with discussion tasks. At various points we were asked to discuss a very particular issue in pairs with a guiding statement something like, *think of a case where ... and talk about it as though you are ... .* Each time, after about five minutes we were stopped and asked to relate what we had been discussing to a set of categories given to us by the presenter. There was a general air of active involvement throughout the whole process. I myself felt very focused on the issues the presenter was raising. However, suddenly, near the end, I realized that my thoughts had been guided to such an extent that I had begun to think only *within* the categories that had been presented, and had been carried along by a fairly seductive mode of involvement in the event.

See also Holliday (1997b: 411). In the same ay that Baxter found herself appreciating the skill of the tutor in the session she observed, I found myself being seduced into the warmth of the involvement that this presenter provided for me. The comment I heard another conferencee making – 'it was a good session in that he managed to elicit some good points' – was indicative of what I heard several people say about the sessions they liked, and raised again the powerful cultural icon of elicitation. Another case was a key-note plenary session with about 200 delegates present. The topic concerned reactions to change amongst language students or trainees. This time, instead I tried harder to focus on what was happening to me rather than on the content; but the following notes I took at the time show that it was hard not to be seduced. I felt myself being drawn in, and at the end I wondered if I was being trained:

> We are asked to talk to the people next to us. I might have private things I want to do in this session (like make final notes for my own presentation, or look at the programme). Then the presenter provides list of possible reactions to change - all of which seem to be inside the discourse - presuming some sort of particularly interactive classroom. There is a discourse of 'change' vs. 'opposition to change'. Then we have to do group work again. And I did find myself being gradually drawn into the discourse - mainly perhaps because of the power of the other members - really wanting to be polite and to belong - also perhaps because I wasn't really one of them and didn't want to appear the 'defensive' outsider. (One of them did say that some of the negative reactions on the list were 'defensive'.) Then the presenter 'goes through' the list of reactions and invites comment - which I suppose will all be within the discourse because of what happened in my group. She then discusses what we could do with the list - collapse it, decide which ones you do as a learner etc. etc. etc. - successful in drawing us further into the discourse. *Then* suggests follow-up for 'on the way home on the train'. *So was this really a (mind) training session*?

Edge has revealing things to say about this sort of thing. His claim that 'we have developed a culture of TESOL (which also reflexively encultures us) through which our values are expressed' (1996: 11) is right in that the dominant professional discourse I am describing is indeed a reality which I and many of my colleagues are part of. It does represent our professional and life values, which, as Edge suggests, include 'diversity', 'inquiry', 'co-operation' and 'respect' (1996: 12) – for the student, for the student teacher and for our colleagues. I however disagree with Edge when he says that:

> These values are made operational in the TESOL class every time a teachers says, 'I want you to get into groups'. Or, to put that more carefully, the strategic and contextual sensitive use of group work is the one

> way in which a teacher can communicate a respect of the diversity of learning process and learning outcome while encouraging co-operative enquiry. And it is as an expression of those underlying values that group work has emerged as such a widespread teaching technique in the realization of the TESOL culture with which I am most familiar. (1996: 13)

It is certainly true that 'these values' are *thought* to be 'made operational' with the phrase 'I want you to get into groups'. The problem is that 'the strategic and contextual sensitive use of group work' is too easily routinized and ceases to be contextually sensitive, allowing the deeper values of corrective training to come through. In my view it is the deep, unconscious desire to correct and train which underlies the fact that 'group work has emerged as such a widespread teaching technique'. This is also an example of a *'liberation' trap*, in that the Self of the teacher is trying to reconstruct the Other of the students according to her own image of how they should behave as 'democratic' people. The problem is when the means for perpetuating these values as a core of professionalism become routinized as prescriptive methods.

A technical activity régime

The examples in Baxter's study, both here and in chapter 3, show how the methodology of English-speaking Western TESOL is looped onto the methodology of teacher training for the strategic purpose of showing the student teachers how teaching should be done. At a deeper level, the corrective training element of audiolingualism, which is perpetuated through current practice, is in effect inscribed into the fabric of the training approach, not only in the mirroring of language activities, but also in the control of thinking. My example from the conference leads one to surmise that it is also inscribed into other areas of professional activity.

Important features of this TESOL régime, as rooted in the English speaking West, can be seen in this experience. The foregrounding of training activities with students playing the role of examples rather than participative individuals places them 'as receivers of and participants in the methodological process, which is ultimately concerned with the achievement of a teaching agenda'; and the 'cultural orientation within the profession towards the essentializing of learners', to enable them better to be characterized as examples 'may *begin* in the training process, or is, at least, reinforced there' (Baxter 2003: 179, my emphasis). This highly technical focus on activities enhances professional systematicity and status. One can also see that the emphasis on learner-centredness is the noticing, investigation and calculation of students' needs in order to find the most effective activities to satisfy them. However, these are *learning* needs rather than humanitarian needs, where the 'need to be taught' overrides the need to be recognized as individuals.

Broader forces of correction

The forces I have described in language teaching are only part of larger tendencies in late modern society towards the systemization and commodification of a range of social processes. Fairclough catalogues some of these, beginning with the '"social skills training"' in the late 1970s of institutional employees and inmates from 'mental patients' to 'social workers, health workers, counsellors, managers, sales people and public officials', in which:

> Large units of practice ... are assumed to be composed of sequences of smaller units which are produced through the automatic application of skills which ... can be isolated and described, and that inadequacies inn social (including discursive) practice can be overcome by training people to draw upon these skills. (1995: 103)

More recently another example of the '"policing" of discourse practices' can be found in '"staff development" and "staff appraisal"' (1995: 103), where, in some cases, 'directly employed staff and outside management consultants are being drawn into specialized institutional roles and practices, partly as discourse technologists' (1995: 104). The audiolingual approach was hardly in this institutional league, but might be seen as an early warming up towards greater professional ambition. I am also sure that the trainers in Baxter's study would be horrified if it were suggested that they were involved in the 'policing' of 'the discourse practices' of the student teachers. A significant feature of English-speaking Western TESOL certificate and diploma programmes, such as those in Baxter's study, is that the validating examination boards directly assess the participants in individual programmes both in written assignments and teaching practice. In my view, this links very well with the shifting of the policing of discourse practices 'from a local institutional level to a transinstitutional level', which Fairclough sees as part of the process of the technologization of discourse, and the 'tendency for techniques to be increasingly designed and projected as "*context free*", as usable in any relevant context' (1995: 106, my emphasis). That teaching techniques are presented as disregarding of the contextual experience which student teachers bring to training programmes, is a major criticism levelled by Baxter. It is also a basis for the technological universality claimed by English-speaking Western TESOL throughout, which I have referred to in chapter 2.

The highlighting of certain areas of knowledge over others, as demonstrated in Baxter's study, is of course natural in any aspect of social life. Usher and Edwards note that any 'discourse of competence' 'marginalizes knowledge and understanding unrelated to workplace performance' and 'education in general, and competence-based assessment in particular' will exclude 'certain forms of knowledge in order to enable the maximizing of correct performance' (1994: 105).

One may argue that teaching and training *should* manipulate and select forms of knowledge in this way if the standards of a new language or good practice are to be achieved. In the previous chapter I critiqued the way in which teachers 'police the discourse' of students as they learn the language. At one level this is entirely necessary if conscientious teachers are to be able to assess how well their students are doing. It is not so much the presence of this sort of control and surveillance that concerns me. After all, Usher and Edwards note how, within the inevitable 'dual face of education', 'incarceration, being "banged up" in classrooms, the "compulsory" of compulsory education, practices of surveillance, monitoring and control, all these go hand in hand with the creation of active and "capable" subjects within the discourse of autonomy and emancipation rooted in "nature"' (1994: 137). The problem with this is that within English-speaking Western TESOL teaching and training the knowledge which *is* selected seems to contradict the principles of reflective practice and the centring of the experience of the student or the student teacher which it claims to be its major aim. It is problematic in the way in which the students are conceptualized as people. It is the way in which control is aimed at correcting the behaviour and culture of the Othered 'non-native-speaker' students that is problematic, while at the same time *pretending* to be learner-centred.

Although 'the only form of authority seen as exempt from otherness is education' (Usher and Edwards 1994: 136), it is the unthinking, unaware way in which the Self of the native-speakerist takes on this exemption which is untenable. In different circumstances there are different types of injustice in the conceptualization of the educational Other. The essence of native-speakerism is not therefore necessarily coming out of the methodology; but on the other hand, the methodology, with its modernist views of correcting people because they are the Other, easily gives rise to native-speakerism.

Autonomy, native-speakerism and culturism

I will now turn to the second of the key concepts within the discourse of English-speaking Western TESOL which I listed in chapter 3, that of learner autonomy. Tudor (1996: 12) sees learner autonomy as a central concern within the learner-centredness movement in TESOL. He traces its discussion within language education back 20 years and to the influence of Paulo Freire and the humanistic movement's concern with 'responsibility, intellectual development and self-actualization' (1996: 17-19, citing Holec and Crabbe). Benson (2001) also relates the movement to notions of student power in the 1960s, and to the reforming influences of Rousseau, Dewey, Illich and Rogers, and also to the social constructivist tradition. Benson goes on to suggest that 'interest in learner autonomy, and in the closely related area of learner training, has moved language teaching in a learner-centred direction in three main ways'. He lists these as: (a) recognition of 'the central role that learners

can should play in the management of their language study' (b) 'the development of pedagogical procedures whereby learners can be helped to become full and active participants in rather than more or less passive recipients of language teaching', which has led in particular to the development of self-access centres, and (c) focus on 'learning processes in addition to learning products' and 'learners' interaction with various aspects of language study', which has drawn attention to 'learners' subjective needs' and 'the interaction between learners' cultural background and expectations' (1996: 20).

My issue with autonomy in TESOL is not with the principles of freedom and self-actualization, but with the way in which these principles are translated into an 'us'-'them' discourse within native-speakerism, whereby the attention to 'learners' subjective needs' and 'the interaction between learners' cultural background and expectations' becomes implicated with a culturist vision of the foreign Other. Like learner-centredness, with which it is closely associated, I wish to argue that within native-speakerism the original humanistic ideals of autonomy have been control-constructed into an 'us'-'them' paradigm of corrective training.

I will structure my discussion around descriptions of two different approaches to autonomy: the dominant, popular, native-speakerist approach A; and the critical linguistics approach B which is shall argue opposes native-speakerism but is still culturist.

The control-construction of humanistic principles

Approach A can be linked to Smith's reference to a 'weak version of autonomy' which refers to 'a capacity which students currently lack (and so need "training" towards)' and is identified with 'a mode of learning which students need to be prepared for' (2003: 130). As with my treatment of learner-centredness, I must stress that I am looking here at how 'autonomy' is perceived as a cultural icon within the dominant popular discourse of English-speaking Western TESOL, and not at how it may be conceptualized in more academic circles.

Approach A contains the contradictions of the control-constructed, skills-based, learner-centredness described earlier in that it falls into the trap of conceptualizing what is good for the 'learner' in the terms of the language learning activities which the *teacher* constructs. It is this approach which I believe Benson labels as consumerist (2001: 20). He equates this with Pennycook's statement that 'political' questions about the broader principles of autonomy as student rights has thus been transformed into a 'psychological' concern about how to develop strategies for 'learner autonomy' (1997: 41). See also Holliday (1999b).

Approach A thus suits the objectives of professionalism through which teachers can be trained to deliver 'learner training', and which gives birth to a wide range of 'how-to-do-it' literature (e.g. Nunan 1977). It is

native-speakerist in that it also encourages teachers to be crusaders in their quest to *change* their students into 'better' thinkers and 'learners'. It is deeply culturist in its vision of a superior 'native-speaker' culture, and leads many ESOL educators to despair at the unsolvable problem of not being able to teach in the way they wish because their students from 'cultures' outside the English speaking West 'refuse', or are 'unable' to comply. Moreover, this desire for ESOL educators to construct the autonomy of students on their behalf is deeply flawed. To use the analogy of sexism, it is like men deciding how the freedom of women should be structured. It *is* possible for educators to be learner-centred, in the same way as it is possible for men to be feminist; but this requires a particularly difficult depth of reconceptualization which cannot be captured in technicalized methodological procedures.

The autonomous Self and the foreign Other

Approach A thus problematizes 'non-native-speakers' from 'other cultures' and promotes the Self of the teacher as unproblematic; and students are considered autonomous when they behave in ways which conform to an image of the 'native speaker' and her culture. Usher and Edwards make the point that autonomy is freedom from 'dependence on anything that is external or other to oneself, that is, in effect, unnatural or "other" to reason'. Within English-speaking Western TESOL, which is so much in contact with the foreign Other, the Other to autonomy has become the generalized, essentialized cultures of 'non-native-speaker' students, and, as I shall argue in chapter 6, also of 'non-native-speaker' colleagues. This particular type of Self and Other opposition can be seen in this statement from *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, which might be considered the standard text on TESOL pedagogy:

> However good a teacher may be, students will never learn a language – or anything else – unless they aim to learn outside as well as during class time. ... To compensate for the limits of classroom time and to counter the passivity that is an enemy of true learning, students need to develop their own learning strategies, so that as far as possible they become autonomous learners. This does not always happen automatically. Attitudes to self-directed learning are frequently conditioned by the educational culture in which students have studied or are studying ...; autonomy of action is not always considered a desirable characteristic in such contexts. (Harmer 2001: 335)

See also Holliday (2003, 1997b). There are several elements here which are problematic. 'Passivity' is placed in unquestionable opposition to 'autonomous learners' and 'true learning'. Then, 'educational cultures' or

'contexts' are cited as conditioning influences *against* (i.e. not *for*) the 'desirability' of 'autonomy of action'. The implication is thus that 'educational cultures' or 'contexts', negatively influence students who are presumed not to have autonomy, whereas language learning is located in a place which is unhindered by these problems, and where students' autonomy can be 'developed' through 'learning strategies'. As within the broader discourse of English-speaking Western TESOL discussed in chapter 3, the educational origin of 'foreign', 'non-native' students, who come from these Other 'educational cultures' or 'contexts', is seen as problematic and Other to the educational origin of TESOL and the unproblematic Self of the 'native speaker' teacher.

This opposition between passivity and autonomy is common within the dominant discourse of TESOL, where 'passivity' means not talking and being 'active' corresponds with 'liveliness' and the 'phonocentric' prioritization of speech discussed in chapter 3. Passivity is also a central to the pantheon of phraseology of the native-speakerist generalized Other as described in Table 2.1 and is thus more a negative reflection of the 'native speaker' Self than an attribute of individual 'non-native speaker cultures'.

Despite my criticism, however, this native-speakerist discourse about passivity is deeply embedded in my own professional development. When I worked as a curriculum consultant in Egypt and Syria in the 1980s I did not question the British Council agenda, and indeed that of some of my Egyptian colleagues, that what had to be changed was the 'passivity' of students in 'local' university language classes. There was a very strong feeling at the time that 'passive' students (i.e. not speaking, only listening) lacked the autonomy to learn effectively. I always therefore assumed that the best classes were the ones where the students were orally 'active', and that the less successful classes were the ones where the students were 'quieter and less active' (Holliday 1994a: 83). And one may wonder exactly what the issue is here, as the truth of what Harmer says may seem self-evident, especially to those teachers who have struggled with non-forthcoming language students from different parts of the world.

An aggressive discourse

Palfreyman's (2001) qualitative study of a Turkish university language centre reveals how discourses of autonomy can be at the centre of 'us'-'them' conflicts; and his (2003a, 2003b) papers focus on this aspect of the larger study. Each of the groups in the study – English-speaking Western and Turkish teachers and Turkish students – have very different views about what autonomy comprises, but the ways in which these are expressed are characterized by uneven forms of cultural Othering which contains elements of the culturist generalized Other. Interview accounts 'often made reference to "Turkish culture" and "traditional ways". Interestingly, 'Western' culture was rarely mentioned by the informants as such: the situation is rather seen in terms of "rational", "professional" (i.e. natural) norms on the one hand, and "traditional", "Turkish" ones on the other. One of the interviewees

expressed an expectation that the students should 'be "like American students", whom he sees as "needing less spoonfeeding"'; and there seemed to be a general feeling that 'TESOL' is in fact very different to what the Turkish lecturers do in that '"TESOL" values are identified with positively evaluated values such as learner autonomy, and all the "Turkish" ones are assumed to be against it'. Palfreyman makes an interesting link between these divisions and the politics of the institution, which is managed largely by English-speaking Western TESOL expatriates, where 'the "Othering" of Turkish students and teachers by "Western"-influenced discourses' is 'linked to institution-wide strategies of control, as well as to wider professional discourses of management'. This othering of takes three forms – 'institutional Other' of Turkish administrators vs. expatriate teachers, the 'historical Other' of 'traditional' Turks vs. 'modern' expatriates, and the 'ethnic other' of 'Turkish' vs. 'Western' (Palfreyman 2003a)

Autonomy and cultural exclusion

Approach B is born from critical linguistics in that it recognizes the political side of autonomy and the changing ownership of English which confirms the untenability of native-speakerism. In this sense it appreciates the imperatives of Position 2; but I shall argue that it misses the mark. It rejects native-speakerism *but is still culturist* in the way in which it categorizes Other cultures as being so different that they should not be *expected* to play the same autonomy game as 'us'. Kubota in effect critiques approach B in her reference to Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) and Atkinson (1997). Atkinson states an opposition between critical thinking and 'many cultures' which 'endorse modes of thought and education that almost diametrically oppose it' (1997: 72), which resonates with that between autonomy and other cultures in Harmer (op cit). There is also a hint of native-speakerism in Atkinson's labelling of the people who come from these 'non-Western cultural groups' as 'non-native thinkers' (1997: 79). See also Benesch's (1999) excellent account of this discussion. This is however different to approach A in that it is suggested that language educators need to be wary of imposing the 'individualism, self expression and using language as a tool for learning' which are 'deeply implicated in critical thought', which may 'marginalize' rather than improve the learning of language students (1997: 89). Approach B is nevertheless culturist in that autonomy is similarly seen a Western phenomenon which 'we' (from the English speaking West) should not therefore expect 'non-native' students to adopt *because* of their cultural origin.

As with the critical linguistics movement, social constructivist approaches to TESOL, despite their advocation of student power (Benson op cit) also seem to me to sometimes fall within both approaches A and B to autonomy. The psychological side of constructivism veers to the instrumentality of corrective training. I have to pause and think when considering how Lantolf (2000) in several places talks about how 'some cultures' think about things

in different ways to other cultures, and how carefully constructed education can somehow liberate people from these restrictions. There is a tendency to talk about *developing* people to enable them to take on cultural behaviour that they were not born into; and in one instance the measure of success is where 'Uzbeks who had spent a year or two in school had no difficulty' doing things as well as 'most educated Westerners would' (2000: 5, citing Luria). There may here be an unfortunate parallel with the development of young children from which some of this thinking springs – with the implication that the 'culturally bound' are more childlike – much in the same way as students in the audiolingual classroom take on a childlike role of needing to have their behaviour cared for and changed.

Sullivan takes a more critical, approach B to autonomy in that she recognizes the ethnocentricity of a dominant methodology of which 'is associated with an Anglo-Saxon view of communication (2000: 115, citing Pennycook). However, by attempting to pin down aspects of Vietnamese culture she falls into the culturist trap of constructing the students deterministically as a generalized Other (see Table 1.2). 'Dependency' and 'hierarchy' in association with Confucianism are thus polarized against the 'independence', 'freedom', 'privacy', 'choice' and 'equality' of the Self of 'quintessential American values', which, as in Edge (op cit), are associated with group and pair work. She then explains how the latter can be nurtured by means of play (2000: 118-9) and sails close to a culturally corrective approach A.

Not able to be individualist

In approach B native-speakerist cultural correction is felt to be unjust on the grounds that all 'cultures' are equal. There does however seem to be a contradiction here in that students from some 'cultures' are *excluded* from the educational treatment given to students from other 'cultures', and therefore treated divisively. There is a complex dilemma here which is expressed in Pennycook (1997). He rightly advocates that students from Other places should find 'cultural alternatives' to Western constructions of autonomy, perhaps with non-native-speakerist forms which allow for 'silent, unobserved resistance', and for *choosing* to be taught in a 'teacherly way' (1997: 43). However, at the same time he seems to fall into a cultural relativist trap of *expecting*, on the basis of essentialist descriptions of cultural difference, that students who do not come from the West cannot participate in a 'concept of individual autonomy' (1997: 36), and that somehow, silent resistance is not individual. There is therefore a sense in approach B of 'us' 'native-speakers' denying 'them' (from Other cultures) 'our' imagination of autonomy according to 'our' imagination of 'them'. Benson (2001: 56-57) argues that this cultural relativist view of autonomy in which 'cultural traits are fixed' is 'inimical to the idea of autonomy, which implies that learning should be a process in which individuals contribute to the transformation of culture'.

Jones' (1995) account of setting up a university self access centre in Cambodia is another example of approach B. He is culturally relativist in his statement that 'the concept of autonomy in laden with cultural values, particularly those of the West' (1995: 228). He then recites the doctrine of the native-speakerist generalized Other when he says that that it is inappropriate to expect 'full autonomy', not only of Cambodians, who he says are 'dependent and authority-oriented', but of people from 'many countries between Morocco and Japan' who find it difficult to accept 'the individual responsibility and freedom' derived from 'Western values' (1995: 229). He therefore sets up the self access centre to allow group as well as individual work; and although he observes that the students manage this very well, with 'as often as not eight students at a time gather[ing] around a listening post in order to do an exercise together' or consulting newspapers in the reading corner (1995: 231), his overall conclusion is that their preference to work collaboratively erodes the ideal of 'individual autonomy'. It needs to be noted, however, that Jones (1995) is an old paper; and I apologise to the author who has surely now moved on from the position he expresses there. I am using his paper because it is a good example of a trend which I feel is still prevalent. In my view there is every evidence that the students in Jones' study *are* being autonomous, but in a way of their own which they have brought with them, with which they inhabit the space provided by the self-access centre. That Jones does not see this as 'full' or 'real' autonomy may be to do with his preoccupation with the existing professional discourse, which he cites in some detail, which prescribes for him what autonomy is and which people from which 'cultures' can fulfil this.

Hedge seems to take a middle position between approach A and approach B. On the one hand she recognises a cultural bias in 'more self-directed learning' which has 'originated in western cultures' and does not 'fit with eastern philosophies'. At the same time she expresses a definite need to bring 'Asian students' round; but considers that it might be useful to employ the help of 'Asian teachers' who have studied in the West 'to mediate between cultures to find a way forward' (2000: 100-1).

The need to see beyond the ideology

In this chapter I have looked at how the apparently liberating notions of learner-centredness and autonomy can be control-constructed within TESOL professionalism, and as such contribute in a major way to the othering of 'native-speaker' students within a culturist native-speakerism. This does not mean that the liberating ideals of learner-centredness and autonomy cannot be recovered; but this requires breaking out of the divisive confines of native-speakerism and looking beyond – which will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Social autonomy and authenticity

This chapter continues the discussion of autonomy from chapter 4 and considers a Position 2 reform to native-speakerist thinking. Social autonomy will be presented as something which students bring with them from their own worlds outside the classroom, but which ESOL educators often fail to see because of their preoccupation with their own professionalism. I also demonstrate that social autonomy implies a different view of authenticity, where what is authentic to the student resides in the same social world from which autonomy springs. Social autonomy is a Position 2 notion in that it places people, regardless of their origin, equally within the domain of being autonomous. It can be linked with Smith's 'strong version of autonomy', which is 'based on the assumption that students are, to a greater or lesser degrees, already autonomous, and already capable of exercising this capacity' (2003: 131). It is 'a way of being in the world: a position from which to engage with the world', and 'is not an ability that has to be learnt' but 'a way of being that has to *be discovered*' (Breen and Mann 1997: 134, my emphasis). It has to be found, rather than created, in the classroom. It is a quality which goes far beyond the classroom into the fabric of behaviour which exists in all societies. This universality is suggested by Benson's definition:

> To me *autonomy* is about people taking more control over their lives - individually and collectively. Autonomy in *learning* is about people taking more control over their learning in classrooms and outside them and autonomy in language learning about people taking more control over the purposes for which they learn languages and the ways in which they learn them. (2004, his emphasis)

The inclusion of 'collectively' removes the insinuation of individuality as an divisive factor between East and West.

Hidden realities

I will argue that régime of any classroom which is organized along teacherly lines can become a *barrier* to seeing this sort of autonomy. (See also Holliday 2001a: 171.) Social autonomy may be actually either *hidden* by classroom

activities or by what teachers believe these activities ought to be. There are many aspects of social autonomy which could, and are being usefully explored. One such is students themselves discovering aspects of their own autonomy and learning how to engage with it in language learning – and of the very important teacher role in helping them in this enterprise. However, because of my overall concern with the struggles that collect around the culturist ideology of native-speakerism, I will confine myself to looking at examples of how social autonomy is manifested as hidden, private, or subversive within this struggle.

It is important to make the point here that it is not just the native-speakerist learning group ideal which can hide or repress social autonomy, but any teacher-dominated setting where the realities of students go unnoticed. While it is certainly the case that when going into classrooms in many parts of the world, students will *appear* to be lacking in autonomy, it is false logic to assume that their outward behaviour in these particular institutional settings reflects their internalized perceptions and abilities.

Let us consider this argument presented by Aliya, that the degree to which students employ autonomy can be connected with their personal or cultural circumstances. She explains that her experience teaching at a private university in Pakistan told her that:

> Students there come as two distinct sets – the 'aware' students from rich families, and the students from rural areas. The students from cities, and who belong to well-off families, are autonomous; on some occasions I have even seen them argue with their instructors and even go so far as to consult the Student Handbook if it wasn't the week for assignment and the teacher was giving them one. This kind of behaviour, assertiveness and independency is unheard of in other institutions in Pakistan and is even frowned upon. These [affluent] students take responsibility for their own learning, are regular at tutorials and consultation sessions and offer a lot of input in class.
>
> Their mirror images are the 'rural' students. Most of them have studied sitting on uncarpeted floors in village schools repeating short utterances after the school teacher. Almost all of these (girl) students come to class ... never looking up at the teacher as a sign to show respect. They don't respond in the class because to them answering a teacher is a sign of disrespect. They always end up with problems that they don't want to share because their 'cloistered virtue' does not permit it. Such students have to be taught to be autonomous. (Email interview)

There is a potentially essentialist presumption here that a particular social group will have problems with autonomy because of previous schooling experience and expectations. This may or may not be the case; but one needs to be wary of presuming that because autonomy is not *displayed* in a current

educational context, in classrooms, or indeed other settings which politically disadvantage them, that it may not be present under the surface or in other social domains away from the gaze of the teacher either privately or in other settings where they can think or behave in their own terms. Whether or not students will *show* autonomous behaviour to their teachers is of course their decision, which is in itself a matter of personal autonomy. Part of the key to this issue of the observability of autonomy might be in this account by Karen of teaching a Pakistani immigrant in a UK secondary school. She begins by noting that this case represents a more general state of affairs in which 'much teaching is based on the premise of not trying to or being unable to take account of what the pupils bring with them in terms of learning styles and strategies'. She continues to explain that the pupil:

> had arrived in the UK a year before from Pakistan where he had been educated. He used strategies to aid his learning which had not been taught in the UK school and which would not be taught in UK schools as they are/were currently unfashionable (I think!). The strategy was learning something by rote. The pupil was also attending a school run by his local mosque to learn to read/recite the Koran – again rote learning was the technique used so this pupil was receiving a lot of 'out of mainstream school' influence on his learning style. (Email interview)

It thus became apparent that the pupil's choice of learning style was in itself autonomous even though it would not be 'seen' as autonomous within the dominant educational ideology.

A critical reader may feel that in universalizing social autonomy I am denying the cultural preferences of people outside the English-speaking West and imposing a Western ideal – thus contradicting myself. The point I wish to make is that I simply do not believe that the English-speaking West has a monopoly on the characteristics of individualism, critical thinking etc, and that it is mistaken to assume that they do not exist in other societies, especially as most of the evidence that they do is based on essentialized culturist descriptions. It is not therefore a matter of *imposing* Western norms, but of *appreciating* that what 'we' might think are Western norms can in fact be found everywhere, though perhaps in forms which 'we' do not easily recognize. Understanding this is the key to understanding that the often stated characteristics of the generalized Other listed in chapter 2 are a doctrine of the Self rather than a truth about other 'cultures'.

To support this assertion, I will refer to critical qualitative studies which are successful in uncovering examples of social autonomy as hidden or subversive elements within the small cultures of TESOL life. What they have in common is a sense of quest to reveal aspects of student behaviour which are unexpected or misunderstood by the dominant discourse. Critical qualitative research is able to do this by providing an interpretivist antidote

to the positivist culturist methodology described in chapter 2, and by employing the discipline of *bracketing*.

Bracketing easy answers

Bracketing originates in phenomenology and helps researchers to put aside the easy or 'normal' answers within whichever dominant discourse they are influenced by (Gubrium and Holstein 1997: 40, citing Schutz, Holliday 2002a: 185). An example of this is in Baumann's ethnography of the multicultural London borough of Southall. To avoid the essentialist trap of 'tribalizing' the Sikhs who lived there, he made himself think of them first as 'Southallians', and made sure that any reference to their 'Sikhness' would be 'a matter of finding out, rather than knowing in advance' (Baumann 1996: 2). The use of bracketing can be seen in my study of undergraduate students from the Hong Kong Institute of Education, who were studying in Britain on an English immersion programme. My aim was to pursue my intuition that that their reticence in the classroom did not mean that they did not possess social autonomy – literally to *find* social autonomy where it did not seem to exist. Bracketing took the form of:

1. *Not beginning* with an essentialist cultural description of students from a certain part of the world, and *not presuming* that autonomy is the domain of a Western (or any other) culture

In my case, the dominant discourse I was most influenced by involved a culturist attitude towards Chinese students, and provided the 'easy answer' that their 'culture' prevented them from being autonomous. I therefore needed to try 'to see the Hong Kong students first and foremost as university students rather than "Chinese"' and to make sure that 'whether or not 'Chinese culture' has anything to do with what I observe' was 'to be discovered last rather than considered first' (Holliday 2001c: 124). This does not mean, however, that I needed to ignore cultural difference. As I have argued in chapter 2, there are many aspects of our behaviour which are 'culturally different'; but we must avoid using these differences to feed chauvinistic imaginations of what certain national or ethnic groups can or cannot do. Thus, when their behaviour did not conform to *my* expectations about autonomy, I must explore other possibilities for how autonomy might be realized.

Another form of bracketing was:

2. Trying to see through and beyond a TESOL professionalism which is influenced by native-speakerism, to search for the worlds which the students bring with them.

This was realized in two ways. First, the study became an account of my own attempts at liberation from the culturist preoccupations of native-speakerism, and a struggle with my own preoccupations and prejudices and

the intellectual influences of the ingrained Self and Other differentiation described in chapter 2. As is now increasingly the expectation in qualitative studies, I explicitly stated that I brought with me 'a discoursal baggage from applied linguistics and TESOL which tends to explain the behaviour of 'Asian students' (from the Asian Pacific rim) by reducing them to prescribed, 'culturist' national or regional cultural stereotypes' (Holliday 2001c: 124). Second, the study broke away from the tradition of looking at the micro aspects of classroom discourse, which would serve only to confirm that reticence inhibited interaction. To get a broader social picture, I looked at relations between tutors and students, the organization, management and location of work and activities in classroom, institutional and community settings, and connections made with the wider educational experience of prior and subsequent study at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. The data comprised observations of my own teaching, tutorial session, encounters with the students in other classes, on school attachment and in various campus locations, and programme documents.

Bracketing finally took the form of:

> 3. Presuming that autonomy is a universal until there is evidence otherwise – and that if it is not immediately evident in student behaviour, that it may be because there is something preventing us from seeing it – thus treating people equally as people.

This led me to search for the causes of the students' apparent lack of autonomy not so much in their own cultural backgrounds, but in the social and institutional context within which they found themselves.

Two major findings emerged – that it was the constraints of the classroom régime which inhibited their expression of autonomy; and as they got further from the influences of the classroom, their strong social autonomy became more evident in the considerable initiative, self-direction and critical thought they displayed in other activities (Holliday 2001c) – and that social autonomy sometimes takes the form of *resistance* to the teachers' plan. Indeed, it was the first finding which led me to go more deeply into why the régime of the so-called 'communicative' classroom should be so inhibiting, and to arrive at audiolingualism as a major factor, as described in chapter 3.

Classroom régime as inhibitor

Despite my 'understanding' of my own professional prejudices, from the outset my audiolingual past led me to feel very unsettled at the Hong Kong students' apparent unwillingness to speak during my classes. Their 'silence' meant that I could not tell when they understood my teaching points and led me no choice but to 'dominate' by doing most of the talking. Group tasks did not invite more than minimal participation.

Invisible walls

The issue of student silence is complex. On the one hand, as I have already noted in chapter 3, the importance given to oracy in TESOL has a marked native-speakerist dimension. On the other hand, the fact that the Hong Kong students were unwilling to speak in the classroom did not mean that they would always be unwilling to speak. This principle is demonstrated by Hayagoshi's (1996) small qualitative study of seven Japanese students in a British university language classroom. I am comparing Hong Kong and Japanese students not because I am falling into the culturist trap of othering both sets of students within the same generalized category, but because both groups often suffer from the same stereotype of 'silence'. Hayagoshi's research was motivated by the discrepancy between the students' reputation among British teachers for being silent, and hence lacking in autonomy, and her experience of her own, similar students in Japan being 'noisy'. She found that whereas the seven students in Britain were indeed silent, 'very slow to react and rarely express[ed] their opinions' in the classroom, out of class they were 'normal students', 'friendly and, of course, quite talkative!'. The key to this discrepancy is best demonstrated in this extract from her lesson observation data where the teacher's presence seemed a major factor in the students' behaviour:

> The teacher went out for a while ... I felt that the tense (hard) atmosphere ... suddenly changed dramatically to a mild gentle one. Actually, I heard one Japanese student sigh with relief. However, this mood vanished when the teacher returned. They were quiet, tense and stressed, again.

When she asked some of the students why they were quiet in the classroom, 'one student answered that "there are some *invisible walls* around me which prevent me from speaking in the class" (her italics).

Hayagoshi's conclusion that the inhibiting, silencing 'invisible walls' were more *imposed* on the students by a régime external to them than by aspects of their cultural personality which they bring with them resonates with my own study of a small fragment of video sequences of Japanese high school classrooms (Holliday 2003b). In the Japanese classrooms I saw several cases of the students talking outside the control of the teacher. In one sequence:

> [The teacher] walks down the aisle while students do work connected with blackboard. Some students are talking quietly to each others. They work with their exercise books. ... Those writing seek comment from their peers. There is a general talkative working environment. Some uneasy laughing in embarrassment. The teacher then reads out from the blackboard – what they have written. He asks a person near the camera if one is the right answer. She replies 'I think it's strange'. This causes mirth. ... A student near the camera leans back to speak to a friend. One

> girl student is arranging her hair. Several students talk to peers while the teacher explains. This does not seem to be a problem. A student who has been 'talking' is also clearly getting on with her work.

There were other examples where student talk seemed to support classmates who were carrying out difficult tasks, one such being:

> Two students standing at the front facing each other, are speaking aloud, heads down. ... Then one students turns to the class for help, still with her head down. Students support her in Japanese. ... Later, a bright, smiling male student standing at back and speaking in Japanese laughs and gets support from other students.

Two Japanese teachers I interviewed about the sequences explained that *personal talk* of this type is supported by 'friendship groups' and is a means whereby the students cope with the pressures of the lesson. When they are put under a 'spotlight' and are 'nominated' by the teacher, and the exchange takes on the form of a 'performance', the rest of the class play the role of 'supporting' the student, and they feel that they have a 'responsibility' to preserve a 'happy' atmosphere. See also description of friendship groups in Shamim's (1996a, 1996b) and Mebo's (1995) description of Pakistani secondary school students and Kenyan university students in large classes.

What both these studies seem to show is a conflict between students being used to talking freely and informally to suit their own purposes and feeling inhibited into silence by the expectations of the English-speaking-Western language class, described in chapter 3, where talk is carefully controlled and monitored – *public talk*.

Getting outside the classroom

It was not therefore surprising that as soon as I took my Hong Kong students away from the classroom into tutorials in my office, although the first tutorial 'started with them seeming silent', the atmosphere began gradually to change. The students showed in evaluations that they liked tutorials; and while the dominant culturist discourse suggests that because of their 'Chinese culture' the students would be 'intimidated' by tutorials, the reality was otherwise as long as I relaxed control over who should speak when and allowed informal talk:

> A pattern in our discussion was me suggesting something, them talking among themselves, pauses, thinking, then one of them asking a quite profound question or making a counter suggestion, then me responding, and so on. They came with a very precise agenda of questions they wanted answering. (Observation notes)

I also observed a colleague with his tutorial group sitting round a table outside the Student Building in the sun' and noted that the students 'were looking at all the preparations, notes and transparencies for the afternoon presentation' with him with little evidence of reticence.

Another example of how getting away from the classroom seemed to change behaviour was in drama sessions, to which 15 hours of the programme was devoted (Almond 2001), where I observed 'a very natural rapport with the tutor'. In one such session I observed the students 'in the middle of oral dramatization, looking very enthusiastic and involved' and 'a lot of loud talking and marching about was taking place'. I noticed one of my own tutorial group who had continued to remain more reticent than the others being 'one of the more vociferous ones'. Even further from the classroom, during a visit to one of the schools to which they were attached for two days per week, 'three students came to show us round, and as we went we encountered others at work with children in various settings' and 'I was touched by how easy it was to talk to individual students', as I did on finding students in several locations around the campus (observation notes).

Making their own space

As expected silence fell away in events outside the classroom, evidence of social autonomy thus began to emerge where students volunteered to communicate; but the strength of this autonomy became evident where the students followed their own agendas - getting about the campus and the attachment schools, getting on with their research projects and generally engaging with the environment. One of the rooms within which I had found them reticent in classes also doubled as their workroom when class was not in progress; and they transformed it into a very different sort of space and made it their own. When I visited the room during these times I felt I was stepping into *their* territory and I found myself following *their* agenda:

> I visited some of the class in their work room ... One group was working on their project in the centre of the room, looking at notes etc. Two members of another group were working at computers. (I didn't check what they were doing.) The group in the centre wanted to ask me a question. They were working on their data collection strategy. They wanted to know whether they should interview customers in shops first or observe behaviour in host families. (Observation notes)

This was very evident on another occasion when I visited the room out of class time and found it hard to get the attention of the students.

The way in which the Hong Kong students asserted social autonomy when transforming the classroom into their own workspace was also evident during one of my classes when my lesson broke down and the

'normal' conceptualization of the classroom changed. I was wrong-footed when I entered the room at the beginning of a class (in my terms) the whiteboard was too far from the students. It was a room which doubled as a language laboratory and had a large console, up on a stage, between the whiteboard and the rest of the room. Someone had also moved in some extra tables which upset the normal seminar arrangement and left hardly any space to sit around. In desperation, I left the room to call the audio-visual people to ask them to bring a flip chart to use instead of the whiteboard. When I came back, the students had taken possession of the class and the work in hand, and had found their own way to make the furniture work for them by 'squeezing themselves between the tables and the back wall'. Furthermore, my own power seemed reduced because 'one group was between me (standing) and the "centre" of the class' but made no attempt to move to so that I could speak to them more easily. I found it difficult to get their attention while trying to brainstorm research projects. Some of the students 'did not seem to be listening, talking among themselves'. However, this apparent lack of attention to me did not prevent them from coming up with up with very good ideas – by themselves 'regardless of my attempts to elicit'. As it became apparent that 'they certainly seemed to know exactly what to do' (observation notes), I left the students to it, retiring from my 'teacher' position; and fitting myself into *their* workspace:

> I sat near them at the table in the only remaining space, asking them if they minded me sitting there, to get on with my own work and be available, also listening in a little. Some of them asked me intelligent questions. The first group read out their idea for a [new research] setting .... One group asked what was meant by 'what the space is like' and 'size'. I dealt with these questions from where I was sitting. (Observation notes)

This resonated with my observation of Japanese secondary school students, cited above, who possessed another world from that of the teacher and his lesson with their personal talk, while at the same time applying themselves to what he was saying.

Elicitation and realia vs. information

I also began to realize the inappropriacy of the 'lesson' which I had in mind in terms of the concept of elicitation. My intention had been to 'elicit' ideas for research projects from the students – thus engaging 'them' in contributing to the outcomes I had already prescribed for 'my' lesson, in very much the same way as the audiolingual teachers would elicit correct responses – with the implication that they, as the 'non-native-speaker' Other, both needed my structure for their ideas, and would improve the 'their' cultural predisposition by joining 'my' culture. When the students demonstrated that

they could take over their own agenda without my eliciting, my approach became redundant.

What became clear as I sat amongst them a waited for them to approach me for help, was that what they needed was not elicitation of their ideas, but information to help them get on with the task in hand. This is also demonstrated in Chang's small study of the differences of opinions between four Taiwanese students who had attended a study skills course at a British university six months before and five British teachers who had taught them on the course and since. Like Hayagoshi (op cit), Chang wanted to undo the common notion in the TESOL literature that there is a lack autonomy among 'Asian students' which comprises a 'cultural shortage' (2000: 42). Whereas the British teachers felt that the students had lacked the autonomy to make full use of 'self-access' time to develop 'study skills', and had failed 'to learn *how* to consult teachers', the students said they simply wanted more *information* about what they were supposed to do. They felt that once they were confident that they understood the instructions, that they could then 'study "autonomously" as teachers wish[ed]'. They agreed that they needed 'to consult teachers more often', but that their reticence here was more to do with lack language skills than with cultural issues (2000: 45). Like the Hong Kong students, they showed considerable evidence of autonomy in that they were very happy to work independently out of class (2000: 42).

Classrooms, lectures and public space

Returning to the Hong Kong student study, it was my visits to the Hong Kong Institute of Education, from where they came, as external examiner for their BA programme, that enabled me to understand better the relationship between classrooms, social autonomy and personal agendas and space – sitting amongst students in the refectory and watching them in lectures and going about their everyday university life. One specific event in which I saw the same students as I had been teaching in Britain was a Phonology class:

> This was a more 'traditional' lecture in a tiered lecture theatre. During the process of the lecture, the lecturer asked individual students questions about the content, which seemed complex and demanding. The students seemed generally unfazed by this and answered competently when asked. On some occasions the lecturer engaged the students in longer exchanges and some discussion; and in discussion time at the end of the lecturer, some students asked the lecturer interesting questions that showed that they had really engaged with the subject matter. From the back of the large theatre, and slightly to the side of the students I noticed that the rows which they inhabited seemed to offer a sense of private space; and the distance from the lecturer afforded them the possibility of sharing

> notes and quiet comments while the lecture was in process. The students tended to sit near each other and not in places arranged by the lecturer. Also because of the size of the room, with a door from the back as well as from the front, the students were able to come and go once the lecture was in session without too much disruption. The students tended to enter from the back of the room, while the lecturer entered from a door at the front. The students seemed more adult than when they had been on the immersion programme in the UK. (Observation notes)

A series of points emerge from this observation:

First, the two types of educational event which seem most comfortable for the students, out of class events (i.e. the tutorial, drama classes and other out of class activities), and the formal lecture, appear to be at opposite ends of the spectrum. In both the students seem more adult, less reticent and display more independence than in the supposedly 'communicative' classroom. The common factor in the out of class events and the lecture seems to be that the students are allowed more private space and there is less control over what they say, when and how they should speak. In the out of class events in particular they have more space for personal talk. In the 'communicative' classroom the emphasis is more on elicited public talk.

Second, these observations about out of class events are certainly nothing new. TESOL educators have for a long time been sending their students out to do projects. It is the high status given to the 'communicative' classroom and the low status given to the lecture which is problematic. The major impact of this study of Hong Kong students on my own teaching was that I did away with the 'communicative' classroom altogether because it simply did not work because the students simply did not like the corrective, controlling culture described in chapter 3. If I wanted to impart important content I gave up on trying to get the students to 'participate' and gave a straight lecture. If I wanted them to practice their oral and intercultural skills I sent them out to get on with their own projects. If I wanted to 'supervise' these activities I did this in tutorials. If I wanted to 'discuss' elements of the programme with them, I did this by means of a new event, the 'meeting'. Meetings were places where we considered options and made decisions. They were conceptually different to 'communicative' classes in that student talk had an instrumental, evaluative function in determining the business of the programme, rather than to demonstrate participation. Sometimes I felt the need to hold the meeting, not around the seminar tables, because their U-shape carried too much of the culture of the threatening 'communicative' classroom, but relocated in another part of the room, where the students brought their chairs to sit in a less organized collection of people and to talk more freely.

Third, my experience in the students' home university confirmed my bracketing strategy of seeing them first as university students because in this setting they *were* very clearly university students. Though much of their setting and what they did was very Chinese, the basic structures of their lives were like those of students everywhere; and the phonology lecture was very much like undergraduate classes I observed in sociology and religious studies in Canterbury. Seeing the students as 'adult' in the phonology lecture contrasted strongly with the culturist native-speakerist image of the student as childlike and in need of cultural correction, as demonstrated in the analysis of my own discourse in describing their behaviour chapter 2. My adoption of lectures, out of class events and meetings in Canterbury had much more resonance with traditional university life.

Fourth, seeing the students taking the theoretical complexities of the phonology lecture in their stride, and generally living easily with an undergraduate experience of lectures, tutorials and research, made it clear that in the 'communicative' language course in Canterbury we underestimated their abilities as students. We had packaged together 'reticence', 'Chinese culture' and 'lack of sophistication in discovery-based process learning' with a disbelief that the students would be able to do research. This could be seen in notes from a tutors' meeting where it was thought that it was 'expecting too much' of the students to ask them to do 'research projects'. It was not appreciated that, as undergraduate students at the end of their first year, they had already done courses which involved quite sophisticated research. One of the students in my tutorial group saying that 'she had done a very short project looking at the influence on local Hong Kong culture of Japanese magazines' demonstrated a worldliness that went beyond the confining essentialist image.

Resistance

The second major finding of the Hong Kong student study was that the social autonomy that began to emerge, as the influence of the corrective régime of the 'communicative' classroom was reduced, sometimes took the form of resistance to the teachers' plan. There is a sense in the example of the Hong Kong students that they choose not to take part in the prescribed *public talk* of the 'communicative' classroom. As one student put it, they were not prepared to expose themselves in what they considered a dangerous environment of scrutiny and correction. This implication of resistance against the dominant classroom régime was brought out in the discussion at the end of conference paper when An English-speaking-Western member of the audience stated that she did not it think it feasible to teach critical literacy to students from certain cultures where political pressures prevented them from thinking critically. This view was countered

by the suggestion that students from some societies may choose not to reveal their criticality in front of English-speaking-Western teachers who did not believe in them (conference notes, 2002). I have already made the point above that not exposing criticality to others does not mean that it does not exist in private or in other domains.

Struggling to learn

Canagarajah (e.g. 1999) argues that critical resistance can take place in 'private sites' Canagarajah depicts Tamil high school students working privately to find their own ways to deal with the foreign Other of an American textbook by 'writing glosses in the margins' and changing the stories to suit their own interests. He suggests that this 'widespread student activity that usually passes unnoticed by teachers and researchers' and which reveals 'verbal and social interaction in the classroom that usually eludes the eyes of the teacher' (1999: 88-9) – thus invoking the notion of 'informal order' or 'deep action' (Holliday 1994a, 1992b, citing Swales, Coleman and others):

> The glosses characterize the discourses that interest the students. They show a mixture of cultural backgrounds: romance, sex, and cinema all show influences from international 'pop culture', and the lifestyle of Western entertainment media and youth groups; traditional cultural values and practices are based on Hindu religious roots; the modern Marxist-influenced political discourse is slanted towards nationalistic tendencies. (1999:90)

This private site scribbling is also a written version of the personal talk seen amongst Japanese students (op cit).

This form of critical resistance is not just confined to 'communicative' classrooms. Tong describes private site autonomous behaviour in detail in his qualitative study of two secondary school classes in Hong Kong. He argues that whereas they Chinese teachers impose the standard Confucian stereotype upon them, which conforms largely to descriptions of the generalized Other in chapter 2, the students behave very differently to the stereotype in that they:

> engage in different kinds of private work, e.g. student reading, working and looking up words in the dictionary, which needed little or no oral interactions, in which students seemed to communicate with the materials and the illustrations. Students looking up words in the dictionary might indicate their initiative and their willingness to be independent life-long learners. ... Students participated, answered or asked questions. Students expressed their opinions or clarified confusions with teachers. Students

> took opportunities to interact with the researcher. ... Students were not all the time conforming to the will of their seniors. (2002: 254)

Tong reveals a double form of resistance. On the one hand the teachers draw on Confucianism as a cultural resource to justify, under the imposition of a 'communicative' syllabus, discouraging their students from expressing themselves freely (2002: 265-7). At the same time the students resisted their teachers' régime by demanding better teaching or through disruptive behaviour. The following is an example of them pressing their teacher for more information:

> Some students asked the teacher for the meanings of the words they had found in the dictionary. The teacher looked at the words in the dictionary. He then went back to the front and said: 'I'm not your walking dictionary. I don't want to explain this.' The student kept on asking the teacher: 'Sir, what's the meaning of these words?' The teacher kept saying: 'I don't know.' One student told another student: 'That's enough. I think the teacher in fact knows the meanings but he doesn't want to tell us.' (2002: 179, citing lesson observation)

As the students withdraw into their own conversation they enter into the private domain within which they can more easily resist, as can be seen in Tong's example of students deciding whether or not to listen to a tape played by their teacher. One says to another, 'It is not useful because it would not be tested in the examination. Therefore, I'm not interested in listening to the tape' (Tong 2002: 188). On another occasion the students show open defiance to the teacher, arguing with him when he accuses them of not having copied down instructions about a book they are supposed to have bought and read before the class (2002: 234).

Asserting agendas

Sometimes this resistance takes on the appearance of passivity. East Asian students sleeping in the classroom is a common complaint from English-speaking Western TESOL teachers. Tong sees this as a form of conscious 'withdrawal from class participation' in resistance to lack of teacher attention by 'playing with their pens or looking at other pages of the exercise book' than the one the teacher was referring to, 'doing the homework of another subject' or 'just not listening while the class was in process', 'looking into space, scribbling in their Reader or flipping through coursebooks of other subjects', 'whispering among themselves', 'reading comic strips, reading the newspaper, chatting or taking a nap' - 'passive resistance strategies' designed to 'delay, distract, modify, or prevent teacher initiated activities or instruction that they dislike' and 're-negotiate the learning and teaching ecology in the classrooms' (2002: 146-9).

Students taking action to actually change the course of their programme can also be seen in this account by Grimshaw, from his experience of Chinese university students who present considerable, organized power:

> There appears to be a great deal of student solidarity within the classes. In the institutions where I worked there was a formal and frequently used system whereby the students reported back to the higher authorities of the School regarding the 'performance' of their teachers. This was done through the medium of a class 'monitor', who was often Party member and seemed to have a lot of power at the local level. If a teacher made him/herself unpopular with a class - for example by being poorly prepared, or delivering bad lectures, or making unreasonable demands upon the students – then the students might rebel. The teacher might then be disciplined by his/her superiors. (2002b)

This resonates quite strongly with recent experience in the English-speaking West of the student voice ruling issues of quality:

It is not therefore surprising that when some public space was given to what had been hidden amongst the Hong Kong students one of its manifestations was resistance to the programme. This was evidenced in various aspects of the programme. During interim presentations of their research projects one group overturned a topic they had agreed with their tutor:

> [They] announced boldly at the beginning of the presentation that they had changed their topic completely – from cathedrals to supermarkets. They said the previous topic required too much history that they didn't want to get into. Does your tutor know about this? Yes. Did you consult with him in your last tutorial? No, we made the decision after the tutorial. When was that? This morning. So how does your tutor know? We emailed him this morning.

During a drama class they *refused to do an activity*:

> There are two teams, shoes off, lying on the floor side by side, glasses off, some given to the tutor to put aside. The end person is supposed to roll over the whole line. This gives rise to group screaming, sitting up as one person and waving their hands in opposition. They refuse to do it. The tutors gives up. (Observation notes)

Taking collaborative action

The indications are that once students get together in 'taking more control over their learning in classrooms' (Benson op cit), they can take on considerable power. See also description of friendship groups in Shamim's

(1996a, 1996b) and Mebo's (1995) description of Pakistani secondary school students and Kenyan university students in large classes. This was particularly evident in Syrian and Egyptian university classrooms which I observed in the 1980s. The students were very ingenious in dealing with overcrowded classrooms, organizing seating, distributing lecture notes, forming informal learning groups, negotiating with lecturers, and generally coping with a considerable scarcity of resources, as well as assenting to and appreciating the nature of power bestowed upon the lecturer (Holliday 1994a). Azer harnesses these capabilities in his methodology for independent communicative study in very large classes (cited in Holliday 1994a: 184-191

Spontaneous collaboration was sometimes a feature of the students in Tong's study taking things into their own hands:

> The teacher asked the students to complete an exercise. The exercise was supposed to be completed on an individual basis. Instead of this, some of the students formed groups spontaneously. The pair sitting immediately on my left worked together. They discussed the choices of the answers, the meanings of words, and so on. The two students sitting in front of them turned round and joined the discussion. Sometimes, they turned back to refer to their coursebook or exercise books. Then they turned round again and continued the discussion. (2002: 151)

Tong also saw collaboration as a means whereby students could solve the problem of lack of confidence. A basic tenet of the native-speakerist approach A to autonomy is that 'passive', non-autonomous students lack self-esteem (e.g. Harmer 2001: 335), the implication being that low self esteem is part and parcel of the cultural condition of passiveness. Tong's study does not however give quite this impression, as the students in his study *take* action or inaction as a way of *dealing with* confidence issues. Similarly, in Hayagoshi's study (op cit), although it may be presumed by the native-speakerist observer that the Japanese students lack self-esteem, or the autonomous initiative to 'do something about' silence in the classroom, there is no evidence in Hayagoshi's study that there could be anything but a temporary loss of self esteem specific to the confines of the specific classroom régime. It is only in the classroom that they lack the confidence to speak, as it is only within the context of the study skills programme that the students in Chang's study (op cit) lack the confidence to ask their teachers to explain themselves better. In other domains they seem perfectly confident – e.g. to tell the researcher what they think. It is not therefore national culture, but specific situations which cause the problems.

It is however important to note that the students in Tong's study do support each other a lot from within a group collaborative effort, which seems natural when there is a student collegial infrastructure available and cannot be seen as specific to East Asian societies. Lorraine similarly notes

that 'her Emirati students have ways of doing things which help them learn – independently of teachers – but it is through a group process of helping one another' (email interview). I have already noted, earlier in this chapter, group collaboration among Egyptian students; my daughter recently told me how helpful it was to share study problems in student-initiated group sessions while doing a graduate programme in Politics in a British university; and American students studying together is often a feature of Hollywood films. It is stating the obvious that students everywhere do this sort of thing; but to remember that this social autonomy is a powerful, inevitable force, regardless of the teacher, is an important antidote to the lockstep ideal of the English-speaking Western TESOL classroom.

At the same time, examples very individualized forms of study can be found which go against the presumption of collectivity in East Asian culture. Grimshaw (2002a: 185-6) takes us into the intimate nature of the very personal sites in which Chinese students engage with study and manage to find privacy in public spaces:

> 7:30 AM. Before the first class of the morning students find a space on campus and set about reciting their texts. Many of them are reciting from language coursebooks. Some are listening to language tapes on personal stereos. A few are listening to the Voice of America on transistor radios and mouthing phrases. Many students stand or sit around the lawn. They face inwards, towards the lawn, turning their backs on the path, where there is a constant stream of people passing by, hurrying to class. Shutting out the rest of the world, they concentrate on their texts. The students are spaced out evenly, with a distance of perhaps three metres between each person.

And at other times in other locations:

> 2:15 PM. Main lecture theatre is empty except for one student. He is reciting Arabic, repeating the same phrase over and over. Girl sits on the floor of the corridor on the 12th floor of the Main Building, reciting from her Spanish textbook. 10:15 PM. Old Teaching Block. Two students studying by themselves in a classroom. They sit at opposite ends of the room.

And one of his informants:

> Xiu Wei Hong explains how students 'stake their claim' to a desk in the library. She says: Students get up as early as six o'clock in the morning in order to beat other students to a place. They mark their territory by spreading a newspaper over the desk which they want to use, or by putting a pencil case or a book on it. Then they go to class. They come back in the evening to claim their place.

The references to the Voice of America and Arabic also serve to break the culturist image of national culture isolation.

Taking over the system

Looking back, most of the issues seen so far were apparent in my experience of teaching Iranian technical English students at Lancaster University in 1980 while doing my masters degree (Holliday 1994a: 144-146, 2002b: 19-21). It began with culturism as I tried to explain their apparent failure to draw technical diagrams during an examination with a cultural deficiency implicit in their 'pre-industrial society' (Holliday 1980). This was influenced by an assignment I wrote with a group of other masters students about the cultural differences between '"modern" society' and 'Third World' thinking, citing Berger et al (1974). We argued that 'the Third World learner' is unable to conceptualize 'process' as 'something to be developed independently', and therefore cannot appreciate 'modern consciousness' (Holliday et al 1979: 7). This analysis was then used to rationalize what we presumed to be deficit cultural traits of the Iranian students, such as 'judging the teacher on a personal not professional basis, … seeing grades as personal favours, … not seeing school activities as important for personal development as a member of society', valuing 'symbolic rewards' more than 'intrinsic' ones, not seeing the importance of 'personal development for career', 'reluctance to make present sacrifices for future gain, … failure to organize work, … not working out procedures for problem-solving, … difficulty in categorizing and selecting relevant information, … no intrinsic interest in practical/group projects' and so on (1979: 3). One might say that this type of thinking that we indulged in was simply indicative of a less politically correct past; but it conforms to the generalized Other described in chapter 2. It is easy to see at this distance that none of these traits are unusual for any group of people who might not be particularly interested in or resistant to the educational event that has been designed for them. What was overlooked in this particular case was the probability that the exam, which involved an elaborate 'communicative' mixture of watching a video, wiring a plug, working in groups to prepare a report and then writing the report, was not sufficiently explained, and the fact that Iran was a highly developed society with a world class industrial base and university system. What they really lacked, as with the Taiwanese students in Chang's study (op cit), was the information about exactly what they were supposed to do. As soon as they received the simple phrase in Farsi which made this clear, they were able to produce excellent drawings, like the ones they were used to at high school in Iran.

It was our own teaching which had confused them! One the of the problems with the activity-discovery approach inherent in much native-speakerist TESOL – 'look at the … and find out how to …' – designed to elicit new behaviour, is that exactly what participants are supposed to do is *not* always transparent to people not brought up in this particular professional discourse. I see the predicament of the students, in their failure to understand what

they were supposed to do in the activities we set them, as a direct residue of the audio-lingual realia paradigm described in chapter 3. Although some of us spoke their mother tongue, I and my colleagues at the time felt the driven need to find more ingenious means, rather than straight forward ones, to demonstrate the concepts of our lessons to them. This was largely because we felt we needed subtly to change their entire sense of civilization – that there would be no way, as the 'non-native speaker' foreign Other, they could grasp the lesson otherwise. Although we cited the communicative discourse of being sensitive with 'what the student brings to the classroom', we did not believe they brought anything that did not have to be changed.

For my masters dissertation I carried out a more in depth study of why they were failing to respond to teaching. There was a lot of personal talk going on which disrupted the lessons to the extent that their teacher believed they were not interested in learning. However, when I listened to this talk I discovered they were complaining about the classroom methodology which they felt was too intrusive in its intention to plan and control everything they did. The result was arbitration which led to them successfully transforming their course into opportunities for them to get on with their work and consult their teacher when they needed him – very much as I found worked with the Hong Kong students above. Thus, despite all our machinations about their cultural incapability, they proved supremely capable of managing their learning while exercising a large degree of social autonomy.

The issue of authority

Seeing instances of social autonomy expressed as resistance to the régime of the classroom, and indeed the teacher, begs the question of the authority of the teacher. Again, critical readers may accuse me of being teacherist, othering the teacher as someone who cannot understand students and cannot be of value to them because she is constantly othering students. In chapter 4 I accused learner-centredness in TESOL of being native-speakerist in the way in which it constructs the student as an object 'learner' who is reduced to teacher-led definitions of how students ought to be. I do not think that this has always to be the case. Indeed, I also say in chapter 4 that the original educational, sociological motives for learner-centredness were well-founded – opposing constructing students as deficit systems and passive instruments (Table 4.1), the very trap native-speakerism, along with other traditional educational ideologies, is falling into, and more dangerously so under the guise of learner-centredness. The Hong Kong students, both in my and in Tong's study, the Taiwanese students in Chang's study and the Sri Lankan students in Canagarajah's study (all op cit), and the Iranian students (op cit), all resent being not understood or misunderstood by so-called learner-centredness which has ideologically constructed for itself some other 'learner', and take one form of action or another.

I have no problem with the authoritative teacher. As I have suggested above, with the Hong Kong students, she should be able to lecture authoritatively when this is appropriate, and must generally have the authority to decide when to lecture, when to hold tutorials and when to send the students out to do their own thing. But before they can do this, they must begin to understand their students for the bigger words that they come from, to see them as more than they appear – different to our image of the generalized Other rather than confined by it. Part of the key to this is to see what students find authentic.

Social authenticity

Within a Position 2 paradigm the issue of social authenticity has a special relationship with social autonomy. To explain this I need first to contrast it with the dominant native-speakerist view of authenticity. With the 'us'-'them' relationships of native-speakerism, there is an a priori notion that authentic *texts* are 'unsimplified' examples of language from the 'native speaker' heartland. The native-speakerist notion of authenticity has become standard in that it is related specifically to language types – the 'genuine language' which is central to the discourse of English-speaking Western TESOL. This idea becomes increasingly problematic as we get into discussions about how far the content of textbooks corresponds with the findings of corpus linguistics and the comparative 'reality' of what is 'normally said' in classrooms which may or may not be considered part of the 'real world' language use inside and outside of classrooms (Widdowson 2003: 112-3).

In Position 2, where there is a struggle to make new, inclusive relationships, *activities, interactions and texts* are authentic when they are meaningful to the social worlds of the students, teachers and other parties who are involved. Thus authenticity and autonomy interact in the sense that, to be authentic, activities, interactions and texts need to communicate with the same social world within which students are already autonomous in their own terms. In many ways this conceptualization of authenticity returns to Widdowson's early definition:

> I think it is probably better to consider authenticity not as a quality residing in instances of language but as a quality which is bestowed upon them, created by the response of the receiver. Authenticity in this view is a function of the interaction between the reader/hearer and the text which incorporates the intentions of the writer/speaker. We do not recognise authenticity as something there waiting to be noticed, we *realize* it in the act of interpretation. (1979:165, my emphasis)

In Position 2 the orientations of authenticity and autonomy are therefore reversed. Whereas within native-speakerism authenticity *pre-exists* in the

nature of the 'unsimplified' text, in Position 2 it has to be *created* – 'realized in the act of interpretation' as teachers work to communicate with the worlds of their students, as students struggle to make sense of what they are doing and how to be in learning events. At the same time, whereas within native-speakerism autonomy has to be *induced* in the classroom through a teacher-led 'learner training', in Position 2 it *pre-exists* in the social worlds of students and teachers.

This can be seen in the instances of authenticity in the examples cited earlier in the chapter, where students find personal talk to help colleagues deal with teachers' questions, bringing issues to discuss in tutorials, making connections between new work and previous research projects, forming groups to discuss classroom tasks, or rewriting bits of their textbooks *meaningful* because they are not contrived by the classroom régime, there is something they really need to talk about, there are connections with other parts of their lives or means of resisting potentially meaningless or threatening events. Some further examples of this will demonstrate how we can learn more about what is important for our students by seeing what they find authentic, in most cases breaking culturist stereotypes.

The culturist trap

I have learnt a lot from my email informants about how I have reduced my students to culturist definitions. I have also learnt from some of them about the traps that *they* fall into. Aliya sent me this observation about using an English-speaking-Western text:

> I had to teach a text on modes of transportation and there was a mention of parking tickets and undergrounds. I spent fifteen minutes trying to explain to the class what they meant because in Pakistan they had neither parking tickets nor undergrounds. One student then spoke out and said 'what about khachar (mules) Miss, I always rode on them when I was in my village. Aren't they a mode of transport?' (Email interview)

Her reaction was the one that most teachers would have, that the text was 'neither meaningful nor real' to the students. But the issue is more complex than this. The connection the student made between transport, say, in New York, and mules in his village *was* a connection beyond his immediate environment, which is surely what education is all about. The implication behind this perception that the text 'neither meaningful nor real' also denies the student the possibility of having wider horizons. Children everywhere build their lives on imagining things they have never seen, from wild animals, to people in their history, to Martians. It is indeed culturist to imagine that people can only find meaningful things with which they are familiar within their own community because it implies a bounded culture

which cannot dream outside itself. Social authenticity does not therefore only relate to discourses in home society. It can also relate to the interface between home and the world – e.g. internet, politics, tourism, globalization, visions of the Other.

Another incident with a text at a conference at Makerere University in the mid 1990s revealed the political implications of underestimating what students might find authentic:

> The subject of discussion was a textbook which had been written in the capital and was being used outside the capital. There was a British volunteer who has been working with the textbook in the countryside. She complained that the textbook was completely unsuitable because it contained references to 'sophisticated' (and she might have meant 'Western') concepts things like computers, the internet, travel agents and space travel of which the children in the countryside had no knowledge. She accused the textbook writers of the city of being élitist.

It is too easy to be cynical about expatriates playing representative to people they consider lacking in power. The small outcry across the conference floor in objection to what the expatriate had said might have been interpreted by her as 'élitist' anger; but some of the people sitting near me made it clear to me that they thought she was being patronizing in not realizing that even people from African villages could *aspire* to things with which they had not had direct contact.

Unexpected sophistication

The following example is of students demonstrating a cultural sophistication and cosmopolitanness which was unexpected within the culturist stereotype. During one of my tutorials with the students from Hong Kong:

> They had been to the Tate Modern Gallery in London on an excursion organized by the programme. I remember that the supervising tutor had reported that none of the students had wanted to spend much time at the gallery and had seemed mostly interested in the souvenir shop. However, in the tutorial two of the students enthusiastically showed me postcards of paintings they had bought. I was impressed at the degree of sophistication with which they explained how the abstract paintings they had chosen, which they had also seen in the gallery, reminded them of images of city streets in Hong Kong, which they also linked to their knowledge of expressionism. (Observation notes)

This was a complex encounter. The students commonly collected 'artefacts' of their cultural encounters for their portfolios, as required by their research projects; but the postcards were at a different level in that they seemed to

touch a deeper connection that they were making between the two cultural worlds. In this sense, the postcards themselves had been picked out as significantly authentic texts. At the same time, the students wanting to show them to *me* was beyond the normal fare of the tutorial where talk was often restricted to the research projects and occasional domestic issues. Indeed, their English seemed better than normal as they struggled to express deeper issues in art and perception, as it rose to the greater authenticity of this particular tutorial event. They thus became more 'adult', as discussed earlier in the chapter, as their (to me) unexpected knowledge of the expressionist movement in art became apparent. There was also the remarkable autonomy with which they completely hid their interest in art and the buying of these postcards from their tutor, the sharing of which they had for some reason not found sufficiently authentic. This relates to the overall way in which the programme tutors underestimated the students' academic ability, also discussed earlier in the chapter. In short, it became eminently clear that there was far more going on in these students' lives than the business of language learning.

Another issue here was the image of culture. Much of the discussions in tutorials had pivoted around 'life in Britain' as it compared with 'life in Hong Kong'. Although I tried hard not to allow this to become essentialist, the enforced vision of the students was that they were travelling from one enclosed cultural block to another. The discussion about painting destroyed this vision. Their reference to European art was not to something 'foreign' and 'Western', but to world heritage shared by everyone, which, moreover, they had as much knowledge of and ability to appreciate as anyone else. A similar point is made by Honarbin-Holliday (forthcoming) who shows how Iranian art students insist that European art is as much part of their heritage as anyone else's.

Unexpected contributions

Part of the ethos of control within the dominant English-speaking-Western discourse of TESOL, which comes from behaviourist audiolingualism, is the tendency to think that what is learnt has to be a direct, immediate consequence of the lesson. To break this limiting ideology we have to appreciate what students bring from beyond our lesson, which might not be as startling as expressionist postcards, but equally significant. Aliya recalls making the connection between what she saw one of her students in Pakistan doing outside class and what she subsequently brought into the class, as meaningful and hence authentic to her:

> I once saw a student in the university bookshop copying out something from greeting cards displayed there. I assumed that it must have been a piece of poetry being copied to make a handmade card. The next week when she submitted the assignment two words struck out in

> it – 'ostentatious' and 'grave' (deep). I knew that the words were not part of her vocabulary. When inquired she told me that she would go to the bookshop and copy out words from greeting cards, book titles etc that she did not know the meaning of. She would then look them up in the dictionary and note them down to use them where and when she thought appropriate. I had never taught her to do that. (Email interview)

Similarly, from his experience with university students in the Dubai and Turkey, David Palfreyman similarly notes that what students in do in the classroom, 'asking questions, looking things up', is '*mostly* brought rather than taught', and that what they bring to the classroom is 'independent of any prescriptions from the English-speaking West'. Indeed, he suggests a conflict between what they bring, as authentic to them, and the English-speaking Western TESOL ideal:

> [English-speaking Western TESOL] prescriptions tend to be narrowly teaching focused (iconic activities such as library research), or related to outside practice/homework of particular kinds; while devaluing/being pessimistic about other focuses, e.g. vocabulary (teachers disparage students learning large quantities of vocabulary, wanting to know the meaning of words in texts). Students have perceptions and agendas with which such prescriptions do not engage. (Email interview, his emphasis)

See also my discussion of conflict between the teacher's and students' lessons in Holliday (1994a: 144, 2002), citing Widdowson (1984: 189) on teacher Prospero and resisting student Caliban's desire to learn, to him authentic, 'bad language'. Moreover, David sees evidence that the students find what the teacher does as a problem to be solved, as his students engage in 'deciding if what I teach is relevant to their agenda', for example 'finding out what the teacher wants in an assessment'. This implies that the engagement of the students' communicative competence is not something which is necessarily planned by the teacher, but something which happens *anyway* while the students try to make sense of *all* the things which happen in the classroom. Moreover, this is *authentic* engagement because the students *really* needs to find out what she is supposed to do, how she is supposed to respond, perhaps even how she can get out of exposing herself by answering questions out loud – if she is going to survive in this teacherly régime. It is also not surprising that 'teachers don't like this because it problematizes *their* own agenda' (email interview, his emphasis).

An opening up, and an undoing of prejudice

In this chapter I have attempted to open up the way we think about autonomy and the related notion of authenticity. The intention is to allow for a more

expansive Position 2 which undoes the native-speakerist prejudice that Other-cultured 'non-native speakers' cannot do certain things and need to be therefore culturally corrected. Beverly, in the following extract from her email interview, sums up this openness with respect to authenticity without ignoring the differences, or perhaps different types of richnesses, that culture brings with it:

> Authenticity is culturally bound and socially constructed. And, therefore, almost always complex. Isn't learning often a dance, a negotiation, sometimes a struggle, others a harmonious flow, between learner and text, learner and situation, learner and teacher? Technology seems to be affecting definitions of authentic – virtual worlds and identities – are these authentic? Is the social world of the imagination authentic? ... Student of English are so different that sometimes it seems quite difficult to generalize. (Email interview)

Chapter 6: 'Stakeholder-centredness'

In the previous three chapters I have addressed the ways in which students, within the dominant ideology of native-speakerist TESOL have been othered, misunderstood, and treated as culturally problematic. In the next two chapters I am going to explore the parallel issue of the similar othering of 'non-native speaker' colleagues. In this chapter I will look at how TESOL curriculum projects have the propensity for positioning them as culturally problematic. In chapter 7 I will assess how far the connected and underlying process of appropriate methodology either solves or exacerbates the 'problem'.

Curriculum projects comprise a particularly poignant context for the relationship between 'non-native speaker' and 'native speaker' colleagues. Like classrooms, they are focused on a set of behaviours which are supposed to be changed or improved. Since the 1970s they have been a major instrument for applied linguistics institutions in the English speaking West, supported by aid agencies, to spread what they consider to be 'universally relevant' skills to the rest of the world (Phillipson 1992: 238).

Curriculum projects have also been particularly responsible for introducing managerialism into TESOL, which, I will argue, parallels the régime of the so-called 'communicative' classroom in prescribing and controlling cultural behaviour. Here there is a similarity between what I shall term *stakeholder-centredness* in the curriculum project and *learner-centredness* as discussed in chapter 4. 'Stakeholder' is a term taken from management as a way of talking about the people whose preferences or 'stakes' need to be considered in a collaborative venture. As with the concept of 'learner', thinking about stakeholders began with a desire to be sensitive to the recipients of educational practice, and I will argue, has to a large extent been control-constructed within TESOL in the same way as learner-centredness. In the mid 1980s and early 1990s, when management became a major force in English-speaking Western TESOL, the activity of finding out and addressing the preferences of stakeholders became a major part of curriculum development practice.

Projects and people

A brief history of the development of project management will demonstrate the degree to which curriculum projects can become powerful régimes within

a native-speakerist quest to change the cultures of 'non-native speaker' colleagues. (See my discussion of these issues in Holliday 2001b). In the 1990s stakeholder-centredness grew out of what has been called a *process* approach which claimed sensitivity to situational needs; and groups of local people, or stakeholders, were quite rightly identified as representatives of these needs. Strategies were developed to satisfy their interests and maintain their *ownership* of the innovation which the project brings. Several examples of these can be seen in Hayes (1997b). In projects in Indonesia and Thailand, Ambrose-Yeoh reports how 87 secondary school teachers are consulted 'in a feasibility study'. In a study related to Malta, Jarvis, and Cameron (1997) monitor the changing roles of teachers as they adopt and interpret innovation. Also, Martin and Balabanis (1995) describe how in Egypt, 'working parties' are set up to involve senior representatives from USAID, the Ministry of Education and the language centre where the innovation was to take place, and negotiate consensus. Similarly, Weir and Roberts (1994) describe how 'insiders' become involved in the evaluation of the innovation process, in, for example, the establishment of 'baseline' data, and how formative evaluation becomes integrated with self-directed teacher development. Stakeholders are thus given an active role in the evaluation process, where their insider knowledge enables them to 'consider and document assumptions and conditions already known to affect the progress or success of the project' (Weir and Roberts 1994: 13-14). Links with thinking in mainstream education are seen as Weir and Roberts cite Case et al's (1985) *Evaluation for Development Education*. The concern about how to involve stakeholders is, however, never satisfied and continues to be an issue. For example, Hayes maintains a strong focus on '*participation* throughout the system' of a project in Sri Lanka, 'as well as ownership by institutional stakeholders – DFID, the Ministry, provincial officials and so on' (2000: 139, his emphasis). Rea-Dickins and Germaine refer to stakeholder involvement as 'evaluators', as teachers assisting with evaluation tasks, in 'self evaluation' and 'ongoing evaluation' (1998: 5-9). The result is 'greater participation of stakeholder groups' which has led to a 'greater democratizing of knowledge about evaluation' (1998: 11).

People in a matrix

However, also like learner-centredness, despite this desire to be inclusive and collaborative in curriculum projects, there was at the same time the inevitable danger of control-construction with the ascendancy, in the late 1980s, of a particularly powerful technicalized professional discourse concerning how projects should be run, which became known as *projectization*. The efficiency of curriculum ventures became dependent on writing stakeholders into the project plan rather than making the plan sensitive to the stakeholders.

An early example of projectization in the literature can be seen in Harrison and Munro's 1989 Dunford House paper, in which they describe how the then new 'project framework' defines the curriculum project within a matrix. They claim that this has the following advantages:

> It clarifies the objectives of the project; it brings the key project components together; it is systematic; it establishes key stages of the project under 'indicators of achievement'; and it makes provision for monitoring. ... Most agencies use the 'project framework' (or 'logical framework') approach to project management. The four columns are labelled project structure; indicators of achievement; ways of assessment; assumptions/risks. The vertical path through the framework shows the logical progression from the bottom row 'inputs' to the next row up 'outputs', which keep to the 'immediate objectives' of the project in the third row up. The logical path is completed by the contribution of the project to the wider (national) objectives. (1997: 132)

Harrison and Munro then provide an example of the project framework for a Nigerian secondary school project. They do not make explicit reference to stakeholders, but the example lists 'host' Nigerian counterparts, teachers and administrative staff along with physical and financial *resources* such as premises, Land Rovers, equipment and materials; and one of the 'assumptions' for success is that counterparts are '*bonded* after training' to the project (1997: 133, my emphasis). The term 'counterpart' is used within the discourse of projectization to refer to a person belonging to the curriculum site who is being 'trained' or 'developed' to take the place of the curriculum developer once the project is 'handed over' to the 'host institution'.

By the mid 1990s the project framework 'is the medium of *contractual accountability*, spelt out for key stakeholders including the host government' (Weir and Roberts 1994: 13-14, my emphasis). Although Rea-Dickins and Germaine see stakeholders very much as people who are *integrated* into the curriculum project in a major way, this integration depends on them being '*trained*' by the project. Reporting on a number of evaluation studies carried out between 1991 and 1997, they refer to examples of such training as 'for contractual technical staff in preparation for data gathering', 'training for field workers' (1998: 5-9).

An essentialist view of culture has been central to matrix thinking as a means for trying to understand the foreign Other who needs to be 'included' and 'integrated' into the framework. Smith, like so many commentators, puts 'cultural' at the top of his list of 'obstacles' to this intendedly humanitarian aim; and what he says about Cambodians falls within the illusion of the generalized Other described in chapter 2 suggests that local personnel:

> will have to push hard to bring about any changes. This will be difficult where culturally one defers to and is not assertive towards someone

> higher in the hierarchy. ... Others have noted the 'cultural nature of management' ... and the 'differing cultural concepts as to the appropriate roles for professionals employed in the public sector'. (1995: 71)

He continues to state the '"need for a thorough understanding by outsiders of the host culture into which the innovation is being introduced"' (1995: 74 citing Leach). He thus alludes to the model of culturism seen in Hofstede, who looks at 'the consequences of national cultural differences in the way people in a country organize themselves' and how 'organizational practices and theories ore culturally dependent' (1991: xiii). The rational, systematic nature of this national culture model fits well with the technical needs of matrix thinking, as it does with many activities, such as management, which seek to commodify human difference efficiently. Following this line of thinking, Flew sees 'counterpart training' as essentially an 'interpersonal interaction across cultures'. She, quite rightly, shrinks from the perception of a one-way transfer from culturally superior expatriate curriculum developer to culturally inferior counterparts as 'potentially patronizing' (1995: 76) and recommends 'mutual learning between people from different cultures' (1995: 81). One wonders, however, whether 'trust and esteem' (1995: 78) will be sufficient to break the 'us'-'them' paradigm and succeed in countering culturism. On the one hand, one would not nowadays recommend a professional exchange of views on the basis of a sharing of gender or racial difference. On the other hand, the headings 'training' and 'empowerment' under which the exchange takes place seem to indicate the ideology of only one side.

We all fall into these traps though. Here is a comment from Kerry, the British ESOL educator who spoke about Thai colleagues in chapter 2. she expresses a genuine interest in working with and learning from her Thai colleagues:

> However, there were other Thai teachers that spoke excellent English that could have done what we were doing and probably the only reason that they were not employed in the same capacity as us was that the parents of the children we were teaching expected to see a native speaker teaching their children. It was a question of prestige and image, something that seems quite important in Thai (or at least in Bangkok) society. (Email interview)

All people, from whatever society, are concerned with 'prestige and image' in different ways and at different times; and to assume that these qualities are a particular feature of Thai people in effect exoticizes them according to an imagined image of 'culture'.

Technicalized inclusion

Terminologies such as 'projectization' and 'project framework' come and go; but I wish to maintain that the matrix thinking beneath them remains and

develops as we move further within the accountability culture of late modern society. The highly technicalized rendering, in which stakeholders become 'bonded', 'trained', 'integrated' and 'contractually accountable' to become 'effective resources' within the project, is what one would expect from 'hyperrational' funding agencies which are by their bureaucratic nature distant from the interpersonal business of curriculum innovation (see Holliday 1994a: 138, citing Daft and Becker and Fullan), and who need to account for the money they pour into such projects by controlling all possible variables. The issue is how far such thinking is reified by TESOL at the interpersonal level, and how far the people in the curriculum are positioned within an unreal matrix which then becomes the illusion of the real world. We are all aware of this danger, so well represented by the Hollywood *Matrix*.

As early as the late 1980s I and colleagues were socialized into matrix thinking while working with project frameworks on the Ain Shams University project in Egypt as part of day-to-day reporting and planning. Although, like all employees caught up in quality assurance régimes, we were critical of the imposition of matrix thinking, we nevertheless got on with it and assimilated its discourse. For us British consultants who were working on short term contracts it was an essential means for keeping the projects going and keeping our jobs. We also involved American Fulbrighters in this matrix thinking, some of whom subsequently went on to develop new US aid-funded projects employing similar thinking.

We also involved our Egyptian colleagues in project planning, which was not of course a bad thing in itself. There is no doubt that the attempt to include all parties within project matrices is sincere. It is the way in which this planning is conceptualized within matrix thinking which is problematic. It is the very specific way in which the matrix manages inclusion by overwhelming existing practice with its technicalized language and practices which we need to look at. It either gains hegemonic control over all parties or excludes those who resist while perpetuating a seductive myth of inclusion.

In the rest if the chapter I am going to look at three closely related themes connected with control-construction of stakeholder-centredness: the way the matrix reduces 'non-native speaker' colleagues to suit is own structures, they way in which it devalues their realities, and the way in which these realities resist the matrix.

Writing the stakeholders in

I can trace evidence of how a culturist othering of 'non-native speaker' colleagues can operate within matrix thinking back to my own curriculum work at Damascus University in the early 1980s. The project was to set up a new English for specific purposes centre. This involved developing English language programmes for university students of humanities, science, medicine, and dentistry, employing and developing a cadre of Syrian teachers who

would teach the programmes, and training two Syrian 'counterparts' to become Directors of the centre after the project had finished.

Demonizing the non-participant

A particularly poignant example of a project stakeholder being written into the matrix as a resource along with rooms and equipment was when one of the counterparts decided to leave the project and pursue a more beneficial career path as a diplomat. The following account has been appropriately anonymized.

> I had arranged a meeting between Jill, my British line manager at the aid agency which was funding my curriculum project, and my Syrian university colleagues. As Jill and I walked through the campus to the meeting we saw Mahmoud, one of the Syrian colleagues, who should have been at the meeting, being driven out of the campus in a dark blue car. Jill was particularly angry because Mahmoud had been to Britain on a six-week 'training grant' and should therefore not be missing such an important project event. She later described the car as being 'a black Mercedes with tinted windows' and 'ungrateful' and 'duplicitous' Mahmoud as 'leaving with his *mukhabarat* (Syrian secret police) friends', when in fact the car was a very old Peugeot with the windows down, and I knew the driver to be another university lecturer.

It was not only that Jill so easily othered Mahmoud as being associated with the secret police, which I really do not think he was, that revealed her prejudices here. It was also that she was colluding with the matrix discourse which demonized anyone who was not prepared to conform. In this case, the matrix demanded that foreign nationals who received the aid should pay with their whole careers – 'bonded' to the project, using Harrison and Munro's terms (op cit). Mahmoud was considered part of a 'cascade' approach to development which presumes that teachers who are recipients of training will stay in their jobs long enough to train their students with the passed-down skills. Many of my colleagues who worked on such programmes in the 1980s and 1990s now see this expectation that people could be expected to stick to pre-planned careers in this way as presumptuous, naïve and unrealistic. In actual fact, Mahmoud had found a much better job completely outside education which amounted to a major career move that he would have been foolish to turn down, and which would also make him completely unneedy of educational aid. In summary, British, 'us', technically 'superior' Jill was reducing foreign, 'them', Mahmoud to a patronized image of incapable of sustained compliance with the aid plan. References to 'duplicitous' and secret police place Mahmoud within the reduced image of undemocratic society characteristic of the generalized 'non-native speaker' Other described in chapter 2.

Constructing 'their' needs

Even though Mahmoud quickly escaped this particular matrix, about which he was not very much concerned, others took his place and became more deeply embedded. My next example is of how the intended inclusion of Syrian colleagues is written over by the need to fulfil the categories and objectives of the matrix which render the 'non-native speaker' Other culturally deficient. The extract is from an extended report written at the time, which deals with the 'needs profile' for 'Counterpart 1':

> These are based upon the duties he will have to perform as Counterpart and afterwards ESP Centre Director (with the other counterpart) and what will be required of him on the British MA course which is an essential part of his training. ... The needs can be listed as follows: (a) to reach the academic standard necessary to cope with an MA course in Applied Linguistics in Britain after one year working on the project (b) to master the appropriate study skills for such a course (in particular reference, organization and research skills) (c) to appreciate the concept of application – e.g. psycholinguistic theory to learning practice in the classroom. (Cooke and Holliday 1982: 11)

Five other needs are then listed which concerned administration and organizing teacher training. What is significant here is that the same type of language is being used to talk about a colleague as would be used to talk about students. Within an English for specific purposes programme it may be appropriate to talk about the language 'needs' of students to define the types of specialized language they would require for the 'target situation' of a specific work or study context. However, when the needs analysis is applied to colleagues implies that they also need to be 'taught' specialized skills which are required, not for a linguistic target situation, but for the institutional, behavioural target situation of the matrix itself. The way in which colleagues are being referred to as numerical *objects*, as 'Counterparts 1 and 2', to be fitted into 'our' 'idea of a 'target' institution is depersonalizing.

What Counterpart 1 was presumed to need to learn in preparation for the British masters programme also exemplifies how we perceived him as the incapable 'non-native speaker' Other and negated his positive abilities. A man in his late 30s, he already had considerable academic experience, also catalogued in the report, which included teaching 'composition and phonetics as an Assistant Lecturer in the English Department for several years', 'experience of ELT in private institutes in Damascus', plus teaching for 'many years in secondary school'. He had already 'managed to get onto the MA course at Lancaster University' (Cooke and Holliday 1982: 11). His English would also have been classified at that time as 'near native-speaker competence'. It may be going too far to say that the use of 'managed' is condescending. However, he had had more relevant academic

and professional experience than I had when I entered the same programme at Lancaster several years before. Moreover, the very basic human concept of 'application' was seen to be culturally alien.

Imagining deficiency

This notion of a culturally deficient Other is also evident earlier in the report on how the needs analysis we carried out on other colleagues did not run as we expected:

> Interviews with informants [e.g. teachers] were not systematic in that it was not possible to run through the CNP with them. ... The reasons for this deviation from orthodoxy are that (a) informants were excessively difficult to get hold of; (b) they often did not have the information required, other than in the form of personal opinions, anecdotes and perhaps fabrications to conceal their ignorance; (c) they frequently disagreed with each other, leading the researcher to continuously seek other 'more reliable and in-touch' informants; and (d) they often did not really grasp the purpose of the research (if they did, they were more interested in providing their own theories on how the ESP problem should be solved than providing information). (Cooke and Holliday 1982: 6)

The informants, who included 'faculty deans, heads of departments, subject lecturers, English language teachers' as well as students (Cooke and Holliday 1982: 6), are seen here as a constraint to the efficiency of the CNP - Munby's (1978) 'communications needs processor', which represents a highly technicalized form of language needs analysis. In one sense this extract can be read as an account of the shortcomings of an 'orthodox', positivistically 'scientific' approach to investigation when applied to people who are getting on with other things. However, the description of the informants is unnecessarily negative. It gives the impression of a deficit local culture, where people are '*excessively* difficult to get hold of', where 'personal opinions' and 'anecdotes' are linked with 'fabrications', concealment, unreliability, and disagreement in the sense of lack of resolve, and, finally, where people lack the mental ability to 'grasp' something as 'straightforward' as a communications needs processor. Seen in this light, the perceptions of the shortcomings of Counterpart 1 with regard to 'appreciating the concept of application' would fall into the same category as 'our' native-speakerist perception of a deficit culture - *unable* to 'manage, research, plan, evaluate, organize' without being 'trained', and 'not' to be 'proficient' in the required technology of curriculum design, in the listing of generalized Other characteristics in chapter 2.

It is perceptions like these, of a deficient foreign Other, which I think drive the idea of innovation which underlies many curriculum projects. What was not

appreciated during the project at Damascus University was that the problematic behaviour of Syrian colleagues may have been more to do with them not wishing to, resisting, or simply ignoring the matrix. At a more common-sense level, the probability that the people in the investigation simply had more important things to do than fill their lives with the issues of 'our' curriculum or 'our' research was being ignored. This will be picked up again below.

Devaluing other realities

The way in which Syrian colleagues were reduced so that they could be written into the design of the matrix was indicative of a larger tendency, continuing into the present, for projects failing to value the 'other' realities of the people the curriculum project is supposed to be helping. This failure derives from a sociological blindness which occurs, as a basis of prejudice, when people are so absorbed by their own cultural orientation – institutional norms, discourse or, indeed, ideology (iii and iv in Figure 3.1) – that their vision of other social realities is distorted (Holliday 1994a: 133, 2002a: 161 citing Morris). This blindness is largely to do with the process of reification described in chapter 2, especially in terms of the naturalization of discourses. First there are the overwhelming demands of dealing with a new technical discourse. Both the instigators and the recipients struggle to master new procedures and language. As these become routine and take on the status of 'the normal way of doing and thinking about things', the instigators can cease to 'see' the recipients' world and 'forget' what it is like to be on the receiving end; and the recipients can also 'forget' their own local knowledge. All parties undervalue activities which no longer seem to fit and adopt new ones which do seem to fit. The thrill of new people, new concepts and 'change' can be very destructive to old practice. Figure 6.1 expresses this process diagrammatically.

I am thinking particularly here of a Central European teacher who adopted a new approach to evaluating her classes as the result of curriculum project intervention, while the evaluation she had been carrying out for years went unnoticed; and she herself did not mention it, even though it had worked very well. She was in danger of being drawn in; and the new evaluation system was in danger of asphalting over important local knowledge. She was losing the advantage of being an insider to her own milieu and was becoming an outsider novice to the discourses and practices of the matrix.

Conflicting discourses

It is also the case that people are *not* taken in by the matrix, or at least by parts of it, and struggle to resist, but are still made to feel outsiders to their own domains by the way in which the matrix attempts to restructure their expertise and practices. However, regardless of this resistance, they still become outsiders to the matrix within their own domain. I experienced one

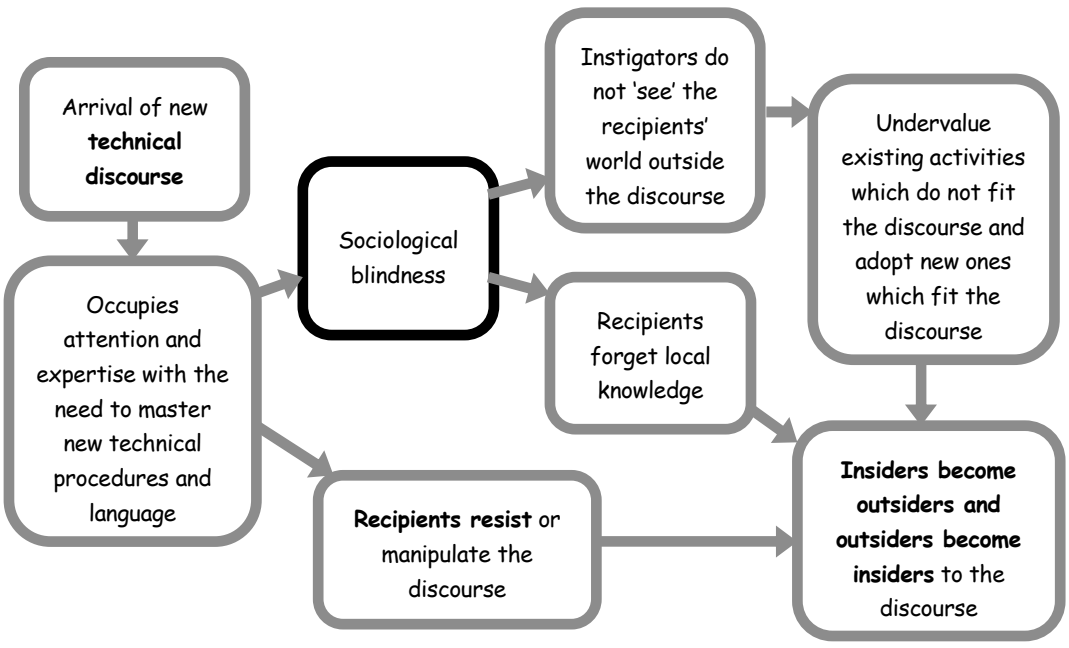
such case, which led to a discoursal war, while working as a visiting consultant on a curriculum project in Asia in the late 1990s. The account in the following pages is not generated by a formal qualitative study, but is based on reports and other documents as well as observation of events. I have changed the names of people, places and activities to protect the people and institutions involved. All interpretations are entirely my own; and I apologize for any misunderstandings.

The curriculum project was located in a large University X in Country A. Its purpose was to develop a textbook for undergraduates in the Faculties of Science, Health and Economics. Funding was provided by a British aid agency. The project was co-ordinated on a daily basis by Dr Rustam, an academic in the English Department. The 'stakeholders' also comprised the 27 English Department lecturers and about 2000 students who would be expected to use the new textbook, and subject lecturers and heads of department in the faculties. One significant event which I witnessed was the initial visit of Gabby, an evaluation consultant. The project had already been running for six months; and her job was to review what was happening and recommend an appropriate evaluation strategy. There was an immediate conflict because Gabby did not like the existing evaluation scheme which Dr Rustam had already developed. Several reports were exchanged over the conflict. The following is a summary:

> Rustam described her evaluation scheme as an ongoing *process study* which was 'inclusive', 'democratic' and invited all parties to make contributions at every point, in which the design of the textbooks would

Figure 6.1: insiders and outsiders

switch roles



> be 'jointly negotiated', and which involved 20 'lecturer-researchers' in carrying out qualitative observations of their own classes and those of colleagues.
>
> Gabby had grave reservations and felt that Dr Rustam's scheme 'lacked clarity and precision', was 'not sufficiently thought through' and made no provision for a 'systematic assessment' of the existing curriculum. She recommended that the lecturer-researchers should be trained to carry out a quantitative *baseline study* which should include systematic classroom research. She requested information about 'the composition and responsibilities' of the lecturer-researchers, how far they had been 'exposed to the necessary skills', and evidence that they 'understood' what the evaluation entailed. With regard to the new textbook, she also wanted to know the 'criteria for text selection and text evaluation', the 'explicit objectives of the textbook', and whether or not the lecturer-researchers were aware of them, and whether a representative sample of the texts and tasks were being 'trialled with representative types of classrooms and students'. She also insisted that the 'data should be analysed, documented and shown to all stakeholders'.
>
> Rustam's response was that Gabby's approach to evaluation was inappropriate for the University X milieu. (Project notes)

There are two types of interrelated conflict here. At one level, Gabby's objections are those which anyone would have who subscribes to a more traditionally positivistic research paradigm which demands quantifiable, representative sampling based on measurable objectives and criteria – and which fits the 'contractual accountability' recommended by Weir and Roberts (op cit). In these terms, Dr Rustam's intensely qualitative approach will seem far too subjective, opportunistic, lacking in substance and unable to 'tie down' what has to be done. The fact that Rustam's scheme is based on a sophisticated postmodern acceptance of subjectivity and opportunism will not be recognized.

Do they understand?

At the same time, there is a systemic contradiction in Gabby's approach which characterizes matrix thinking. In trying to squeeze the project into an accountable matrix, Gabby fails to give value to what Rustam and her colleagues, as stakeholders, are already doing. A major ingredient in this failure is her doubt, in her comments on their 'skills' and 'awareness', that the lecturer-researchers are competent to carry out the research or even to understand what the new textbook is about without the 'training' which is central to the matrix raison d'être. Inherent in this attitude is the same deficit view of the 'non-native speaker' culture as in the Damascus University

project above. She also ignores the fact that Rustam had, just prior to the commencement of the project, already published an exhaustive study of classroom English in the very faculties where the project was situated. Rustam's study did, in effect, serve as a baseline study, but is ignored by the matrix. It is also ironic that Rustam, like the Central European teacher mentioned above, failed to take a stand on this, as though she had already been taken in by the matrix to the extent that she also was beginning to recognize its importance.

Evidence that the lecturer-researchers did have considerable 'skills' within the process approach to evaluation could be seen in a seminar organized by Rustam:

> Dr Rustam's opening presentation was very academic and assumed a shared discourse with the participants, with such terms as 'ethnography', 'technology transfer', 'narratives', 'collective knowledge'. She also talked about 'grounding the discourses' of the new textbook in the lecturers notes. The presentation was also very inclusive, talking and referring to the lecturer-researchers as equal colleagues.
>
> Some of the lecturer-researchers then made a very formal presentations by reading out from ethnographic observation notes they had made during their own classes or while watching colleagues trialling draft units of the new textbook. These were quite meticulous, observant descriptions of both teacher and student behaviour and methodology. (Project notes)

Not only did Rustam assume that the lecturer-researchers did understand the deeper principles of the qualitative approach, the lecturer-researchers demonstrated this in their presentations, which also showed that they did not need any extra special training in research – at least not of the softer kind which Dr Rustam had in mind. The marked inclusivity of the event was also in sharp contrast to Gabby's more excluding technical integration through training approach. On another occasion I also saw several of these lecturer-researchers give very competent papers at a conference on postcolonial literature which demonstrated an acute awareness of and ability to articulate complex political ideas connected with language education.

'Ivory towers'

These conference skills would not however stand up to the requirements of the matrix. There is a broader issue represented in this conflict between the two types of practice – that of a widespread lack of respect amongst ESOL educators, especially but not only in the English speaking West, for academia and what might be considered 'ivory tower' theorizing. I have to admit my own initial reservations on hearing Dr Rustam's '*very* academic' presentation (I almost wrote in my project notes the more derogatory, to

my professional discourse, 'speech' and 'lecture' instead of 'presentation'); and I found myself wondering if the 'teachers' *would* understand it. This resonates with my experience at Damascus University (op cit), where the language centre we set up was in open conflict with the English Department. In our modernist quest for training in accountable skills, I and my British colleagues found the teaching of linguistics and literature in the English Department anathema and refused to let any of the lecturers there teach in 'our' Centre.

There is however a deeper culturist prejudice at work here, which is exemplified by this incident:

> I was visiting a British TESOL institution while doing consultancy work for a Pakistani teachers association. One of the British teachers said that she had no reason to take the Pakistani teachers association seriously. I asked if she had ever been to any of their conferences. She said he had not because she just knew that it would comprise people lecturing about theory. I told her that she would find just the opposite and drew her attention to the teachers' manual which the association had produced to help Pakistani teachers introduce communicative teaching in under-resourced state schools.

It is difficult to say why this view should be held. Aboshiha (in process) makes a valuable investigation into the complexity of factors underlying British teachers' disdain for theory. The Pakistani teachers in question were not university lecturers. It is however my impression that it is less to do with whether or not the people in question are university people, but with their foreignness to the English-speaking Western TESOL instrumental ideal as described in detail in chapter 3 – where valuing the practical act of changing linguistic and behavioural habits of 'skills' through the management of activities makes any educational culture which is *believed* to be based on the transmission of theory, knowledge or ideas inferior. The conflict between these two educational cultures is explored in Holliday (1994a, citing Bernstein, Esland, Barnes, Tomley and Goodson); but what is not explored there is the prejudicial, culturist element of this thinking. The Pakistani teachers were of a highly practical disposition, setting up their own workshops to support each other in teaching in the very difficult circumstances of primary and secondary schools. The unspoken problem that some English-speaking Western ESOL educators have with them is that they have not been 'trained', 'corrected', culturally 'civilized'.

Incompatible hierarchies

There was also an incompatibility between the hierarchical structures of the university and the matrix cultures. This deeply affected the work of Dr Ansari, a textbook specialist who had been brought in by the project

from University Y, who had difficulty in getting his travel expenses. He had a quarter-time contract with the project and was responsible for the final design, editing and writing of the textbook. Because of the rhythm of the project he was required to stay at University X, which is 600 kilometres distant from his university, for periods of up to three weeks at a time. He was in the middle of a fraught dialogue about this with Gulnaz, the project manager from the aid agency:

> During a private conversation, Dr Ansari told me that he was soon going to have to leave the project because of the way in which he was being treated, which was making his position untenable. He explained that was an associate professor, the same as Dr Rustam. This was also a relatively senior position within the university system to that of Gulnaz within the funding agency and equivalent organizations. He said he had to mention this, not because he was normally so concerned with status, but because it had become an issue within the project.
>
> He had received a letter from Gulnaz which explained how, within the project 'line-management' structure he was now placed somewhere between the lecturer-researchers and Dr Rustam as project co-ordinator. This meant he was junior to Rustam. Furthermore, he was told that he could not speak directly to Gulnaz because he should 'report' only to Rustam, who would then 'report' to Gulnaz.
>
> Ansari said that this was divisive and a clear example of the funding agency trying to 'invade' the project with its own hierarchy. He had only agreed to work with the project on the basis of collaborating with colleagues from other universities whom he had always considered his 'equals'. Furthermore, his institution wasn't getting paid; and he had to leave all his teaching behind, to pile up for his return. University Y was not prepared to employ someone else to take his classes until they got paid by the project. (Project notes)

He went on to explain that he not only felt marginalized by the project hierarchy, but that the university system was being sidestepped:

> He felt he couldn't approach his good friend Dr Rustam about this because this line-management business had made him feel nervous about the whole thing. He knew she was still really his colleague and friend, and would feel the same way about the line-management thing as he did; but he wanted to go through his own, university, system. (Project notes)

Here we have an interesting exposure of how the system set up by the aid agency, which, in Gulnaz's terms, disapproved of 'antiquated' hierarchy, was blind to its own counterproductively hierarchical system in the eyes of the university people. Under the surface was further evidence that the matrix

just did not appreciate the status of expertise such as Ansari's, which came from the alien, 'uncorrected' university culture.

Wrong-footing the local system

Grimshaw, in his ethnographic study of the impact of British funded curriculum projects on Chinese universities, shows the disruption of local hierarchies at a much deeper level than at University X, perhaps because of the longer influence of the projects concerned. That he takes these comments from British sources shows how not all British personnel collude with matrix thinking. But we should also be a little cautious here in that they may have over-estimated the degree of impact of that they were doing:

> For the Chinese personnel the project meant extra work, including an increased teaching load .... To the best of my knowledge, the local staff did not receive additional pay for attending project meetings or training sessions. This was a problem for some Chinese lecturers who were already doing two or more jobs in order to make ends meet. The requirements of the British aid agency bureaucracy were cited as a particular problem by one British respondent .... In this sense, the project was a disturbance and an imposition on the local personnel. (2002: 294, citing questionnaire responses)

As well as this inconvenience to academic staff were issues concerning relations with their students, where 'this situation may have impacted upon the students who "lost confidence in their teachers as 'all knowing' and lost confidence in the ability of (some) Chinese produced materials"' (citing interview). There was also evidence of the project exacerbating conflict between younger and more senior Chinese staff. The younger staff were able to manipulate the English-speaking Western TESOL methodology brought by the project to:

> develop a counter-discourse of progressive ELT which challenged the prevailing academic discourse of the 'senior professors'. It is difficult to determine whether the younger Chinese members of the project team sincerely believed in or even truly understood the principles of 'Communicative Language Teaching'. Nevertheless, these young lecturers were able to manipulate the discourse of CLT in order to obtain power and influence within the School of International Studies. (2002: 291-2)

This may have been more to do with the young lecturers' agendas than with the project. However, the project did disturb the balance of power in that:

> Within the task-oriented culture of the project the younger members of staff were granted more responsibilities than was customary in the

> host culture .... In this way the project weakened established power-knowledge relationships within the institution and enabled the project team to side-step some of the usual protocols of the host institution. (Grimshaw 2002: 291)

This may be the area where the greatest power of the matrix resides. As established power-knowledge relationships are spoiled there is a greater chance of marginalizing local forces. This makes me think twice about this observation from Kerry:

> Because some of the native speakers wanted to convey the message that we could also learn from their experience we suggested that the Thai teachers also ran a workshop, perhaps on managing large classes, or something they had experience of that we did not, but the Thai teachers were shy about doing this. (Email interview)

The surface reading of this would be that the Thai teachers lacked the ability to present in front of British TESOL colleagues. Might it not just be the case though, that they were reluctant to take part in an event which was set up and owned by their British colleagues, which would force them to enter into a domain in which they lacked power. It is one thing to openly oppose the matrix, as did Dr Rustam and her colleagues; but quite another thing to try and perform within its domain and according to its terms. This resonates with the Hong Kong students in chapter 5 saying that they did not speak in the classroom because they were not prepared to expose themselves in what they considered a dangerous environment of scrutiny and correction. There is an unavoidable dilemma of a foreign presence of one sort forcing an appearance of local inability. Could this be why Rustam, as mentioned above, did not talk in public with the matrix people about the book she had published? It is sometimes better to withdraw than play a game on other people's terms.

Just read the documents: we don't need to talk

A major way in which the instigators of the matrix at University X tried, consciously or unconsciously, to wrong-foot the university culture in this way was in how they demanded their discourses and practices to be understood. Evidence of this can be found in a conflict between Dr Rustam and Gulnaz over another payment discrepancy – the lecturer-researchers' subsistence and travel expenses for attending research training workshops, which Rustam had understood would be funded by the funding agency, and Gulnaz said should be paid by the University.

Rustam wanted to meet because 'there was never time to talk about this issue'. Gulnaz did not because 'the time allocated to her for this project by the

agency was limited and did not allow her to make more frequent visits to the project for face-to-face meetings' which she felt bothersome and unnecessary (project notes). Later, I noted down the substance of what each of the two parties told me about the issue. For her part, Gulnaz did not pull her punches about what she thought about university academia. She explained that:

> She found the university people impossible to work with. She felt that Rustam knew very well that all the details were spelt out in the project document; she just refused to take the time to read through them. She said that Rustam complained that she had too much to do; but that really, compared to people in private and aid sectors her workload was incredibly small. She said that university people were basically lazy, that they wanted everything, but were prepared to give nothing. They were stuck in their antiquated hierarchies and ivory towers. They were stuck up about literature and lectures; but they couldn't put themselves out to read important documentation.

A very different side of the story was expressed by Dr Rustam:

> She said that their documents were incomprehensible. She explained that she had known Gulnaz since they were teenagers; but she couldn't find the time to sit down with her and talk things through. She said she knew all the information was in the documents; but that all *the technical language and charts hid the truth*. This was supposed to be a project to develop people – lecturers and students – but all they got were time lines and objectives. (Project notes)

The big issue here was not who should pay the subsistence, but the way in which the matrix insisted on imposing an alien mode of communication which would deeply upset the whole basis of the local process of power and knowledge.

Complex relations

Despite the great importance which the matrix gives to documentary frameworks of accountability, the above examples show that what really matters is what happens at an interpersonal level. This in itself is highly complex. Gulnaz and Rustam may seem to have an unusual relationship in that they do not come from different societies; but as with Aliya's story at the end of chapter 2, it is the blurring of boundaries which this represents which highlights important aspects of the workings of native-speakerism. They are compatriots with the same initial educational upbringing. However, Gulnaz has been socialized into the matrix thinking of the aid agency for whom she works, which is very different to the university system which values 'sitting down and talking things through', and which makes it

possible for Gulnaz reductively to characterize her old friend as 'lazy' and 'stuck up', and to become sociologically blind to what she knew about her friend and colleague outside the domain of the matrix.

The University X project was not a straight forward case of English-speaking Western ESOL educators bringing their matrix to 'local' 'non-native speaker' colleagues. Gabby happened to be British; but in other projects in the same country compatriot evaluation consultants were also employed. The language issue was also complex. In the country where the project took place English was a language which was commonly used in education and commercial sectors; and University X was an English medium university. The book which Rustam had written was in English, as would any administrative writing she would have to do in the university. Rustam, Ansari and Gulnaz would have used English as a major language of work and study all their lives; but within the native-speakerist ideal they would be labelled 'non-native-speakers'. Whereas Rustam argued that Gulnaz had been 'changed' by the culture of the aid agency, it could also be argued that Rustam herself had also been socialized by the qualitative, postmodern academic culture to which she prescribed. While the matrix culture along with its positivistic approach to evaluation may have been born in Western late modern societies, the postmodern approach of Rustam and her colleagues may have far older roots not confined to the West. Either way, in an increasingly globalized academic and business world, neither the matrix nor the university system could be described as particularly 'foreign' or 'indigenous'. What we have is a mélange of small cultures within a complex society. The relationships and conflicts which they represent could be found in any complex institutional milieu where innovation from outside sources is taking place.

However, I wish to argue that there is a *specifically* native-speakerist thread running through these conflicts which colours the way in which matrix thinking undervalues the complex 'local' worlds with a desire to correct the cultures of 'non-native speaker' colleagues. Gulnaz, regardless of her background is thus infected by the native-speakerist ideology. In chapter 1 I make the point that native-speakerism, while generated in the English speaking West, has taken root in the lives of ESOL educators everywhere – and also in the lives of people like Gulnaz, who become implicated in its ideals.

Bucking the imperialism thesis

Although she and her university colleagues may have felt marginalized by the matrix, Dr Rustam maintained a sharp resistance throughout the life of the project. The story of the relationship of people and the matrix is by no means one sided. The imperialism thesis presented by Phillipson (1992), which claims that curriculum projects are a major means whereby the English speaking West dominates the East and the South, does not always ring true. In this section I will look at examples of major resistance to the

possibility of curriculum project imperialism which show that despite everything, local stakeholders and their institutions can get their own way.

Seeing through the matrix

At one level people everywhere possess a natural intelligence which leads them to see through the matrix. The story of Bojana, one of my interviewees who was a counterpart in a British curriculum project in Eastern Europe is one of someone who initially had a degree of awe at the technology implicit in the discourse while at the same time refusing to be taken in by the matrix:

> My first encounter with the words 'stakeholder', 'counterpart', 'project input and output', 'knock-on effect' etc., was when I was involved in a British … project as a 'local counterpart'. Before the project began I was sent by my Department to the … [aid agency] to a meeting about project design. I remember looking at the forms to be filled in and trying to understand them. I was amazed at the level of detail to be specified and the amount of thinking ahead that had to be done in terms of the outcomes and effects. It all seemed extremely professional to me. (Email interview)

She then, like Rustam above, expresses scepticism at how far the forms, documentation and plans could relate to the reality of her department:

> But I was surprised at the implication in these documents that somehow the project should have a more far-fetching and long-lasting effect on a larger scale than I saw it could really have. I remember thinking "that must be the way things are done in the West and that's why things there are so efficient'. At the same time, I felt incapable of contributing much because the world presented in those documents was very different from the one in my Department.

There is a sense here that Bojana felt she was being overwhelmed by a force which somehow had interests above and beyond her own and in which she had no place or ability to contribute. She continues:

> I felt that 'my world' was not at all conducive to the kind of planning that was proposed because things in my Department could not be planned with such precision and detail and so far in advance. And I wondered about my role in the process since it was obvious that all the planning had to be done according to the BC standards. (Email interview)

She then analyses the role she imagines the British planners had seen for her:

> Looking back, I now understand that the idea was to involve the 'stake-holders' from the beginning of the process of project planning. A good

> intention, I agree. But my involvement as a stakeholder was only technical. I had no tools that would enable me to contribute in that kind of process. And the contours of the process had already been determined.

Her feeling that the 'contours' of the project had 'already been determined', despite the good intentions of the planners gives the impression that 'involvement' of the participants was only secondary. This leads Bojana to critique the entire validity of the project:

> In fact, I see a conflict between two things in these kinds of educational projects: accountability and sustainability. Those who fund projects are naturally concerned with accountability and in order to account for the resources everything must be planned and tightly controlled in advance. But in order to achieve sustainability I think project management must adopt a much more flexible and open approach. It has to take into account the perspectives of all the 'stakeholders' if the project is to be meaningful to people. Because if it is not perceived as meaningful, then it is done for some other reasons (for example, to maintain the good relations with the … [aid agency]) and it may dissolve the moment the 'input' stage ends. (Email interview)

Indeed, she echoes the points made by Swales (1980) in that the project might have been acquiring 'internal validity' by going through accountable processes, but was not achieving 'external validity' by failing to engage with the deeper worlds of the people and the institutions involved. Bojana characterizes this conflict at a level which makes collaboration impossible:

> I think this is part of a wider process of bureaucratization of all processes including educational ones, in the name of greater efficiency. But when there is a project involving an agency aiming to be very efficient and an institution in a country where efficiency understood in that sense is not high on the priority list, then it becomes extremely difficult for people who actually work on the project to collaborate even if they share a common goal. (Email interview)

Playing one's own ground

Jacob, who also worked as a 'local co-ordinator' on a curriculum project at Pune University in the mid-1990s, demonstrates both how she and her colleagues put up with the imposition of the matrix took, and indeed had ulterior motives throughout. This is part of her response to a challenge that she was colluding with linguistic imperialistic aims by taking part in the project,

and that the money the project had granted would be 'siphoned off to the "empire"':

> I am aware of this. In fact my colleagues in the department were also very concerned. But I think we've worked it out for ourselves. ... I think we will be getting all that we had stated in our proposal [to have the project]. The hardware i.e. the computers the photocopier and other equipment for the resources centre are some of the major inputs that will be provided. It's a good bargain! That's how I would like to look at it. As for the primary product i.e. the textbooks that we will be writing ... I think they will be negotiated by the community. It is quite aware of what is at stake. (Jacob 1996: 3)

This form of 'playing' with what projects bring is well catalogued in Shipman et al's (1974) ethnographic account of the Keele schools project in Britain. They describe in detail how the teachers were happy to receive 'electronic gadgetry' along with other hard-to-get goods, while not actually conforming to what the project had planned for them (1974: 117, cited also in Holliday 1994a: 116). These displays of resistance to the régime of the matrix parallel the displays of social autonomy amongst language students which take place in private sites of learning described in chapter 5.

It would however be a mistake to be complacent about the material value of curriculum projects to local communities. Grimshaw notes that in his study 'there are some differences between the views of the Chinese and the British respondents' with regard to 'material resources'. While the British felt that these were significant, there was no evidence that the Chinese found them outstanding (2002: 276). It is indeed a common source of misunderstanding between the instigators and recipients of the matrix about what is meaningful. There is often an *appearance* of agreement in the form of documentation which is signed at a high level by aid agencies, ministries, universities and so on which can give the impression that what is important to the local stakeholders was the whole project with all its outcomes, whereas in fact it may only be some of the project 'goods' which they want. Whereas hyperrational project agencies set a great deal of store on 'contractual accountability' (Weir and Roberts op cit), the local stakeholders may well see these agreements very differently or indeed superficially. The following warning by Taylor against naïve notions of mutuality rings true:

> Establishment and maintenance of sustained dialogue between all those involved ... [is] not easy .... There are barriers and inequalities of language, culture and education, and frequently even the need for such dialogue is not recognized by either side. There is unfamiliarity on

> both sides with the use of common management tools for the sharing and analysis of information (from project frameworks, analysis, tables, grids and diagrams to statistical methods and computer programmes). (1997: 116-7)

Something similar was found by Smith (1991) who noted that notions of 'control', 'predictability', 'generalization' and 'objective' were constructed very differently by different parties in a number of scenarios. This was certainly the case in the dispute between Dr Rustam and the matrix people at University X cited above.

The fact that project agencies imagine that there is total agreement may be a sign that they are falling foul of their own strategies. According to Fairclough (1995), a political, though tacit and perhaps unconscious motive of technologized discourses in late modern societies is to create a false image of consensus. As a form of technicalization and bureaucratization, as described with learner-centredness in chapter 4, principles are demoted to form manageable bits. The people who design matrices do so to catalogue impressively agreeable qualities of action with which they can impress their own funding masters; but then themselves fall into the trap of believing the matrix, while the local stakeholders pursue their own ends in their own ways within the domain of informal orders and deep action. One such example is where university lecturers take considerable time and effort to attend materials development working parties even though they are not actually prepared to develop any materials (Holliday 1994a: 121).

Empowerment and ownership

Something which matrix instigators often believe about what they are doing is that they are somehow empowering local stakeholders and giving them ownership of what the matrix has to offer. Once, University X project, I found myself talking about how 'we' in the project should give the lecturer-researchers the opportunity to own the process of textbook development. I am grateful to Rustam and Ansari, who possessed a powerful and highly sensitized post-colonial discourse, who said that *I* was in no position to empower or 'give' ownership to 'local' colleagues, and insisted that ownership was indeed not mine to give. I found these comments shocking and life-changing. It was the same order of revelation as discovering native-speakerist discourse within my own ostensibly Position 2 writing about (chapter 2) and thinking about (chapter 5) Hong Kong students. Even when English-speaking Western ESOL educators subscribe strongly to a collaborative inclusive discourse, strong native-speakerist residues can easily continue to move beneath the surface, as the following observation at a conference I attended in Egypt shows.

I have changed key details related to the people in the presentation to protect their identity:

> The session was presented by three Egyptian teachers and one English-speaking Western TESOL curriculum consultant. The session was introduced by the consultant. The teachers then each gave short papers which reported how they used local networks to exchange and build appropriate practice. The consultant then concluded the session by commenting on how well the teachers had done in developing their voices in this way. (Conference notes)

The role of the consultant here could be interpreted as encircling the voices of the Egyptian teachers with his own, thus maintaining a strong pastoral role.

There is every evidence that the consultant was trying his level best inclusively to support the indigenous initiatives implicit in Position 2 without being patronizing or reductionist. It is at a deeper, discoursal level that it is so easy for people in the role of the English-speaking Western TESOL consultant, who has been socialized into matrix thinking, to fall into the trap of 'setting up' the means whereby an indigenous 'them' may 'come out'. The consultant had thus fallen into the native-speakerist trap, even though there was no reason to assume that he was himself native-speakerist. This is another example of the *'liberation' trap*, in which English-speaking Western ESOL educators too easily perceive Position 2 in their own image, with their own construction of the 'liberation' of Other ESOL educators. Readers will appreciate this from their own experience of having been victim to this trap. Thus, the question must be asked: what exactly is the role of 'facilitators' in the process of movement towards Position 2? Whose image are they facilitating? Is Position 2 in danger of reconstructing notional 'non-native-speakers' in a control-constructed stakeholder-centred paradigm?

This danger of misconstruction is embedded in much of the TESOL literature on stakeholders where there is a tacit power distinction made between those parties who somehow instigate, manage, fund, design, and possess the technology of innovation, and those who do not, as implied by the generalized Other myth, as described in chapter 2. This can be seen in the way that Smith writes about counterparts. He suggests that it cannot be denied that there may be a power difference in many developing world locations, when the expatriate 'expert' has the 'privileges', which are 'granted to' or assumed by 'the foreign guest' which enable access to budgets, key locations, events and people. The counterpart does not have this access and is then expected 'to sustain project impact after the aid has been withdrawn' on 'US$25 per month' (1995: 67-8). Discussion of whether or not this is always the case necessitates looking more deeply at the whole relationship between insiders and outsiders. One might suspect that the problem is not so much one of power *per se*, but of the nature of the practice which

the counterpart is expected to continue to use. Might it be that what the 'expert' is considered to be *expert in*, as defined by the matrix discourse, is not relevant to the counterpart anyway? Smith acknowledges that the 'power' required to sustain the innovation may not be something the counterpart simply does not have, but something which she might 'refuse to accept' (1995: 67). Here, as in so much of this literature, there is a concerted *effort* to get to grips with and understand the viewpoint of the 'local', but the outcome, the insistence that 'empowerment' of the 'local' is the answer, is still deeply rooted in the 'us'-'them' perception of the generalized Other, in which 'they' 'don't know the technology' and are 'easily dominated'. The converse is easily demonstrated in the cases of the University X project, where Dr Rustam and her lecturer-researcher have developed their own practice, and are not really interested in the practice brought by the matrix. There is however an ambivalence. Dr Rustam and her people have the power to do what they want, in their own way; but they do not have the power to have it recognized by the matrix; and their practice is marginalized by that of the matrix.

Cultural resilience

With Rustam and Jacob (op cit) we see how individual local stakeholders can find ways to deal with the matrix and to carry out their own agendas, practising their social autonomy in resistance to imperialism. In some cases the whole community will also practice a resilience which will deal with the foreign project in its midst. Talking about China, Grimshaw proposes that the education environment within which the project arrives is already a cultural pastiche which will have no difficulty absorbing the project in much the same way as 'innovations to the built environment … have been assimilated into the Chinese cityscape' (2002: 159).

He uses this assimilation model to counter three commonly held assumptions about Chinese society. First, whereas Pennycook suggests that the introduction of foreign examinations in China serve the interests US and British exam boards and provide 'some of the strongest evidence in support of the "linguistic imperialism" thesis', Grimshaw points out that 'one reason why tests such as TOEFL are so popular in Asia is that they are perceived as compatible with local traditions of language learning' and 'provide the basis for a flourishing local industry which provides employment for tens of thousands of people' (2002: 169-70). Second, whereas Phillipson (1992) maintains that 'project counterparts' are, like foreign experts, 'agents of English linguistic imperialism', Grimshaw argues that opportunities to be counterparts are fully integrated into the complexity of Chinese life:

> The situation is more complex than a simple relationship between 'colonizer' and 'colonized'. For example, it is important to recognise

> that in the more developed cities of China there are an ever-increasing range of schemes and projects by which Chinese academics can obtain opportunities to study overseas, with funding available from both Chinese and foreign sources. To Chinese participants one means is as good as another. The basic fact that a person gets to study abroad is often of far greater significance than the specific scheme by which he or she achieves this end. … It would therefore be grossly simplistic to assume that project counterparts operated according to the desires of foreign agencies. (2002: 298)

This in turn makes the matrix view of the counterpart as someone who 'should "pay the project back" with years of service ... as justification for the expense of overseas training', as with the case of my demonized Syrian counterpart referred to at the beginning of this chapter, seem naïve.

Third, contrary to Western opinion that China is a 'prison' (2002: 186) marked by the domination of official media, Grimshaw explains how Chinese university people at all levels 'demonstrate skill in articulating discourses by which they reassert the Chinese world view and challenge "Western" constructions of social reality'. He describes how his own students showed that they were 'not bound to accept unquestioningly the messages with which they are presented' and that 'consumers of the mass media, especially educated consumers with a critical consciousness, are free to put their own interpretation on what they see and hear' (2002: 175-6). He claims that 'local forms of academic discourse ... are every bit as powerful as their "Western" alternatives' when it comes to 'the encroachment of alien modes of academic discourse' in the form of songs, movies, literature (2002: 190-4). This represents

> important parallels with the phenomenon of Orientalism; for just as the "West" has assimilated and manipulated the artistic products of other cultures in order to serve its own purposes, the Chinese have appropriated and "sinified" products from the 'West' (2002: I97).

Seeing individual richness

A large part of the source of the conflict discussed in the chapter has been the way in which culturist native-speakerism, strengthened by matrix thinking, has tried to incorporate people into existing systems, and, in so doing, has relied on stereotypical notions of who they are based on the small or large cultural prejudices of the day. What have become apparent, however, are cases where either individuals or individual groups or communities have used their own resources to find ways to resist the confining impact of these forces.

The focus of the chapter has been externally funded curriculum projects because these are where the evidence of these conflicts can be found, with their discourses clear to be seen in the documents on which they themselves lay so much store. Ge (2004) lays this in a broader context of the way in which ESOL educators and researchers from the English speaking West miss the point. They 'fail to see the diversity' and 'miss out the richness, the diversity and dynamism' of what really goes on in English departments like hers in Chinese universities. She describes the same 'us'-'them' problem which others have demonstrated throughout this book:

> These discourses are usually constructed and operated based on a dichotomized conception of East and West. ... Essentialized cultural traits are frequently and conveniently made use of to explain and justify what is happening and should happen in Chinese ELT. They fail to see that the struggle over pedagogic changes in Chinese ELT is not all about the modern against the traditional, China against the West. They fail to see other forces that are at play, that the interplay of various forces constitutes a very complex picture of ELT in China. Moreover, the literature published in mainstream Western ELT journals portrays Chinese ELT as a monolithic whole.

Wu (2002), looking at another university in China, demonstrates this complexity of local discourses by tracing, by means of personal narrative, the way in which, contrary to the formal curriculum project view of planned training, organized skills development and accountable objectives, his colleagues develop the curriculum at informal levels during a series of interconnected meetings in their homes. He suggests that instead of focusing on 'the role of the institution, i.e. the school, as both locus and prime agent of the change' and 'teacher development … as the development of curriculum expertise either at the level of decision-making, or at the phase of practice for the adaptation to the grand discourse of knowledge', we need to look at the 'everydayness' of teachers' lives (2002: 335).

One might think that these misunderstandings are the normal products of the workaday pressures of institutional educational life. But greater damages are done. In this chapter we have seen people demonized, thought to be duplicitous, incapable and de-statused as a result of cultural discrimination.

Chapter 7: Critiquing appropriate methodology

In this chapter I will use the experience of what can go wrong with matrix thinking described in the previous chapter to attempt an assessment of how far the appropriate methodology movement has been able to counter these problems and their association with native-speakerism.

Separating the positive from the negative

In the process of deconstructing my own practice at Damascus University in the previous chapter I painted a particularly dismal picture of what was believed, at the time, to have been 'good practice' in the interest of sound, effective curriculum design and innovation. There were however substantial positive aspects which resulted from this practice, some of which can be listed as follows:

a) Despite its lack of inclusion, the strategy at Damascus University *was* in many ways effective. It did lead to the establishment of an English for specific purposes Centre which continues to thrive and expand with entirely Syrian personnel. During a visit in 2002 I noted that the Syrian staff who were appointed in the 1980s trained and educated a new generation of teachers who are now embarking on successful careers. The University X project did eventually produce a textbook which is now in use.

b) Throughout all the projects referred to in chapter 6 there were many good relations between expatriate and local personnel which were on an equal footing and generated an invaluable exchange of ideas and expertise.

c) At a more piecemeal level, expatriates have managed to effect real improvement. At Damascus University this was the case where the Centre did institute better recognition and rights for service English lecturers, did create new programmes which fulfilled important functions, did employ lecturers who then had the benefit of good staff development opportunities both in Syria and abroad.

Generalizing out again from my own experience, there is therefore an ambivalence, which to an extent is captured in Bowers' response to Phillipson's claim that there is nearly always an imperialistic motive in

language curriculum projects in the East and the South where there is a preponderance of contribution from the English-speaking West. Bowers, speaking from the perspective of the British Council establishment, acknowledges that there are undoubtedly 'graphic descriptions of cases' where 'the process of training' in such projects 'has damaged individuals and thereby the educational programmes and contexts in which they operated' (1991: 33). Nevertheless, he argues that the overall intentions are sincere, and that there are '*clear procedures* ... for engaging local authority, making project aims and processes subject to local constraint, and ensuring through both training and structural means the local ownership and sustainability of a project' (1991: 32, my emphasis). This response represents a sincere desire for inclusive collaboration; but at the same time it suggests instrumental agency on the side of the expatriate instigator. The notion of 'clear procedures' takes us back again into matrix thinking. However, I think that we need to look more deeply. In chapter 1 I argued that native-speakerism does not depict a *division* in the TESOL world, but an ideology which has the potential to pervade all TESOL practice, especially, but not only, from the English-speaking West. We cannot therefore say that there is a division between curriculum projects which succeed in being collaboratively inclusive and those which do not. Instead there is a probable impact of native-speakerism in all ESOL curriculum projects especially where there is a major contribution from the English-speaking West.

This can be understood in terms of three elements of interaction between a particular curricula milieu and new ideas and practices coming from the outside. One element, at the most positive end of the spectrum of human endeavour, will always be beneficial, as people interact with new systems and people. This is not something which can be planned, but has something to do with an organic, tacit ability and desire to learn. A parallel with this in the language classroom is where, despite everything, students will learn simply because their existing communicative competence will be put to use and developed by whatever is going on. A second element is to do with the conscious, planned business of curriculum change, and will ensure that our plans to be collaborative and inclusive actually work, because we *are* sensitive and careful and do *not* manipulate and reduce our colleagues. Note that I use the unmarked inclusive Our here. The interests and opinions of stakeholders really *are* considered and incorporated. Even project matrices can be successful in ensuring rather than preventing inclusivity.

It is the third element which is problematic. This represents native-speakerism as a thread which can run through, and damage the other two elements to greater or lesser degrees. Wherever it exists it is destructive in that it divides people along 'us'-'them', culturist lines and reduces local stakeholders according to a deficit image of a 'non-native-speaker' Other. What I tried to do in chapter 6 was to reveal where this destructive thread lies and where some of its origins may be. I would hope that once the

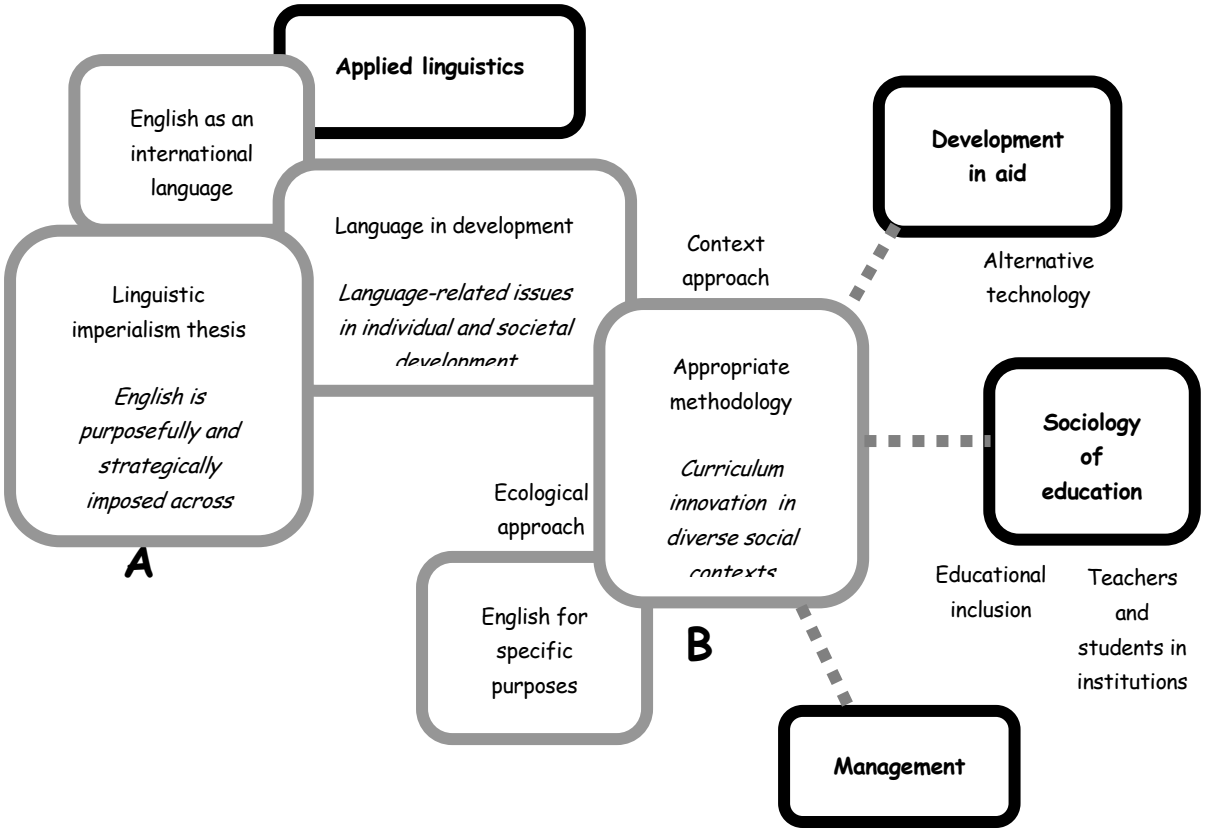
destructive thread can be revealed and understood, it might actually be pulled out, leaving the positive aspects of the other two elements intact. This might be over-romantic. It may be more realistic simply to uncover where the thread lies so that we can learn to minimize and work around it.

Instrumentality vs. critical politics

Appropriate methodology needs to be assessed in this context because, although it has not focused its concerns on the specific issue of native-speakerism, it claims to address cultural inappropriacies in curriculum work. It represents an approach which I and other English-speaking Western ESOL educators like me have adopted as part of our own struggle to make sense of ourselves in relation to the wider World TESOL. It has been very much part of *my* struggle to understand how to work with others.

It is significant that the appropriate methodology movement stems from a different line of thinking to that of the linguistic imperialism thesis. This can be seen in Figure 7.1 which maps out the areas of TESOL which look at social context. Area A is the imperialism thesis which is in turn connected with critical discussions around the notion of English as an international language, currently focusing around the work of Jenkins (e.g. 2000) and Seidlhofer (e.g. 2002). Area B is the cluster of thinking connected with appropriate methodology. Reference is made there to the

Figure 7.1: TESOL and social context



ecological approach, at the interface of English for specific purposes and appropriate methodology, and to context approach (e.g. Bax 2003), both of which I shall discuss below. Whereas the imperialism thesis is concerned with critical assessment of the *political* role of English, the appropriate methodology movement concerns the *instrumental* process of how to do curriculum innovation in diverse settings. Anderson confirms this distinction. He suggests that the imperialism thesis sees the 'global expansion of English as oppressive' and recommends 'change to the global political system' (Phillipson 1992) or critical pedagogy (Pennycook 1994a, Canagarajah 1999). In contrast, appropriate methodology (Holliday 1994a) is 'liberal reformist' and recommends that TESOL should 'adapt itself to cultural differences' (Anderson 2003b: 84-5).

The appropriate methodology movement was part of a general appreciation in the 1980s that there were broad social and cultural issues at stake in international curriculum development. This was not simply a matter of English-speaking Western ESOL educators bringing what they believed to be a new expertise into education environments abroad. Despite the positivistic distance which was created between the 'us' and the 'them' of the curriculum setting, there *was* an appreciation that there were other systems and ways of doing things in those environments. This was expressed in two influential papers by Swales (1980) and Bowers (1980). It was at a Dunford House in 1986 that the term, 'appropriate methodology' was first introduced into TESOL in a discussion between Bowers and Widdowson. Several issues were addressed; but I would like to focus on that of language. Bowers questioned how far the nature of language should be made the major factor in curriculum development, and asserted that 'what we need to understand is teachers, students, administrators, and how they need to react to change', and that to be 'appropriate', not only the programme, but the whole curriculum 'project' needs to fit the wider social context (Bowers and Widdowson 1997: 141-2). In another very influential paper Bowers (1983) follows this line of thought with an analysis of how curriculum change at any point affects the whole 'spider's web' of the wider institution.

It is this concern with the curriculum in its institutional, rather than linguistic, context which places appropriate methodology within the influence of management and mainstream education, where the latter is concerned with teachers and students in institutions, to the right of Figure 7.1. Another influence is alternative technology (Abbott 1997: 140) and other projects in development in aid – for example in agriculture and technology. All of these influences make appropriate methodology less politically critical and more instrumental. Especially management and development in aid are preoccupied with solving the problem of *how* to increase efficiency in organizational or under-resourced settings. These influences place appropriate methodology firmly in the same camp as the matrix approach to stakeholder-centredness described in chapter 6.

This instrumental problem-solving approach with regard to large curriculum projects in the developing world has also become specialized in the language and development movement (e.g. Kenny and Savage 1997, Hayes 1997, Crooks and Crewes 1995). In these discussions, language is very much a secondary issue. However, there is more recently a shift in the language in development movement towards critical, political linguistic concerns. This is particularly the case in the 2002 special issue of *TESOL Quarterly*, which gets into discussions of language rights in development scenarios. My label for language in development in Figure 7.1 is adapted from Markee's (2002: 266) definition.

This distinction between the critical political and the instrumental is important. The former has its limitations, as can be seen in the attitudes of critical applied linguistics with regard to autonomy, as described towards the end of chapter 4. It is a postmodern enterprise which, in order to celebrate difference, can make the mistake of placing the Other in a reductive framework of difference. The failing of the instrumental approach, on the other hand, is that it can easily fall into the trap of constructing the 'problem' in terms of how to correct the culture of the 'non-native speaker' Other. It is a modernist enterprise which seeks to make the Other like 'us'. Of course I am aware that the way in which I place huge areas of literature, research and practice in Figure 7.1 massively overgeneralizes. My purpose is more to focus a critique of the appropriate methodology movement than to get into a discussion of the imperialism thesis. For example, the critical area of educational inclusion would sit more happily on the left of Figure 7.1. Its influence on the thinking in *this* book, will, I hope, serve to pull it away from some of the criticisms I will be levelling at the appropriate methodology movement.

'Our' system or people

I shall now look critically at the appropriate methodology movement and assess how far its instrumentality makes it fall into the same native-speakerist traps as the projectization and matrix thinking discussed in chapter 6. I will consider how far it can succeed in minimizing the thread of native-speakerist discourse to arrive at a more mutually inclusive Position 2 attitude to local stakeholders. I am starting from the position that the appropriate methodology movement *is* an English-speaking Western TESOL initiative and therefore needs to prove its credentials before achieving Position 2. I shall focus the critique around the summary of the negative and positive features of appropriate methodology which are embodied in Table 7.4. This will provide a framework upon which to pin the various parts of the critique as the discussion progresses. The left hand side is based upon what has been learnt from my critique of projectization and matrix thinking. The 'system' referred to in various parts of the left of

Table 7.4: Parameters for critiquing appropriate methodology

	Negative attributes **Native-speakerist: Oriented to 'Our' system**	**Positive attributes** **Position 2: People oriented view**
[1] Vision	'Our' system is good for 'them'. 'We' are being inclusive by finding out what sort of people 'they' are so that 'we' can adapt 'our' system to fit 'them' in more effectively.	We need to develop a curriculum that is beneficial for all of us. We need exploratory research in which all parties can learn what is important for the educational environment.
[2] Agency	English-speaking Western ESOL educators. Including local people.	All concerned people. Mutually inclusive and collaborative.
[3] Task	**Problem solving** How to undo the shortcomings of matrix thinking How best to adapt 'their' educational environment to fit 'our' system. How best to adapt 'our' system to fit 'them' in. Cultural engineering is necessary.	**Re-assessing** How best to develop or preserve the curriculum to suit all parties. Piecemeal cultural change may be necessary.
[4] Learning	Learning about the educational environment to assess how it can best be changed.	Learning about the educational environment to understand what is going on
[6] Outcome	'Our' system is made more effective. 'They' are subjects of 'our' system. 'We' are developing 'our' vision of the educational environment. 'Their' educational environment will change.	The curriculum is developed in dialogue with the environment, if appropriate.

the table implies that appropriate methodology is not simply concerned with a classroom teaching methodology, but with the curricula system which surrounds it – in effect a whole way of doing things with all its accompanying cultural baggage. This broader system is characterized in as:

> three basic types of methodology, all of which sooner or later affect what happens in the classroom. The first is the methodology for carrying out the work of teaching English, which includes what the teacher does in the classroom ... extended to the work of training or educating teachers [… and] on the nature of the curriculum as a whole. The second is the methodology for carrying out the work of *designing* and *managing* English language education ... from writing textbooks or examinations ... to designing, setting up and managing large projects. ... The third methodology is that of *collecting the information* about the particular social context in question. (Holliday 1994a: 1, original emphasis)

The implication is thus of something which pervades the lives of local stakeholders and is very dangerous *if* it is 'brought' with a native-speakerist ideology. The notion of an all-embracing 'system' does indeed sound like matrix thinking – designed to capture, organize and account for every element of curriculum life. Is it therefore no accident that when I drafted the right, Position 2 side of the table I wrote 'curriculum' instead of 'system'? To me, 'curriculum', which can still be very wide-ranging in its remit, can also be a looser, less tight assembly of activity than 'system'.

Applying communicative principles

The central feature of appropriate methodology is finding a curriculum type which suits a particular classroom or institutional culture. This is achieved as a result of ethnographic investigation. This idea is made possible by the understanding that there is a difference between (a) communicative *principles* and (b) the large variety of ways in which they can be realized as very different teaching *methodologies* in diverse contexts. Three such principles are:

1. Treat language as *communication*
2. Capitalize on students' existing *communicative* competence
3. *Communicate* with local exigencies

Treating language as communication is I think commonly accepted as being central to the communicative approach. The other two principles come from the conceptualization of the communicative approach at Lancaster University in the early 1980s. Principle 2 is based on the idea of building on the 'individual contributions' that language learners bring to the classroom in terms of their 'initial competence', 'expectations' and 'changing needs' (Breen and Candlin 2001: 15). I shall look in detail at principle 3 below.

These communicative principles are then developed into the different and specific methodologies on the basis of what is learnt about the 'context' in which they will be used. Each methodology will *apply* the same communicative principles, but in a multitude of different ways. What I have already referred to in earlier chapters the 'standard' or 'weak' form of communicative language teaching, the 'so-called communicative classroom', or the 'learning group ideal' (comprising predominant attention to oral skills and group work) as central to the English-speaking Western TESOL dominant discourse of language teaching, is simply *one application* of the communicative principles and is appropriate only for specific English-speaking Western TESOL contexts – for example the university language centre described by Anderson in chapters 3 and 4 and British private sector TESOL. I call this *particular* application or communicative principles 'standard' because this is the methodology which has been packaged and exported world wide. In my 1994a book I argue that this 'standard' methodology is inappropriate in most contexts, and that its transportation to those contexts is the inappropriate instrument of English-speaking Western TESOL expansion. In this book I have argued that it is the instrument of native-speakerism. This means that the primacy of practicing oral skills and group work, which characterize the English-speaking Western TESOL learning group ideal, do *not* have to feature in *other* communicative methodologies. It does not help when teachers themselves, following the popular view, believe that 'communicative' in every sense equates precisely with the 'learning group ideal', as evidenced by the teachers in Anderson's study in chapter 4.

A communicative ideology

A major critique of appropriate methodology is that it is driven by a notion of communicative language teaching which is in essence an English-speaking Western construct (Canagarajah 2002, Bax 2003a, 2003b). My first reaction to this critique is that it has missed the important distinction between communicative *principles* and the *specific methodology* of the English-speaking Western TESOL 'learning group ideal'. (See Canagarajah 2002: 139.) However, Canagarajah develops his point by explaining that despite its apparent rejection of the 'learning group ideal', appropriate methodology is '*still* influenced' by this dominant English-speaking Western TESOL methodology, and that 'communication is the key construct in this methodological proposal' (2003, personal communication, my emphasis). What he says here is not surprising, considering the general view, expressed in *this* book, that as an English-speaking Western ESOL educator I am irrevocably socialized by English-speaking Western TESOL. Despite how 'neutral' the three communicative principles may *look* to me, by virtue of the whole postmodern stance I am taking, they *must* be ideological.

On the other hand, just because ideas have an ideological origin in English-speaking Western TESOL, does not mean that they are inappropriate. It depends whether the ideology is a confining, divisive ideology like native-speakerism, or one which encourages expansion and liberation of thinking and behaviour. I distinguish between English-speaking Western TESOL and native-speakerism in chapter 1. The presence of native-speakerist elements in the 'standard' communicative methodology does not mean that the deeper principles from which it springs are also native-speakerist. The positive attributes of appropriate methodology on the right of Table 7.4 require a negation of native-speakerism, but not necessarily a negation of the whole of English-speaking Western TESOL.

The first two communicative principles listed above (to do with communicative competence and language as communication) are aligned with a series of guidelines for how language should be treated in Holliday (1994a: 168). These comprise learning about discourse, seeing text as discourse, using language data, teaching students to communicate with text, using text unlocking activities, solving language problems, producing new text. I do not think that any of these imply any prescribed cultural behaviour. They do not demand any of the culturally defined group work, oracy or even any particular teacher-student relationship required by the native-speakerist 'learning group ideal'. An interesting mark of cultural transferability of the guidelines is that I would imagine that all of them are being realized by the Sri Lankan students writing in the margins of their textbooks as a resistance strategy against potentially alien cultural content, cited in Canagarajah (1999: 88-90) and discussed in chapter 5.

I do however acknowledge that the communicative principles in appropriate methodology are more prescriptive than Kumaravadivelu's (1994) macro-strategies, which Canagarajah (2002: 143) prefers, which emerge from observation of good teachers in Indian classrooms. However, although Kumaravadivelu's relate to what teachers do rather than to what students might be expected to engage with, I feel that they are the other side of a similar coin in that they all relate to these first two communicative principles. I also agree that they do not provide the:

> critical and social component … [which] would add a reflexive component in this pedagogy, helping students and local teachers critically interrogate their pedagogical practices in terms of broader questions related to power and difference … [which] will enable students to consider the purposes/objectives/ends of their learning. (Canagarajah personal, communication).

This statement touches on the issues of critical pedagogy, which is not the major topic of this book, but which does connect with the discussion of student social autonomy in chapter 5, in which I demonstrate how students make their own sense of the curriculum and assert their identity.

In Bax's (2003a, 2003b) proposal for a 'context approach' he touches on the same issue as Canagarajah but from a different direction in that he does not seem concerned about the degree of English-speaking Western TESOL influence. Whereas Canagarajah speaks from the critical, political, postmodern, imperialism camp, Bax speaks from the instrumental, modernist camp. He nevertheless comments on the pervasive 'obsession with communicative language teaching and its priorities', with, as noted by Canagarajah, its focus 'on communication in various ways' (2003a: 280). This is supported by evidence from teacher accounts of how the degree to which communicative language teaching is implemented in 'countries' outside the English-speaking West is seen as a measure of advancement or 'backwardness' – in what he calls the 'CLT attitude' (2003a: 279). Because appropriate methodology has 'tended to operate *within* the dominant CLT paradigm, attempting to make CLT more relevant to different contexts, not only did it 'fail', 'but it was misconceived in the first place', because, 'with a dominant methodology, context will always be secondary' (2003b).

As with Canagarajah above, Bax seems to have missed the distinction between communicative principles and their diversity of probable applications. Neither the first two communicative principles listed above, nor their realization in Holliday (1994a: 168) represent a communicative *method* in that they do not imply classroom steps or stages. The claim of 'failure' is also highly contentious. It is beyond the scope of this book to get into a discussion of how Bax proposes to help teachers arrive at how best to address the contextual needs of their students without the primacy of some sort of ideology about methodology. What I find important here is, again, Canagarajah's and Bax's conviction that appropriate methodology is not able to escape a dominant English-speaking Western TESOL discourse.

Communicating with the ecology

Canagarajah's and Bax's comments raise questions mainly with the first two communicative principles, which are, as Canagarajah and Bax propose, centred around language as communication, and *may* therefore be too English-speaking Western-centric to meet the Position 2 attribute of 'being beneficial for all of us' (Table 7.4, rows 1-2 right). I shall now turn to the third principle, *communicating with local exigencies*, to see how far it meets the Position 2 requirement for exploratory research and learning in dialogue with the environment on the right of Table 7.4.

This principle represents an aspect of 'communicative' which I think is very different to the anxiety about 'communication' expressed by Canagarajah and Bax in that it is not about language as communication, but about communicating with the environment itself. It is based on the idea that '"communicative"' means 'geared to the competence *and* expectations of those participating in the learning process"' and 'negotiation between all

the parties concerned' (Hutchinson and Waters 1984:108). Holliday and Cooke similarly explain that the curriculum should interact 'with a milieu of attitudes and expectation of *all* the parties involved' (their emphasis). They list 'the involved parties' as a wide range of people who include students, teachers, programme designers, managers and so on – who would in future years be termed stakeholders (1982: 126). It grows out of the investigatory aspect of English for specific purposes, but a more positive side to the one I criticize in chapter 6 for the way in which it superimposed the needs analysis discourse on colleagues and students in the Damascus University project. It expands the English for specific purposes investigation of how language is used in a target situation into a broader ethnographic investigation of how these findings might be developed into a curriculum which suits the broader social context in which it will be used. Principle 3 influenced what Holliday and Cooke (1982) called an 'ecological approach' – whereby the curriculum would be sensitive to the broader sociological nature of its 'ecosystem'. With this went the idea of the 'means analysis', which would complement the lack of attention to social context in the needs analysis with an ethnographic investigation of the 'educational environment' and would inform curriculum innovation (Holliday and Cooke 1982, Holliday 1992, 1994a: 200, Tudor 1996: 131-2). The ecological approach and the means analysis later became basic elements within appropriate methodology as conceptualized in Holliday (1994a).

A further important characteristic of principle 3 is that it aims to create a *cultural continuity* between all the parties concerned. This means that the curriculum should connect and integrate at a deep level with the cultural realities of the milieu within which it is being carried out. I shall take up the theme of cultural continuity in chapter 8.

There is however a weakness inherent in the ecological approach and the means analysis at their moment of inception during the Damascus University project. In the way they were implicated, the behaviour of 'Counterpart 1' and his colleagues were constructed as cultural problems, as described in chapter 6. Although there was an intention to develop a curriculum which fitted with the ecology of the university culture and its community, the actuality was more to do with adapting the ecology to fit the curriculum. Hence, Syrian colleagues were constructed as the problematic 'non-native-speaker' subjects of 'our' native-speakerist system (Table 7.4 row 1 left) – as the *generalized Other* of the unproblematic 'native speaker' self, as described in chapter 2.

Dissecting the culture

In Holliday (1994a: 200), the means analysis is represented as a 'means for overcoming "constraints" and exploiting local features'. This is fine as long as the investigators do take an inclusive and collaborative stance, and that

'constraints' and 'exploitation', and the desired outcome, are not conceptualized along an 'us'-'them' divide. On the surface, the following descriptions of the means analysis procedure seems to be neutrally analytical:

> Reveal aspects of the host system that can be conveniently divided into three types: (1) immutable problems, which we can do little to influence, and which will, sooner or later, necessitate radical change in our project aims; (2) flexible elements – problematic features which can, however, be worked within and around; (3) exploitable features, which can be used to our advantage. (Holliday and Cooke 1982: 134)

> What the teacher has to achieve is the fine balance between stretching the classroom culture and breaking it in order to achieve the learning objectives required. It is important for the teacher to find out what expectations a student has .... Then [she or] he has to negotiate what can be done to change these expectations without being destructive. (Holliday 1984: 49)

However, a deeper look reveals that the procedure is potentially culturist. The first move in the investigation (1 in the first extract) is to locate 'problems' inherent in the 'host *culture'*. At Damascus University, along with the shortcomings of the teachers and 'Counterpart 1' referred to in chapter 6, these are catalogued as 'deficient classroom management, … hold-ups in the bureaucracy, a high degree of centralization, lack of a tradition of academics being involved in office work, system inflexibility ...; academic decisions ultimately subject to political considerations', which result in the overall culture being 'predominantly static and product-oriented'. (1982: 128-9).

This description of the local culture is revealed as culturist because it falls into the same pattern of opposition to the native-speakerist Self as that seen in the conference presentation about Exian culture described in chapter 2 and of students and colleagues elsewhere in this book. It conforms to the imagination of the *generalized Other* which characterizes culturist methodology. That this is more to do with opposition to the native-speakerist Self than with the actualities of Damascus University is also evidenced by the fact, that some readers may recognise, that these features are not unlike the aspects of Western universities which Western academics complain about. Neither my co-author nor I had at this time ever worked in a Western university and therefore did not realize that this characterization of the foreign Other was not really that 'foreign'. The contrasting characterization of 'our' system, which was 'dynamic, open-ended, self-correcting' and 'process oriented' (Holliday and Cooke 1982: 128-9) thus falls into the category of unproblematic Self. Once again, some readers will recognise these qualities as those which we all hope for but cannot often achieve even in Western universities.

The investigative procedure of the means analysis, as a central task within the ecological approach, thus falls within row 3 left in Table 7.4 and is native-speakerist, where the Other educational environment it to be adapted to accommodate 'our' 'dynamic, open-ended, self-correcting' and 'process oriented' system. Moves 2 and 3 (in the Holliday and Cooke extract above) involve manipulating the culture to fit the curriculum. The ecological part is that the 'desirable' bits would be preserved and the 'undesirable' changed. This might seem right if all the involved parties were in a position to negotiate this. This is not however the case, as can be seen in Holliday and Cooke's use of a gardening metaphor. Although they recommend 'using local gardeners' – 'using' being the operative term – it is under the guidance of the 'British Head Gardeners' *until* there is evidence of 'an acceptable, if reduced, degree of growth' and 'capacity for natural propagation', when 'the locally engaged Gardeners' would 'take over' (1982: 125). Within this gardening metaphor, the Damascus University project is referred to as 'an experiment, in a "developing" country, in growing the ESP plant ecologically, in local soil, exposed to local conditions' (1982: 125). And, when matched with the belief that these conditions are deficient, it becomes clear that *if* the 'ecological approach' is for the purpose of effecting the well-being of the culture, it is *on condition* that things *change*, which is the final outcome of Native-speakerist (row 6 left, Table 7.4).

Lack of collaboration

The English for specific purposes needs analysis has clearly been a contributor to matrix thinking within TESOL as many projects have been connected in one way or another with specialized English. At the time of the Damascus University project, establishing language needs did not involve consultation with the students themselves, because the target situation was considered a set of external practices which they had to master as a result of being taught. It was not an investigation of how the people in the setting might make sense of and deal with language as part of a broader social involvement. This was reflected in the way in which 'Counterpart 1' and our other Syrian colleagues were investigated as ignorant subjects rather than as collaborating colleagues. The possibility of researching *with* the people in the setting, and negotiating *with* them the way in which meanings are made, as represented in a more progressivist form of qualitative research (e.g. Denzin and Lincoln 1994b, Holliday 2002a) was thus lacking. This failure jointly to negotiate the making of meanings is noted by Barmada in her qualitative study of the impact of 'us' curriculum developers:

> They decided what the students and the teachers needed ... from their own observations and assumed that neither the students nor their teachers knew what was good for them. They also refrained from asking the teachers and the students whether they were happy with the courses, because they

> assumed that ... [they] would not be able to really appreciate what they were doing until after having gone through the process. (1994: 198)

She suggests that we were rather naïve to assume that 'our' English-speaking-Western TESOL ideas of innovation, as long as they were tweaked appropriately, would automatically fit the local culture – and that we 'expected to be able to change practices and beliefs within the sub-system ... without changing those beliefs and practices in the wider system' (1994: 199). She also comments that our approach was characterized by a 'tight ideology' of an 'expert syllabus' in which the 'most up-to-date approaches in curriculum design' were 'tightly supervised and the teachers' role was restricted to following the prescribed teaching methodology and materials' (1994: 201-2). Even though at the time we, along with others, decried lack of attention to context in Munby's 'scientific' needs analysis (Holliday 1994a: 199-200), we were well ensconced in the cult of the expert which came out of it.

The use of the phrase, 'host system' in Holliday and Cooke (1982), or of 'host educational environment' elsewhere, implies a place which is going to receive an invading implant. This phraseology is also common across English-speaking-Western TESOL literature. I may be overdoing my search for the sinister here; but I am thinking of the way in which 'host' is used in current science fiction to mean someone within which an alien organism can find a home within which to sustain its development regardless of the health of the host. I am thinking here of the need for English-speaking-Western TESOL to expand its territory to foreign locations in order to preserve its status, as described in chapter 2 – to find foreign hosts within which to settle and multiply. It is thus, within this native-speakerist zeal, not the people already in the host who are important, but the host's capacity to receive English-speaking-Western TESOL. The emphasis on change is thus on what needs to be changed in the host to comply with the implant, just as the native-speakerist classroom methodology correctively changes the 'non-native speaker' student to enable her to receive its expansionist ideology.

The preoccupation with solving problems and change is a significant feature of native-speakerist thinking which underlies the matrix as well as appropriate methodology. It follows logically from the native-speakerist desire to correct the culture of the 'non-native-speaker' Other and can be traced back to the English-speaking Western TESOL need to gain academic and professional capital discussed in chapter 2, and through the modernist quest of audiolingualism. It can also arguably be traced back to a Protestant, capitalistic ethic and the colonialist commercial need for expansion.

Repeating the same mistakes

This throws an interesting light on the notion of inclusivity The ecological approach *is* inclusive in that, even in native-speakerism (row 2 left, in the

table), the culture of local people is included in the investigation. However, this type of inclusivity is inappropriate if the people who are being included are being constructed within a *'liberation' trap* as different to who they are by the agents of the inclusion. A truly inclusive Position 2, in row 2 right, of the table, could only be achieved when curriculum developers see themselves, the curriculum, and all the people involved in the curriculum as being equally a matter for dialogic, interpretive negotiation. Notice that in Position 2, in row 1 right, I refer to *we* without inverted commas. This is the inclusive we which is based on collaboration to build a mutual picture.

Achieving Position 2 is difficult. Tudor, in his article which claims that there is a revival of interest in an ecological approach, which 'has begun to assume the role of an explicit paradigm' (2003: 10), says all the right things. He says that it must explore 'language teaching and learning within the totality of the lives of the various participants involved' (2003: 4). He thus reiterates the third communicative principle in his talk of considering the 'attitudes and expectations of students, parents, of school administrators, of materials writers and many others including, of course, each teacher as an individual in his or her own right'. And he reminds us that we need 'to look beyond the concept of rationality' and 'to acknowledge the existence of different rationalities' while taking an emic rather than an etic perspective (2003: 6-7). Bax also returns to the notion of considering 'the coursebook, local conditions, the classroom culture, school culture, national culture and so on' (2003a: 285). All of this is fine; but *how* do we prevent ourselves, despite these high intentions, from falling into the same psychological, native-speakerist traps all over again. Taking all these measures could *still* fail to make the instigator of the approach an equal, rather than a 'superior' participant, who would make sense of and suffer from the distortions of personal professional ideology *along with* all the other people in the mélange of curriculum life. It is not *what* is to be investigated, but *how*, *as who* and *with what sort of ideology* that is important. I shall elaborate on what I mean by this in some detail in chapter 8. While the modernist desire to solve the 'problems' of the practice of 'non-native-speaker' teachers remains, with English-speaking Western TESOL experts as agents, there will always be the danger of the thread of native-speakerism taking dominance.

Local researchers

To see how far the investigative side of appropriate methodology can overcome the criticisms discussed above, we need to see what happens when it is used by other than English-speaking Western ESOL educators. There are several examples in the Ain Shams University project towards the end of its 20 year life at the beginning of the 1990s. Azer, the Egyptian academic cited in Holliday (1994a: 185ff), applies a cultural engineering approach extremely well. In the words of the Holliday (1984) extract (op cit), he

(a) 'stretches' the culture of his very large (over 350 students) grammar class to enable it to accommodate extensive workshop activities as well as lectures. He achieves this constructively rather than 'destructively' by (b) maintaining some of the traditional cultural elements of the classroom such as social distance between the lecturer and the students, while (c) capitalizing on cultural elements evident outside the classroom such as the students' propensity for autonomous collaboration. The story behind how Azer and some of his colleagues came to carry out investigations of this type indicates a more oppositional relationship between appropriate methodology and matrix thinking. Within Position 2, appropriate methodology claims to address the shortcomings of matrix thinking by focusing on *learning* about the educational environment and local stakeholders (Table 7.4, row 4 right).

Azer and several other Egyptian academics were a group of post-doctoral researchers who were significant in the following ways.

a) The majority of them had positively resisted taking part in project events up until this time. They had refused to cooperate with the project matrix either because it lacked appeal or relevance, or because they did not have the energy or the time.

b) I decided to form the group because several of them came to me independently asking for help to solve classroom problems.

c) Working with Azer and his colleagues was an alternative measure to the existing project plan, which was suggested by a means analysis I was carrying out at the time. I broke with the plan, which had previously only supported young lecturers, and found American aid money to buy them time (Holliday 1991b: 302). Some of the group worked a 50+ hour teaching week to make ends meet, comprising partly of private lessons which the funding enabled them to drop. The means analysis had revealed that a major factor in their apparent inability to teach more effectively was their lack of time for planning and reflection. It had also become apparent that the younger lecturers did not have the authority or career stability to sustain curriculum change (Holliday 1991b: 303)

d) An outcome which was meaningful to the academics was the opportunity to publish the results of their research. (1991b: 303)

e) Azer based his approach to his own classroom problem on his own reading of seminal texts on the communicative approach (Azer 1990: 37), from which he derived the communicative principles he needed to solve his problem. The text he consulted were at the theoretical end of the spectrum (e.g. Breen and Candlin, Hymes, Levinson, Widdowson, Canale and Swain) and thus tended to deal more with communicative principles than with how they might be applied within a specific methodology.

Thinking about the issues raised by Canagarajah and Bax (op cit), there are several points that need to be made here. it may be the case that this

group of Egyptian academics felt they had no choice but to look at literature on the communicative approach because that was what was on offer by the English-speaking Western TESOL expert. I do not however feel this to be the case, as (a) above indicates that the group were generally autonomous of the project and unaffected by its curriculum thinking. Azer was a discerning, experienced researcher, who evaluated the literature made available to him very keenly. Furthermore, the appropriate methodology approach offered him a *research* methodology – not a teaching methodology – as well as pedagogic principles. Azer displays his self-motivated ability in this area in the following qualitative description of curriculum process:

> From what I have observed, the motivation … [the new procedures] provided the students, the novelty of their being asked to observe and infer rules rather than getting them first, the enthusiasm with which they negotiated tasks, tolerated differences and deliberated the selection of a speaker [to report back] were all indicative of a favourable reception. ... It is true that in terms of quantity, large classes following a communicative methodology are bound to cover fewer topics than in traditional lecturing, but there is the added bonus that 'all' students participated in the process and many of them had the chance to 'talk' and 'discuss', some for perhaps the first time, grammatical rules which they have been trained to regard as unquestionable. (Azer 1991: 48, also cited in Holliday 1994a: 186)

In Bax's terms, the outcome was very 'context sensitive' in that it depended not on a predesigned communicative method, but on Azer's deep cultural knowledge of his own students, his personal ability as a researcher, a set of educational principles which he had marshalled on his own terms, and no other aid than a blackboard and a microphone.

Emergent practices

I can report two further instances in favour of the possibility that the communicative principles listed above might be independent of an English-speaking Western TESOL construction. The first is a lesson I observed in a Chinese university (Holliday 1997a). I have often referred to this lesson to my masters students as 'the best I have ever seen'. The reason for this is that I feel the teacher manages to fulfil all three communicative principles, which I hope if clear from this brief extract from my research diary:

> The lesson begins as the teacher steps to the front of the class. Suddenly, there is silence, and the air of pandemonium is transformed into a focused atmosphere of study and language. Even the traffic noise is no longer heard. ... They are asked to look at the text and 'find interesting points'. They are given precisely two minutes. They have to look at three lists and cross-refer between them. Then, 'tell me what you have found'. ... The

> ensuing discussion involves one student speaking out, followed by the teacher commenting constructively after listening to what she has to say, and invoking further discussion, gradually involving different students around the room. 'Do we have any disagreement.' During the discussion, the text is constantly kept central as the teacher refers the students back to it. Language is always in the air. There is an atmosphere of research. (Observation notes)

The first principle, treat language as communication, is met where the reading text is presented as something the students must communicate with, with the implication that, through its author, it communicates with them. The second principle, capitalize on students' existing communicative competence, is met where the students have to use their communicative competence to solve a series of language problems in the text, unlocking how it operates as a communicative event, in the process of finding effective ways to communicate their findings to the class and their peers, and in interpreting and responding to the classroom discussion. The third principle, communicate with local exigencies, is met where the teacher responds to the intelligence of the students, and to the academic disciplines of university work, by creating a research ethos in which there is tremendous precision and analysis.

The success with which the teacher communicates with the expectations of the students is evidenced in the way in which he commands their attention. What is more significant is that he told me after the class that he had not been trained as a language teacher. (He was a recent English literature graduate.) He explained that his 'methodology' was simply to teach in the opposite way to the way in which one of his teacher taught him – to treat his students as intelligent human beings. Furthermore, what makes this a successful application of communicative principles *without* taking the form of the 'standard' English-speaking Western TESOL methodology, was that there was no group work, and that classroom talk was incidental to the requirements of language research. This is an example of *emergent* communicative principles in that I *found* them in a piece of existing pedagogy where they were not imposed. The fact remains that this teacher, like Azer above, was making use of material which had been brought by a British curriculum project (in his case a textbook). Nevertheless, he was making his own sense out of it and making it an instrument of his own design, which I think places his actions clearly in Position 2 (Table 1.2, row 3 right – 'instrumental use of foreign' goods).

My second example comes from a description by Jacob of what she terms 'communicative' teaching as carries out in lectures by her Indian university colleagues. Her following comment is about the way in which a good lecturer, while explaining a text to her students, can capitalize on their communicative competence (principle 2) *without* them speaking.

> The teacher's role appears to be mediatory as he/she provides interpretations of textual content to match the learner's level of comprehension in an arbitrary but experiential assessment of communicative competence. ... Attempts to elicit student responses do not really signal verbal interaction but silent acknowledgement of negotiation on behalf of the students ... [resulting in] collective meaning negotiation. (1991: 6)

Her knowledge of her students, and her observation of their response to what she says, enables the lecturer to sense and respond to their level of competence. As with the Chinese teacher above, this is a long way from the 'standard' notion of a communicative class. Very significantly, Jacob uses 'elicit' to mean drawing out intellectual response, which is very far from the oral-oral elicitation found in the learning group ideal.

Jacob's example thus makes it very clear that attention to *communication* does not have mean an excess of oral work, and can sit quite comfortably in 'traditional' classrooms outside, *and in*, the English-speaking West where the English-speaking Western TESOL learning group ideal might be entirely inappropriate. This makes me think that both Canagarajah and Bax (op cit) might be missing the point in that is *they*, along with large numbers of ESOL educators who have been taken in by the dominant English-speaking Western TESOL discourse, who think that 'communicative' and 'communication' always have to mean 'standard' communicative tasks and groupwork.

The puzzle of Position 2

In this chapter and chapter 6 I have looked harshly at the efforts of English-speaking Western TESOL to include and consider the needs of 'non-native-speaker' stakeholders, first by means of the technical professionalism of the matrix and secondly through the more liberal reformist appropriate methodology. The only positive points in the story have been where the stakeholder recipients of these approach have been able, either through the struggle to resist or with the opportunity to take ownership, to take matters into their own hands. In this chapter, there has been a glimmer of hope for appropriate methodology, and even for the communicative principles it insists on maintaining. But this is only realistic if the right hand of Table 7.4 is achieved. Allwright (2000), in his exposition of 'exploratory practice', acknowledges appropriate methodology as having potential 'in working with teachers on their *own* professional development' (my emphasis). But he places important conditions on this potentiality. We need to escape from the primacy of *problem* solving and its accompanying discipline of action research. Apart from my concern that 'problems' are often native-speakerist in orientation, Allwright suggests that if the practice is truly exploratory, then whether or not there is actually a problem should be left open. It is true that Azer's research, like that of the Chinese teacher above, was driven by

the need to solve a classroom problem; but it was a problem which *he* brought to the task, not one defined for him by the matrix. Allwright (2000) does concede that 'the work you and they have done to understand better the situation the situation you are all in should provide you all with the necessary background for intelligent problem-solving' which could then 'amount to a rational switch to an Action research framework'. The primary position is therefore to investigate *puzzles* which might reveal problems. Thus, whereas the primary native-speakerist appropriate methodology task is problem solving, the Position 2 task is *re-assessing* which *may* result in piecemeal curriculum change.

Chapter 8: The struggle for cultural continuity

In this final chapter I am going to consider cultural continuity as a solution to native-speakerism. In Table 1.1. cultural continuity is presented, in contrast to a native-speakerist ethos of cultural difference, as a major element in Position 2 thinking – as the basis on which all ESOL educators can be equally represented and valued. Establishing the precise nature of cultural continuity is not however a straightforward process. It can be defined as an appreciation of how cultural realities and practices connect and mingle to allow collaborative inclusivity. This achievement of this appreciation results from a struggle to stand outside the dominant discourse of native-speakerism – to excavate and put aside deep-seated prejudices about the nature of culture and speakerhood.

Correction vs. understanding

Native-speakerism and Position 2 are differentiated by ways of *seeing* and *making sense*, which are in turn underpinned by different motivations for knowledge. Position 2 represents a desire to know and understand who and how we are so that we can achieve *cultural continuity* by living and working together without discrimination. In contrast, native-speakerism represents a desire to know about a foreign Other in order to change and 'improve' it. Native-speakerism is concerned with *cultural correction*, which is driven by a chauvinistic desire to dominate and control, which is the alternate concept to *cultural continuity*.

This distinction is present in Edward Said's definition of two types of knowledge within a broader political sphere, that of American policy in the Middle East:

> But there is a difference between knowledge of other peoples and other times that is the result of understanding, compassion, careful study and analysis for their own sakes, and knowledge that is part of an overall campaign of self-affirmation. There is, after all, a profound difference between the will to understand for purposes of co-existence and enlargement of horizons, and the will to dominate for the purposes of control. (Said 2003)

By a 'campaign of self-affirmation' he means the need for the US government to assert its will; but I see a parallel with the native-speakerist vision of cultural correction. In the following extract I think one could read 'the contemporary societies of the Arab and Muslim' as 'the "non-native speaker" Other', and 'modernity, enlightenment, and democracy' as 'autonomy and critical thinking':

> There's been so massive and calculatedly aggressive an attack on the contemporary societies of the Arab and Muslim for their backwardness, lack of democracy, and abrogation of women's rights that we simply forget that such notions as modernity, enlightenment, and democracy are by no means simple and agreed-upon concepts that one either does or does not find, like Easter eggs in the living-room. (Said 2003)

How ESOL educators see each other across cultural divisions is deeply implicated with how people see each other across cultural divisions in world politics and in daily life.

The sort of knowledge which Said condones, which involves 'understanding, compassion, careful study and analysis for their own sakes' fits with Allwright's (2002) suggestion that we need 'deeper understanding of who we are and what we do to each other'. This is not 'knew knowledge' about 'how' students learn, but more detailed knowledge about how things already are which brings deeper reflection and analysis to help us rationalize how to behave. This is the type of TESOL life data, which can inform cultural continuity.

Dealing with professional division

In the life data represented by my email informants throughout this book, the ongoing struggle with the divisions created by native-speakerism also expresses what has to be achieved in a movement towards cultural continuity:

- teachers outside the English speaking West dealing with the 'non-native speaker' label and asserting identity, professional status and employability
- English-speaking Western ESOL educators fighting their prejudices, avoiding reducing the foreign Other, learning to appreciate the meanings their students bring to the classroom and dealing with the changing, global ownership of English
- language students and teachers dealing with the cultural dilemmas implicit in language learning.

They speak simultaneously about how native-speakerism can be undone and cultural continuity can be achieved. Their responses move between varying

degrees of optimism and depressing ambivalence depending on the particular experiences they bring with them. They reflect the full complexity of the issues of both native-speakerism and cultural continuity. In this section I present positive suggestions for removing the native-non-native-speaker division. In the next section I will address some of the deeper political issues which underlie the nature of cultural continuity as struggle.

Changing professional image

A major barrier to cultural continuity is the division between so-called 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' educators. Several of my email informants felt that the removal of this barrier could be aided by changing the professional image of the latter in the eyes of employers, colleagues, trainers and students. Bojana, the Serbian teacher working in Hungary who spoke of her experience of a curriculum project in chapter 6, suggests that this process is being aided by changes in 'the actual practices in schools and universities' which gradually replace 'native speakers' with 'non-native speakers', not only in their own countries but as they take on expatriate roles abroad:

> It is not uncommon for non-native speakers to occupy positions traditionally reserved for native speakers only. ... This shows that the attitudes of employers are changing. … Traditionally, non-native teachers were confined to their own countries, where they had the advantage of knowing the students' native language. Today it is not uncommon for non-native speakers of English to teach English in another non-English speaking country. I myself teach at an English-medium university in Hungary, as a non-native speaker and non-Hungarian, to students from a range of Eastern European countries. A Serbian friend of mine teaches English in France, a Hungarian friend teaches English in Taiwan. (Email interview)

Lydia, speaking as a Kenyan academic, asserts that this change requires as deliberate a move to undo native-speakerism as there has been to impose it. Reflecting on Phillipson's (2002) account of British and US aid policy to establish English, she says:

> The creation of the notion of 'native speakerism' was a deliberate move by the 'centre' to have a hold on the development and spread of second language teaching and learning. It was not only deliberate but systematically done, it is therefore going to take a deliberate move on the part of one who wants to bring to the fore the unfounded bases of this fallacy. (Email interview)

A major ingredient of such deliberate action is 'non-native speakers' themselves working to change their self-image. Ana Maria, from her knowledge of working with teachers in Mexico, suggests that this will be

possible 'the moment language teachers conceive themselves as true professionals of their field' and 'where being a professional will mean having an unquestionable knowledge of the language being taught' and will be 'tightly linked to academic qualifications'. The stresses that 'while the belief that whoever speaks a language can teach it is still valid native speakerism will continue to exist' (email interview).

There is however the dilemma, which is central to the principle of cultural continuity, of how remove divisions and without removing the richness of difference. Bojana draws a parallel with other equal opportunities initiatives and suggests a means for acknowledging diversity within world TESOL without compromising equality in speakerhood:

> Here we could, to a certain extent, draw a parallel to feminist struggles for wider inclusion of women. The famous dilemma whether to emphasise sameness or difference may be useful to apply here. If promoting non-nativeness as equally valid, should we emphasize the unique qualities of non-native teachers (e.g., they themselves have learnt the language they teach so they must know something about the difficulties etc) or should we insist that both natives and non-natives are, first of all, teachers, trainers, or researchers? I think that the second option is the one that leads to equality based on belonging to the same profession. … We need to promote images of teachers as first of all people engaged in a certain professional activity rather than women or men of this nationality or another. One way to achieve this is to avoid using the words 'native' and 'non-native'. After all, these terms are imprecise and misleading. If for some reason the linguistic or national background of the teacher is relevant, it should be acknowledged in its full right, e.g., Dutch, Romanian or Australian teacher of English rather than something that is 'not'. I think this practice would, at least at the level of discourse, legitimize the 'non-native' teachers' right to equally participate in TESOL. As long as we use the 'non' as a descriptor, such teachers will be perceived as lacking in something essential and therefore of less value. (Email interview).

She suggests that this way of thinking would support an 'equal opportunities principle not just in terms of gender or race' but also in terms of 'qualifications, expertise and experience' rather than 'native language' (email interview).

This remoulding of the professional identity of world TESOL educators is also enhanced by a stronger presence in the academy. Apart from Aliya's insistence that 'non-native speaker' academics must work hard to 'create powerful impressions' and 'share their ideas through publications and paper presentations' (email interview), there is a deeper need for 'decentralizing research bases from the "centre"', where the 'centre' has always 'held the reins on research funding' (Lydia, email interview). Richard, a British

academic, suggests that it is only the persistent voices of individuals across institutions and communities that will bring about a shared World TESOL awareness and an understanding of how division comes about:

> Organizations, agencies, bodies etc need to change and be changed by the members of the World TESOL community. That change begins with the personal activities and beliefs of the individuals within that community whatever their role (teachers, materials writers, curriculum designers, teacher educators, inspectors, examiners, etc). And that ultimately means recognising that we are positioned (self and other) in the ideological debates and to consciously seek to be positioned in ways we are comfortable with which accord with World TESOL aspirations. (Email interview)

Changing curricula

Deliberate action also needs to be taken to encourage students to appreciate cultural continuity within their own and their teachers' situatedness within the process of English education. This requires changes in the curriculum which are referred to by several informants - to undo what Aliya refers to as 'the "charisma" of the West' which 'has brought strange ideas into the English language classrooms' and leads students to 'blatantly announce that they would like to be taught by "native, white teachers"!' – as we have seen in Shuck's study in chapter 2.

Esmat suggests including discussions of native-non-native speaker issues explicitly within Egyptian university classes. One aspect of this content could be 'the impact and interaction between English and local languages':

> We can include this theme in different forms where teachers can debate and raise their consciousness toward the value of the native speaker culture and that of the local cultures and the falsity of the native speaker syndrome. Translations should be encouraged, although the state of events has triggered multitudes of translations any way. Literature authored in English by non-native speakers should be used in classes. Native English cultures should be represented as one among many that learners are exposed to. (Email interview)

Lama suggests that Syrian university students should be introduced to texts written by English-speaking Western people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, thus discouraging simplistic images of speakerhood (email interview). Chris, a British colleague, reports her experience of using the native-non-native speaker issue itself as content and introducing Japanese masters students to the writings of critical linguists 'including Japanese writers writing in Japanese' when teaching 'What kind of

English should be taught in Japan?'. She also recommends courses in 'English for International communication' which focus on 'broadening out the source material we draw from in searched for language content which would not only push cultural continuity to an international level, but which would also be equally relevant to first and second language students' (email interview).

Addressing deeper political issues

There may however be naïve to presume that cultural continuity can be brought about simply by removing the professional divisions created by native-speakerism. The suggestions in the previous section, that cultural continuity may arise out of changes in professional identity and curriculum need to be seen within a deeper political context of a long-standing post-colonialist dominant discourse which is established around the principles of cultural division and the renewal of this discourse since the attack on the New York World Trade Centre in September 11th 2002.

Renewed entrenchments

Taking the last issue first, within the polarized political climate post September 11th, resisting native-speakerism can in fact work *against* cultural continuity and increase this polarization. This short extract from Lama reflects how strategies for demystifying the 'native speaker' norm amongst her Syrian students cannot be separated from a deeper disillusionment with the West :

> Discussing this matter with students and arguing that 'unless you want to be a spy, you don't need to sound like native speakers to cope and live abroad'; can be very efficient in qualifying student's perceptions and personal ideas about good language speakers. (Though within the current global conditions, there can be very strong counter arguments!!!) (Email interview)

Esmat, speaking from experience of the huge complexities of Egyptian TESOL, draws our attention to how deeply the attitudes which underlie such 'perceptions and personal ideas' about the politics of English are rooted in society:

> I do not think that there is a clear cut prescription or antidote that can alter attitudes especially on such wide scale and among diverse audience of TESOL. There are so many uncontrollable factors affecting perceptions: social, political, economic, professional, even religious that will impact on how people change their views.

While she supports the idea of a 'planned struggle' to 'help create a better understanding of 'others'' cultures', like Lama, she thinks September 11th has

created an anti-Western climate such that 'the world we live in now is not conducive to well-intentioned genuine curiosity about other cultures' necessary for cultural continuity. She feels that there is 'a perception that culminated (not started) on September 11th and was reinforced in the Iraqi war that links native speakers of English with a new race of undesirable imperialists'. She maintains that although TESOL is ready to be liberated 'from its Native Speaker fetishes', the whole nature of the 'us'-'them' divide is changing and deepening with these renewed poltical and cultural entrenchments:

> You need to establish a new boundary of us/them after September 11. My belief is that the boundaries, culturally and hence linguistically have become more profuse and that this is a current running totally counter globalization. So there seem to me to be two much stronger contradictory currents and that TESOL is even more torn between them than it had ever been. I do not even think that selling a 'world Englishes' is acceptable any more in the light of how the language is becoming mangled and mingled with attitudes towards its speakers. (Email interview)

An outcome is that the possibility of cultural continuity is retreating:

> I think that after Sep 11th there is a resurgence of nationalism, particularly in the U.S and in the West in general and in the process, English speakers are reclaiming and reasserting their own, including their language. I think you have to revisit your assumption by perhaps recognizing that the process is going circular. We are in an anti-global trend where cultures are setting up '*boundaries*' and it is 'us' or 'them' the good and the bad, soldiers and robbers and of course terrorists and this must be reflected in many facets of life.

And then, finally, Esmat contextualizes this 'anti-global trend' within persistent inequalities of resources which will always act against notions of equality:

> I am sure that those around me from the profession have no second thoughts about everyone's equality in the professionalism be he/she a native of the language or otherwise. The division lies in the contexts from which we each come: a rich, open society that is well-equipped to trial and innovate and a poor, dependent society that cannot afford to explore and does not have the resources to do so or the flexible system to allow for it. (Email interview)

The persistence of colonial structures

At the beginning of this chapter I placed a new *appreciation* of the nature of *how* cultural realities and practices connect and mingle at the centre of

the definition of cultural continuity. Much of the discussion so far has therefore focused on how we perceive ourselves and our relationships with others. The ability to *see* cultural potential is thus paramount, but is inhibited by the renewed polarizations discussed above, and by colonial entrenchments that persist to the present in the maintenance of professional control – pursuing the agendas of self-affirmation defined by Said (op cit). Lydia expresses this in political and economic terms:

> This historical legacy of how English 'should be taught' has plagued English language teaching the world over. The British government through the British Council has perpetuated the notion that the way English ought to be taught is a domain that they are experts in. It is true that this has done a lot to advance English language teaching but in the same breath this feeling of ownership has paid no attention to the knowledge held by TESOL educators in the colonies. The colonies have therefore only been exposed to practices that have been funded by the British Government and documented by British based scholars. Even if the periphery has had its own ideas on methods and practices in English language teaching the Centre would not fund the dissemination of such an idea in terms of publication and dissemination especially if it means that it takes away the legacy of control of 'what ought to be taught'. The feeling has been 'If you feel bright enough to come up with your own ideas that exclude me from the equation, then you better be ready to fund it as well', therein lies the powerlessness.

Despite the critical, postmodern writing on the imperialism issue which has come from the English speaking West (e.g. Phillipson 1992, Pennycook 1994, 1998, Holliday 1994a):

> The Centre is not more critical of its practices in terms of the service that it needs to offer to English language learners, but more for the control that it seems to be losing with the changing of ownership of the language and the subsequent loss of authority over 'how things should be done. (Email interview).

This takes us right back to the structures of the 'us'-'them' scenario laid out in chapter 2. It is also reminiscent of my informant Kuo's angry insistence in chapter 1 that despite Jenkins' intention to democratize English by arguing for an international standard, she is in fact representing yet another 'Centre' plot to control what sort of English people should speak – and of Canagarajah's comment in chapter 6, that although my rendering of appropriate methodology claims to look beyond the native-speakerist 'learning group ideal', its overall discourse essentially remains the same.

Patricia Sullivan, from her broad international experience, offers a sobering word of caution about the way in which the 'ownership of English' itself may be a constructed in a particular way by English-speaking Western

TESOL 'philanthropists' which is not meaningful to the people they think they are helping:

> I agree that the ownership of English is changing, but I don't see this perspective from most of the local teachers I deal with. I think this is an issue that is seen as more important by native speakers than by non-native speakers. The whole concept of 'ownership' is a new idea to most local teachers that I bring it up with. And they don't seem too interested. I hope that it makes teachers from the Centre more critical of their own practices, but I don't think this concept is what makes teachers from the Periphery more aware. There are other things that make them more aware, such as teacher in-service classes, teacher conferences, books, presentations, etc, and these don't often focus on 'ownership.' I just don't think that 'ownership' is a concept that is very relevant to local teachers. They see English as necessary for economic, social, and political reasons, and use it as they need it. It's a pragmatic decision. English is necessary for many reasons, and they use it when they need it. I don't think they see the need to 'own' it. On the other hand, giving up ownership from people in the Centre is a much bigger (harder?) deal. (Email interview)

Here is the depiction of a situation where the issue is not how do 'we' English-speaking Western ESOL educators 'give' more to 'those' 'non-native speakers', but of how 'we' just keep out of the picture in a way which allows people, whoever they are, to get on with things on their own terms. Of course Sullivan is presenting an 'outsider' English-speaking-Western perspective of what is happening in the 'local' sphere; but she importantly alludes to another example of the *'liberation' trap*, where the supposedly democratizing English-speaking Western TESOL discourse is not appreciated by the people it is supposed to be helping and imposes its own constructions upon them. As Lydia notes above, it may be more to do with the West satisfying its own needs. The trap may indeed go deeper and encompass any notion of 'other things that make them more aware' as artefacts of English-speaking Western TESOL discourse.

Understanding other agendas

Negative though the deeper political picture may be, it may *take* a disillusionment with the West to create a cultural continuity which is not dominated by the English speaking West. This involves really putting English and its methodologies in their place – as an instrumental, though very rich resource, which does not *have* to represent the cultural values of the English speaking West, but which can absorb and express the depths of whatever cultural values with which it becomes associated.

Looking at things in this way helps English-speaking-Western academics like me to try harder to understand agendas which come from outside the English speaking West, but seem at first sight to support native-speakerism. Such a one is the preference for British or American models of pronunciation, as put forward by Kuo and her Taiwanese students, in chapter 1. Indeed, if I am to pursue cultural continuity I need to understand the cultural origins of such agendas. On looking at Kuo's preference again, I begin to see it as an expression of *choice* about the type of cultural character one puts into English. Here Kuo makes the point that such choices do not have to involve submission to the English speaking West:

> People in Taiwan, for example, do not have any sort of hostility to English. Taiwan does not have any colonial past by the British (or even American) government and our attitude to English has been healthy. In this case, the commonly-seen constraints do not operate. The native-speaker norm, to us, is the only reliable source and the target that we look to on the way of learning English.

I also need to understand how it is possible for her to wish to adopt something which is to me quintessentially un-Taiwanese while maintaining her own identity. Indeed, it is her and her students colonizing exigencies of the West rather than the other way round. This can be seen in Kuo's clever, counter-'critical' reference to McDonaldization as a force that people can turn around – as they *choose* to exoticize English to make it a more attractive commodity:

> Apparently, they would already have some familiar tastes or sauces for hamburgers in America, which people in the United States might be very fond of, but when they decided to start business in other cities or countries, they would have to consider adding different ingredients or flavours ... such as the Beijing Duck flavour in Chinese cities or Pizza flavour in Italy or the more spicy, curry choices in India. Generally speaking, you have to make an investigation of the target market and you satisfy the needs of the local people, rather than imposing some strange offer. However, sometimes people will choose to have the original American flavour for its exotic and exciting attraction. Then, why not sell the originals? If the students are fascinated with the exotic flavour of English and prefer to learn it the way it is, then teach it that way. There is really no need to encourage some sort of awkwardly regional standard, particularly where English is not used within the society, as in Taiwan. (Email interview)

I also need to try and understand why some people from outside the English speaking West wish to preserve the 'native speaker' ethos. Despite her apparent opposition to my thesis, Florence's reference to diversity of people, roles and expertise, in her defence of the 'native speaker' ideal, *does*

signify a cultural continuity in a TESOL marketplace which is not *always* damaged by a native-non-native speaker divide:

> I don't feel a problem when I present myself as a 'native speaker' of Cantonese to others. I don't mind benefiting from my native-speaker identity and resources should such scenario arise. In my opinion, if 'non-natives' can demonstrate that they could perform the job of TESOL equally well or even better (in different aspects) when compared to the natives, I don't think we need to undo anything. I like to see a diversity of people contributing to a field playing different roles with different expertise. (Email interview)

In listening to her views it is possible to separate a certain type of 'native speaker' ethos from native-speakerism and begin to see unexpected traces of cultural continuity.

Luk (2002), who is recommended to me by Florence, takes 'a critical pedagogic perspective', and seeks a 'way of seeing and thinking which avoids overdeterministic, essentialistic, and totalistic attitudes' (2002: 1, citing Pennycook). As a Chinese university language teacher in Hong Kong, Luk acknowledges that she is 'one of the "victims"' of the preference for 'native speaker' teachers. Nevertheless, she finds that there are very clear benefits for her students in having 'native speaker' teachers who 'would "force" them to use English in class' (2002: 3); but more importantly her study of classroom interaction reveals that:

> pedagogical tension often emerges in such cross-cultural encounters due to the cultural and linguistic 'otherness' embodied by the native speaker teachers. Interestingly, this quality of 'otherness' ... may sometimes result in students' linguistic actions which reflect an identity release on the part of the students. Due to their perceptions of the native speaker teachers as being different, they may momentarily shed their sociohistorically conditioned institutional roles which they would have displayed in front of local non-native speaker teachers. (2002: 1)

The students thus enjoy, she argues, the liberation made possible by the third culture, space or place created by the necessarily 'cross-cultural encounters' with the teacher which allow the students to step outside themselves (2002: 19, her italics, citing Kramsch 2003).

A third place

I find this notion of third place attractive as a possible pivotal point around which to position cultural continuity – as a place where, taking my

definition from the beginning of the chapter, cultural realities and practices connect and mingle to allow collaborative inclusivity. When I look in Kramsch's early writing on this topic I see that it '*could* be' something that 'grows at the interstices between the cultures the learner grew up with and the new cultures he or she is being introduced to' (1993: 236, my emphasis). The 'could be' signifies a very important caution from being prescriptive about the nature of the third place. Kramsch is very clear that it is the *students* who must 'define for themselves what this "third place" that they have been engaged in seeking will look like, whether they are conscious of it or not' and that 'nobody, least of all the teacher, can tell them where that very personal place is' (1993: 257). This resonates with my perception of students' social autonomy which is independent of teacherly design, described in chapter 5.

There is however a problem. I can see how the third place could also be interpreted as arising from native-speakerist cultural division rather than Position 2 cultural continuity. Luk seems to suggest a binary native-non-native speaker division, which in my view encourages a simplistic idea about one set of people being culturally the same and the other being culturally different. This in turn derives from what I believe is now an outdated essentialist notion of a 'culture 1' corresponding with a 'language 1', and a 'culture 2' corresponding with a 'language 2'.

I prefer therefore to conceptualize the third place in more liberal terms – not as an alternative to the 'first' place of native and the 'second' place of foreign language and culture, but as something shared between the normal and the unusual. A language teacher who can transport her students into an exciting domain of cultural and linguistic experience with which they are not familiar does not have to be a 'native speaker' or a foreigner. Indeed, associating third place teaching with the 'white European' cultural stereotype only strengthens the racial prejudices described in Shuck's paper and Aliya's account of being discriminated against in chapter 2. Overcoming such prejudices should be a formalized objective within the learning process. Many readers must remember teachers they have had, not necessarily language teachers, who were not from other countries, but who brought a sufficiently cosmopolitan atmosphere to the classroom to open up new worlds to them. It is dangerously essentialist to imagine that it is only Western foreigners who can be culturally cosmopolitan.

What can therefore be learnt from Kuo, Florence and Luk is that there is indeed a cosmopolitan appeal in learning a foreign language. It does provide an important opportunity for transporting students into a third place and enabling them to explore cultural diversity. Language is by its nature cultural; and it may be particularly attractive in some settings to attach English to a British or American world (among many other possibilities) with its attendant literatures and accents. However, this need for cultural education must not be associated with an 'us'-'them' division in which educators are

discriminated against by virtue of nationality, speakerhood or race. In a Position 2 of cultural continuity all parties are equally present within their own communities of cultural richness.

Working from the inside out

It therefore becomes clear that approaches to cultural continuity which avoid domination by the English speaking West must develop counter to its self-affirming dominant discourses. In the second part of the chapter I am therefore going to explore how we might arrive at the understanding which is not based on self-affirmation by looking in some detail at a particular strategy for achieving cultural continuity which works from the inside out. Jacob writes from her experience as an Indian curriculum project coordinator at Pune University in the mid 1990s, where she was employed jointly by the university and the funding agency. She writes about how she and her colleagues made sure that project matrix thinking (chapter 6) was kept at a distance.

She describes a process for 'counteracting imperialism through a conscious *resistance discourse* that is created in the context of a collaborative model'. She sees the project and the curriculum together as 'a *dynamic ongoing process* of social interaction in which the "stakes" held by all concerned/affected members of the academic community are concerned vital to the project's ideology for safeguarding local knowledge and experience'. Hence, 'in this context, curriculum development is not just the simplistic carrying out of a preconceived schedule of project activities'. Because Jacob is partly employed by the project she is in a position to mediate by means of '*a continuous engagement* with members of the local community' to bring about '*a conversion of the discourse* from its initial unequal position of dominant discourse to a more equal representative discourse' (Jacob 1996: 1-2, her emphasis).

Although she talks about 'resistance', she treats it as a subtle concept which is interactive, and indeed 'communicative'. Her reference to 'all affected members' corresponds with the third communicative principle discussed in chapter 7, to take heed of all relevant parties, and is very different to the matrix version of stakeholder-centredness in which 'we' consider 'their' needs in order to effect change. Instead she talks of an 'interaction' and 'continuous engagement' within which there is a 'conversion' of positions from unequal to equal. Working at this level, Jacob depicts a set of almost personal strategies through which all parties in the curriculum endeavour make their own way in establishing connections with the project, the community and their own discourses within the project itself. Cultural continuity is thus achieved as the process Jacob describes communicates out to the other parties involved in the curriculum in a way which forms links with their own cultural perspectives.

Table 8.5: Intermediate actions of resistance

Strategies	Applications	
	by Rustam and her colleagues in University X	by Hong Kong students
Marking territories	Establishing an evaluation scheme which is meaningful to local colleagues. Establishing significant events such as seminars in which local colleagues present the ideas of the scheme.	Establishing their own spaces in classrooms, lecture theatres and workrooms
Reconciling with the past	Making sure the scheme is rooted in and continues to grow from existing cultures.	Making connections with previous experience community, art and education
Speaking against the grain	Speaking out against Gulnaz's and Gabby's representation of the matrix. Establishing anti-matrix ideas in reports and seminar presentation.	Overturning plans for project work agreed with tutors
Moving to centre stage from the periphery	Institutional actions as above	Designing and presenting research projects in their own terms
Holding back technology	Resisting the timelines, documents, and hierarchies of the matrix. Resisting Gabby's imported evaluation scheme	Refusing to speak in formal classes
Breaking silences	Speaking out as above	Speaking out when it is necessary to resist

Jacob delineates this process in terms of six small, intermediate actions. I have listed these in Table 8.5 and placed alongside them my observation of how Dr Rustam and her colleagues seemed to apply them, with varying degrees of success, in the University X project in chapter 6, and also how students from Hong Kong applied them while on my course in Canterbury, as reported in chapter 5. The categories could easily also apply to secondary school students in Hong Kong, in Japan and in Sri Lanka in Tong's (op cit) study, Holliday (2003b) and Canagarajah (1999) and others discussed in

chapter 5. one can also see elements of these strategies in Aliya's account of 'non-native speaker' teachers in the UAE presenting at conferences to help achieve recognition and higher employment status, in chapter 2.

Penetrating worlds of behaviour

Jacob in effect describes the parameters of a small *counterculture* – a small culture which asserts itself against a dominant small culture or cultures, but one which, in order to achieve continuity, tries to make sense of the dominant culture in different ways in order to survive and make itself known. The counterculture may become a more normalized way of life as the dominant culture becomes a more permanent part of the scene. Examples of this are the teachers in Ge's and Wu's studies, cited in chapter 6, who make use, in their own ways, of foreign methodologies to suit their own ends, and who develop their own ideas and strategies out of sight of the 'formal' curriculum process. Evidence of counterculture can also be seen in the classroom with the practices of social autonomy cited in chapter 5, where the Hong Kong students in Tong's study and the Sri Lankan students in Canagarajah's study find the dominant culture of the classroom dangerous and take action to deal with it in private sites.

A major problem for the counterculture is when it is perceived by the dominant culture as a deficit 'non-native speaker' Other which lacks the cultural ability either to take part in the matrices of curriculum projects or to adopt the dominant definition of autonomy, as seen in chapters 4 and 6. Even where there is focused investigation of a local educational environment, such as the means analysis described in chapter 7, the integrity of the counterculture can remain entirely invisible because the dominant culture is looking for specific things which suit its own agenda – gaining knowledge about the problematic foreign Other, for the purpose of self affirmation.

This sort of relationship between a counterculture and a dominant perception which sees something completely different is not only a feature of TESOL. Honarbin-Holliday's ethnographic study of women art students in two Iranian universities reveals a vibrant counterculture in which the students carry out intermediate actions of resistance not in the classroom but throughout their daily lives. Whereas the dominant Western perception would be that they are bound by narrow definitions of Islam in which women lack autonomy and there is no depiction of the human form, these students paint and draw the nude in private sites and embrace world art as their own. One of their tutors observes that 'the identity of these young people can only be seen in their search and struggle for ways of expressing themselves' (in process, citing interview, also 2004). She notes intermediate actions of resistance where the students and their teachers:

> routinely and highly competently critique and organize their lives with a sense of agency and autonomy. They are well aware of their circumstances,

> alert to issues of change, and negotiating new possibilities. We cannot ignore their strong voices. They are vociferous and demanding contributing to the debate of women's issues that has been ongoing in Iran since the 1920s. We must be vigilant and willing to see that they are. (Honarbin-Holliday 2003)

Being 'vigilant and willing to see' is indeed the key to achieving cultural continuity – 'to gain a better understanding of others' spaces and texts' (2003).

Bringing worlds together

The irony is that the intermediate actions of resistance and the enacting of social autonomy in the counterculture are more similar to what the dominant culture is seeking than it can imagine. It ought to be the role of the teacher or the curriculum developer to *work with* the counterculture, and to help cultural continuity along by being instrumental in bringing the worlds of the dominant and counter cultures together. Danai, the Greek Language school owner, has this to say about what teachers can do about the role of the internet in the counterculture of students and in the dominant culture of the lesson:

> Many teachers have been unwilling to legitimate other resources for learning than the ones they use in class. This also holds true for the Internet; it seems that learners use it for entertainment but not learning, because the teachers do not show them how they can use it to promote their learning and skills. In a small piece of action research that I conducted in a Greek EFL school ... it was found that students would welcome teacher guidance and support in how to use the Internet for learning. (Email interview)

At the classroom level, because of the inevitably unequal power relationship, Lorraine, as British ESOL educator, may be right that the teacher has a responsibility as 'the one who brings the two worlds together – to the best of her ability in a fixed time and space' (email interview). When asked if he was ever torn between the dominant culture of his British professionalism and the counterculture of the students, David Palfreyman responded with a sensitively positive role for teacher intervention:

> Yes, sometimes. When I *don't* feel torn, I sometimes feel that this is because I'm ignoring the students' world. However, couldn't valid goals for language education include challenging students' worlds (in order to get them to reflect on the same) and giving them meaningful access to other worlds? (Email interview)

He then reported an incident in which he began to appreciate something about his university students in Dubai *because* his lesson structure broke down – similar to my account with my Hong Kong students cited in chapter 6. It was supposed to be a 'listening to lectures and note taking' class:

> One lesson the tape recorder broke down, so I delivered the lecture myself. I found that the students were not taking notes as they usually did, but instead looking at me as I talked. When I asked why, they said what was happening was 'not listening', but rather trying to understand. This made me realize how much they saw the taped lecture listenings as a special event, distinct from their 'real world'. Faced with a real speaker, they became engaged with me as a person and with the negotiated activity of understanding my meaning, nodding, agreeing or disagreeing, etc. (Email interview)

It could be argued that what happened here was the leaving behind of the teacherly discourse, in which 'listening', one of 'the four skills', was the dominant icon.

A more neutral geography

At the curriculum level there are many parties who must take responsibility for seeing things differently. Here, cultural continuity is encouraged by a small culture approach because it encourages an equality of status for all concerned parties, with no a priori primacy given to an imported English-speaking Western TESOL culture. Instead of thinking in terms of a polarized opposition between and English-speaking-Western invader and a local national culture, which encourage cultural correction, a view of the world as smaller, more negotiable and flexible cultures which can flow and mix as a result of intermediate action can encourage cultural continuity. Seeing the University X project in this way presents the curriculum milieu as a mélange of groupings and forces – a field of complex activity within which each person interacts on an equal basis. Locating oneself in this mélange encourages an understanding of how the interaction which takes place is multi-dimensional and multi-participatory. Each person must join with the other people in the mélange to locate her own role and identity, making sense of the changes in her life. This interpersonal view turns the role of the curriculum developer back into an outsider participant rather than an instigator of a new matrix order. Beverly uses the analogy of the guest at a dinner party:

> The role of the outside expert (researcher, consultant, English teacher even) brings to mind a dining table in which the outsider is a guest at the table, arriving with a gift perhaps, enjoying what is offered, watching

> others for cues as to how to eat, in what quantities, and order. The guest, because he/she is a guest, can question what is offered in order to learn, engage in conversation but mostly not as the leader, sharing own thoughts, traditions and stories but always in relation to what is offered re: food and talk at the table. And of course a thank you and reciprocity are somehow expressed. And there are implications in terms of time allotted – a good dinner cannot be had in an hour and cell phones – connections to the outside – must be turned off. (Email interview)

The interpersonal and the global

The discussion in this chapter so far leads us in two apparently conflicting directions. Taking Edward Said as inspiration in defining the form of knowledge needed to support cultural continuity at the beginning of the chapter leads to broader implications, which in turn sit well with the concept of native-speakerism as a global ideology that underlies the discussion throughout the book. In a very different direction, implicit in the vision of the curriculum in terms of a mélange of small cultures and counter-cultures, and in Jacob's rendering of a resistance discourse, is a vision of a more universal interpersonal strategy of *being* which can be found wherever people actively work to maintain the values of who they are in professional or other circumstances which may act against their identities. It is employed by all human groups and individuals in the everyday business of establishing themselves in concert with people around them. In the final conclusion to the chapter and the book I shall look briefly at the importance both of these directions.

Self understanding and discipline

The issue of cultural essentialism, which I present in chapter 2 as the basis for culturism, can be addressed at the interpersonal level. The vision of cultural continuity as interpersonal relations within a mélange of small cultures requires small intercultural communication. Holliday et al suggest eighteen disciplines for making us see each other as individuals who are culturally constructed in complex ways rather than as bound by stereotypes, which are summarized as follows:

> Seek a deeper understanding of individual people's identity by avoiding preconceptions, appreciating complexity, not over-generalizing from individual instances. Achieve this by employing *bracketing* to put aside your preconceptions, *thick description* to enable you to see complexity, and an appreciation of *emergent data* to signal the unexpected. ... Seek a deeper understanding of the prejudices, preoccupations and discourses

> which lead you to otherize. Use this to enable bracketing and to manage your own role in communication. ... Seek a deeper understanding of the representations of the foreign Other which are perpetuated by society. (2004: 48-49)

Bracketing and thick description are also the basic disciplines with which critical qualitative researchers were able to put aside preconceptions, and piece together the newness of what they did not expect, to begin to see some of the hidden realities of students in chapter 5. Aspects of qualitative research have been modelled on the individual making sense of daily life scenarios. Bracketing puts the researcher into the role of a stranger, temporarily putting aside notions of the 'normal' in order to see things differently, to recapture what it is like for all of us to learn the ethnographic truths we need to behave effectively (Schutz 1964, Holliday 2002a: 10), and piecing together the puzzling fragments of experience in fresh, new thick description. The difference between insiders and outsiders blurs, as we all have the experience of the latter in different parts of our lives. Whereas the quest for self-affirmation which underpins cultural correction might be said to be positivistic in its intention to satisfy prejudgements, for interpretive qualitative researchers, the quest for cultural continuity needs to allow understanding to emerge from the lived experiences of the people they engage with.

To play a little with the comparison between professional interpersonal relationships and research, the following is a minimal re-write of an extract from the end of my 2002a book on qualitative research:

> The ESOL educator is one person amongst others in the social setting where she is carrying out her work. As such, she is a person who is trying to understand others, but must do this through the way in which they interact with her ... – just as anyone who is relating to new people, or indeed friends and colleagues she has known for longer but whom she must still struggle to understand. In everyday life we have always to remember that how people are to us has a lot to do with how we are with them. They react to the complex baggage that we bring with us; and we see them also in terms of this baggage.

There is an indication here that the baggage, which, in the case of TESOL, is native-speakerism and its residues, can never really be completely discarded but, through the prism of bracketing, becomes an object around which to explore other beliefs. Trying hard to put away one's prior professional conditioning seems to me to be the only way to undo 'us'-'them' fixations and achieve anything like cultural continuity and learning to live with the other people in the curriculum setting. We all therefore have to allow ourselves to relinquish the securing power of our own professional cultures and discourses and be prepared to begin again.

Sociological imagination

The baggage and the prejudice it brings with it must not be forgotten however. In placing cultural continuity within a wider, global scenario, it is necessary to achieve what C Wright Mills calls a 'sociological imagination' – the ability to locate oneself and one's actions critically within a world scenario – 'to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society' (1970: 12). There must therefore be a tension between seeing things freshly without baggage and remembering who we are in terms of where we come from and the ideological forces that have formed us. This tension is very evident in the title of Alibhai-Brown's (2000) book, 'Who do we think we are?', which makes us re-assess who we are with new thinking while reminding us of the history of what we have thought in our ignorance.

At the same time as seeing people freshly as autonomous individuals we need to remember the key facts of that have placed us in this situation in the first place. While we may not agree with the entire linguistic imperialism thesis, we need to remember that, consciously or unconsciously, the original purveyors of English have tried hard to dominate and re-categorize the lives of students and colleagues whom they thought could be culturally changed for the better in the process. We need to remember how difficult it has been for people, who have found themselves the victims of this process, to struggle for identity while wishing and trying to take part in an educational venture which leads them to love and hate at the same time.

Loose ends and enriching encounters

This has been a particularly challenging book to write partly because of the sometimes unexpected dialogue with my email informants and partly because of a conscious detachment from the instrumental problem-solving discourse to which I have been used throughout my professional life. For these two reasons I have had constantly to refrain from trying to tie things up too neatly. This chapter is particularly characterized by loose ends. I feel comforted by this note of caution from Geertz:

> Coherence cannot be the major test of validity for a cultural description. ... There is nothing so coherent as a paranoid's delusion or a swindler's story. The force of our interpretations cannot rest on the tightness with which they hold together, or the assurance with which they are argued. Nothing has done more, I think, to discredit cultural analysis than the impeccable depictions of formal order in whose actual existence nobody can quite believe. (1993: 17-18)

And indeed I then wonder if what I have written has too few loose ends. The idea of cultural continuity addressed in this chapter is left open-ended; and

I am happy to leave it that way. It is also perhaps more than we can hope for; but if it can be a solid heading in people's minds against which to think about who they are and how they treat each other, then a great deal will have been achieved. Part of the problem is an underlying modernist force that has led us to culturism and native-speakerism by trying to over-define who people are, how they are divided and the subsequent limits of what they can do. An important message about how it is not necessary to create these boundaries and package our understanding comes from two of the Kuwaiti students cited in Kamal (2003). When she asked them what they wanted her to say about them when she went to the US to give her paper at the TESOL Convention, one said '"I think teachers need to understand that it's OK if they don't get everything about our culture and behaviour. As long as we're not hurting anybody, why does it matter if I am different from someone else?"'. Another student said: '"We're just students you know. Why have you got to understand us?"'. What these students might to be telling us is that their identity goes beyond what we can possibly define.

If the damaging, controlling, accusing desire for self-affirmation is to be avoided, and an understanding for purposes of co-existence and enlargement of horizons is to be achieved (Said op cit), the sense we make of who we are and how we can work together needs to be more open. As I write in a café in the centre of Canterbury I can see one of our masters students walking across the square. She is from Thailand, which, in the centre of over-'English' Canterbury, brings with it the hope of something different and enriching. Even the way in which her English words come out represents a refreshingly different world of thinking which can transport me into a third place. At the same time she is a person just like me with ideas and thoughts to share, the essence of which we both hold in common. We are separated by many things – age, gender, occupation and life aspirations; and what is most important is not her Thainess at all. When we get to know each other she is not 'foreign'. If the *final* thought is that she is 'foreign' then we are lost.

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