Waikato Journal Of Education

Te Hautaka Mātauranga o Waikato

Volume 17, Issue 1, 2012

Introduction
*Linda Mitchell* 3

**Special section: Early Childhood**

New Zealand Kindergartens 2005 to 2010: Funding and operational changes
*Claire Davison* 5

Connecting curriculum and policy to assist families’ aspirations
*Jeanette Clarkin-Phillips* 17

Embedding collaboration in integrated Early Childhood Services: The strategic role of governance and leadership
*Frances Press* 29

**General Section**

The Tragedy of the Commons fishing game
*M. C. Morris* 43

‘Looking back, looking forward’: An interview with Emeritus Professor Ted Glynn on his involvement in special education
*Peter Stanley & Ted Glynn* 57

Book Review
*Kirsten Petrie* 69

**Doctoral Thesis Abstracts**

An investigation of the development of students’ and teachers’ perceptions towards technology: A framework for reconstructing technology education in Malawi
*Vanwyk K. M. Chikasanda* 71

Teacher development for English language teaching in China: Based on English language teachers’ beliefs and practices in New Zealand
*Suxia Gao* 73

Programme design practice in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand: A case for complexity
*Elly Govers* 75

The perceptions of beginning secondary teachers about their professional learning experiences in the Solomon Islands context
*Patricia Rodie* 77
WAIKATO JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

TE HAUTAKA MĀTAURANGA O WAIKATO

Current general editors: Beverley Bell, Noeline Wright
Editorial board: Beverley Bell, Margaret Carr, Bronwen Cowie, Rosemary De Luca, Deborah Fraser, Richard Hill, Margie Hohepa, Judy Moreland, Sally Peters, Clive Pope, Noeline Wright

Waikato Journal of Education is a refereed journal, published annually, based in the Faculty of Education, The University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. It publishes articles in the broad field of education. For further information visit the WJE website http://edlinked.soe.waikato.ac.nz/research/journal/index.php?id=8

The Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research (WMIER), which is part of the Faculty of Education, The University of Waikato, publishes the journal.

There are two major submission deadline dates: December 1 (for publication the following year in May); June 1 (for publication in the same year in November). Please submit your article or abstract to the WJE Administrator, email wmier@waikato.ac.nz.

Submissions for special sections of the journal are usually by invitation. Offers for topics for these special sections, along with offers to edit special sections are also welcome.

Business correspondence: Orders, subscription payments and other inquiries should be sent to the WJE Administrator, Waikato Journal of Education, Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research, Faculty of Education, The University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton, 3240, New Zealand, Email: wmier@waikato.ac.nz

Subscriptions: Within NZ $40 (2012) $50.00 (2013);
Overseas NZ $50 (2012) $60.00 (2013)

Copyright: © Faculty of Education, The University of Waikato

Publisher: Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research, Faculty of Education, The University of Waikato

Cover design: Donn Ratana

Printed by: Waikato Print

ISSN 1173-6135
Teacher development for English language teaching in China: Based on English language teachers’ beliefs and practices in New Zealand

Unpublished Ph.D thesis, Faculty of Education, University of Waikato

Suxia Gao
The University of Waikato

ABSTRACT

My study inquired into English language teachers’ beliefs and practices in China and in New Zealand. It explored the process of using New Zealand English language teachers’ beliefs and practices as a stimulus to promoting and developing Chinese English language teachers’ understanding of English language teaching and their practices in the classroom.

Interviews and questionnaires were conducted respectively in both China and New Zealand from May 2007 to November 2007. An action research process took place in China, lasting about four months with three cycles from March to July in 2008. Two English language teachers with the students in their class participated in the action research. The goal of my study was to identify the role that New Zealand English language teachers’ beliefs and practices played in helping Chinese English language teachers develop their teaching beliefs and practices so as to promote their students’ communication competence in the target language.

On investigation, I found that New Zealand English language teachers’ beliefs and practices played a positive role in helping Chinese English language teacher participants develop their teaching beliefs and practices. They provided Chinese teacher participants with an alternative view to construct and reconstruct teaching beliefs and meaning of being an English language teacher. Teachers’ previous beliefs assimilated other beliefs that were regarded as helpful to solve the self-perceived problems. However, teachers’ existing beliefs still played a role in their new teaching practices.

Some values are hard to change and may not need to be changed. Thus, I argued that cultural congruence had to be achieved between New Zealand teachers’ beliefs and practices and Chinese social contexts. I also found that once New Zealand teachers’ beliefs and practices were transplanted in China, Chinese teachers adapted and tailored pedagogical practices against contexts, which motivated Chinese teachers to develop
culturatively appropriated beliefs and practices when they considered Chinese sociocultural contexts in teaching.

Factors which influenced the application of these new approaches were also explored. Firstly, the Chinese educational and learning environment had a large influence because there are large differences between New Zealand and Chinese educational, cultural and learning environments. Beliefs and practices appropriate in New Zealand may not be so in China since different beliefs and practices have different cultural implications. It is thus unrealistic to transfer directly from New Zealand to China and essential to adapt New Zealand beliefs and practices to suit Chinese contexts.

Secondly, teacher expertise was another influencing factor. This expertise linked to teachers’ English language proficiency, their subject matter knowledge and their pedagogical content knowledge. For example, English language proficiency influenced teachers’ confidence in practising new teaching and their creativity in creating a target language speaking environment in class. In-depth subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge were the basis upon which teacher participants practised new teaching and closed the gap between their beliefs and practices. Lacking the knowledge about the nature and process of foreign language teaching prevented them from transferring what they believed to practical activities.

Pedagogical reconciliation was found as the key to achieving socio-culturally appropriate pedagogical practices in Chinese contexts. It balanced and integrated what was introduced to teaching with what had influenced teaching before. This study embraced a positive attitude toward using beliefs and practices from other culture(s) in Chinese English language teacher development and proposed it as an effective teacher development mode for China’s English language teacher education programme.