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**The ‘Native Speaker’ Frame: Issues in the  
Professional Culture of a Japanese Tertiary EFL  
Program**

**by**

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**Thesis submitted  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis provides an ethnographic investigation into the ways in which the ideology of native-speakerism operated unrecognized under the surface of a Japanese university EFL program. While the program appeared to be free of explicit expressions of native-speakerism, such as discrimination against teachers, the study found that the claims which were used to justify the practices of the program were underlain by implicitly native-speakerist assumptions based on the stereotyping and Othering of Japanese students and the Japanese education system. The study develops the concept of “the ‘native speaker’ frame” as a way of explaining how, even in cases where native-speakerist ideology appears to be absent, the dominant framing of a program may still be influenced by, and in turn may serve to propagate, native-speakerist ideology.

The study further shows how the program utilized a particularly strict teaching methodology, which, along with a specific discourse of ‘professionalism’ and a covert program of reinforcement, resulted in the instructors on the program aligning their own psychological frames almost completely with the program. Finally, it highlights how instructors were able to enact ‘frame transformations’ through acts of cultural resistance which led, in some cases, to a challenging of the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program and changes in the practices of the program itself.

This study provides a new perspective on debates around native-speakerism, which have recently tended to focus on explicitly discriminatory beliefs and actions. In contrast, this study shows how the ideology of native-speakerism can exist undetected and unrecognized in the framing and structures of ELT programs and professional practice, and suggests that ‘native speaker’ framing may lie at the heart of much, if not all, of the English language teaching profession.

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# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1. Personal and professional background: Motivations for the research**

As teacher of English as a foreign language, I have spent the majority of my professional life working in the Japanese higher education system, teaching in both private and public institutions. I have worked both as a part-time and full-time instructor, and have experienced many kinds of working environments, which I felt at the time to be both good and bad. This does not, of course, distinguish me from any other teacher, nor from any other person in any field. However, I have, in my teaching life, always sensed that there are links between the ways that I and other teachers have been treated at each institution, and the ways in which the courses we were teaching were designed, packaged, delivered, and sold to the students. In particular, there seemed to be a strong connection between the 'native' or 'non-native' speaker status of the teachers and the way they were treated by each institution. In some cases the 'native speaker' teachers seemed to be treated disproportionately well, with higher salaries, relaxed hiring criteria, longer holidays, and reduced pressure to engage in departmental activities. In other cases, it seemed that the 'native speaker teachers' were reduced to mere props in the classroom; tokenistic representatives of an imagined cultural and linguistic community rather than trained educators, who were prized purely for their 'native speaker' status, rather than for their skills and expertise as language educators.

I did not know it at the time, but the observations I was making had already been discussed and conceptualized by critical applied linguists at some length, with 'native speaker' privilege making up one aspect of the industry-wide ideology of "native-speakerism" (Holliday, 2005). I also found that the treatment of English language teachers in the Japanese higher education system was increasingly coming under academic scrutiny (Houghton & Rivers, 2013b). It was these experiences in my own life that led me to embark on the research that forms the basis of this thesis



– a work examining a department I entered which did not seem to be subscribing to the ideology of native-speakerism, but rather appeared to be providing a more equitable approach to the hiring and treatment of instructors. Before discussing the particular research questions which underlay this study, I will give a brief description of the setting which both inspired, and was the focus of, this project.

## **1.2. The setting: A Japanese tertiary EFL program**

The focus of this research was one EFL program located in a Japanese university. I will here give a short description of the university itself, and then describe the place of the program under discussion. This description will be rather brief, as my intent here is to introduce the setting. More detailed analysis will come later in the data chapters.

### **1.2.1. Akarenga University**

Akarenga University (A pseudonym) is a large private university with campuses in Tokyo and Saitama, Japan. It was started by a missionary in the 1800s, and maintains its identity as a Christian institution with one chapel central to each campus. While it is nominally a Christian university offering courses in theology, it is largely secular in practice, and very few students attending the university are Christian (or even religious) themselves. In fact, it most resembles what would be known in America as a 'liberal arts' university, with the majority of undergraduates studying topics such as literature, history, geography, sociology, and architecture. However, while its missionary roots are not hugely influential on the lives of its students, Akarenga University's Christian heritage does seem to influence its self-perception as an 'international' institution. In Japanese education, the notion of 'kokuzaika' (internationalisation) is very prominent (McVeigh, 1996, 2002), and many institutions have, since the 1980s, been working to promote their image as 'international' (Kubota,

2002b). This can take the form of increasing the number of their students studying abroad, increasing the number of international students on their own campus, participation in international academic or sporting events, or the hosting of conferences on their premises. One of the ways in which individual institutions and the government have attempted to improve the international image of Japan and Japanese universities is through the cultivation of English abilities in students, and through the teaching of classes in English (Hashimoto, 2013b). While this move has been opposed by some Japanese scholars (Aspinall & Cullen, 2001; Suzuki, 1999; Tsuda, 1990, 2000), it is still the case that, rightly or wrongly, English ability is seen as an important part of the internationalisation of Japan, of Japanese institutions, and of Japanese students (Sergeant, 2011).

### **1.2.2. The Discussion and Communication Program**

It was with the goal of improving the English abilities of its students that Akarenga University set up the program which was the site of this research. The Discussion and Communication Program (a pseudonym, hereafter referred to as DACP) was started in 2009 by professors associated with the intercultural communication department, and designed and administered initially by two foreign teachers who were recruited specifically for this purpose. The DACP was designed to improve the English communication skills of the undergraduate students at the university. This means it was taken not only by the students studying English language and literature, but was in fact a mandatory part of the freshman studies of every student in the university. The program was designed to encourage as much communication as possible amongst the students, and so class sizes were limited to a maximum of nine, with an average of eight students per class. Each class met once a week and lasted for ninety minutes. The fact that the classes were so small, combined with the fact that the course was taken by every undergraduate in the university, meant that an unusually large number of instructors were employed in the DACP. While the course was initially piloted

with a small number of teachers, this increased over time to make the course as wide reaching and reliable as possible. The number of total instructors fluctuated slightly from year to year, but remained relatively stable at just over 40 full-time staff. Each staff member was limited to a contract of five years, and they were under the supervision of between three and four 'program managers', who themselves were overseen by a panel of professors.

The study described in this thesis sought to investigate this program in the context of the research questions described below.

### **1.3. Research questions**

As mentioned earlier, my initial aim in undertaking this project was to discover how the course had managed to overcome the native-speakerist ideology so prevalent in other parts of the ELT industry, and in my own experiences in Japanese university EFL programs. However, this was an ethnographically-influenced study (the details of which I shall explain in chapter 5), and as is common in these cases, the questions and indeed the whole focus of the project shifted over the time during which the data was collected and analysed (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). In this section I will provide both my original research questions, and the questions that later came to be formulated as themes began to emerge in the data. I will contextualize these within a narrative so readers may get a sense of the reflexive nature of the project and how this influenced the development of the research questions and the research approach.

#### **1.3.1. Initial questions**

Given my previous experiences in other institutions, I felt compelled to investigate what was happening in this department, and to discover whether my intuitions about the equality of the hiring and treatment of teachers were correct. This led me to formulate the following research

questions, which acted as a base for my initial explorations of the department:

1. Was there equality among the teachers in this program, both 'native' and 'non-native' speakers?
2. How had this been achieved?
3. What could be learned from this in terms of future program design?

These were my initial questions, and in a way, they presupposed that at least the answer to question one was "yes". As I entered the project with what may be called a 'hypothesis' about what was going on (since I had preconceived beliefs about the research setting), this could not be considered a pure ethnography, because a pure ethnography assumes no preconceptions on the part of the researcher. However, the ethnographically-influenced approach to research taken in this project required that I be reflective, and this orientation necessarily led to new considerations and understandings arising about the environment I was studying. Indeed, although my own observations were initially focused on the treatment of teachers, my reading of the literature in critical applied linguistics, and my developing understanding of the discourses at play among the program managers and instructors on the course, forced me to think more deeply about the subject of my study and reconsider the questions I was asking. While I quickly found evidence of equal treatment among teachers on the program, as I document in chapter 6, I also started to notice what I considered to be culturally chauvinistic attitudes towards Japanese students and towards the Japanese education system which led me to question my assumptions regarding the role of native-speakerism in the program. These attitudes initially caught my attention in the form of explicit statements by teachers. However, I soon started to find evidence of the same attitudes in the underlying philosophy of the program, and this led me to not only reformulate my research

questions, but also broaden the scope of my research approach.

### 1.3.2. Reformulated questions

As a picture began to emerge from my data, I started to realise that perhaps, despite the equality for teachers that seemed to be present in the course, there was still evidence of the program being influenced by the ideology of native-speakerism, particularly in terms of what I call the ‘native speaker’ frame. This led me to rethink my approach and reconsider my ideas, eventually formulating the following research questions:

1. Was there equality among the teachers in this program, both ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ speakers?
2. What was driving the equitable treatment of teachers in this program?
3. Was the program free of native-speakerist ideology in other respects?

My study took the form of a qualitative analysis, in which I interviewed the course designers and instructors, as well as collecting artifacts and documents, and keeping a journal of my experiences as a teacher on the course. While, as already mentioned, I cannot claim to have been conducting a pure ethnography, I used many of the tools of ethnography, and attempted to take a reflexive approach to the research. As my project progressed I began to analyse the data I was collecting in new ways and from a more critical perspective, leading eventually to an understanding of the deeply hidden native-speakerist ideology at play in the program as described in chapter 7. This new critical orientation also led me to collect new types of data. Notably, my growing awareness of the forms of resistance taking place on the program led me to gather new data related to the cultural resistance being enacted by the DACP teachers, as described in chapter 8. The exact research

methodology will be described later in the thesis, but it is important to note from the outset that the changing research questions signal a clear shift in my orientation towards the project, and towards the conclusions that I drew regarding the role of native-speakerist ideology in the course. Indeed, I developed an understanding that far from being free of native-speakerism (if it is even possible to be 'free' of an ideology), the DACP was heavily influenced by what I term the 'native speaker' frame; meaning that although the program did provide true equality for instructors on the program, it still operated under a set of assumptions that assumed a Western native-speakerist perspective, framing the context in which it operated through the eyes of the Western 'native speaker' and the institutions of Western ELT. I do not believe that this was a conscious choice on the part of the course designers or instructors, rather I think that this framing is built into ELT practice, particularly among educators trained in the West. I also believe that this framing is so ingrained that it is only through a very close analysis of data that it can be seen. In this thesis I will show how my analysis of ethnographic data led me to understand that, despite the equitable treatment of teachers on the program, the practices of the DACP were still framed in a native-speakerist way, and that this philosophy was hidden within what I term the "DACP discourse of professionalism". This was a discourse that actually, ironically, drove the equality among the instructors on the program. I further identified ways in which DACP instructors engaged in acts of resistance against the course which, while not representing conscious resistance to native-speakerism in the DACP, did allow them to enact 'frame transformations' in which assumptions and practices could be questioned and challenged. I believe that this is significant because it is through such frame transformations that native-speakerism in the program, even when not recognized as such, was able to be resisted and challenged in some measure.

At this point, I would like to clarify my use of the terms "West" and "Western", as these will be mentioned throughout the thesis. These terms appear to represent a dichotomous way of thinking

which splits the world into the “West” and the “non-West”, however this binary categorization is not what I mean to imply. While these terms are, on the surface, geographical labels, they represent ideologically constructed perceptions of the world. Phillipson (1992) uses the terms “Centre” and “Periphery” to describe relationships of power connected to colonial history, and notes that even these terms are not dichotomous and that there are “centres of power in the Centre and in the periphery” (p.52) which are connected by shared interests and which serve to exploit their respective peripheries. Despite this, Phillipson’s theories have been attacked by Pennycook (1994) and Canagarajah (1999b) as being overly-simplistic and unable to account for micro-social aspects of ELT. Other terminology such as BANA/TESEP (Holliday, 1994a) has similar problems in terms of being overly-deterministic. However, I follow Holliday (2005) in feeling that the usefulness of these labels lies not in “the objectivity of the categorization but how it is subjectively perceived” (p.5). In other words, when I use the terms “West” and “Western”, I am referring not to static objective categories, but to the psychological associations these categories suggest. For example, when I refer to someone as having a “non-Western name” in chapter 2, I do not intend to imply that a name can objectively be ‘non-Western’, but rather that the name would be considered ‘non-Western’ by those hearing it. This is shown by the fact that, in this case, individuals with ‘non-Western’ names were assumed to be ‘non-native speakers’ of English. In other words, the terms are used in this thesis to refer not to an extant political or social entity, but rather to a political and ideological abstraction; an imaginary binary, which yet has the effect of allowing people to make simple ‘us’ and ‘them’ distinctions between ‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’ students, ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ speaker teachers, and ‘collectivist’ and ‘individualist’ cultures.

#### **1.4. A change in perspective**

I think it is important to note at the outset of the thesis that this has been a difficult project for me

to undertake, a point which is reflected in the changing research questions outlined earlier. I began the project with a very specific aim in mind. I believed that the DACP was free of native-speakerism (as I then understood it) and that lessons could be learned from this that could be transferred to other programs in order to eliminate native-speakerism in other settings. My attitudes toward the program were further shaped by my own personal position; before joining the DACP I had been let go from a job at a previous institution and had spent several months picking up part-time work while struggling to complete my MA. Finding employment on the DACP provided me with much-needed stability and a feeling of professional satisfaction which I had not to that point experienced. As such I felt a sense of loyalty to the program and had a very positive orientation towards it. Over the course of the project, my understanding of the program shifted as I began to consider the data I was collecting in a more critical light, and this caused some internal conflict. My growing critical understanding of what was happening on the program and how it was framed according to native-speakerist assumptions led to feelings of disloyalty and a certain amount of cognitive dissonance. Accordingly, I resisted the conclusions reached in this thesis for a long time, only coming to articulate and defend them in the final few months of my project. I still feel this conflict to an extent, and I have found myself, while writing this thesis, second guessing many of my conclusions and wondering if I am being unfair or over-interpreting the evidence. In the end, I believe that it is important for me to be honest about my conclusions, and it is these conclusions that are represented in this thesis. I believe that these conclusions are significant because they show how deeply native-speakerist assumptions can be embedded in ELT practice, and how these assumptions may be framed as normal, neutral, and even commonsensical. However, I am still uncomfortable with these conclusions, and I suspect this may be because I still feel some loyalty towards the course, which I think contains many positive elements and which was well-intentioned. I also think it is possible that these conclusions conflict with the residual 'native



speaker' frame within my own mind, which I am not hubristic enough to imagine I have completely reasoned away.

I believe that this thesis contributes significantly to discussion of native-speakerism in ELT, principally through providing empirical evidence of the deeply hidden existence of the ideology in a particular course, along with a detailed description of how this ideology manifested in this location. This study offers a perspective on what was happening 'between the lines' of a program which otherwise appeared to be free of native-speakerist ideology, and as such provides essential empirical support to claims that native-speakerist ideology underlies much, if not all, of the field of English language teaching.

### **1.5. Structure of the thesis**

In **Chapter 2**, I first discuss some of the major literature surrounding the concept of the 'native speaker', investigate the ways in which the 'native speaker' has been conceptualized in theoretical linguistics and applied linguistics, and outline the attempts that have been made to classify the two perceived groups of speakers. As this thesis' central concern is with language education, I make particular reference to the roles that 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' instructors have been assumed best to fulfill. I also discuss some of the various attempts that have been made to reconceptualize these concepts in ways which are conducive to work conducted in practical, rather than theoretical branches of linguistics. Finally, I explain the way in which I will be using the term 'native speaker' throughout this thesis.

**Chapter 3** is concerned with the concept of 'native-speakerism'. I explore the theoretical precursors to this concept in critical applied linguistics, explain what I mean by describing native-speakerism as an 'ideology' and as a 'discourse', describe the role native-speakerism plays in global ELT, and discuss forms of resistance to native-speakerism documented in research literature.

I then describe the many professional issues caused by native-speakerism in ELT, and examine how it works as an ideology to influence the lives of language teachers, the design and development of materials, the privileging of Western models of English and of Western-developed English language teaching methodologies, and the Othering of students. Next, I engage in a critical discussion of a recent attempt to redefine the concept to include discrimination against 'native speaker' teachers, and finally I examine some of the criticism that has been made of the concept, the ways in which this criticism has been responded to, and the validity of this criticism, in my view.

**Chapter 4** begins with a definition of “the ‘native speaker’ frame”, the core concept of this thesis. I compare this to the White racial frame in the theory of systemic racism, and examine some of the parallels between the two, going so far as to suggest that native-speakerism may in fact simply be a domain-specific form of racism. In this chapter I also investigate one of the main discourses which serves to uphold native-speakerism, that of 'professionalism'. I first draw a distinction between 'professional discourses' and 'discourses of professionalism', and explain how, while they are interrelated, for the purposes of this thesis I will be focusing on discourses of professionalism. I discuss the concept of teacher professionalism, and how discourses of professionalism play out in ELT, with a focus on training, qualifications, agreed knowledge bases, and standards of practice. I then explain how discourses of professionalism have influenced native-speakerism and help to uphold and propagate this ideology. Finally, I bring together the three literature review chapters to create a framework through which the data in this study can be analysed.

In **Chapter 5** I explain the methodology used in the process of this research. I first explain why I have chosen a 'constructivist' perspective on social research, and then explain why I think that an ethnographic study is the most reasonable and fruitful way to carry out the particular research described in this project. I then explain the types of data that were gathered for this project and the

way in which each kind of data was gathered. I give a description of the way in which my field notes were collected, the selection and procedure design for the interviews, and the kinds of artifacts and documents collected and the rationale for their collection. Finally, I explain how this data was coded and analysed.

In **Chapter 6** I present the first of my research findings; the level of equality in the course. I discuss, with reference to interview data, how the equal treatment of the teachers in terms of the structure and management of the course was partially intentional, through the desire of one program manager to create a politically liberal professional 'utopia', and partly a result of the 'professionalism' of the program, which promoted one particular educational technology within a unified curriculum, in which it was felt that the most important thing for a teacher on the course to be able to do was to teach the lessons within a rigid philosophy and framework. I explain how the promotion of professional standards within the course allowed for total teacher equality in the program, as long as the teachers were willing and able to teach in the way prescribed by the program managers. This chapter, in other words, documents the equality of the program at an administrative and classroom level and explains how this equality was achieved.

**Chapter 7**, the second data chapter, provides some insight into the darker side of the professional discourses which underlay the program. I argue in this chapter that the program was informed by a native-speakerist framing in which:

- a) the Japanese education system was constructed through simplistic stereotypes as a problematic 'Other', which was in need of correction with the educational technology of the DACP,
- b) Certain totemic practices of Western ELT, such as the PPP (present, practice, produce) lesson structure, and the gradual introduction of functional language were uncritically

accepted, which contrasted markedly with the critical orientation displayed towards Japanese ELT methods,

- c) the structure and content of the lessons revealed implicit biases related to assumptions about cultural deficiencies in the learners and in their ability to communicate, a point which was coupled with the dismissal of learners' requests for changes to lesson content, with the course instead opting to train them in the 'correct' way of learning,
- d) a particularly strong English-only policy, which I connect to Phillipson's (1992) "monolingual fallacy".

I argue that these four native-speakerist assumptions are strong evidence of the 'native speaker' framing of the program.

Following this, I document how this 'native speaker' framing was maintained among the teachers. This began with the selection of teachers, all of whom received their ELT training from Western institutions, and who therefore "fit with the philosophy" of the program. This framing was then reinforced through the orientation week for new instructors and through regular "faculty development" sessions which, while coded as professional development, in fact served to reinforce the principles and practices of the DACP. This was further reinforced through the "DACP discourse of professionalism", a discourse in which professional practice became synonymous with the practices of the DACP. I argue that cumulatively, this explains how unconscious biases led to a situation in which professional equality was achieved, and yet was achieved through a reinforcement of other forms of native-speakerist thought and action.

**Chapter 8** contains the last important element of my analysis of the course as it related to native-speakerism: acts of resistance on the part of the teachers. I describe how teachers engaged in unconscious acts of resistance against the program, which took many different forms. I do not

argue in this chapter that the teachers were aware of the native-speakerism on the program, nor do I argue that they were even unconsciously acting against native-speakerism. Instead, I believe that the teachers were acting against the strictures imposed on them by the program through engaging in subversive activities which created “free spaces” in which they could question and challenge the established practices of the program. However, I demonstrate that this creation of “free spaces” served to go against some of the reinforced assumptions and practices of the program which I have identified as native-speakerist. These acts of resistance allowed the instructors to enact “frame transformations”, in which they were able to gain a new perspective on the course and challenge, even inadvertently, the native-speakerist assumptions on which it was built, framed, and justified.

Finally, in **Chapter 9**, I draw the points made in the preceding chapters together into a conclusion, and suggest some implications of this research, particularly in terms of how an understanding and awareness of ‘native speaker’ framing can help us to recognize and challenge these implicit biases as teaching professionals.

## **2. A critical evaluation of the ‘native speaker’ concept**

### **2.1. Introduction**

Before discussing the various ways in which the concept of the native speaker is used in professional and academic spheres in the field of applied linguistics, it will be important to review the literature surrounding the term ‘native speaker’, and some of the controversies that have arisen by the importing of this term from theoretical linguistics to applied linguistics, most of which are centered on what Davies (2003) refers to as “the issue of the relation between the particular and the universal” (p.2) – in other words between the assignment of categories used to theorize about generic, shared linguistic systems, and the application of these categories to real examples of actual, complex, socially situated human beings. To do this, it will first be necessary to examine the conceptualizations and uses of the ‘native speaker’ in theoretical linguistics.

### **2.2. The 'native speaker' in theoretical linguistics**

There are several approaches to the concept of the native speaker in theoretical linguistics, but between them they have certain commonalities. The most important of these commonalities is the way in which the native speaker is generally held as an idealized figure; a reference point for larger concepts, structures, or frameworks. This can be seen in the work of linguists such as Chomsky (1965), who describes the object of linguistic study as:

*“An ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogenous speech community, who knows it’s language perfectly, and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual*

*performance.*” (p.3)

Clearly, this view of the native speaker is not, nor is it intended to be, representative of real people in real situations. It is a deliberate abstraction, as the quote above explicitly states, providing a simplified model on which linguists can base their hypotheses and theories. However, despite the clearly abstract and theoretical nature of the terminology, the native speaker is not confined only to this foundational role, even in the work of those who champion such a definition. As Coulmas (1981) notes, “the native speaker leads a double life in Chomsky’s work, (1) as a creature of flesh and blood, that is the linguist himself, (2) an idealization.” (p.10). Coulmas’ observation leads Davies (2003) to note that for Chomsky “the native speaker is both the arbiter of a grammar, and (when idealized) as somehow being the model for the grammar” (p.5), a position of almost perfect circularity, but one which demonstrates how the hypothetical and idealized notion of the native speaker in theoretical linguistics begins to bleed into the language of real people, who are flawed, imperfect, and always less than ideal. In the next section, I shall address the problems caused by the application of theoretical understandings of the native speaker to the field of applied linguistics.

### **2.3. The 'native speaker' in applied linguistics**

Applied linguistics is a practical, rather than theoretical field, which deals with questions related to the application of linguistic ideas and theories to the real world (Widdowson, 2003). As such, the utility of terms and definitions imported from one to the other must be carefully evaluated to ascertain whether they are truly appropriate when used in this new context. The terms ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ speaker, muddled and circular as they are in theoretical branches of linguistics, are even more problematic when attempts are made to apply them to descriptions of the real world.

While the 'native speaker' is a concept that is interesting to consider in theoretical linguistics, and one which may be useful in building models of competence and acquisition in hypothetical and purely monolingual settings, in the real world people do not so easily fit into these dichotomous categories. This problem becomes even more pronounced when "native speaker" is used as a shorthand way of referring to proficiency, and an example of this can be seen in the remarks of Chomsky in the following exchange (McEnery & Wilson, 2011; citing Hill, 1962, p.29):

**Chomsky:** The verb *perform* cannot be used with mass word objects: one can *perform a task* but one cannot *perform labour*.

**Hatcher:** How do you know, if you don't use a corpus and have not studied the verb *perform*?

**Chomsky:** How do I know? Because I am a native speaker of the English language.

Here, Chomsky highlights the problems with importing terms from theoretical to applied linguistics. While the 'native speaker' may well be a useful model for testing hypothetical linguistic examples on, real people are not so flawless, and their 'native speaker intuition' may not be as exacting as they would like. In this case, Chomsky was wrong about the use of the word *perform* - as McEnery and Wilson (2011) point out, "one can *perform magic*" (p.11).

The notion of the native speaker has a strong hold in public discourse (Holliday, 2006), and is a term often invoked when making judgments about language ability and group membership (Davies, 2003), however there are strong reasons to think that the term does not, in fact, represent an objective reality, and is instead a flexible and porous term, socially constructed and applied to speakers of a language at many different points along a continuum of actual ability or proficiency (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 2001). In this section I will first critically discuss some of the attempts that have been made to define what a native speaker is, before examining some of the social



influences which colour our views of who is a 'native' and 'non-native' speaker. I will then examine some of practical problems that arise both on a global scale, and in the realm of English language teaching from the application of these definitions.

### 2.3.1. Attempts to define the 'native speaker'

The folk notion of the 'native speaker' often seems to be based on so-called 'common sense' assumptions. One of these assumptions is, roughly speaking, that the native speaker is someone who has learned the language 'from their mother's knee' (Bloomfield, 1984, p. 88), which Davies (2003) notes is a definition far too simplistic to be suitable when describing the complex reality of people in the world. A fuller definition of what a native speaker is can be found in the *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (Richards & Schmidt, 2010), which is a major resource book for applied linguists and teachers, and as such should show us the general understandings attached to the term. According to this definition, there are several attributes which identify one as a native speaker. Namely, a native speaker:

- Learns the language as a child
- Continues to use it fluently as a dominant language
- Uses the language grammatically, fluently, and appropriately
- Identifies with a community in which the language is spoken
- Has clear intuitions about grammatical correctness. (p.386)

This seems to be a reasonable and useful definition, but further consideration reveals a certain sleight of hand in these conditions. The major problem with this definition lies in the first point listed above; that one must learn the language as a child to qualify as a 'native speaker'. This acts

as an arbitrary buffer, preventing anyone who did not learn the language as a child from ever claiming membership in the group of ‘native speakers’, a notion which appeals to many people’s common sense understanding of nativism, but which is problematic in a number of ways. According to this definition, someone could be disqualified from being a ‘native speaker’ even if the other four points specified are met. However, this doesn’t seem to make any sense; if a speaker uses a given language grammatically, fluently, appropriately, intuitively, and in accordance with a community with which they identify, they are essentially indistinguishable from any adult ‘native speaker’. However, they are unable to lay claim to the title due to the age at which they started to learn the language. This reads as bet-hedging – an attempt to pin down a tricky term by adding an arbitrary condition which satisfies our intuitions, but which does not help us in working through these two categories in the messiness of the real world, some examples of which I shall present in the next section. In fact, this demonstrates the main issue with attempting to apply static labels such as ‘native speaker’ and ‘non-native speaker’ – the fact that the subjects they are applied to and used to describe (i.e. people) are not static, and membership of a given group can change and fluctuate. This is true also for members of a particular group of speakers of a language; in terms of the ‘native’ / ‘non-native’ speaker dichotomy, Davies (2003) argues that it is possible for people to move between the two categories, through a process in which they learn to, as Moussa and Llorca (2008) put it “master the intuition, grammar, spontaneity, creativity, pragmatic control, and interpreting quality of ‘born’ native speakers” (p.315-316), a position which causes problems for the clear-cut definition set down by Richards and Schmidt (2010), as it suggests that it is possible for one to fulfill all of the criteria set out, with the notable exception of the accident of birth. This does not seem to be a useful definition therefore, because it is easy to imagine (or recall) cases of individuals for whom the application of the label ‘native’ or ‘non-native’ speaker, using this definition, would be meaningless and would not relate remotely to their actual language use.

Examples of these people may include, as Paikeday (1985) notes, Vladimir Nabokov and Joseph Conrad. This definition exists despite previous challenges - Davies (1996) makes a similar argument for circularity in describing an almost identical vernacular definition of the native speaker, and further argues that “all characteristics [of native speakers] except that of early childhood exposure are contingent” (Davies, 2003, p. 215), again demonstrating the arbitrariness of this definition.

We can see from the preceding discussion that attempts to define the native speaker in applied linguistics are incomplete and question begging, and serve to highlight the issues that arise when attempting to import theoretical concepts into applied fields.

### **2.3.2. The 'native speaker' as a social construct**

I have argued that major and commonsensical definitions of ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ speakers are insufficient and incomplete. However, even if we were to grant that Richard and Schmidt’s (2010) definition was correct, there would still be a range of social, cultural, and political influences on how people classify others as either ‘native’ or ‘non-native’ speakers which are at least as influential on the applications of these labels. This is evident when we begin to raise questions about which English we are discussing, and whether a ‘native speaker’ of one form of English is still considered a 'native speaker' when entering a community with a different model of the language. Widdowson (2003) raises an important question about the ownership of English, and whether or not speakers of (for example) Nigerian English and speakers of American English are even speakers of the same language at all. In fact there is evidence to suggest that the 'native speaker' is a social construct (a term introduced by Berger & Luckmann, 1966), in that it is “a product not of objective observation of the world, but of the social processes and interactions in which people are constantly engaged with each other” (Burr, 2015, p. 5). As Burr (2015) puts it, “if

our knowledge of the world, our common ways of understanding it, is not derived from the nature of the world as it really is, where does it come from? The social constructionist answer is that people construct it between them. It is through the daily interactions between people in the course of social life that our versions of knowledge become fabricated” (p.4). If the ‘native speaker’ is not a label describing a clear and objective reality, as I have argued it is not, then the fact it is taken to be a common-sense descriptor despite this indicates that it is a social construct.

For example, Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (2001), conducted a small series of case studies around four English speakers, who all were born in areas in which English was not the dominant language and later moved to the U.S. They found that the participants were all assigned ‘native’ or ‘non-native’ status by their peers based on a range of social or superficial characteristics. For example, one participant was assigned the status of being an L2 user of English due to the fact she spoke with a slight accent, and spent her early years in Argentina. In contrast, another of the participants was considered to be a ‘native speaker’, despite having moved from Korea to the U.S. at an early age and being in almost exactly the same social and linguistic position to the first participant. This disparity appeared to be related to their willingness to identify with the dominant culture around them, and their willingness to self-identify as a ‘native speaker’. Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (2001) note that “national identity plays a crucial – and at times decisive – role in determining who is and who is not a ‘native speaker’ of English.” (p.103), and argue that “nativeness and nonnativeness among English users constitute non-elective socially constructed identities rather than linguistic categories” (p.99). Shuck (2006) shows how these labels of ‘native’ and ‘non native’ are based on a hierarchical discourse in which white, middle class ‘native speakers’ reside at the top, and those who are identified as not part of this group are located further down the hierarchy. While Shuck (2006) does not specifically relate this ideological hierarchy to the assignment of ‘native’ or ‘non native’ labels, it is not difficult to imagine how the application of

these labels can also be affected by the same discourses and perceptions surrounding race, nationality, and class (see also Amin, 1997; Bonfiglio, 2010; Kubota & Fujimoto, 2013; Kubota & Lin, 2006, 2009; Singh, 1998). Indeed, Leung, Harris, and Rampton (1997) argue that “language use and notions of ethnicity and social identity are inextricably linked” (p.544), and in support of this a study by Rivers and Ross (2013) found that teachers in Japan are favoured and idealised by students on the basis of race. A study by Ali (2009) even found that simply having a non-Western name can influence whether or not people are judged as 'native' or 'non-native' speakers of English.

It seems clear that the assignment of the categories of ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ speakers are often closely related to assumptions of proper standards of English, to proper models of English, and to the proper norms of English, as well as to a range of socially-determined factors such as race, nationality, class, and self-identity. As Davies (2003) states, “individuals regard themselves (and others) as native speakers for symbolic, rather than communicative purposes” (p.76), and because of this it seems that whether or not there lies any psycholinguistic truth behind the categories of ‘native speaker’ and ‘non-native speaker’, the way in which these labels are assigned is inexorably linked to such a range of social, political, historical (see Hackert, 2012), and ideological influences that any attempts at objective application are close to impossible. In this way, the concept of the 'native speaker' is revealed to be a social construct. The assignment of this role is not based principally on language proficiency but on other factors which are socially mediated and depend on mutually-constructed understandings of what constitutes a 'native speaker'.

### **2.3.3. Attempts to redefine the 'native speaker'**

Seeming to acknowledge that these are problematic and unhelpful terms, efforts have been made to find new ways to categorize or assess the proficiency of language users. For example, Rampton (1990) argues that the term “expert speaker” should be used to describe highly proficient language

users instead of “native speaker”, because the connotations of ability contained in the word ‘expert’ are preferable to the idea of ‘nativeness’, which connotes untenable notions of the inborn and unchangeable. However, this does not solve the problem of the standard against which proficiency is measured. A standard would still be required in order to define “expert” vs. “non-expert”, and if such a standard were derived from an inner circle model of English (as it seems it likely would be), then this would not, in fact, move us very far away from the initial problem.

One attempt to get around this problem of centralized norms is the proposal that teachers and students should focus on English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), which is an approach to English that focuses on the intelligibility of English for the purposes of international communication (see Jenkins, 2000, 2007, 2011, 2012, 2013; Seidlhofer, 2011). This attempts to avoid the problem of overt influence from inner circle ‘native-speaker’ norms by making the central goal of learning communication with others no matter what their national, cultural, or linguistic background; described by Llorca (2014) as a “boat”, in which people can travel from one linguistic landscape to another. This is an interesting approach which is gaining traction among theorists and professionals, with teaching handbooks being produced in order to help teachers pursue ELF goals in the classroom (Walker, 2010).

For Pennycook (2012), however, the ELF movement runs the risk of being patronizing to students, by telling them that their language level is “good enough”, and that they shouldn’t attempt to strive to reach the level of linguistic competence which they desire - that is, a ‘native-speaker’ level. Pennycook (2012) instead argues that learners should be trained to be ‘resourceful’ speakers, who are able to use the linguistic resources at their disposal to “pass” as legitimate and authentic speakers in particular social and cultural situations and settings.

These attempts to redefine the ‘native speaker’ are, however, largely focused on goals for learners and less strongly on effects that these labels can have on teachers, and it is this subject that

we shall now turn to – the way in which the ‘native speaker’ label has been discussed and understood in foreign language education.

## **2.4. The 'native speaker' in foreign language education**

In language education, one of the major problems that the application of concepts such as ‘native speaker’ and ‘non-native speaker’ can have is professional disadvantage for, or even discrimination against teachers due to what can be an arbitrary or ideologically-rooted assignment of either of these categories to a speaker of a given language (see Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 2001, for an example of this). This discrimination will be discussed more fully in the following chapter, but at this point it will be useful to review some of the major ways in which the ‘native-’ and ‘non-native’ labels have been discussed in applied linguistics research. These discussions fall into two major categories which, following conceptualizations related to language and gender, I label “deficit” and “difference” (see Talbot, 2010).

### **2.4.1. Deficit**

The notion of ‘deficit’ is the idea that those classified as ‘non-native speakers’ have a language knowledge and proficiency that is inferior to ‘native speakers’, and that their language use can only ever be, at most, a pale imitation of that of the ‘native’. This view has been expressed by a number of scholars, though less frequently in more recent literature. However, it is still very likely to be found among language students and members of the general public (Moussu & Llorca, 2008, p. 232).

The deficit view, as held by scholars, is most clearly described in the work of Quirk (1990), who cites studies into the use of French by ‘non-native speakers’ in order to argue that even highly proficient ‘non-native speakers’ are still inferior language users, who, though able to work in

professional positions, are unable to act as arbiters or gatekeepers of the language. Using this data, Quirk (1990) argues that “the implications for foreign language education are clear: the need for native teacher support and the need for non-native teachers to be in constant touch with the native language” (p.14). A study by Coppieters (1987) on the intuitions of 'native' and 'non-native' speakers of French came to similar conclusions. However, this conclusion is made with reference to competence as defined by a particular linguistic standard. Quirk is discussing ‘non-native speakers’ operating in a homogenous, monolingual environment, in which proficiency is measured against a particular standardized norm. This is not the case for speakers such as those described in the study by Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (2001) mentioned earlier, who expressed themselves equally well but were categorized as either 'native' or 'non-native' speakers on the basis of other factors than their objective proficiency. This is a problem for Quirk’s argument.

Additionally, Quirk does not discuss the possibility of ‘native speakers’ of different varieties of French (such as Quebecois), which would be far more relevant when considering the application of an ideologically-charged label such as ‘native speaker’ or ‘non-native speaker’, in which national background and language variety spoken are often taken as indicators of linguistic competence. As Canagarajah (1999a) notes, Quirk assumes a standard form of English which by definition labels speakers of other linguistic varieties as deficient. In this sense, Quirk is begging the question by arguing that speakers of one variety are better teachers of that variety than speakers of another variety. He does not, however justify why we should consider one variety more important than another. In fact, studies which have claimed to find measurable differences between L1 and L2 users of languages using grammaticality judgement tests, such as Quirk (1990) and Coppieters (1987), ironically demonstrate the socially constructed nature of the ‘native speaker’, because as Cook (2002) puts it, “the grammaticality judgments technique is bound to reveal differences between monolinguals and L2 users, because the actual measuring instrument is not neutral” (p.22),



assuming, as it does, a standard form against which language use should be measured.

Quirk also seems to jump from the question of proficiency level to the question of suitability for teaching, conveniently skipping the rather important question of actual teaching ability. Clearly, not all 'native speakers' are going to be as skilled in the classroom as all 'non-native speakers', and vice-versa; indeed, Britten (1985) and Phillipson (1992) argue that 'non-native speakers' may be more suitable as teachers because they themselves have undergone the process of adult language learning, and so may be more able to empathize with their students and understand the challenges faced by learners, as well as having a deeper level of metalinguistic knowledge.

It is, therefore, difficult to argue that 'native speakers' are, by definition, ideal teachers, and that 'non-native speakers' are, by definition, inferior teachers. This has led other scholars to adopt a more complementarian view; the idea of 'difference'.

#### **2.4.2. Difference**

According to this conception of the 'native speaker teacher' and 'non-native speaker teacher' the two sets of teachers are neither superior nor inferior to each other, but rather serve different roles and purposes in the classroom. As Medgyes (2001) writes, "both groups of teachers serve equally useful purposes in their own ways. In an ideal school, therefore, there should be a good balance of NESTs and non-NESTs, who complement each other's strengths and weaknesses" (p.441). This view has been promoted by researchers such as Tajino and Tajino (2000) who reviewed team-teaching in Japan between 'native' and a 'non-native' speakers, concluding that the combination of the teachers' linguistic and cultural backgrounds can provide optimum opportunities to help learners develop their communicative and cultural competence. Medgyes (2001), referring to earlier studies (Medgyes, 1994; Reves & Medgyes, 1994), provides a list of traits that distinguish 'native speakers' from 'non-native speakers' according to 325 surveyed

teachers. These differences included the beliefs that 'native speakers' "speak better English", "are more innovative", "are more casual", "are less committed", "are less insightful", "focus on fluency, meaning, language in use, oral skills, and colloquial registers" and so on. In contrast, 'non-native speakers' "speak poorer English", "are more cautious", "are more empathetic", "are stricter", "are more committed", "are more insightful", "focus on accuracy, form, grammar rules, printed word, and formal registers" and "supply less cultural information" (p.435). This list of differences between 'native speakers' and 'non-native speakers' seems, to put it mildly, rather stereotypical. Each group is painted with an extremely broad brush, which, as we have already discussed is a dangerous thing to do when talking about real people in real situations. While Medgyes (2001) compiled this data from others, his own conclusions in the article fall along the same lines, arguing that 'non-native speakers' "provide a better learning model", "teach language learning strategies more effectively", "supply more information about the English language", "better anticipate and prevent language difficulties", are "more sensitive to their students", and "benefit from their ability to use their students' mother tongue" (p.436). Medgyes concludes by stating that these two groups of teachers should be assigned different roles in the classroom in order to capitalize on these traits. This is not to mention the fact that, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the assignment of the labels 'native' and 'non-native' are often arbitrary and ideologically influenced based on a range of factors outside simple linguistic proficiency. Despite these problems with the difference approach, they still appear in the literature (see Ruecker, 2011) and have currency among teachers and the popular consciousness in ELT.

While the difference approach to the description of teacher attributes was an attempt to praise the positive elements that 'non-native' speaker teachers can bring to the classroom - which is surely an improvement on the "deficit" approach described earlier - it is still guilty of playing on stereotypes and using the unclear and poorly-defined labels of 'native speaker' and 'non-native

speaker' to place teachers into two separate categories. As we shall see in later chapters, this has had the unintended effect of causing various forms of employment discrimination. While scholars such as Cook (1999) have noted that it is not necessarily important to use the 'native speaker' as an aspirational model, because of the unreasonable expectations it places on students, the problematic stereotypes discussed here still hold major currency with language learners, teachers, and the general public.

## **2.5. Conclusion and use of 'native' and 'non-native' speaker in this thesis**

In this chapter, I have discussed the ways in which the terms 'native' and 'non-native' speaker have been used in both theoretical and applied linguistics. I have explained how while these terms may be useful in theoretical linguistics for building simplified, hypothetical models on which to test linguistic hypotheses, they cause a number of serious problems when imported into the field of applied linguistics. This is, I have argued, because the complexity of the real world cannot be described in these simplistic terms, and as such, attempts to define the term 'native speaker' are incomplete and question begging. In addition, a huge range of political and ideological assumptions and beliefs influences these two terms, and this means that any attempted application of them in the professional world is close to meaningless. I proposed instead that the 'native speaker' in applied linguistics is a social construct, and that the idea of a "pure" native speaker is a myth.

Following on from this, I discussed some of the ways in which these terms have come to be used to describe teachers of foreign languages in terms of 'deficit' and 'difference' noting that these not only rely on the same poor and incomplete definitions, but also add a further dimension of stereotypical generalisations, which, while intended to be egalitarian and empowering, actually have the potential to provide a rationale for discriminatory hiring and employment practices. In

fact, as we shall see in later chapters, this is exactly what has happened.

Despite my argument that the terms 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' are unclear and not particularly meaningful, I will still be making reference to 'native speaker teachers' and 'non-native speaker teachers' throughout this thesis, and it is important to explain both why this is, and what I intend to convey by using these terms. Whenever the terms 'native speaker' or 'non-native speaker' are used in this thesis, they are not intended to be understood as value-free descriptions of people or groups. Rather, I am using them specifically in the way they are understood in the discourse of native-speakerism – as labels used to characterize people on ideological and political grounds. For example, it may be the case that a person who is functionally bilingual will be referred to as a 'non-native speaker' despite having equal proficiency in both languages, because this is the way in which they would be perceived by the professional discourse. This is the same rationale as described by Holliday (2005), who explains that he “place[s] the terms 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' in inverted commas to show that they are as stated by the discourse, and as such are disputed” (p.4), going further than this in recent work to always include “labelled as...” before the terms. While it would be preferable to avoid the use of these phrases at all, it would render this thesis extremely difficult to read, and would handicap my ability to discuss the relevant issues to do so. As such, I use these labels with the understanding that they are being used in the terms of the discourses under discussion. In the next chapter I will move on to discuss some of the effects that these labels and stereotypes have been observed to cause.

### **3. Native-speakerism: Definition, background, and change**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

In chapter 2, I critically evaluated the concepts of the 'native speaker' and the 'non-native speaker', and discussed how these labels are circular, poorly-defined, and of little use in describing real, socially situated people and their language proficiency. In this chapter I will explore one of the key ways in which the use of these terms has manifested in English language education through what Holliday (2003, 2005, 2006) calls "native-speakerism". I will first provide a definition of the term, and some of the historical and theoretical foundations on which it is built. Following on from this I will discuss how it functions as an ideology within the ELT industry, which is supported by both academic and professional discourses. I will then describe some of the major issues caused by native-speakerism in the field of ELT, and recent changes that have occurred in its definition. Finally, I will provide some criticisms of the concept and evaluate whether these criticisms are strong enough to justify abandoning or overhauling the concept.

#### **3.2. Native-speakerism: Definition and background**

According to Holliday (2006), native-speakerism is an ideology that can be seen in "many different areas of professional life, from employment policy to the presentation of language" (p.385) and is defined as "a pervasive ideology within ELT, characterized by the 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" (Holliday, 2006, p. 385). Native-speakerism, as presented by Holliday (2005) is an ideology which privileges certain Western cultures, models, and speakers of English over others, and which is pervasive throughout the ELT profession. The consequences of native-speakerism can be seen to produce numerous detrimental effects on the

professional lives of English language teachers, and on the whole field of English language teaching.

While Holliday (2005) describes native-speakerism as an ideology which privileges 'native speakers' of English over 'non-native speakers', the term has also recently been used to describe discrimination against 'native speakers'. The most important (though not the sole) piece of literature on this is the book *Native-speakerism in Japan: Intergroup dynamics in foreign language education* edited by Houghton and Rivers (2013b), in which an attempt is made to redefine the term 'native-speakerism' to include any discrimination carried out against teachers on the basis of their speakerhood, regardless of their 'native' or 'non-native' status. I will explore this later in the chapter, but for now it is sufficient to note that while I agree largely with Houghton and Rivers in terms of professional discrimination against teachers, I see native-speakerism as encompassing a much broader and rather more fundamental range of beliefs and practices than simply discrimination against teachers.

However, before discussing these professional issues in depth, it will be necessary to paint a picture of the theoretical and historical background against which native-speakerism is set, in order to show how it is tied to and builds upon other strands of thought, and explain why this concept is a more suitable way to describe the current attitudes in ELT than those previously put forward. In the next section I will provide such a discussion, with reference to the theoretical precursors to native-speakerism in ELT.

### **3.2.1. Theoretical precursors to native-speakerism**

The concept of native-speakerism draws on previous work in critical applied linguistics by writers such as Pennycook (1998; 1994) and Phillipson (1992). However, as we shall see, it makes an effort to more accurately capture the nature of the political issues in global ELT than these previous

attempts. Native-speakerism also looks more closely at the professional culture of ELT, which, while a feature of earlier discussions, was rarely placed at the forefront of the proposed conceptualizations.

Phillipson (1992) put forward the controversial notion that the ELT industry is engaged in a covert neocolonial enterprise in which the West is aiming to promote its own cultural and capitalist interests through English language education projects. This, according to Phillipson, involves the collusion of organizations such as the British Council, which set up and propagate the norms and standards of the global ELT industry in order to facilitate this neocolonial enterprise. Phillipson terms this concept 'linguistic imperialism', and uses the terms "Centre" and "Periphery" to categorize and describe the dichotomy he considers to be at the heart of the issue. The terms 'Centre' and 'Periphery' were first put forward in Galtung's (1971) *A structural theory of imperialism* as a way of classifying centres of power in imperialistic contexts. In Phillipson's adoption of this framework, 'Centre' refers to the politically powerful, English speaking West, which is responsible for the creation and dissemination of the norms of the ELT industry, while the term 'Periphery' is used to describe less politically and economically powerful countries into which English is imported. To demonstrate the ways in which the Centre imposes itself on the Periphery through ELT, Phillipson (1992) identified a number of central 'tenets of ELT' by which linguistic imperialism is propagated. These 'tenets of ELT' refer to what Phillipson considers to be unquestioned and unexamined dogmas at the heart of language teaching, which were deliberately created and are deliberately maintained in order to benefit Western nations and Western organisations at the expense of both the personal and institutional interests of individuals and countries in the 'periphery'. In the order given by Phillipson, these tenets are:

- 1) English is best taught monolingually.

- 2) The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker.
- 3) The earlier English is taught the better the results.
- 4) The more English is taught the better the results.
- 5) If other languages are used much, standards of English will drop. (p.185)

The first two of these tenets are the ones most relevant to this thesis, and describe what Phillipson (1992) terms the "monolingual fallacy" and the "native speaker fallacy", respectively. Taken together, these two central fallacious tenets manifest in the widespread belief among teachers, students, and educational authorities that English should be taught by monolingual 'native speakers'; resting on the unexamined assumption that this group of people (which, as I have already discussed, is illusory and socially constructed in the first place) are the ideal speakers, and therefore the ideal teachers of a language, despite a lack of evidence that would lend support to this assertion. This is, as already discussed in the previous chapter, an extremely problematic belief, and one that is also central to the concept of native-speakerism, discussed by Holliday (2005).

Phillipson's thesis has been criticized by a number of scholars, both by those who are sympathetic to his central concern about power relations within the global ELT industry, and those who do not share his political sensibilities. To understand the criticisms of this second group, it should be noted that Phillipson (1992) was building his thesis on the basis of a conference in Makerere convened by the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee, and it is the inferences from this conference that are made by Phillipson that have drawn some criticism. An example of this criticism can be found in Howatt with Widdowson (2004), who argues that "the conference did not in fact suggest any 'tenets' at all (and even if it had it could only speak for ESL not for ELT as a whole), still less did it give anything a 'seal of approval'." (p.312). This is a valid point, but has problems of its own. Firstly, even if it were true that the English Language Teaching (ELT) industry could be cleanly



divided into subgroups such as 'EFL' (English as a Foreign Language – generally considered to be English as taught in non-English speaking countries) and 'ESL' (English as a Second Language – generally considered to be English as taught in countries where it has some official status) with no overlap, the 'ESL' portion of the industry would still be one of the largest and most relevant to Phillipson's concerns. However, it is not true that things can be so cleanly categorized, and networks of influence, both professional and political, weave throughout EFL and ESL settings, a situation that is propagated by organisations such as the British Council, which accredits schools, trains teachers, and carries out overseas curriculum projects, using the same Western-originated principles in each case. Howatt with Widdowson's (2004) criticism also does little to undermine the resultant framework describing 'linguistic imperialism' that Phillipson (1992) developed. This would in fact seem to be the most relevant point, as subsequent work has demonstrated quite conclusively that there is still a widespread preference for monolingual 'native speakers', which I will discuss later in relation to native-speakerism and professional issues for 'non-native speakers'.

Pennycook (1994), while broadly sympathetic to Phillipson's viewpoint, highlights a shortcoming in the linguistic imperialism thesis, arguing that "[Phillipson's] adherence to a version of structural imperialism leaves us at a problematic impasse. The unfortunate conjunction between structuralism and neo-Marxism in world order theory has tended to reduce human relations to a reflection of the political economy (...) Phillipson amply demonstrates how and why various governments and organizations have promoted the spread of English, but rarely explores what the effects of that promotion may be apart from maintaining global capitalism" (p.56) which, Pennycook (1994) argues, leaves linguistic imperialism as "the end point of analysis and leaves little space for consideration of how English is used in diverse contexts or how it is appropriated and used in opposition to those who promote its spread" (p.57). Pennycook (1994) argues for a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between power, politics, and language which

features both a consideration of colonial discourses about non-Western people and languages - discourses that serve to demonstrate how similar ideas continue to survive in modern times, working to privilege certain cultures and language users over others (Pennycook, 1998) - as well as providing accounts of people from other cultures "writing back" in English; using the language of the powerful as a tool to express their own cultural and personal identity (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2003; Pennycook, 1994). Through these processes, people take ownership of the language as a way of subverting the political and cultural power of the West, and as a way of asserting their own identities. This process of subversion has been explicitly applied to ELT by Canagarajah (1999a), who documents some of the ways in which Tamil learners of English in Sri Lanka act against their lessons and their teachers; for example subverting their American-produced English textbooks by scribbling graffiti over the pages, and reconstructing them as something more relevant and authentic for their own situation (p.88).

Native-speakerism builds on these ideas in order to construct an overarching framework in which the ideological privileging of particular forms of English and particular speakers of English can be seen as a driving factor behind a number of professional issues faced by 'non-native speaker' teachers of English and various problematic attitudes in ELT surrounding which teaching methods and approaches to use, which English to teach, and whose voices should be privileged in the discussion.

### **3.3. Native-speakerism in ELT: Ideology, discourse, politics, and power**

Native-speakerism is a concept that informs areas of the ELT industry connected to politics, power, and capital, both cultural and economic. Before we can consider the ways in which the aspects of the concept interact with and inform one another, it will be necessary for me to define my terms, particularly what I am referring to when I speak of native-speakerism as an *ideology*, which is

constructed from and supported by *discourses*. I will then discuss some of the ways that native-speakerism functions in relation to politics and power.

### **3.3.1. Native-speakerism as ideology**

Throughout this thesis I will be referring to native-speakerism as an 'ideology', but it is not always clear what is intended by this term. Eagleton (2007) notes that ideology has many different definitions, some of which are compatible, and some of which are mutually exclusive. Indeed, some definitions of ideology will exclude other systems of beliefs and realms of thought which most people would consider ideological, and others will include these while discounting others. There is no single definition of ideology that will encompass all potential ideologies without being so broad as to be meaningless. I confess that at the outset of this project my conception of ideology was a rather blunt and crude colloquialism, roughly corresponding to Durkheim's (1982) definition of "the use of notions to govern the collocation of facts, rather than deriving notions from them" (p.51), with the associated stigma this would entail. However, to describe native-speakerism in such a way would be to capture neither the complexity of the concept nor its relationship to the profession herein under discussion.

Ideology is connected to power, particularly persuasive forms of power associated with Gramsci's (1985) notion of hegemony, which can be defined as "the ways through which dominant groups in society succeed in persuading subordinate groups to accept the former's own moral, political, and cultural values and institutions" (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 24), or, put more succinctly, "the formation and organisation of consent" (Ives, 2004). One particularly influential definition of ideology was put forward by Marx (2011) who, as Machin & Mayr (2012) put it, argues that "ideology is an important means by which dominant forces in society can exercise power over subordinate and subjugated groups" (p.24). In other words, a Marxist understanding of ideology is

that of a set of beliefs and ideas, created by the dominant class, that can be used to justify the structure of a society and the subjugation of subordinate groups. Ideology, then, is the key tool by which hegemonic consent is built. Althusser (1984) argues that ideology is upheld through two apparatuses; the repressive state apparatus (for example, the police) and the ideological state apparatus (including religion and the media). Van Dijk (1998) notes that until relatively recently, social science considered ideology a negative term, associated with this Marxist notion of a false consciousness consisting of popular but incorrect beliefs created and propagated by some ruling class or group with the aim of upholding the power of the status quo through hegemonic discourses. This understanding of ideology is limited to 'negative' ideologies, and Van Dijk notes that broader definitions are now used in order to include 'positive' ideologies such as feminism and anti-racism.

In this thesis I will be referring to native-speakerism as an ideology in a broadly Marxist sense. Native-speakerism in ELT represents a dominant set of ideas which serve to structure the industry in a particular way; with Western institutions and their 'native speaker' representatives representing the ruling class, and those from the so-called 'periphery' as the subjugated. The ideology of native-speakerism is complicit in building consent to Western hegemony in ELT through the propagation of ideas concerning appropriate educational technology, ideal teachers, and the location of centres of ELT knowledge, which I will explain in more detail later in this chapter. It is through native-speakerist professional discourses that Western hegemony is normalised and upheld, and by which this hegemony is even supported by those who are subjugated by it.

### **3.3.2. Native-speakerism and discourses**

This throws up another problematic term that needs to be defined; discourse. Discourse is a key concept in this thesis, because it is through professional discourses that the ideology of

native-speakerism is upheld and propagated. Discourse in general refers to language “above the level of grammar and semantics” (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 20) with the understanding that when language is used in real situations it automatically reflects aspects of the social setting and the beliefs of the speakers. As Simpson and Mayr (2010) write, discourses “capture what happens when these language forms are played out in different social, political, and cultural areas” (p.5), and it is through the study of discourses in spoken or written texts that social relations of power can be identified (Dijk, 1993). However, discourses not only reflect social conditions, but also play a role in creating and sustaining social beliefs. Fairclough (1992) notes that discourse is a term which, like ideology, has many meanings, but that in social theory it is widely used “to refer to different ways of structuring knowledge and social practice” (p.3). In other words, “discourses do not just reflect or represent social entities and relations, they construct or ‘constitute’ them” (p.3). Examples of discourses which seek to construct or constitute social life include national unity, and cultural superiority (Fairclough, 2000). Machin and Mayr (2012) give the example of a *Daily Mail* newspaper editorial about immigration which discusses how “‘we’ must ‘defend’ our ‘indigenous culture’” (p.20), which can be seen to project anti-immigration and potentially racist values through its use of inclusive and exclusive pronouns and metaphors such as a “deluge” of immigrants. This example can be seen as a discourse which promotes a particular view of the world and the actors within it. Discourse can then be seen as both reflecting and creating or sustaining social values and social conditions.

When I refer to the discourses that uphold native-speakerism I am referring to the ways in which native-speakerist ideas are embedded into the language, symbols, and communication of the field. Native-speakerism is an ideology which is constructed from and supported by professional and academic discourses. For example, social entities such as the 'native speaker', and the 'non-native speaker' are used in the professional and academic literature in the way described in Chapter 2,

where binary categories are created and attributes are then assigned to these categories. These are then used to construct social relations in the form of codified assumptions about the 'strengths' and 'weaknesses' of teachers perceived to be in each group, and this leads to social practices such as discrimination against 'non-native speaker' teachers of English. This is a clear example of how particular professional discourses reflect, create, and uphold ideological native-speakerist beliefs and values in the field of ELT. As Reucker and Ives (2015) observe, "racism, as well as native-speakerism, only survive if they are constantly reinforced through daily discourses that make them seem natural" (p.407).

In other words, native-speakerism is an ideology which places the West at the centre of global ELT, and serves to uphold Western hegemony. It is constructed from (and in turn constructs) professional and academic discourses, and is maintained by these same discourses in order to create an overriding hegemony within the field.

### **3.3.3. Native-speakerism, Othering, politics, and power**

The ideology of native-speakerism is one in which the West is seen as the centre of power in ELT, and legitimizes this authority through a number of different practices. Canagarajah (1999b) argues that "dominant groups are always involved in building consent to their power by influencing the culture and knowledge of subordinate groups" (p.31), and this is certainly true in the ELT industry. By presenting Western so-called 'native speakers' as the ideal users and owners of the English language, other varieties and speakers of English are implicitly de-legitimised, and this can be more clearly seen when we examine the ways in which culture is presented in the ELT classroom. Guest (2002) claims that in teaching materials and teacher training courses the ELT industry presents "a taxonomy of differences between familiar and exotic cultures" (p.154), based on what Kubota (1999) refers to as static "essences", as if these cultures were monolithic entities, and not

always in a state of negotiation and flux. This allows students to feel, when they are learning about culture in the classroom as if "they are travelling from one enclosed cultural block to another" (Holliday, 2005, p. 107), which in turn leads to self-Othering, as the students are encouraged to reduce their own cultures to simplistic interpretive elements, or to adopt what Paige et al. (2003) and Yuen (2011) call a 'tourist perspective' on culture. By encouraging students and teachers to 'Other' themselves and their culture, the ELT industry implicitly reinforces and strengthens the power of the West, and perpetuates its role as the political center of the ELT industry. Holliday (2005) refers to this as 'culturism', and to native-speakerism as a "chauvinistic professional discourse" (Holliday & Aboshiha, 2009, p. 671) which 'Others' non-Western cultures in order to uphold the power of the West. Holliday (2013) defines Othering as "reducing a group of people to a negative stereotype" (p.13), however within the context of native-speakerism Othering must also be connected to power relations between the Centre and the Periphery. Jensen (2011) argues that Othering describes a situation in which "subordinate people are offered, and at the same time relegated to, subject positions as others in discourse. In these processes, it is the Centre that has the power to describe, and the Other is constructed as inferior" (p.65). This is the sense in which I use the term regarding native-speakerism; the Other of the non-Western colleague or student is constructed as inferior through the discourses produced by the Western ELT establishment.

As well as creating and categorizing crude cultural differences in materials and in the rhetoric of the industry, the ELT profession also builds essentialized models of students from different cultural backgrounds, and offers these models to teachers with the professed aim of helping them to work through cultural differences in their host country and their classroom while working overseas (Holliday, 2005). However, such advice and materials serve to Other students by constructing them as deficient, using words such as "collectivist", which is defined in opposition to the more positively inflected "individualist" cultures of the West (Holliday, 2005). It is through processes

like these that the Western ELT industry promotes its own power at the expense of other non-Western users and students of the language.

This process imbues the West with 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, Thompson, & Raymond, 2003). Sullivan (2001) argues that “Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is not clearly defined, and it is not particularly surprising that it has been operationalised in various different ways by subsequent researchers” (p.896), however I use the term here in the sense described by Block (2014), to mean “social validation, legitimation, and recognition conferred onto those who have the right educational qualifications or taste in art or other forms of cultural expression” (p.53). The cultural capital of the Western ELT establishment makes it an aspirational target for teachers and learners of English, who believe that they can access this cultural capital by gaining access to the institutions of the West through language education or through language education teacher training programs, an example of consent building to the benefit of the dominant powers in ELT. Canagarajah (2012) makes this point when he described his own experiences of attempting to gain cultural (and perhaps even professional) capital from entering a Western institution:

I approached my senior colleagues and asked them how I could obtain the knowledge that would make me more authoritative in my teaching. Where did the experts get their superior knowledge that gave them the power to treat my teaching as laughable? My colleagues divulged the secret that orthodox knowledge is embodied in the scholarship and research that came to us from the United States.  
(p.259)

Based on this understanding, Canagarajah travelled to the West to undertake training that would furnish him with the cultural capital he desired:



I resolved to travel to what appeared to me then as the center of TESOL expertise - a U.S. university - to become professionalized. I decided that undergoing an institutionalized form of training, with a certificate to show at the end, would establish my credentials in my profession. After such training, I told myself, no TESOL expert would laugh at my methods and I wouldn't be lost for an answer the next time they challenged me to give an account of my teaching practice. (p.266)

Canagarajah provides here a clear example of a TESOL professional who sees the West and its institutions as a key to gaining cultural capital and professional recognition within the ELT field. As I have argued, such an attitude is not unexpected given the ways in which the ELT industry promotes the West as the only legitimate authority on English use and teaching. In other words, there is a strong connection between native-speakerism and notions of authenticity, in which 'native speakers' of English are considered to be the only authentic bearers and users of the language, and this authenticity can only be gained by those ELT professionals who are not 'native speakers' if they are willing or able to seek professional training and enlightenment in the West (Lowe & Pinner, 2016). This observation lies at the heart of native-speakerism - an ideology which 'Others' speakers and users of English from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds through a process that Holliday (2005) refers to as 'cultural disbelief', defined as "a disbelief in the ability of teachers labelled as 'non-native speakers' to teach English with 'active' oral expression, initiation, self-direction and students working in groups and pairs" (Holliday, 2015). This 'cultural disbelief' functions to promote the power of the West and imbue it with legitimacy and cultural capital.

### **3.4. Native-speakerism and issues in the field**

Native-speakerism causes numerous issues in the ELT industry, and these can be placed into five categories, with the understanding that all of these categories are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. These categories are:

1. Preferential hiring of 'native speakers' over 'non-native speakers'.
2. Adoption of Western teaching methodologies in place of local methods and approaches.
3. Privileging of particular western models of English over other varieties.
4. Creating narratives of “uncritical and unthinking” students, whose culture is in need of correction (Holliday, 2006, p. 386).
5. Internalisation of these beliefs on the part of 'non-native speaker' teachers and students.

I will now explore how each of these areas have been discussed in the academic literature, with reference to key and supporting research data, and provide a brief tangential discussion of the propagation of these ideas through advertising.

#### **3.4.1. Preferential hiring of 'native speakers' over 'non-native speakers'**

As stated earlier, according to Holliday (2005) 'native speakers' are placed in an extremely favourable position in the job market when compared to 'non-native speakers', simply by virtue of their speakerhood, rather than their professional qualities. Braine (1999b) attributes this both to the "native speaker fallacy" as discussed earlier, and also to Chomsky's (1965) notion that 'native speakers' are the ideal informants on a particular language (p.73). Employment discrimination against 'non-native speakers' is widespread, and this can be demonstrated through an examination of numerous studies that have been conducted on job advertisements for teachers. This

discrimination occurs despite the high levels of qualifications held by many 'non-native speaker' language educators, with highly qualified language teachers often being passed over for jobs in favour of completely unqualified 'native speakers' (Canagarajah, 1999a).

It is perhaps most instructive to begin with research which has been conducted focusing on large, objectively measurable studies into employment practices. Clark and Paran (2007) conducted a questionnaire-based study into what employers considered to be of importance when hiring ESL teachers in the United Kingdom. They found that 72.3% of their respondents believed that the 'native speaker' status of an applicant was very important when considering prospective English teachers for their programs. This seems like a situation that is very likely to result in discriminatory practices, and reflects earlier studies published in the context of the United States. One notable example of this research is the study by Mahboob, et al. (2004) which found that 59.8% of intensive program administrators surveyed gave preference to 'native speakers' in their hiring practices, which was clearly reflected in their finding that just 7.9% of the teachers on these intensive courses were, in fact, 'non-native speakers'. The conclusion that there are major discriminatory practices at play against 'non-native speakers' is confirmed by a number of other studies, such as Flynn and Gulikers (2001).

This discrimination can be seen even more clearly in studies conducted into explicit discriminatory attitudes and practices enshrined in job advertisements. Song & Zhang (2010) in a study of ten teacher recruitment websites such as TESOL's online career center, and *Dave's ESL Cafe* found that 78.5% of the advertisements contained a discriminatory criterion, one of the main examples of which was 'native speaker' status. The survey additionally found that "71.6% of job advertisements for teaching positions in Korea demanded NS status, while 79.3% of the advertisements for positions in China required being a NS" (p.1). Similar results were found by Selvi (2010), in a study that also examined job postings on the two online locations listed earlier.

This study discovered that 60.5% of job advertisements in EFL settings require 'NS' status, while in ESL settings this number shrank dramatically to only 7.8%. Additionally, Selvi (2010) found that a number of the advertisements also required qualifications to have been earned in particular inner circle contexts, and applicants to speak specific varieties of English. This study therefore goes further than the previous work, as it reveals how some of the other biases inherent to a native-speakerist mindset are manifested in job applications. In a more recent study, Mahboob and Golden (2013) collected together 77 unique job advertisements from the website *ESL jobs world*, mainly advertising jobs in the Middle East and East Asia. Of the 77 advertisements, they found that 61 asked for a 'native speaker', and a further 38 asked for an instructor of a particular nationality. Further evidence of discrimination against 'non-native speaker teachers' was found in a study by Ruecker and Ives (2015). This is clear evidence, once again, of discriminatory hiring practices based on a native-speakerist mindset.

Another piece of evidence that can be brought in to support this notion is the fact that many large government programs exist which are explicitly designed to bring in young, 'native speakers' as language instructors. Prominent examples of such programs are the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) (McConnell, 2000) and the Hong Kong-based NSET schemes (Jeon & Lee, 2006). Some may argue that these programs include nationality as criteria for employment due to the fact that they are only nominally language-teaching programs, and are more focused, in reality, on promoting national interests through soft power, as is the case with the JET program (McConnell, 2000). However, the fact remains that these programs hire large numbers of people as English instructors on the basis of their national identity and speakerhood rather than on the basis of any particular skill in teaching or language instruction. This is, quite clearly, native-speakerist discrimination.

This data can be further supported by the anecdotal experiences of 'non-native speakers' in their

search for employment and recognition in their field. Braine's seminal book *Non-Native Educators in English Language Teaching* (1999b) contains many such stories, including accounts of teachers who, despite receiving excellent student evaluations were still seen as inferior to their coworkers by their students (Thomas, 1999) and their colleagues (Braine, 1999a; Liu, 1999). Canagarajah (2012) tells a similar story of a struggle for professional recognition due to being considered a 'non-native speaker', and Braine (2010) cites several more studies and examples. It is clear from all of this evidence that preferential hiring of 'native speakers' over 'non-native speakers' is a serious and ongoing consequence of native-speakerism, and highlights in particular what Canagarajah (1999a) calls the "absurdity of an educational system which prepares one for a profession for which it disqualifies the person at the same time" (p.77).

#### **3.4.2. Preference for Western teaching methodologies**

A second professional issue caused by native-speakerism is the preference for, and adoption of, Western teaching methodologies over local knowledge and techniques in foreign educational settings. This belief in the superiority of Western professional knowledge again has a long history, and is an issue which is difficult to clearly shine a light on. This is because, I believe, of the way in which the problematic nature of the practice is often obscured behind a mask of 'professionalism' - and this is a statement which requires unpacking. I should start by stating that I am in favour of research into second language acquisition and believe that a stronger understanding of how people learn languages on the basis of empirically collected data should inform the ways in which languages are taught. However, I also believe that it is important to recognise that teaching methods, educational technology, and assumptions about the goals and values of education have not only scientific, but also ideological and political dimensions. This argument was strongly articulated by Pennycook (1989) who argued that the concept of 'method' as applied to

prescriptivist classroom teaching was a way in which inequalities were created and maintained by powerful centres of ELT through the production of interested knowledge. In other words, educational technology, even when based on scientifically collected data, contains within it a particular ideological perspective, and the packaging of this technology in the form of “methods” allows other cultural values to be smuggled in as a part of the whole. The use of methods also turns teaching into a saleable product, which certainly benefits those who are trying to sell it. These criticisms may seem less powerful in modern times, as we are supposed to have moved into a 'post-method' era (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, 2001, 2012), however authors such as Widin (2010) have found evidence of explicit political influence on the exporting of teachers and methods to other countries. While data on processes of SLA can and should inform the teaching of languages, I believe that treating the creation of educational approaches as if it were a simple matter of mapping data onto techniques allows us to ignore the cultural and ideological biases that also drive the creation of educational technology.

This problem has been recognized in critical applied linguistics for a number of years. As Pennycook (1994) noted, “the export of applied linguistic theory and of western-trained language teachers constantly promotes inappropriate teaching approaches to diverse settings” (p.159). The clearest examples of specific methods which are exported from the West with little care for local context are Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). CLT has long been promoted by organisations such as the British Council, but has been criticised as “a classic case of a center-based pedagogy that is out of sync with local linguistic, educational, social, cultural, and political exigencies” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 6), and resistance to the use of CLT approaches by both students and teachers has been documented in Pakistan (Shamim, 1996), South Korea (Li, 1998), China (Hu, 2002; Yu, 2001), and Japan (Sato, 2002), with the most famous example being the 'Madras Snowball' project; a project in which situational

approaches were exported to Indian teachers, and which was a failure due to the fact the methodology used was not felt to be suited to the local setting (Widdowson, 1968). These issues have long been recognised, however attempts to work around the problem of 'local context' have been rife with their own sets of problematic assumptions. Holliday (1994a) in an attempt to reconcile these concerns, proposed methods for facilitating appropriate "technology transfer" between foreign project managers and aid organisations, and local teachers and groups so that Western teaching approaches could be more effectively imported into foreign educational settings. Canagarajah (1996) criticised this approach, stating that on reading the book he felt that "I (as a periphery professional) begin to feel as if I am listening to a conversation in which I am not a participant; a conversation between centre-based project managers and scholars on how to trade in the periphery in a gentlemanly but profitable way" (p.82). Holliday (interviewed in Lowe, et al. 2015) acknowledges this criticism, and characterizes his earlier approach as attempting to 'solve the problems' of another part of the world, which by necessity involves researchers making assumptions about what problems may or may not be present in these other parts of the world in the first place.

This problem has been noted by others. Susser (1998) conducted a study of two types of EFL literature - materials offering advice to foreign teachers entering Japan, and research into cross-cultural learning styles - and identified aspects of "Orientalism". Said (1979) described Orientalism as "the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient - dealing with it by making statements about it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (p.3). Susser (1998) argues that rather than being based on solid evidence, the texts he examined were "grounded in assumptions, stereotypes, platitudes, and errors" (p.63), which seemed intended to legitimize the authority of Western teachers over local teachers, students, and educational

institutions by 'Othering' them and attempting to solve problems that were only clearly apparent in the texts themselves. The same tendency to Orientalise foreign educational methods is mentioned by Canagarajah (1999b), who notes (citing Bowers, 1980; Dudley-Evans & Swales, 1980; Holliday, 1994a) that "the preference for didactic instruction in many periphery ELT programs has been attributed to ancient ethno-religious practices" (p.108), and then provides evidence of why such an understanding of local educational techniques is oversimplified, unnuanced, and serves to create 'problems' which the West can step in to 'solve'. One of the consequences of this is that ELT professionals from periphery settings seek to gain cultural capital by studying in Western institutions in order to gain the 'authentic' and 'authoritative' knowledge that can be found there (Lowe & Pinner, 2016) as exemplified by the quote from Canagarajah (2012) given earlier. A study by Lowe (2015) in Japan showed the consequences of this, with the majority of staff on three large ELT programs at Japanese universities - both 'native-' and 'non-native' speaker teachers - having earned their teaching credentials from centre institutions (chiefly British, American, and Australian). In other words, Western methods are part of a larger mindset in ELT that Others local educational settings and then 'corrects' them with Western educational technology.

Taking this into account, it is easy to recognise that the promotion of particular methodologies and teaching approaches is problematic not simply because of clashes with 'local settings', but because "methods are not value-free instruments validated by empirical research for purely practical teaching functions. Methods are cultural and ideological constructs with politico-economic consequences" (Canagarajah, 2002, p. 135). Holliday (2005) makes this case in his discussion of CLT, arguing that it is a simple evolution of audiolingualism, and that it carries with it baggage related to the control and training of students in how to learn the language properly. He terms this the 'legacy of lockstep' (p.39) and demonstrates how major elements of CLT are in fact traceable back to the more authoritarian aspects of audiolingualism. Block (2002) provides an



example of some of the cultural and ideological content that underlies SLA theory, making strong connections between notions in TBLT such as 'negotiation for meaning', and Western ideologies of free enterprise. Block (2002) accuses SLA research of reducing a psychological and social phenomenon to "principles of efficiency, calculability, predictability, controllability, and standardisation" (p.132), which turns language into "McCommunication" that can be measured and taught in prescriptive ways. An even more explicit example of the political and economic influences on the promotion of ELT methods is provided by Widin (2010), who examined Australian government ELT projects in Japan and Laos, finding them to be commodified and corporatized. Widin (2010) quotes one official who admits, rather unsettlingly:

"The purpose of this particular project is not to deliver great, you know, English language teaching methodology into this country's teaching system. Actually, by doing that we put many Australians out of a job...I mean...in fifteen years time if great English is being taught here then we're, you know, Australians out of business.

So I couldn't care less whether this country wants it, or needs it, or likes it, at the end of the day it's not the judgement of teachers, it is a decision we've made against the background of what would enhance Australia's interest" (p.2)

Widin goes so far as to claim that the projects "exerted symbolic violence" (p.191) on local systems by, in the words of Kumaravadivelu (2012), "ignoring the importance of learners' first language, and, above all, by marginalising the commendable expertise and experience that host-country teachers bring to the projects" (p.23).

The foregoing discussion serves to show how the exportation and adoption of Western teaching methodologies and approaches is based on the creation of orientalisng narratives about foreign educational settings which seek to reconstruct these settings through the eyes of the West. Through this process, 'problems' are discovered, and Western educational technology is prescribed as the solution for these problems. Further, these methods often carry with them unsavoury political and economic implications, either implicitly through a 'west is best' mindset, or through more explicit political and economic incentives as in the case described above. This is a process which is disempowering for local educational professionals, and beneficial to both individuals and organisations from the West. In other words, this is another clear symptom of native-speakerism.

### **3.4.3. Creating negative images of students**

Related to the adoption of Western methods and approaches is the creation of narratives surrounding students. As a teacher in Japan, I have often heard colleagues express frustration with Japanese students, and their apparent reticence in class. I have heard them described as "shy", "quiet", "unable to think critically", "unable to work autonomously", "lazy", and so on, and these descriptions are always related, by those making them, in some way to the students' culture. McVeigh (1996, 2002) provides a good example of this, relating his students' self-descriptions of being shy to larger cultural beliefs and norms he claims exist in Japanese society. Specifically, he claims that Japanese culture is unusually ritualistic and staged, with people learning how to act in very distinct ways to fulfil cultural roles connected to particular occasions, events, and life stages. As such, he argues that in the classroom - specifically the foreign language classroom - students are hesitant to answer questions or engage with the teacher because of a fear that they will make a misstep due to not being familiar with the ritual requirements of this particular social setting (p.98-99). This seems, to me, rather stereotypical and essentializing. In my own professional

experience, I have never found Japanese students to be particularly quiet, or reticent, or incapable of expressing opinion or disagreement. In fact, all of these criticisms made both by my colleagues and by McVeigh (1996, 2002) could be explained in a number of other ways. Perhaps, for example, the class was simply not interesting to the students? Perhaps the teacher was not teaching in a very engaging way? Perhaps the students were not English majors, and were forced to take these classes as part of their first year comprehensive education? Perhaps their level of English was so low that they did not want to raise their hand and risk potentially embarrassing themselves? These alternative explanations seem at least as likely as those presented within a culturist framework in which all of a student's perceived deficiencies are explained with reference to their collectivist mindset, or their "shy" national character, or their inability to act freely outside of 'scripted' and 'staged' social interactions. In fact, it seems that we are here, as in the previous section, running into an issue of 'Othering'. Any issue that a teacher has with a student can be, in this mindset, explained with reference to something considered 'problematic', or at odds with Western values or systems in the student's cultural background. The individual is treated as part of a group with no power of agency of their own - blindly following the prescribed behaviour of their culture, as interpreted through the eyes of an outside observer.

The creation of negative images of students through 'Othering' is another example of native-speakerism in action. Holliday (2006) argues that a continuing problem is the 'Othering' of students and colleagues from outside the English-speaking West according to essentialist regional or religious cultural stereotypes, especially when they have difficulty with the specific types of "active, collaborative, and self-directed 'learner-centred' teaching-learning techniques that have frequently been constructed and packaged as superior within the English speaking West" (p.885). In particular, he identifies labels such as "dependent", 'hierarchical', 'collectivist', 'reticent', 'indirect', 'passive', 'docile', 'lacking in self esteem', 'reluctant to challenge authority', 'easily

dominated', 'undemocratic', or 'traditional'" as being commonly used to describe students from a variety of non-Western cultural backgrounds.

Examples of these labels appearing in scholarly work include Liu (1998) who argued that countries in Asia have "cultures with a long tradition of unconditional obedience to authority" where the teacher is a "fount of knowledge" (p.5) who is expected to lecture to their passive students. Here, there are two intertwined depictions of Asian students which can be discerned - firstly, that they are passive receivers of knowledge, and secondly that they are culturally conditioned not to question authority. Both of these stereotypes of students can be found in the research literature of ELT (Guest, 2002; King, 2013; Littlewood, 2000; McVeigh, 2002).

These stereotypical representations of students have been questioned and shown to be suspect. Littlewood (2000) conducted a questionnaire study in which students were asked to respond to three statements using a 1-5 likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). The statements were:

1. In the classroom I see the teacher as somebody whose authority should not be questioned.
2. I see knowledge as something that the teacher should pass on to me rather than something that I should discover myself.
3. I expect the teacher (rather than me myself) to be responsible for evaluating how much I have learnt.

Littlewood concluded that "The students' responses to the three questions indicate clearly that the stereotype of Asian students as 'obedient listeners'-whether or not it is a reflection of their actual behaviour in class-does not reflect the roles they would like to adopt in class. They do not see the teacher as an authority figure who should not be questioned; they do not want to sit in class

passively receiving knowledge; and they are only slightly on the 'agreement' side that the teacher should have a greater role than themselves in evaluating their learning" (p.33), and suggests that "if Asian students do indeed adopt the passive classroom attitudes that are often claimed, this is more likely to be a consequence of the educational contexts that have been or are now provided for them, than of any inherent dispositions of the students themselves" (p.33). While this study was not particularly rigorous in terms of its research methodology, it is useful in that it shows that the commonly expressed perceptions of teachers about the attitudes of their students are at least incomplete, and may be masking deeper issues in the language classroom and the ways in which the students are being taught and treated.

#### **3.4.4. Privileging of Western models of English over other varieties**

Following on from the previous discussion, another effect that can be observed to be produced by native-speakerism is the privileging of Western models of English over other varieties. This privileging occurs in terms of the ways that cultures are presented and represented in textbooks, and can be clearly seen in the perceptions and preferences of students. Holliday (2005) notes that "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" (p.104). In other words, certain language models are considered by the TESOL profession to be 'authentic', and are then presented to students as 'authentic' models in opposition, one must presume, to those varieties of English that are not 'authentic'. This promotion legitimises certain models of English over others, and creates connections in the minds of students between 'authenticity' and Western language models (Lowe & Pinner, 2016).

The ways in which such views may be inculcated are numerous, but can perhaps be most clearly demonstrated through an examination of the teaching materials through which language is

presented to students. While it has been recognised for a long time in the scholarly literature that English is no longer the property of a discrete number of Western countries such as Britain, America, and Australia, books published by major international publishers, as well as those produced by local writers and publishers, still display an overt focus on these Western cultures and models of English. For example, Yamanaka (2006) examined high school English textbooks in Japan in terms of inner, outer, and expanding circle representation. Overall, while a small number of references were made in the textbooks to nations in the outer and expanding circles, Yamanaka found that nations in the inner circle were focused on far more heavily than others, and were often presented in contrast with Japan. This is a clear example of the ways in which what is considered an 'authentic' model of English is propagated by EFL teaching materials. Although the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) acknowledges the diversity of English and the need for cultural awareness and understanding among students for them to use English as a language of international communication, this is only paid lip service to in their actual teaching materials. It is Western cultures and nations to whom the majority of the attention is paid, and it is therefore these models of English that become 'authenticated' in the minds of students.

The effects of this legitimisation of Western forms of English can be seen in the work of Matsuda (2002) who conducted a qualitative study of Japanese secondary school students in order to investigate their perceptions of English ownership around the world. Adding to the issues of materials which focused mainly on inner-circle nations and cultures discussed previously, Matsuda found that "teachers' comments and teaching materials both focused almost exclusively on the language and culture of the inner circle and reinforced the American/British-centric view" (p.494). The students Matsuda spoke to and observed held, unsurprisingly given the environment, a view that English learning was for communication between Western people, and that other varieties

were not considered as desirable. Interestingly, they even rated non-standard Western varieties of English (i.e. German-accented English) as more desirable or correct than their own Japanese English. This seems to demonstrate a kind of crude taxonomy of 'correct' or 'authentic' English radiating outwards from the West. Matsuda's findings are supported by other work which showed positive orientations among students in Japan towards Western models of English (Loveday, 1996; Matsuda, 2012; Morrow, 2004).

A study by Saito (2012) similarly found that middle-school students studying English in Japan had much more positive orientations towards 'native' than 'non-native' varieties of English, and were more interested in learning English to communicate with 'native speakers' than as an international lingua franca. This study demonstrates that almost ten years after Matsuda's study, the situation remains largely unchanged, and this remains true not only in Japan, but in the ELT industry as a whole (see Kirkpatrick, 2007). Two studies by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005a, 2005b) found evidence, through the ratings of learners on questionnaires, that learners had strong preferences for 'native speaker' varieties of English, providing more evidence that this privileging of particular Western models of English leads to student preferences for these models.

### **3.4.5. Advertising and target cultures**

One way in which the native-speakerist ideology described here is both constructed and reinforced is through the way that schools and universities advertise their courses or present their faculty. Bailey (2006) demonstrated, through an analysis of adverts for *eikaiwa* (Japanese conversation schools), that images of visibly Western 'native speakers' are used in order to create *akogare* ('longing') for Western culture and even to inspire romantic or sexual desire for Western men (see also Takahashi (2013). Even if we are to leave aside the gendered nature of such advertisements, there is ample evidence that advertisements are designed to be aspirational for students, and to

show them that learning English either in or from the West (in the form of 'native speakers') is a route to changing their life and increasing their cultural capital (Sergeant, 2009). We can see here connections between this form of advertising and the imbuing of the West with cultural capital for the purpose of strengthening and reinforcing its role as the centre of the ELT industry. A further example, provided below is taken from the student handbook of a university in Tokyo, where the students are presented with images of 'native speaker' teachers with the English text reading simply "NATIVE SPEAKERS", as if this in itself should be enough enticement for the students to want to study there (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: 'Native speakers' in a Japanese university prospectus

The promotion of particular target cultures related to the English language is also evident in the content of coursebooks, which further serves to promote these cultural associations. Such rhetoric on the part of the sales and advertising in the ELT industry serves to propagate the idea that the



West and its 'native speaker' representatives are the authentic, authoritative owners of the language, and this serves not only to uphold the power of the West, but also to remove power from teachers and students from other linguistic and cultural backgrounds within the profession (see also Rivers, 2016).

#### **3.4.6. Negative self-images among 'non-native speakers'**

This leads us finally from outside influences to one of the more personal aspects of the influence of native-speakerist thinking - the creation of negative self-images among students and teachers classified as 'non-native speakers'. This is very closely related to the previous discussions, as it is through the legitimisation of certain Western models of English and the processes through which such legitimisation occurs that teachers who do not fall into the ideologically-constructed 'native speaker' category begin to form negative self-images.

There is, as documented in previous sections, much literature about the discrimination faced by 'non-native speakers' in the ELT profession, due to reification of particular Western forms of the language as well as negative perceptions on the part of students, all of which is both constructed and reinforced through advertising practices common in the industry prominently featuring 'native speakers' and portraying the West as the target culture of English students. The knock on, cumulative effect of all of this is that 'non-native speakers' gain a negative view of their own language use and classroom ability.

Through comparing themselves against 'native speakers', who may be speaking a version of English completely inappropriate for their students, L2 speaker teachers of English engage in what Reves and Medgyes (1994) label 'self-discrimination'. As Moussu and Llurda (2008) describe it, this involves teachers becoming overly self-conscious towards their own language use and perceived errors. Naturally, such a reflexively self-critical stance can draw teachers into a situation

where they develop a poor self-image, which then itself negatively impacts on their language use in a kind of vicious circle. Furthermore, this is compounded by student behaviour towards 'non-native speakers'. Llorca & Huguet (2003) found a similar issue, with teachers falling prey to the 'native speaker fallacy' and believing 'native speakers' to be superior to themselves. A study by Jenkins (2005) lent extra support to this notion of negative self-image through an in-depth study of eight highly qualified, highly proficient, and highly experienced teachers of English. Jenkins found that despite possessing so many positive attributes, the teachers in her study still demonstrated a preference for 'NS' accents and a lack of confidence in their own accents. A study by Kelch and Satana-Williamson (2002) found that students were unable to clearly distinguish between recordings of 'native' and 'non-native' accents, absent any visual support, which makes it doubly troubling that teachers have such a negative self-image based on these issues. Despite this, the students in the study believed that 'native speakers' had a higher level of training and proficiency than 'non-native speakers', showing how these prejudices manifest even in cases where no tangible differences can be discerned. Moussu and Llorca (2008, p. 323) also point out that students act suspiciously of their 'non-native speaker' teachers, and will judge them more harshly for a grammatical mistake or a lack of knowledge of a particular language point than they would be of 'native speakers', despite the fact that 'native speakers' are far more likely to have gaps in their grammar knowledge due to not having learned the language in a structured, formalised way. This phenomenon has been noted by other writers (e.g. Amin, 1999; Lowe & Kiczowski, 2016) and again feeds back into the negative self-images created in the minds of 'non-native speakers'.

The practical effects of this can be most clearly seen in the work of Suzuki (2011) who carried out research with Japanese trainee teachers who had been trained specifically to encourage their recognition of non-Western varieties of English. Suzuki (2011) found that even in this case, where the teachers had undergone specific training in order to raise their awareness, they still stated they

would not use non-'standard' varieties of English in their classroom, and still considered these varieties to be errant and incorrect. This mindset has led writers such as Hall (2012) and Hall, et al. (2013) to suggest and trial ways of deconstructing a native-speakerist mindset among trainee teachers.

The effects of native-speakerism in ELT previously discussed work together to create negative self-images in the minds of 'non-native speakers', which, in a world where English has globalised and diversified and where 'non-native speakers' make up, by some estimates, 80% of the teachers currently working in the profession (Braine, 2010), is clearly an undesirable and harmful state of affairs.

Clearly there are a number of issues caused by native-speakerism in ELT, and these mostly act in favour of the Western ELT establishment, while disadvantaging the people and institutions of other parts of the world. However, it has recently been argued that this is not the only way in which native-speakerism can function, and this will be the subject of the next section.

### **3.5. Native-speakerism and cultural resistance**

As a dominant ideology in ELT, it is unsurprising that native-speakerism has been met with resistance from scholars, students, and teachers. Native-speakerism is an ideology which influences much of ELT professional culture, and so the particular form of resistance which is taken against this ideology can be called “cultural resistance”. As with concepts such as “ideology”, “discourse”, and “hegemony”, it is necessary to define exactly what I mean by “cultural resistance” in the context of the present study. Canagarajah (1999b), in his study of resistance to linguistic imperialism, traces the history of theories of resistance, noting that Marxist and structuralist theories offer a somewhat monolithic approach to understanding power in society, with Marx

arguing for material (and specifically economic) factors primarily shaping all areas of society, including education, and structuralism considering people to be under the control of ideologically-constructed linguistic and symbol systems by which ideologies and social systems are culturally reproduced. Both Marxist and structuralist views are therefore deterministic, in that the individual and the society in which they live are seen as being beholden to dominant social discourses. As Canagarajah (1999b) notes, for these models “power is monolithic and absolute” (p.33), however he argues that “the exercise of power always implies the existence of counter-power or counter-discourses”, calling the interplay between dominant powers and counter-powers “dialogic” (p.33). In other words, a particular group, discourse, or ideology is dominant in society not because other groups, discourses or ideologies have been destroyed, but because they have been pushed into a subordinate position. However, these groups, discourses and ideologies still exist, and have the potential to exercise their own subaltern power in opposition to that which is dominant. In other words, they can, through the exercise of power, engage in cultural resistance.

A general definition of this term is offered by Duncombe (2002), who describes cultural resistance as "culture that is used, consciously or unconsciously, effectively or not, to resist and/or change the dominant political, economic, and/or social structure" (p.5). Duncombe (2002) argues that there are several ways in which cultural resistance may manifest, and outlines several different perspectives on this, from one extreme ("cultural resistance is political activity: writing or rewriting political discourse and thus political practice", p.8) through to another ("cultural resistance does not exist. All culture is, or will immediately become, an expression of the dominant power", p.8). Duncombe (2002) further argues that there are numerous scales of cultural resistance, including unconsciously political forms of resistance, those which are individual acts, the creation of subcultures, self-consciously political activities, and even full social revolution (p.8).

Resistance to native-speakerism has been documented as occurring in a number of different ways. Scholarly work such as Phillipson's book *Linguistic Imperialism* (1992) can be defined as "self-conscious political activity", as it has a particular political perspective which seeks to subvert the dominant structure; in Phillipson's case, he wished to point out what he saw to be a pernicious imperialism in the language policy of Western nations and of organisations such as the British Council (see also Holliday, 2005; Kubota, 2002a). Activist work such as the starting of the NNEST caucus in the TESOL association (Kamhi-Stein, 2016) can also be read as self-consciously political in the sense that such organisations have a specific political aim in mind regarding perceived problems with the dominant culture which they seek to address. At a more practical professional level, Menezes Jordão (2016) documents a research project in which teacher educators, tasked with introducing the communicative approach into a setting where it was inappropriate, acted against their training, and against accepted practices, through a process of *unlearning*. This is another good example of conscious resistance to native-speakerism in ELT.

Unconsciously political forms of resistance to native-speakerism have also been documented. An example of this is the aforementioned description given by Canagarajah (1999b) of Sri Lankan students subverting their American-produced textbooks by writing and drawing inside them, thus resisting these texts and transforming them into something more meaningful than the original forms, which were divorced and distant from the realities of the students' own lives. This can be called unconsciously political because it is unlikely that the students in this case would have considered their actions a political act. However, as Canagarajah (1999b) states, "socio-cultural conditions always influence our cognitive activity, mediating how we perceive and interpret the world around us" (p.14). In other words, even though the students may not have considered their actions political, they were still expressing resistance to a dominant power.

In this thesis I take the perspective that "cultural resistance creates a 'free space'" (Duncombe,

2002, p. 8), both ideologically (a free space to "create new language, meaning, and visions of the future", p.8) and materially (a "place to build community, networks, and organizational models", p.8). I have chosen to take this position because this is how the resistance I observed in the study manifested – through the creation of groups independent of the larger educational structure, in which ideas and activities could be expressed and attempted freely, and led to challenges in which the dominant power of the program was subverted and the practices thereby changed. This will be the subject of chapter 8.

### **3.6. Attempts at redefinition**

In this section I will explore a recent attempt to redefine the term 'native-speakerism' by scholars working (mainly) in Japan. While 'native speakers' are generally privileged and empowered by the effects of native-speakerism, it has been argued by the scholars discussed in this section that in some contexts and in some cases, 'native speakers' can actually face discrimination as a side-effect of this ideology. As such, they propose a wholesale redefinition of the term in order to capture what they see as the central issue of discrimination against teachers based on speakerhood. In the following discussion I will provide a critical examination of this redefinition, point to some of the evidence supporting their point of view, and explain why I think it fails to accurately capture the reality of the global situation.

#### **3.6.1. Redefinition and the Japanese situation**

One major result of native-speakerism is the preferential hiring and treatment of 'native-speaker' teachers, due in large part to the high status of the language model and culture they are thought to represent. However, it appears that the very preferential treatment that 'native speakers' have traditionally received in these institutions has contributed towards the discrimination against them

being described in recent literature on the subject, perhaps the most important piece of which is a collection of essays edited by Houghton and Rivers (2013b) called *Native-speakerism in Japan: Intergroup dynamics in foreign language education*. Houghton and Rivers' book has a specific goal in mind - they seek to redefine the term 'native-speakerism' to mean discrimination against both 'native speakers' and 'non-native speakers' (though, it must be said, with a heavy focus on the former). As Houghton (interviewed in Lowe, et al. 2014) puts it in a recorded interview, "what we wanted to do...was to try to expand Adrian Holliday's definition to also include 'native speakers' as objects, targets of prejudice...prejudice against people based on whether or not they are 'native speakers'" (I include the problematizing inverted commas in this quotation, as Houghton made reference to this earlier in the interview). The authors argue that native-speakerism is a hegemonic discourse which manifests differently in different cultural and professional settings, meaning it can act to cause discrimination against both 'native speakers' and 'non-native speakers' depending on the cultural context in which it is occurring, and therefore cannot be defined as an ideology which affects only one group in all settings and at all times (Houghton & Rivers, 2013a). This aligns with Holliday's (2005) view, but while Holliday sees native-speakerism as a hegemony that exclusively favours 'native speakers' and disadvantages 'non-native speakers', Houghton and Rivers (2013b) argue that in certain contexts the opposite result may occur, and that 'native-speakers' can actually face professional discrimination in the ELT industry.

A brief summary of Houghton and Rivers' (2013b) definition of native-speakerism is that it is a ideology in which 'native speakers' are valued and treated ONLY as representatives of a target language model and culture, and NOT as serious, professional educators. Because of this, 'native speaker' professionals face a number of discriminatory practices that locate them as mere tokenistic resources, entertainments, or decorations in professional settings, and not as equal colleagues to be taken seriously. Under this view, native-speakerism is dependent on context and setting, and for

discrimination against 'native speakers' to occur, the educational setting must meet certain criteria. Particularly, Houghton and Rivers (2013b) argue that Holliday's (2005) definition is connected to practices and histories of imperialism and colonialism, and thus countries that do not have these historical power system-based inequalities may be able to perform the ideology differently, in the form of discrimination against 'native speakers', and even in "the imposition of racial hierarchies in society as a whole" (Houghton & Rivers, 2013b, p. 6). In effect, from this perspective the discourses by which the ideology of native-speakerism is constructed are complicit in constructing and Othering all language education professionals, and anyone can experience the negative effects of this, depending on the setting and position in which they are working (see Lowe & Kiczowski, 2016).

I will now attempt to identify some key properties that define practices that can be broadly classified as native-speakerist, under this redefinition. As mentioned earlier, context is very important for Houghton and Rivers' (2013b) definition of native-speakerism, and they argue that while Holliday (2005) discusses native-speakerism against the historical backdrop of colonialism and imperialism, "Japan has never been colonized by a foreign power; though it experienced a period of occupation by the United States after World War II, even then English was never forced upon the public" (Tsuneyoshi, 2013, p. 120), which may come as a surprise to the generations of Japanese students who have undergone mandatory English study for most of their secondary schooling, and taken required English examinations to enter university. This point aside, it seems that there are legitimate concerns being raised among teachers working in Japan relating to their treatment as 'native speakers' rather than ELT professionals. As such, I will frame this brief overview in the context of Japan, as this is the area in which the most compelling literature on the subject can be found. It is important to mention that evidence exists of similar issues occurring elsewhere (see Neilsen, 2009; Petrie, 2013), but the large volume of writing from teachers in Japan,



as well as the fact that the study undertaken for this thesis was set in that country, makes Japan a fitting location for this discussion to be undertaken.

From an analysis of complaints made in the literature surrounding 'native speakers', it seems that the main issues for these educators in Japan revolve around particular perceptions and constructions of 'native speakers', which feed into their undesirable treatment. I will try to summarize and simply explain the relationship between these two issues in the following way:

*Perception* - The 'native speaker' is:

- **A representative of a western language and culture**, who is;
- **Living abroad on a short-term basis**, and is;
- **Fluent in their mother tongue**, but is;
- **Unaware of the workings of the language (grammar, etc.)**.

*Treatment* - As a consequence, 'native speakers' should:

- **Be treated as a resource** to be used by the 'real' teachers, and;
- **Should teach conversation classes** in which;
- They should be **entertaining and decorative**;
- But are **not real teachers**, and as such;
- **Do not require long-term contracts of employment**.

I will explore each of these points in the following sections with supporting research and data, with a particular focus on Japan as the setting in which this discrimination is largely (at least in terms of documentation) taking place.

### 3.6.2. 'Native speaker' as resource

Among teachers in Japan, a common trope that is often brought up is the idea of 'native speakers' as 'living tape recorders'. This complaint is usually made in the context of the JET program (short for the 'Japan Exchange and Teaching' program) due to the program's focus on team teaching. The JET program was started in 1987 for the dual purpose of improving Japan's communicative language teaching, as well as promoting foreign cultures in Japanese classrooms, and promoting Japanese culture to the foreign participants (McConnell, 2000), similar to the Hong Kong NET scheme (Lai, 1999). Participants in the JET program are usually young university graduates who are hired to enter the country as Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs), and who are then (usually) sent to work in Japanese middle schools and high schools as English teachers - very often with no training or qualifications in language education. In order to understand the notion of "'native speaker' as resource", it will be necessary to focus on the classroom dynamics of the JET program. Participants on the JET program engage in team teaching, which Brumby and Wada (1990) describe as "a concerted endeavour made jointly by the Japanese teacher of English (JTE) and the assistant English teacher (AET) in an English language classroom in which the students, the JTE and the AET are engaged in communicative activities" (p.vi). In other words, the team teaching carried out on the program is intended to take advantage of the "differences" between the two perceived groups of teachers, as described by Medgyes (1992), in order to create the ideal learning environment for students. Brumby and Wada (1990) argue that benefits of this system include the provision of authentic interaction with a 'native speaker' of English, promotion of cross-cultural awareness, and the opportunity to see a model of interaction between the Japanese and foreign teacher. This image of collaboration, problematic in itself, is not, however, the way the relationship between the Japanese teacher and the JET program Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) regularly plays out in practice. In fact, the very term '*assistant language teacher*' reveals some of the issues

that have been raised by teachers in this position. These issues relate mainly to power imbalances in the classroom (McConnell, 2000). Miyazato (2009) notes that "AETs' lower status as assistants was intentionally created in order to equalize the power balance between NSs and NNSs in TT settings" (p.41). The power imbalances spoken of here are numerous, and revolve around language ability as well as political and cultural power. The ALT is generally perceived to have a higher linguistic proficiency than the JTE, which causes problems for the JTE such as a lack of confidence in their ability on the part of the students, a loss of autonomy in the classroom, and a perceived inability to inform on cultural matters. All of these assumptions are questionable, but it is the belief in these disadvantages which is important for our purposes, as these fears formed part of the considerations when creating the AET contract conditions; Miyazato (2009, pp. 41–42) argues that:

AETs' employment conditions (an age limit of 35 and a 5-year employment limit) could ensure that AETs remain politically powerless. In fact, most AETs are recent college graduates in their early 20s (CLAIR, 1992) with little or no formal training or experience in teaching EFL or even teaching itself (Tajino & Tajino, 2000); prior living experience in Japan was limited to a 3-year maximum. In other words, bringing in young untrained native speakers as assistants was considered less threatening to JTEs, and as such was thought to create more balanced power-sharing in the classroom.

There is some complexity here, as the fact that young, relatively unqualified teachers were sought and were given higher salaries and a lower workload than their JTE counterparts points to 'native

speaker' privilege being manifest. This is an important point, but for now, I wish to focus on the classroom dynamics that arise from this power imbalance. Miyazato (2009) argues that "some AETs were originally used by JTEs as so-called "living tape recorders" based on the assumption that AETs were only assistants" (p.39). In other words, the AET was used only to give examples of language points, and not to engage in any teaching activities themselves. This is a view backed up by Benoit and Haugh (2001) who argue that "In other situations these NSAs perform as 'live tape-recorders', undermining student perception of their usefulness in the class" (p.7). Miyazato (2009) argues that this situation has changed in recent years, with the AET taking on a more active role in the classroom, but this view is not universally held. Indeed, Hashimoto (2013b) argues that within Japanese educational policy there is an entire discourse in which 'native speakers' are described as a resource to be utilized, rather than as professionals to be consulted with. Hashimoto (2013b) states that "to describe native speakers along the same lines as other resources is also a common practice in Japan" (p.164), and demonstrates this by showing how the "merits" and "demerits" of 'native speakers' and ICT are discussed in precisely the same way in MEXT documents, with ICT being deemed preferable to 'native speakers' because it is "easier to use" (p.164-165). We see here evidence of 'native speakers' explicitly being discussed as resources rather than as colleagues, and the fact that candidates for JET program positions are not sought on the basis of their qualifications but only on the basis of their speakerhood serves to drive this point home. It may be argued that this is the price 'native speakers' pay for their privilege in easily finding jobs in Japanese high schools, but the fact remains that the Japanese education system deliberately seeks candidates who lack cultural experience and professional training, and are thus unable to exercise their voices institutionally and as a result can be exploited as resources by these schools. Further support for this notion can be found in an interview study by Breckenridge and Erling (2011) conducted with 'native speakers' participating on the JET program, in which

candidates claimed that their role in the classroom was "emblematic", that they were in the classroom "simply to represent 'the Other'", and that they were used tokenistically "to make English look appealing to the kids" (p. 92-93). Here again we see 'native speakers' treated as resources rather than as teachers or professionals, and their 'native speaker' status used to define them and their role in the classroom.

### **3.6.3. 'Native speaker' as entertainer**

The previous discussion was mostly concerned with the JET program, which operates only in one particular domain of Japanese education, however 'native speakers' may also face issues in other areas of the Japanese education system. One common issue raised is the notion of what I shall refer to as "'native speaker' as entertainer". In a study exploring the professional identities of Japanese university English teachers, Nagatomo (2012) quotes one of her participants as saying "I can't be those kind of people who just entertain students...but sometimes students, who are not interested in the subject at all - they just need someone, a charismatic teacher. But I can't do that" (p.175). The teacher making this statement is a literature specialist who has been tasked with teaching EFL classes due to her excellent language skills, but who "equates ELT teachers with being only one of those who entertain students" (p.174). It is not clear whether this participant is referring specifically to 'native speakers', as she does not explicitly state this, but such a view would certainly seem to tally with other perspectives present in the research literature surrounding 'native speakers' in Japan and their professional perceptions, and Nagatomo (interviewed in Lowe, Turner, & Schaefer, 2015) later confirmed that she believed this is most likely who the teacher was referring to.

Shimizu (1995) makes a supporting observation to this end about her own professional life, stating that "Since I began teaching in Japan nine years ago, I have always felt that students viewed

me more as an entertainer than a teacher. In contrast to my Japanese colleagues, I feel my classes are not taken seriously by my students" (p.5). In order to investigate the perceptions of 'native speakers' among her students, Shimizu conducted a survey of student attitudes, finding that in general the students had a positive orientation towards their 'native speaker' instructors, and more negative perceptions of classes taught by their Japanese teachers. However, Shimizu found that "in the case of foreign English teachers, the two things students felt were the most important were how easy they were to get acquainted with (28%) and how entertaining they were (26%)" (p.7). While Japanese teachers were overall rated more negatively by the students, they were valued more for their intellectual capacities than were the foreign instructors. Shimizu notes that "while 28% of the students thought intelligence was important for Japanese teachers only, a mere 4% of students thought that it was important for foreigners only. Knowledge of the subject area, respectability, ability to explain things clearly, reliability, and being knowledgeable followed the same pattern. In each of these cases, students felt that these qualities were more important for Japanese teachers by more than double" (p.8). This data appears to support the conclusion that students were, at least in this study, disposed to seeing their 'native speaker' instructor as an entertainer rather than as a teacher, and not as a professional to be valued for their intellectual skills in the same way as their Japanese teacher was.

More recent studies have come to the same conclusions. Hullah (2007; cited in Amundrud, 2008) conducted a nationwide survey of university freshmen, finding that 31% of the respondents said that NJTE (Non-Japanese Teachers of English) and JTE-led classes were different, with the former being "more enjoyable/fun" and the later being "serious/strict/boring" (no page number). Hullah (2008) further spoke to foreign ALTs and JTEs to get their perspectives of how their students perceived them and their classes. One ALT stated that "The kids I teach seem to have a general ingrained perception of foreigners as frivolous clowns from the media which predates their

interaction with their ALT”, while a JTE participant claimed that their students “think what they do with the ALT is just play, while the serious study is what we do when only I am there” (2007; cited in Amundrud, 2008). Here again we can see student perceptions of the 'native speaker' as simply an entertainer, and the JTE as a more serious teacher.

Amundrud (2008) in another study sought to investigate 'native speaker's' self-perceptions of how they were perceived by their students. Through a survey collected from 20 respondents, Amundrud found that the top three issues raised by 'native speakers' were:

1. NJTEs are not taken seriously by their institutions or students (24 instances).

Survey respondents stated that they felt they were not as valued as teaching professionals by their institutions or as respected as their Japanese colleagues by students.

2. NJTE as entertainer (21 instances). Respondents discussed their jobs in terms of entertaining their students, or of expectations that they are supposed to be entertainers, even if they do not see this as their role.

3. NJTE's professional role as (oral) English expert (18 instances). Confirming Law's (1995) description of the divide between communicative, oral communication classes led by NJTEs and instructivist, grammar-translation classes led by JTEs, most survey respondents specified their expertise as seen by their institutions as lying exclusively in teaching oral English skills. (p.92)

Amundrud (2008) then interviewed a number of these respondents to get more detailed information on their experiences. He found that while some of these teachers embraced the entertainer role, many resisted it very strongly despite great pressure from their schools or

institutions to act in this specific way. This evidence suggests that there are particular roles that 'native speakers' are expected to fill in the Japanese educational system, which are based on some general idea of the attributes of the 'native speaker'.

The third category highlighted by Amundrud (2008) as given above is interesting, as it provides a clear line from perceptions of 'native speakers' to the professional responsibilities they are expected to perform.

#### **3.6.4. 'Native speakers' and 'academic apartheid'**

A further complaint made by 'native speakers' is that they are only given limited professional responsibilities when compared to their colleagues. In the JET program, as described earlier, this may take the form of being used as an exemplifier of the language rather than as an instructor of it, however even in institutions and situations in which 'native speakers' are required to teach the language themselves, they are commonly tasked with classes geared toward "communication", and are seen to occupy a particular 'native speaker' role. Nagatomo (2016) describes this in terms of two competing conceptions of English - "*eigo*" and "*eikaiwa*". The first of these is the formal term for English in Japanese, literally "English language", while the second is most usually translated as "English conversation". Nagatomo argues that *eigo* is seen as 'real, valuable English', whereas *eikaiwa* is seen as less serious, and more about communicating and having fun. It is unsurprising to learn that classes by Japanese teachers and professors are considered to be the former, while classes taught by foreign professors are generally considered to be the latter. Rivers (2013a) defines the roles allotted to 'native speakers' in Japanese universities as the "'native speaker' location", which can be "enduringly restrictive" (p.54), as teachers are forced to play particular roles as designated by their 'native speaker' status rather than their qualifications, interests, or abilities. This idea has historical precedent, and can be traced back to what Hall (1998) terms



"academic apartheid" in Japanese universities. Hall (1998) is not referring specifically to ELT positions, but his comments about Japanese university staff preferring to have "unacclimated aliens on campus" who were "linguistically incapacitated, culture shocked foreign newcomer[s]" that could provide "exotic ambience" (p.105-106), accords with the observations of other scholars such as Murphey (2004), who notes how his own contributions to the entrance exams in his university were ignored and he was considered to have overstepped his mark as a foreign professor. Another example is the case of Ashikawa university, where, as Heimlich (2013) reports, a lawsuit was brought by a foreign professor for unlawful dismissal, only to be brushed aside by a court ruling which stated that "for a professional foreigner, 'freshness' is necessary for enthusiasm in promoting travel and professorial exchange" (p.175). Even more explicitly, in an editorial in the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper, professor Shinichiro Noriguchi states that English teachers who have lived in Japan for more than ten years are no longer pure foreigners, their English has become Japanized, and they "have become ineffective as teachers" (D. J. Rivers, 2013b, p. 77).

In other words, the role of the 'native speaker' has been limited by their identification as 'foreigners' and 'native speakers', and their professional roles in Japanese universities have been accordingly diminished and limited. This leads to the final point central to this redefinition: the short contracts given to 'native speakers'.

### **3.6.5. 'Native speakers' and contract limitation**

As mentioned in section 4.5.2, teachers on the JET program are limited to a maximum contract length of five years. While this may be considered quite generous in terms of the many participants on the program who are not trained English language teachers at all, the limiting of contracts is another example of 'native-speakerism' manifesting as discrimination against 'native speakers'.

Houghton (2013) argues that in the Japanese tertiary education system, the creation of separate

contracts for *gaikokujin koushi* (or foreign lecturers) was an early manifestation of discriminatory practices against 'native speakers'. These contracts have a long history going back to 1982, and were contracts which allowed foreign faculty members to be employed "on the same terms as Japanese faculty members", while allowing that "term limits could be imposed upon *gaikokujin kyouin* at the university's discretion" even though "Japanese faculty members were assured of permanent employment" (Houghton, 2013, p. 60). Several legal challenges were made by foreign faculty (Houghton, 2013; Masden, 2013) as they found themselves under far more restrictive and unfair contractual limits than their Japanese counterparts. The effect of this was for many universities to create new non-faculty positions with new contract titles, in order to sidestep the need to employ full-time, tenured instructors.

The limiting of contracts for 'native speakers' is another element of the discrimination faced by 'native speakers' in Japan, and one that is likely tied to the other issues described in this section - 'native speakers' are seen as emblematic of a particular Western linguistic and cultural background, and it is this for which they are valued, rather than their skills or professional qualifications. This is further tied to a belief in their worth only as practice for communication (*eikaiwa*), rather than serious instruction of the language (*eigo*). Because of this, foreign teachers are given diminished professional responsibilities, are treated as resources and as entertainers, and thus have unfair contract limitations imposed upon them.

### **3.6.6. Problems with this redefinition**

The redefinition of 'native speakerism' as provided by Houghton and Rivers (2013b) is compelling, and particularly in the context of Japan, there appears to be much evidence showing how the essentialization of 'native speakers' leads to discrimination, particularly within the Japanese university system. It seems that in Japan, a situation has emerged in which 'native speakers' can

easily find employment on the peripheries of their institutions but have great difficulty gaining more advanced positions as teachers or academics. As described earlier, this could be due to the effects of an ideology in which 'native speakers' are highly valued for their symbolic association with a particular target culture and model of English, but are not taken seriously as professional educators. Indeed, even Holliday, whose terminology they have co-opted, remarks that Houghton and Rivers "argue quite rightly that the Othering of any teachers in this manner, regardless of their backgrounds, is a matter of human rights" (Holliday, 2015, p. 15). I myself have experienced such Othering in my professional life in Japan (though this is certainly outweighed by professional advantages I have received as a 'native speaker'), and I believe that Houghton and Rivers and the contributors to their book, along with other writers and works who make the same or similar observations (Bueno & Caesar, 2003; Lummis, 1976; Whitsed & Wright, 2011) have highlighted an important and novel aspect of native-speakerism.

However, I believe that this redefinition has problems of its own. While Holliday's original definition featured teacher discrimination as one aspect of the concept, this was set against a larger background of the influence of the West in language teaching methodology, teacher education, language models, and target cultures. While Houghton and Rivers seek to expand the definition to demonstrate the intricate and deep relationships between age, gender, sex, race, and 'native speaker' status as interconnected elements of native-speakerism, the result of their analysis seems very much focused on discrimination against teachers. I contend that while this is important, and while they are right to highlight these connections, there is a risk that this work serves to minimise the wider socio-political native-speakerist discourse upon which teacher discrimination is based and through which it is justified. The commodification of 'native speaker' teachers is, I propose, a symptom of the underlying power structures in ELT which promote Western interests. Just as defined gender roles can have a negative effect on individual men while serving to uphold male

power in society in general, so too do individual 'native' and 'non-native' speaker teachers suffer at the service of the wider Western project within ELT. There is some evidence that those researchers within this camp are moving towards the broader implications of idealized western norms in ELT (see Glasgow, 2014), however the focus of those carrying out this research still seems to be principally on discrimination against language teachers as a consequence of native-speakerism. As a result, rather than accepting Houghton and Rivers' redefinition of the term 'native-speakerism', I will use their insights to modify the existing definition to show that native-speakerism is an ideology which can affect both 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' teachers while upholding the interests of the Western ELT establishment.

### **3.7. Semantic shift and popular use**

Deliberate redefinition is not the only change that the term 'native-speakerism' has undergone in recent years. In this section, I will argue that the term 'native-speakerism' has undergone a process of semantic shift over the past few years in tandem with growing awareness of issues of discrimination against 'non-native speakers' in the popular consciousness. Holliday's (2005) original definition of the term was rather broad; as I have already explained in the section 3.4, it encompassed the privileging of Western 'native-speaker' cultures, institutions, and of the practitioners that represent these cultures and institutions in the field of language teaching. However, over time, the term seems to have undergone something of a change in meaning, at least as far as its popular use is concerned. This is perhaps most clearly seen in Silvana Richardson's plenary address at the IATEFL 2016 conference (Richardson, 2016), which called for an end to discriminatory hiring practices in ELT, describing such practices as 'native-speakerism', and this use can also be found in articles in places such as the *EL Gazette* (Butler, 2017) and the blogs section of the *TEFL Equity Advocates* website (Arnold, 2017; Hockley, 2017; Setterfield, 2017), in

which native-speakerism is equated solely with discriminatory practices. I would argue that while it is true that these practices are *native-speakerist*, they are not, in and of themselves, *native-speakerism*. However, in common use, this is how the term seems to have come to be used. Perhaps due to its close relationship to other terms of discrimination such as 'sexism' or 'racism', and perhaps because discrimination is the most clearly visible and clearly acknowledged effect of the ideology, the term 'native-speakerism' is now used, at least in common speech, interchangeably with the notion of discrimination against 'non-native speaker teachers'. While such discrimination is certainly a serious issue, and is in urgent need of addressing, there are dangers inherent in stripping the term of its broader meaning. I believe that doing so allows us to ignore the other insidious effects of the ideology within the field of language teaching (much of which was documented in the previous chapter), and provides a false sense of a problem being solved, when it has merely moved to a less visible level of operation. In short, it has the same problems as the Houghton and Rivers redefinition of native-speakerism; by focusing only on blatant discrimination the more deeply-rooted and insidious side of the ideology is ignored, and even hidden. In this thesis, to keep my terminology clear, I will refer to native-speakerism in the popular sense as “overt native-speakerism”.

### **3.7.1. Overt native-speakerism**

By 'overt native-speakerism', I refer to the manifestations of native-speakerism that are clearly visible, and have been deemed largely unacceptable by the language teaching field. Issues of discrimination against 'non-native speaker teachers' is certainly a case of overt native-speakerism, as it is an issue where the ideology manifests at a visible level, and where it has been most roundly denounced by ELT professionals. It would not be true to say that discrimination against 'non-native speaker teachers' has stopped, and recent research such as that by Mahboob and Golden (2013) has

shown such discrimination continues to the present. However, it is certainly the case that this discrimination has been widely acknowledged and challenged, both in the professional and academic literature (see Aneja, 2016; Aslan & Thompson, 2016; Galloway, 2014; Kumaravadivelu, 2016; Selvi, 2014) and through advocacy groups such as the NNEST caucus in TESOL (Kamhi-Stein, 2016). Another example of overt native-speakerism is the practice of schools focusing their advertising on images of white 'native-speakers' to sell their courses, or to explicit references to 'native speakers' in their advertising copy (Seargeant, 2009). These are both visible aspects of native-speakerism that have been acknowledged and challenged. Overt native-speakerism is therefore rightly seen by members of the language teaching profession as a problem in need of addressing. However, it arises from a more subtle structural set of biases, which I term 'the 'native speaker' frame'. This concept forms the theoretical basis of this research, and will be the subject of the next chapter. However, before moving on to discuss this, it is important to consider some of the criticism that has been levelled at the concept of native-speakerism over the last ten years.

### **3.8. Criticism of the concept**

Native-speakerism has been accepted by many in the scholarly and professional spheres of ELT as an important concept and a useful way of highlighting and considering prejudice and power on both the macro and micro scale in the field. However, this is not to say it is completely without criticism. Perhaps the most serious criticism of the concept came from Alan Waters, who published three papers rather closely together discussing critical approaches to ELT (Waters, 2009), and native-speakerism more specifically (2007a, 2007b). It is important to note that Waters accepts the fact that 'native speakers' have been overrepresented in the field, and that the voices of 'non-native speakers' have been marginalised (Waters, 2007a, 2007b), but his interpretation of the reasons for

this are at odds in many respects with the views of writers such as Holliday (2005). He also feels that the seriousness of these issues is overplayed in order to advance one particular political agenda. In broad terms, Waters (2007a) attacks critical approaches in ELT as being propagandistic in nature and reflecting wider societal 'political correctness'. In Waters' (2007a) view, the promotion of what he considers politically correct approaches to ELT is potentially harmful, as it is not emancipatory in the way it claims to be, and in fact simply replaces one hegemony with another. In other words, Waters believes that both sides of the debate tend to minimise the arguments of the other by throwing out simple ad-hominems and weak justifications unsupported by evidence, accusing critical writers in the field of ELT of, ironically, a lack of criticality in the way they assess situations and apply their own views. An example of this is given by Waters (2007b) in an alternative account of a conference presentation reported by Holliday (2005) In terms of the culturally chauvanistic attitudes which attend native-speakerism, Waters (2007b) argues that Holliday (2005) is seeing racism where in fact, there is simply necessary, and necessarily reductive, stereotyping. What Holliday sees as reductionist, culturist assumptions that lead to harmful essentialism and stereotyping about groups of people, Waters sees as well-meaning attempts to help expatriate teachers and local personnel to understand each other and work together without inspiring cultural misunderstandings. In other words, Waters sees such perspectives as necessary, practical, and politically neutral, and feels that burdening such perspectives with ideological baggage is unnecessary and counterproductive. Waters (2007b) advocates the use of more modernist research approaches (questionnaires, etc.) to ascertain whether there is in fact any native-speakerist bias. A similar position is advocated by Moussa and Llorca (2008), who feel that a reliance on qualitative interpretation of data is harmful and allows problematic personal and political biases to creep in.

Holliday (2007) agrees with Waters (2007b) that the simplistic application of 'politically correct' attitudes is not a productive way to approach the issue of native-speakerism, but argues that Waters is engaging in a simplistic analysis himself, and denying the role of ideology in the construction of these perspectives. Where Waters (2007b) criticises Holliday (2005) for using what amounts to anecdotal evidence to prove his point in relation to the analysis of the conference presentation, Holliday (2007) points out that this was presented as a part of a 'thick description', not in isolation, and therefore cannot be presented as though it was the whole of the argument. Holliday (2007) further argues that the approach to research advocated by Waters (2007b) and Moussa and Llorca (2008) is problematic as it does not investigate these issues in a critical way and allows for surface-level interpretations to be made about very deeply-rooted issues which are both historically and socially situated. A similar point is made by Kabal (2009) who argues that the position adopted by Waters (2007b) is typical of conservatism within applied linguistics as a whole, and fails to recognise the historical and social underpinnings of dominant attitudes. Holliday (2007), Simpson (2009), and Kabel (2009) agree that the position advocated by Waters (2007a; 2007b) is one in which modernist, positivistic approaches are advocated in a way which allows the field of applied linguistics for language teaching to ignore its ideological presuppositions and the historical and social antecedents upon which they are based. If I may add my own voice to the chorus of dissent, I would suggest that the amount of evidence documented in chapter 4 of this thesis demonstrates that native-speakerism is deeply rooted in the ELT profession and is reproduced through the professional structures of the industry, through the professional literature (both in terms of teaching material and advice for teachers), and through advertising for language schools, and can be found settled in the attitudes of schools, teachers, and students. It seems to me that, taken together, this is very strong empirical evidence of native-speakerism at play, and that disputes over the precise way in which this data has been collected does indeed amount to a denial of ideology. I would also add



that Waters does little to address the colonial context from which the industry emerged, and the historical dominance of Western institutions and methods is similarly seen as of little importance in his writing. Surely, these facts influence attitudes within the industry, whether we realise it or not. The criticisms put forward by Waters, in light of the documented evidence provided, do not seem to be persuasive.

A more personal note of criticism comes from Breckenridge and Erling (2011) who quote Holliday (2005) describing 'native speakers' as "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; and sees itself as liberally humanist even when it blatantly reduces foreign colleagues and students to a problematic generalised Other" (p.29). Breckenridge and Erling (2011) argue that while Holliday is willing to grant 'non-native speakers' "multifaceted identities", he "essentializes and villainizes native speaker teachers" (p.83). This may seem to be the case from the quoted paragraph, but it is certainly not the thrust of Holliday's work. Indeed, even writers who disagree strongly with aspects of Holliday's conception of native-speakerism allow that "Holliday *does* recognise that not all English speaking Western colleagues are native speakerist" (Houghton & Rivers, 2013a, p. 4). It seems clear that the concept of native-speakerism includes a profession-wide cultural chauvanism as one of its driving forces, and that 'native speakers' are often (or even usually) complicit in this, however this is not to say that all individual 'native speakers' necessarily buy into this ideology, nor that this ideology is internalised only by 'native speakers'. It is in the nature of ideology that it is, to some extent at least, unconscious; as Eagleton (2007) writes "nobody would claim that their own thinking was ideological, just as nobody would habitually refer to themselves as Fatso" (p.2).

### **3.9. Conclusion**

Native-speakerism is an ideology that lies at the heart of the English language teaching industry, and that has been well documented by researchers in recent years. The effects of native-speakerism are numerous and may have extremely negative effects on the ways in which 'non-native speakers' are treated in comparison to 'native speakers'. In chapter one, I argued that the 'native speaker' is a model that is of little use in applied linguistics as it is simplistic, circular, and impossible to apply accurately to individuals in the real world. Native-speakerism is an ideology which has, at its core, the 'native-' 'non-native' distinction, and as such it necessarily starts from an erroneous and reductive set of assumptions about people. Built on top of this is a history of power relations, politics, 'Othering', and assumptions about authority, authenticity, and culture, which serve to marginalise English users from varied non-Western social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, while reifying the authority and authenticity of the language models, users, methods, and institutions of the West. In this chapter I have provided a definition of, and some of the theoretical background for native-speakerism. I have described what I mean when I refer to native-speakerism as an ideology, discussed how it is upheld by professional and academic discourses, and given a large amount of evidence of the negative ways in which it impacts the field of English language teaching.

As an ideology in which Western 'native speakers' are considered to be the ideal standard bearers and transmitters of a language, native-speakerism explicitly marginalises 'non-native speakers' and excludes them from the many dialogues and discussions within the field of ELT. Not only does this cause students and institutions to be wary and overcritical of teachers perceived to be 'non-native speakers', it also instils negative self-perceptions in the minds of these instructors.

An interesting development in the literature on 'native-speakerism' is the attempted redefinition of the term by a group of scholars working primarily in the Japanese context to also include

discrimination against 'native speakers' on the basis of stereotyping and Othering which springs from the underlying ideology. The arguments offered by these scholars are important, and ought to be included as a part of the definition of 'native-speakerism', but I argue that the redefinition proposed here minimises (unintentionally, it must be presumed) the larger power structures which lie at the heart of the ELT industry. As such, I treat the ideas underlying this redefinition of the concept as a modification of the original concept, incorporating them into the broader political sweep of Holliday's (2005) original conception.

Finally, I have critically evaluated some of the criticisms that have been made of the concept; concluding that while some good points are raised in opposition, the concept is strong enough and well evidenced enough to withstand these criticisms. It is clear from the research reviewed and documented in this chapter that the ideology of native-speakerism has far-reaching and damaging consequences for both 'native-' 'non-native' speaker teachers in ELT, and can be seen in the attitudes, conditions, and materials produced by the industry. In the next chapter I will move on to define and explain the concept of “the ‘native speaker’ frame”, which is the central theoretical concept of this thesis.

## **4. The ‘native speaker’ frame**

### **4.1. Introduction**

As I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, the term ‘native-speakerism’ has undergone a series of quite radical changes since its initial coinage. Alongside Holliday’s (2005) original definition, the term has seen both a shift in its popular usage to refer only to explicit discrimination against ‘non-native speakers’ (which I termed ‘overt native-speakerism’ in the previous chapter), and also a purposeful redefinition to refer to any discrimination against language teachers on the basis of their ‘native’ or ‘non-native’ speaker positioning (Houghton & Rivers, 2013a). I have also explained my disagreement with these changes as I believe they serve to undermine the broader political implications and manifestations of native-speakerism in ELT, and I will expand on these ideas in this chapter. My main aim in this chapter is to define and describe the concept of “the ‘native speaker’ frame”, which is the central idea at the core of this thesis. In doing this, I will draw direct comparisons with the notion of “the white racial frame” in the study of systemic racism, as I believe that systemic racism and native-speakerism are closely analogous, and that there are many clear points of comparison between the two. I will then examine the relationship between this concept and dominant professional discourses in ELT. Finally, I will tie these points together and provide a full definition of the ‘native speaker’ frame, which will serve as the analytical framework on which this thesis is based.

### **4.2. Systemic racism and the white racial frame**

Before turning to the ‘native speaker’ frame, it is necessary to explore its analog in the social science theory of systemic racism - the “white racial frame”. Systemic racism can be described as “the manifestation of historically developed, societally embedded ways of white Eurocentric

thinking, of the organization of social groups according to a racial hierarchy separating whites and people of color, and of an array of racially oppressive institutions devised by whites that targets people of color” (Elias & Feagin, 2016, p. 6). In other words, systemic racism is historically rooted, and resides in societal power relations resulting in discriminatory acts of racism and expressions of racist sentiment such as “police shootings of unarmed black men, women, and children; widespread anti-immigrant discrimination; and major mismanagement of Native American affairs” (Elias & Feagin, 2016, p. 281). Systemic racism is an important theory, because as Feagin (2013) notes, there has been increased emphasis in the United States and other Western nations on these societies as being “post-racial”, due to visible indicators of racial equality such as the election of Barack Obama. However, Elias and Feagin (2016) argue that this does not mean racism has disappeared, and instead believe that social science must acknowledge more covert forms of racism such as those which manifest on the level of societal institutions. As Bonilla-Silva (2003) notes “nowadays, except for members of white supremacist organisations, few in the United States claim to be racist” (p.1), and many people would prefer to do away with the concept of race altogether. However, this has led to a situation of “color-blind racism”, in which there are few avowed racists in society, but in which racism persists through “frames” including “abstract liberalism”, “cultural racism”, and “minimization of racism” (Bonilla-Silva, 2003, p. 47). In support of this, Better (2008) provides evidence of institutional racism at work in areas such as the de facto segregation of schools in the United States, and discourses which explain away disparity between racial groups as due to cultural failings on the part of the group in question. Writers such as Elias and Feagin (2016), Better (2008), and Bonilla-Silva (2003) argue that the persistence of racism in society can be laid at the door of systemic racism. Rather than racism being a social aberration that must be excised from the body of American society, Feagin (2013) argues that it is a foundational concept on which American society is based, and is spread throughout the structures and institutions of this society.

While systemic racism is the overarching theory which explains contemporary racial inequality in the US, one concept plays a key role in creating and upholding this racism; the “white racial frame”. The concept of “frame” is one which is used often in the cognitive and social sciences to refer to the idea that individual minds, social histories, and collective memories are implanted with particular ways of viewing and thinking about the world which “helps people make sense of everyday situations” (Feagin, 2013, p. 9). The concept of framing in social science was introduced by Goffman (1974), who refers to frames as “schemata of interpretation” (p.21), and argues that people’s interpretations of the world are filtered through whatever their primary framework is. The white racial frame is “an overarching white worldview that encompasses a broad and persisting set of racial stereotypes, prejudices, ideologies, images, interpretations and narratives, emotions, and reactions to language accents, as well as racialized inclinations to discriminate” (Feagin, 2013, p. 3). In other words, the white racial frame presents a particular white Eurocentric view of the world and involves “the explanation and construction of reality from the perspective of dominant whites...that develops and reinforces ideas, actions, networks, institutions, and social structures according to the views and practical racial-group interests of white people” (Elias & Feagin, 2016, p. 7). The white racial frame is, on this view, a lens through which people view and interpret society, allowing racism to persist through assumptions which seem racially neutral, despite being contingent on this white racial framing. This can be seen in discourses such as the idea of “cultural deficiency”, in which the relative lack of success of particular social or ethnic groups is blamed on the “attitudes and values” of the group in question, “rather than social structure” (Better, 2008, p. 8).

In summary, the white racial frame is a way of seeing and interpreting the world through a white Eurocentric lens, which supports systemic racism by allowing racially loaded assumptions and discourses about society to be seen as commonsensical, thus perpetuating racist systems,

institutions, and interpretations.

### **4.3. The ‘native speaker’ frame**

I believe that systemic racism is very closely analogous with native-speakerism in ELT. Both are systemic and foundational concepts which underlie all aspects of the society they inhabit. As documented in the previous chapter, evidence exists to show that native-speakerism lies at the core of ELT practice, influencing everything from the explicitly discriminatory hiring of teachers, to the assumptions of correct pedagogy as seen to be embodied in the ‘native speaker’ and the institutions of the West. As with so-called “color-blind racism” (Bonilla-Silva, 2003), it has become something of a taboo in recent years to be explicitly native-speakerist in ELT. The campaigning of pressure groups has led to explicit discrimination being de-emphasised, and politically correct phrasing such as “native-like proficiency” replacing more overtly discriminatory terms in job advertisements. In other words, ‘overt native-speakerism’, as defined in section 3.7.1, is very much like explicit racism; increasingly seen as socially unacceptable and consequently becoming less visible. However, this does not mean native-speakerism has disappeared. Rather, I believe native-speakerism functions much like systemic racism, at the level of assumptions and framing which serve to perpetuate native-speakerist ideology without anyone being explicitly native-speakerist in their actions.

This is supported by what I term “the ‘native speaker’ frame”. The ‘native speaker’ frame is intended to be analogous with the white racial frame, and refers to the aspects of the ideology of native-speakerism which can be found embedded in the structures, viewpoints, and assumptions that underlie global English language education. In other words, I wish to argue that the ELT industry operates with a perspective on the world in which Western ‘native’-normativity is assumed, and through which educational beliefs and representations of other cultures and

education systems are filtered. The ‘native speaker’ frame can be contrasted with what Mahboob (2010) calls “the NNEST lens”, which is defined as “a lens of multilingualism, multinationalism, and multiculturalism through which NNESTs – as classroom practitioners, researchers, and teacher educators – take diversity as a starting point” (p.1). The ‘native speaker’ frame instead has a monolingual and monocultural approach to language teaching, examples of which may include assumptions that Western approaches to language education are superior to local educational technology or in some other way normative (Holliday, 2005; Widin, 2010), thus implicitly devaluing and denying the contributions and traditions of other cultures and educational systems. Other examples may include the perceived superiority of ‘native speaker’ teachers (D. J. Rivers & Ross, 2013) or the association of “correct” English with Western varieties of the language (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005b; Loveday, 1996; Matsuda, 2002; Morrow, 2004; Saito, 2012). As with the white racial frame, the ‘native speaker’ frame is based on the perpetuation and acceptance of discourses within ELT which seem to be neutral or commonsensical, but which I will argue are in fact culturally and ideologically loaded, and based on unacknowledged or unrecognized prejudice. I believe the ‘native speaker’ frame is a powerful concept that can be used to understand how the ideology of native-speakerism still exists and operates in ELT despite explicit expressions of overt native-speakerism declining in the face of increased challenges. In other words, the ideology of native-speakerism lies not only in the explicitly discriminatory language or actions of members of the ELT industry, but rather in the acceptance and perpetuation of a Western ‘native speaker’ worldview which assumes the superiority and normativity of Western educational technology and views the rest of the world from a viewpoint of educational and cultural deficiency.

Of course, the analogy between systemic racism and native-speakerism is not perfect. Discussions and studies of systemic racism have focused mainly on the United States, while conversely ELT is a global enterprise. However, I believe that they are closely allied enough for the comparison to be



a strong and revealing one. Systemic racism is based on a history of colonialism and empire (Elias & Feagin, 2016), and native-speakerism can also be traced back to colonial roots (Pennycook, 1998) and the workings of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992). Systemic racism is, on this historical basis, built into the structures and institutions of society, and so is native-speakerism built into the structures and institutions of ELT (Holliday, 2005). While systemic racism and native-speakerism are contextually, geographically, and historically distinct from one another, their similar (and to some extent shared) historical roots and modes of operation make the analogy from one to the other very appropriate. Indeed, I believe an argument could be made that native-speakerism is simply the expression of systemic racism in one very narrow professional field. See Figure 2 for a direct comparison between the concepts informing both systemic racism and native-speakerism.

Concepts in systemic racism theory	Concepts in native-speakerism theory
<b>Explicit racism</b> – outward expressions of racial prejudice or contempt	<b>Overt native-speakerism</b> – outward expressions of prejudice or discrimination against ‘non-native speakers’
<b>Systemic racism</b> – historically rooted racist thought and attitudes that lie at the heart of social structures and institutions	<b>Native-speakerism</b> – historically rooted attitudes that lie at the heart of ELT theory and practice
<b>The white racial frame</b> – a way of seeing and interpreting the world through a white Eurocentric lens	<b>The ‘native speaker’ frame</b> – a way of seeing and interpreting the world through a Western ‘native speaker’ lens.

**Figure 2: Conceptual comparison of systemic racism and native-speakerism**

In this thesis I intend to show how native-speakerist framing in ELT continues to operate, even in a program which was free from overt or explicit native-speakerism. It will be necessary, before doing this, to examine some of the key professional discourses which help to support the ‘native speaker’ frame in ELT.

#### **4.4. Resistance: Reframing, counter-framing, and frame transformation**

Earlier in this thesis I examined theoretical approaches to cultural resistance, and particularly in terms of resistance to native-speakerism in ELT. As resistance will be a major topic in later stages of this thesis, it is necessary to discuss the ways in which resistance manifests in the view of frame analysis theory. There are three different perspectives on this; ‘reframing’, ‘counter-framing’, and ‘frame transformation’, each of which has a slightly distinct focus and process of enactment. I will describe each of these in turn and explain how I see resistance to the dominant ‘native speaker’ framing being manifested in this project.

Feagin (2013) argues that in order to challenge and resist dominant framing it is necessary for subordinate groups to engage in a process of conscious “deframing”, in which a person intentionally deconstructs a frame in order to critically examine its composite elements. In so doing, a person is able to “reframe” a concept; that is to use their critical analysis to construct a new frame through which the concept can be understood (p.204).

When reframing is carried out on a large enough scale, it can be termed “counter-framing”. This is when a group creates and uses a new frame as a form of conscious cultural resistance to an established frame. Feagin (2013) explores how resistance to the White racial frame in America has taken the form of “anti-racist counter frames” and “home-culture frames” (p.166). The first of these involves racially oppressed groups creating tool kits and strategies that allow them to

confront and challenge White racial framing, while the second involves employing aspects of the home culture (that is, the culture most strongly connected to the ethnic background of the group) to build an individual identity with different values and focuses. These two forms of counter-framing are similar to the idea that cultural resistance involves groups using their subaltern voices in order to challenge the dominant voices of those in power (Canagarajah, 1999b).

What reframing and counter-framing both have in common is the notion that these actions are conscious and carried out due to an awareness of either injustice or a wish to challenge a social order. This conscious awareness is what separates these two forms of resistance from “frame transformation”. Frame transformation refers to a largely unconscious process of resistance which comes about when people reach an understanding that the situation they find themselves in “may not resonate with, and on occasion may even appear antithetical to, conventional lifestyles or rituals and extant interpretive frames” (Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986, p. 473). This is a less conscious form of resistance, and may even have unintended effects, so in addition to the thing people are (unintentionally) resisting being changed as a result of frame transformation, other things may be changed as well. Frame transformation will play an important role in this this thesis, as I document in chapter 8 how DACP instructors underwent personal frame transformations through acts of resistance, which they then used to influence and transform the frame of the DACP itself, moving it away from some of its native-speakerist practices and attitudes. DACP instructors were not doing this intentionally in my view; rather they were acting against professional restraints placed on them through the DACP discourse of professionalism (which will be focused on more in later chapters), a resistance which had the unintended consequence of challenging and disrupting the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program in a few specific ways. This brings us on to the issue of the ‘native speaker’ frame in relation to professional discourses.

#### **4.5. The 'native speaker' frame and professional discourses**

I have argued that native-speakerism is an ideology constructed from and perpetuated by the 'native speaker' frame, which manifests in a number of discourses in the field of ELT. One discourse (or, perhaps, set of discourses) which is most representative of this is that of 'professionalism'. Professionalism is often considered a positive or at least neutral part of global ELT in that it is thought to dictate standards of teaching quality, textbook and materials design, and overall standards of teacher development and behaviour. However, I will argue that discourses of professionalism are actually strongly complicit in promoting and upholding the ideology of native-speakerism in ELT by perpetuating the 'native speaker' frame. In this section I will discuss the positioning of ELT as a profession, describe how ideas of professionalism function as discourses, the role they play in ELT, and the close relationships they have with native-speakerism.

##### **4.5.1. 'Professional discourses' vs. 'discourses of professionalism'**

Before continuing with this chapter it will be necessary to briefly discuss the distinction I would like to draw between 'professional discourses' and 'discourses of professionalism' in ELT. Professional discourses have been part of the concept of native-speakerism since its inception. Holliday (2005) in his discussion of professional beliefs and 'icons' in ELT describes some of these discourses in great detail, and I will return to them later in this chapter. I define 'professional discourses' as those which take place within the field of ELT between practitioners, academics, and writers, readers, and students. These discourses serve to create the key social entities (such as the 'four skills'), and social relations ('learner-centeredness', for example) which define practice in ELT. 'Discourses of professionalism', on the other hand, are, in my view, a specific subset of professional discourses, which are concerned with what it means for a practitioner, an institution, or indeed a field to be 'professional'. This includes discussions of training and qualifications,

accepted bodies of knowledge, and standards of practice. I will describe these in more detail later, but it is important to draw a distinction between these two, as in this thesis discourses of professionalism are much more prominent and relevant to the discussion than professional discourses in general, though both will be discussed.

#### **4.5.2. Teacher professionalism**

'Professionalism' is a term used differently in different settings, and even within the domain of education there are several perspectives on what it means to be a 'professional'. Evetts (2003), reviewing the ways that professionalism has been theorized in the social sciences, groups conceptions of professionalism into two categories: 1) professionalism as a normative value system, and 2) professionalism as a controlling ideology. As a value system, professionalism is seen optimistically as something which makes "positive contributions...to a normative social order" due to the fact that "professionalism in occupations and professions implies an importance of trust in economic relations in modern societies with an advanced division of labour" (Evetts, 2003, pp. 399–400). When seen as a controlling ideology, professionalism is regarded as a "hegemonic belief system and mechanism of social control for 'professional' workers" (Evetts, 2003, p. 399). These two discourses about the nature of professionalism are also played out in discussions of educational professionalism. Some authors see professionalism in education as an ideology exerting occupational control over teachers (Stevenson, Carter, & Passy, 2007) while others are more positive, arguing that professionalism is simply a way of identifying and achieving the best standards for teaching (Phelps, 2006). Demirkasımoğlu (2010) in a historical review, argues that "the dominant discourses in the field of education indicate that teacher professionalism is associated with improving the quality and standards of teachers' works and their public image", but argues that "the meanings attributed to teacher professionalism and the status of teaching have a

dynamic characteristic" (p.2050), and are constructed and understood due to educational and social pressures and beliefs, as well as ideological ideas of what constitutes best practice. In Demirkasımoğlu's view, we cannot understand 'professionalism' without understanding the educational settings in which it arises and is constructed. In other words, for the purposes of this project it is important to place the concept of professionalism within the context of ELT.

#### **4.5.3. ELT as a profession.**

The concept of professionalism is a difficult one to pin down, and there is much debate as to whether language teaching should rightly fall under the heading of a 'profession' or an 'industry'. The argument has largely centered on what exactly constitutes a profession. In his 1999 president's address for the TESOL International Association, Nunan (1999a, 1999b) stated that for ELT to call itself a profession it must have:

- specialised education, advanced training, and regulated certification
- an agreed theoretical and empirical base for practice
- consistent standards of practice and teacher assessment
- advocacy through professional bodies (adapted from Lorimer & Schulte, 2012)

Nunan argued that ELT (at the time of his address) fared quite weakly in all of these categories and so could not legitimately call itself a profession without addressing its shortcomings in these areas, and as Long (2015) notes, little has changed in recent years to unite the global field of ELT around a particular set of qualifications, standards, or principles (p.5). However, efforts have been made for many years to make ELT more professional in each of the four ways outlined above. I will briefly examine the ways in which this has been attempted.

### *Specialised education, advanced training, and regulated certifications*

In terms of training, many different options are now available for people wishing to move into English language teaching. In the UK and Europe, many people opt for short pre-service courses such as the Cambridge ESOL CELTA or the Trinity College London CertTESOL. These courses are quite similar, lasting for four weeks in which teachers are trained intensively in basic classroom management, tightly controlled communicative teaching approaches such as PPP (present, practice, produce) and TTT (test, teach, test), basic phonology, structure drills, and so on. Teachers will then usually teach for a few years before studying a more advanced training course such as the Cambridge Delta or the Trinity College London DipTESOL, which are higher-level qualifications requiring substantial amounts of metalinguistic awareness and teaching skill in the classroom (Hawkey & Milanovic, 2013). This can then be followed by a more theoretical Master's degree in applied linguistics or TESOL (or some combination of the two). In North America it is common for people to do a pre-service Master's degree (often with more of a focus on teaching practice than their European postgraduate counterparts) and then enter the field as teachers. In other parts of the world, teachers may be required to study a specialised degree in education in order to teach English in their own mainstream education system. In other words, advanced training and specialised education is available in the field of ELT, however as Long (2015) argues, these courses are not standardised, and prospective teachers may emerge from their courses having studied wildly different theories and techniques to one another (p.5) (see also Govardhan, Nayar, & Sheorey, 1999). In my own master's degree in applied linguistics I mainly studied world Englishes and sociolinguistics, while several of my co-workers spent their entire postgraduate studies learning about theories and applications of second language acquisition (SLA). While initial European ESOL training is largely standardised (due to the dominance of the Cambridge and Trinity College

London certificate and diploma courses, see McBeath, 2016), the field worldwide is not unified and the training teachers receive is inconsistent. This is likely due in part to the fact that research does not present a unified picture about many aspects of ELT.

*An agreed theoretical and empirical base for practice*

As Long (2015) notes, in the field of ELT "there is no agreed-upon common body of knowledge of which all practitioners should demonstrate mastery, and no common examinations required of would-be practitioners" (p.5). Although research results are consistent in some areas of SLA, for example in terms of interlanguage development (Jordan, 2004), and theories of how second languages are acquired grow more robust all the time, this research has rarely translated into truly defensible generalizable theories of classroom practice. Scholars are divided over such key issues as whether language teaching should take a synthetic or analytic approach, whether comprehensible input is sufficient for acquisition, what the role is of focus on form (or forms), and so on (Long, 2015). Indeed, what SLA research has seemed to consistently do well is demonstrate that accepted and prescribed classroom practices are often at best ineffective, and occasionally even counterproductive (Brown & Larson-Hall, 2012; Folse, 2004). On top of this, even those such as Long (2015) who argue for one particular approach (in his case a particular form of task-based language teaching) based on the results of empirical evidence are quick to admit that this is not a one-size-fits-all solution, and the success of such approaches still lies in the suitability of tasks to the particular needs of groups of students and local educational practices, as well of the acceptance of a particular set of philosophical and moral principles (pp.63-83). In other words, while we know an awful lot about how people learn second languages (though certainly not to the extent of having a complete and unified theory), teachers are left with very little guidance about how this can best



translate into classroom practice, despite the efforts of course book writers and publishers, and the standards adopted by influential organisations such as Cambridge ESOL.

#### *Consistent standards of practice and teacher assessment*

With no strong theoretical base guiding principles of best classroom practice, it is difficult to see how there could be consistent standards of practice and teacher assessment in ELT, and this in turn makes it particularly surprising that at least in some areas, such standards are employed. Teachers studying for the certificate and diploma programs offered by Cambridge ESOL and Trinity College London must pass required amounts of assessed teaching practice with rather strict guidelines, including submitting lesson plans with timed stages and objectives decided in advance (see the online syllabi for each of these courses). Although these courses have evolved to include things such as experimental practice and aims that are beyond the grammatical or lexical, they still have a rather prescriptive way of assessing teaching that lends itself to structurally-based classes embedded within a synthetic syllabus. The attempts by organisations and professional bodies to create a set of standards for teaching practice and teacher assessment are, in other words, guilty of promoting one theoretically-based paradigm of language instruction over other possible alternatives. As Mcbeath (2016) puts it “economic interests have reduced [the CELTA] to a one-month, full-time training course which offers a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach” that fails to acknowledge the differences in teachers’ specific contexts” and “offers a primarily BANA, if not Eurocentric, view of what constitutes ‘good teaching’” (p.249) and this becomes even more problematic when these standards are exported to other teaching environments overseas (Holliday, 1994a).

Holliday (1994a) notes how conflicts can be caused between external bodies and local teachers through the insensitive top-down imposition of foreign educational 'technology' into different local

settings. While we might find this binary contextual dichotomy problematic (as Holliday, interviewed in Lowe et al., 2015, now admits), it is still the case that language teaching approaches which have been deemed 'effective' by Western institutions, despite being based on shaky theoretical foundations, are exported into diverse educational settings with often little regard for local knowledge or expertise - a process that is regularly carried out in the name of professionalism. Canagarajah (2012) gives an example of this, explaining how after receiving his teaching qualifications in Sri Lanka, he was assessed by a group of outside experts who felt his teaching was substandard due to the students making extensive use of their L1, and the tasks and activities employed not being deemed suitably communicative. In other words, the professional standards that were used to assess his lesson were exported from the West with little sensitivity to the skills and knowledge of the local teachers. The fact that outside bodies were brought in to assess lessons in Sri Lankan classrooms serves to underline the ways in which such ideas of professionalism privilege the perspectives of the Western ELT establishment. It is notable that Canagarajah's reaction to this was "to travel to what appeared to me then as the center of TESOL expertise—a U.S. university—to become professionalized" (p.266), clearly associating training in the West with professional standards. This backs up Mcbeath's (2016) assessment of the CELTA as "appear[ing] to devalue the experience and expertise of non-native English speakers" (p.249).

#### *Advocacy through professional bodies*

Professional bodies have existed within ELT in many countries for a long time, such as IATEFL in the UK, TESOL in the US, and JALT and JACET in Japan. These bodies are prominent and play an important role in codifying the workings of ELT, but they are not strong advocacy groups for a number of reasons. Firstly, they do not have the power to regulate the field globally, and secondly much language teaching takes place in private schools, an industry which is insulated from the

dictates of disparate and unrelated professional organisations. While these organisations may offer endorsements or accreditation to courses or schools, they do not have the necessary power to lobby or advocate for large-scale change or development in the field.

ELT is not, by the standards described here, and in the views of many authors, a profession. However, as Canagarajah (2016) notes, within the TESOL and ELT community "we see a preoccupation with taking stock of...its professional status" (p.1), and there are many who advocate ways in which the field could become more professional (see Alatis, 2005; Kim, Micek, & Grigsby, 2013 for examples). This has led to what I described earlier as 'discourses of professionalism' in ELT, in which particular standards are promoted and principles of best practice are sought.

#### **4.5.4. Discourses of professionalism and native-speakerism**

In mainstream education (i.e. that which takes place within state schooling), professionalism is often identified with the development and achievement of standards of best practice (Demirkasimoğlu, 2010), and as such, discourses of professionalism have arisen around this central conceit, including in the specific area of ELT. These discourses concern what it means for an individual to be a 'professional' teacher, or for a school or program to operate in a 'professional' way. The three key points which underlie discourses of professionalism, as demonstrated in the preceding sections, are (1) pre-service training and qualifications, (2) performance in the classroom and teaching approach, and (3) modes of continuing professional development. I will discuss each of these points in turn and explain how in the field of ELT they serve to uphold native-speakerism.

##### *Pre-service training and qualifications*

In ELT, training courses are considered to be an important part of the process of becoming a

professional teacher. Crandall (1996) argues that TESOL masters programs should have certain essential elements, such as "opportunities to develop a deep understanding of the theories behind various approaches to language teaching", "opportunities to construct knowledge and develop an understanding of how to apply that knowledge to the processes of learning and teaching", and "opportunities to evaluate curriculum and materials" (pp.11-12), a view which carries with that of other authors such as Alatis (2005). In other words, as noted earlier, despite there not being a standardised body of knowledge taught to the majority of language teachers (Govardhan et al., 1999; Long, 2015), there are certain things that a teacher is expected to gain a knowledge of through their training courses, and as such their understanding of the process of teaching and learning will be to an extent mediated by their professional training. Kubota (2002a) argues that "the field's knowledge of culture as well as language acquisition, teaching, and learning, is much more than a constellation of numerous random individual views. Rather, it is discursively structured in a more or less consistent way, producing, sustaining, or resisting certain relations of power" (p.85). I argue that in both pre-service and in-service training courses, these views of culture, teaching, and learning are essentially native-speakerist, relying as they do on simplistic representations of culture (Armenta & Holliday, 2015; Canagarajah, 1999b; Susser, 1998), and beliefs and constructs connected to teaching and learning that have been constructed in the West, and that represent Western educational methods as superior to those in other countries (Aboshiha, 2015; Holliday, 2005; Lowe & Pinner, 2016).

Canagarajah (2016) takes a somewhat different position, arguing that "the social orientation to knowledge and learning has motivated significant changes in teacher development" so that now "professionalization [i]s shaped by values and beliefs of the teachers, their pedagogical influences from society and classrooms, and their evolving and desired professional identities" (p.17). While Canagarajah is correct that writing on these points has increased substantially (the article is a review

of *TESOL Quarterly* literature), I would contend that these are largely academic discourses which are not central to many training programs. In fact, it seems that beyond master's degrees these ideas are little discussed, if at all. Certificate and diploma programs rarely cover such points, and instead encourage teachers to develop a fairly limited repertoire of pedagogical skills based around nominally communicative approaches, and even within the area of master's degrees, whether or not these particular approaches to development will take place varies from institution to institution, and will often be left up to the choices of the individual student teachers (Govardhan et al., 1999). Practice lags behind theory in this regard.

In other words, the training offered on these courses is largely based on Western-produced and -mediated knowledge and research, and the discourses of professionalism within ELT encourage teachers to seek this training, thus providing economic capital to these Western institutions due to their desire for the cultural capital thought to be embodied by these institutions (Lowe & Pinner, 2016). This upholds both the dominance of Western knowledge in ELT, and the hegemony of Western teaching approaches.

#### *Performance in the classroom and teaching approach*

Guy Cook (interviewed in De Bot, 2015), when asked about the impact of applied linguistic research on English language teaching, argues that contrary to popular belief (and contrary to the views of many contributors to de Bot's book), "many movements, such as SLA (second language acquisition), TBLT (task-based language teaching), have done a great deal of harm, by promoting anglo-centric native-speaker models to the detriment of more inclusive and bilingual approaches" (p.123). Cook's words point towards the fact that things which are seen as professional advances in the field of ELT often originate in the West and are exported to other educational settings at the expense of local technology. Indeed, discourses of professionalism in ELT are presented as neutral

and non-ideological, and yet simultaneously are based on and mediated by knowledge, principles, and techniques created by the Western ELT establishment. This position is argued strongly by Phillipson (2013), who claims that TESOL and applied linguistics try to distance themselves from any overarching political or economic agendas, despite propagating educational fallacies and promoting knowledge and concepts created by Western researchers and exported to other countries.

Holliday (2005) takes a more subtle approach, arguing that rather than a deliberate attempt to uphold Western power, discourses of professionalism in ELT are driven more by the professional reverence of 'icons'. While Holliday's discussion is more concerned with professional discourses than specifically discourses of professionalism, in this case the one feeds into the other. Holliday argues that there are a number of "major icons" of native-speakerist teaching methodology, including "the 'four skills', close monitoring, staged teaching, and oral elicitation" (p.39) which are direct descendants from the behaviourist audiolingual teaching approach of the mid-1970's.<sup>1</sup> While Holliday notes that individuals and groups mediate their Western-gained knowledge through local

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<sup>1</sup> Holliday is slightly incorrect in conflating audiolingualism and behaviourism, as the chronology of these two ideas does not quite add up. The audiolingual approach is said by some writers to be variously traceable back to the structural method (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004), the 'army method' of the 1940s (Hall, 2011), or even as far back as the 1920s or 30s (Coady & Huckin, 1997). In addition, the major works (by Fries, Lado, etc.) on which audiolingualism was purportedly based make no mention of behaviourism (Mayne, 2015), which itself was not applied to language until Skinner's *Verbal Behaviour* (Skinner, 1957), and was in fact not attributed as a source for audiolingualism until the work of Rivers (1964). However, this is a terminological point, and the fact that audiolingualism was not explicitly based on behaviourism does not change the fact that it was essentially behaviouristic in nature.

practices and experiences, there are ideological 'cultural icons' which lie behind accepted classroom practice in TESOL, such as the 'four skills', oral expression, staged learning, and so on. Indeed, Holliday argues that "the cultural icons of a profession are...likely to be aspects and principles of practice" (p.41). Holliday notes that many features of audiolingualism have survived into modern communicative language teaching either unchanged (as in the case of elicitation, 'oral first' teaching, classroom layout, etc.) or with only minor changes (the 'structures' of audiolingualism give ground to 'functions', 'notions', and 'concepts'), and this results in much professional teaching methodology still being based on ideas such as 'learner training' and 'corrective surveillance' in monitoring. In short, Cook's observation is largely correct - even modern, 'enlightened', post-method communicative approaches are still inextricably tied to theories and ideas developed in the West, and require learners to be 'trained' in the correct way of learning. This is what Freire (2013) calls "assistencialism" - teachers, with a particular (and universally well-meaning) agenda concerning learning or issues in society, step in to solve problems on behalf of students, as if the students themselves were incapable of carrying out this action. This is, despite its good intentions, culturally chauvanistic. As Long (2015) argues, "problem-solving can lead to outsiders imposing solutions in the name of learner-centeredness" (p.74).

Again, we see here a professional discourse based on research and theories created in the West being exported in the form of Western methods and approaches to teaching. Within these methods it is possible to find both native-speakerism and associated culturist ideas about the 'deficiency' of teaching and learning styles of diverse cultures being propagated, and the training and monitoring of learners the common solution.

*Continuing professional development*

While continuing professional development (CPD) itself is no bad thing, the methods by which it is achieved in ELT are, I believe, largely native-speakerist. CPD can take the form of postgraduate study, reflective practice, discussion groups, observations from trainers or managers, and peer observations. While some of these are not necessarily native-speakerist (see Farrell, 2015, who attempts to help teachers achieve the classroom they want through reflective practice without mandating any particular approaches to teaching and learning), many of them are. As already noted, ELT postgraduate study is problematic in that it often reinforces native-speakerist ideas of best practice. Observations are often conducted with the intent of 'correcting' deviant teaching approaches (deviant, that is, from prescribed norms), and discussion groups often center on discussion of articles and research, which, as Cook (interviewed in De Bot, 2015) notes, promote Anglo-centric 'native speaker' models. While CPD can be an important part of a teacher's professional life, the ways in which it is usually carried out, due to discourses of professionalism, all too often serve to propagate or strengthen native-speakerist beliefs, positions, and approaches to classroom teaching, management, and to teacher development. CPD can, of course, also be used to challenge native-speakerism, and that will be the topic of chapter 8 in this thesis.

#### **4.6. Discourses of professionalism and the 'native speaker' frame**

I have defined the term 'discourses of professionalism' and explained how these discourses are complicit in perpetuating native-speakerist ideology. However, I have yet to explain exactly how they do this, and with this in mind I return to the concept of the 'native speaker' frame.

I argued earlier in this chapter that the 'native speaker' frame is a kind of perceptual filter through which experiences are processed and organized. The White racial frame consists of discourses in society which frame phenomena in such a way as to perpetuate racism without anyone actually considering themselves to be racist. These discourses are normalized and built into the fabric of



society. As Feagin (2013) notes, “children initially learn, and adults continue to learn, major aspects of the dominant frame by means of everyday socialization processes and regular interactions with others” (p.91). In ELT, this socialization into ‘native speaker’ framing can be seen to take place in initial teacher training, whether it be certificate or postgraduate level, where particular discourses of professionalism (and of course other forms of professional discourse), particularly those which frame ELT in euro- or Amero-centric ways, are encountered and absorbed by teachers (see Anderson, 2015; Liu, 1998; McBeath, 2016). These are then further ingrained and reinforced through the discourses which are prevalent among teachers and in educational institutions, as documented in this chapter, and in much of the research on native-speakerism. In other words, the discourses of professionalism which run through the training of teachers and which are commonplace in the work environment of language teachers are complicit in shaping and upholding the ‘native speaker’ framing of the ELT industry.

#### **4.7. Conclusion**

In this chapter I have identified the key concept of the ‘native speaker’ frame with reference to the white racial frame, a supporting concept in systemic racism theory. I have further suggested that the ‘native speaker’ frame, and thus native-speakerism itself, is upheld, promoted, and maintained in large part by discourses of professionalism in ELT, and explained how this has led to a global situation in which Western professional ideals and educational technology are exported into other environments with the assumption from many parties that they are naturally superior to local knowledge and 'technology', leading to numerous detrimental effects. In part, this is because the desire to turn English language teaching into a 'respectable' professional activity has led to the construction of discourses about what constitutes best practice in teaching based on the construction of an agreed-upon knowledge base, which then underlies teacher training courses

(though not in a completely standardized way, especially when it comes to Master's programs), approaches to teaching, and modes of professional development. This is problematic because the evidence supporting these approaches is disputed, and because the construction of professional notions of 'best practice' in a global field such as ELT runs the risk of marginalizing those who do not follow these principles.

These discourses of professionalism reify Western approaches to ELT, thus imbuing Western ELT establishments with cultural capital. This makes the knowledge and skills taught in Western teacher training courses desirable to teachers, which then feeds into the teaching approaches that are considered appropriate. Aboshiha (2015) quotes an interviewee expressing this very view: "native speaker teachers tend to have a different kind of methodology where they are more encouraging, not creating anxiety, actually lowering anxiety" (p.45). While this comment is talking about 'native speaker' teachers, we can assume that the methodology mentioned is related to training rather than pure speakerhood (though these are clearly related, at least at the level of discourse), and demonstrates how Western teaching approaches and the training which underlies them are often considered superior by many English language teachers compared to local knowledge and skills. Here we clearly see a discourse of professionalism underlying the culturally chauvinistic attitudes which are a key constituent of the 'native speaker' frame, and thus serve to uphold native-speakerism in ELT.

#### **4.8. Emergence of the framework**

Before presenting the analytical framework in this thesis in detail, I feel it is important to discuss how this framework developed over the course of my research. There is a danger that, in presenting the framework and then providing an analysis of the data, I may give the impression that the framework was in place before conducting the analysis. As I note in Chapter 5, my research took a

grounded theory approach, with there being a continual correspondence between the data I was collecting and my developing framework. At the outset of my project I began, as already noted, with a naïve conception of native-speakerism as simply being discrimination against teachers, which I have described as ‘overt native-speakerism’. During my research however, I started to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of native-speakerism through consideration and analysis of my data. One incident which helped to challenge my thinking was when a teacher complained between lessons that one big problem with DACP classes was "to get them [students] to have ideas in the first place" (as I discuss in section 7.2.3). This dismissive statement, and other similar views expressed by instructors on the course, led me to question some of the assumptions which lay behind the educational technology used on the program. I began to detect sentiments which appeared to me culturally chauvinistic, and which seemed to cast Japan and Japanese students in a negative light; as deficient, passive and uncritical. This further seemed to chime with issues in the literature I was reading, including closer readings of Holliday (2005), work on orientalism (Susser, 1998), and the discursive construction of Japanese culture in English language teaching (Kubota, 1999).

I began to connect this with notions of professionalism on the program, particularly as this appeared to be to be a prominent discourse among the teachers, with professionalism being seen as a point of pride. However this seemed to me to come at the cost of teacher autonomy, with the philosophy and practices of the course strictly promoted and strongly reinforced, as I describe in section 7.3. This led me to think that it may have been through these practices that the native-speakerist assumptions at the heart of the course became normalized, which informed the idea of the ‘native speaker’ frame described in this chapter.

For the majority of this project I used the term “embedded native-speakerism” to describe the phenomenon under investigation, however it was pointed out to me by my supervisors that this

term did not adequately describe what I intended it to. They further questioned whether its social science analog “embedded racism” (Arudō, 2015) did not in fact contain a somewhat different philosophical approach to the issues than the one I was trying to describe. Based on these discussions, I began to consider other concepts which provided a more appropriate correspondence to the picture emerging from my data. It was at this point, only a few months before completing my research, that I came upon the concept of framing, and particularly the white racial frame, which I encountered in a book of the same name (Feagin, 2013). This fit much more closely with what I intended to say, and it was from this that the ‘native speaker’ frame was created.

It was also towards the end of my data collection that the forms of resistance described in chapter 8 began to occur. I was able to participate in one of these (the JDACP), and it struck me how subversive this activity was, at least within the context of the DACP. This also seemed to fit with work I had been reading by Canagarajah (1999b) on resistance to linguistic imperialism in ELT, and further investigation into the social science literature on resistance led me to the concept of cultural resistance and the idea of ‘free spaces’. This seemed to fit neatly into my developing framework, and also seemed to be effective in changing both the minds of teachers and the practices of the program. As such, it was incorporated into the framework as a way in which dominant ‘native speaker’ framing could be challenged.

This narrative serves to clearly explicate how the analytical framework presented in the following section came into being, not as a predesigned tool for data analysis, but rather as a reflexive companion to the analysis which provided a coherent lens through which to view the data, and yet which was itself also a product of the data being collected.

#### **4.9. Analytical framework**

To end this chapter, I would like to bring together the threads of both this chapter and chapter 3, in

order to create an analytic framework. This is the framework I will use to analyse the data that will be presented in chapters 6, 7, and 8.

- **Native-speakerism** is an ideology which serves to uphold Western political and cultural dominance over the field of ELT.
  - **Overt native-speakerism** has become politically incorrect, and expressions of this have begun to shrink from public view.
  - However, the ELT industry is still heavily influenced by **the ‘native speaker frame’**; a set of historically contingent assumptions that position Western educational technology as superior and normative, while at the same time devaluing non-Western cultures and education systems, and Othering educators and students from non-Western backgrounds.
- The ‘native speaker’ frame is supported by:
  - **Professional discourses** in ELT, which include **culturalist** assumptions and stereotypes about students.
  - **Discourses of professionalism**, which include assumptions about superior educational technology and training.
- Native-speakerism can be challenged through acts of **cultural resistance** on the part of students, teachers, and other interested parties. This may be conscious or unconscious, intentional or incidental, and can lead to either counter-framing or **frame transformations** in the minds of individuals which may eventually cause changes in the larger social frame.

## **5. Methodology**

### **5.1. Introduction**

Having examined and discussed the concepts and established the theoretical framework that will be used in the analysis of the data collected for this study, it is now time to turn to the methods by which this data was collected. As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, my understanding of the department I was researching changed over time, and my orientation became more critical, which was reflected in the ways in which my research began to take shape. In this chapter I will first explain why I chose to engage in an ethnographic study, and describe why this approach was most suitable for the project. I will then explain how the data was collected during the course of the study. First, I will describe the collection of my own field notes from the perspective of a participant observer employed on the program. I will then describe the interviewees that were chosen for this project, giving a rationale for why each interviewee was chosen and explaining how the interviews were carried out. I will then describe the collection of documents and artifacts from the program, and how artifacts were selected based on their significance to the project. Finally, I will explain how the data was coded and analysed, and outline the ways in which it will be presented in the following chapters.

### **5.2. A constructivist orientation**

While familiar with ideas such as postmodernism and social constructivism from my undergraduate studies, I have always had a personal preference for rationalist forms of research, involving the controlling of variables and the use of statistical analysis. In applied linguistics I generally agreed for a long time with Jordan (2004) that this was probably the most reliable way of learning about the cognitive dimensions of SLA and effective pedagogical approaches. I have also

been wary of the 'social turn' in SLA, as exemplified by Block (2003) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006), which attempts to frame language learning as a largely social phenomenon, and which accordingly cannot be explored in a purely rationalistic way. While acknowledging that the social surely plays a role in SLA, I believed (and still do, to an extent) that these processes cannot be understood, nor properly investigated without a clear rationalist research program. The project described in this thesis was not about SLA, however I think it is important to note my perspective here, as it certainly contributed to my hesitance to undertake a project using a reflective, constructivist approach such as ethnography.

In approaching this project I quickly came to realize that a rationalist, and specifically post-positivist project (which was my initial instinct), would not provide satisfactory answers to my questions. As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) note, researchers into the social world have long rejected positivist approaches due to the belief that "the social world should be studied in its 'natural' state, undisturbed by the researcher" (p.7), with the understanding that any attempt to conduct an analysis of a fluid dynamic system such as a culture or society by controlling variables and manipulating situations is, by definition, to change and obscure the very thing one is trying to investigate, or even to construct something else entirely. It is also to assume that there is one particular social reality, which is capable of being discerned through rigorous and controlled experimentation (Hatch, 2002). Reading into this topic, despite my own leanings towards rationalist research, I no longer think it is applicable to the social world, at least not entirely; instead, I believe societies and cultures must be approached and examined on their own terms. However, while this 'naturalistic' approach (Holliday, 2016) seems reasonable, it presupposes that "the task of social research is to represent social phenomena in some literal fashion: to document their features and explain their occurrence" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 10), which is to again make the mistake of believing there is one true social reality that can be explained, and is

also problematic in that it ignores the influence, preconceptions, and interpretations of the researcher themselves (Erickson, 2011).

I therefore, despite my predispositions, took a constructivist approach to this research project. Hatch (2002) defines such an approach as centered on a belief that "universal, absolute realities are unknowable, and the objects of inquiry are individual perspectives or constructions of reality", which are "apprehended in the form of abstract mental constructions that are experientially based, local, and specific" (p.15). I was, in other words, not attempting to uncover an objective truth regarding what was happening in the program, but rather working to construct an internally coherent narrative of what was happening in this particular setting based on an empirical collection of ethnographic data. My research into the ideology of this particular EFL program in this particular institution certainly required a local and specific approach, and the role of discourses in the construction of native-speakerist ideology points to the need for a research approach which sees individual perspectives as central, and is concerned with how these perspectives affect the co-construction of the social world, or in this case of one particular social setting.

I decided, based on this growing understanding of the role and forms of social research, that a constructivist approach was the most viable option for producing a valuable piece of research about this setting.

### **5.3. An ethnographic approach**

For this project, I felt that the most viable research method would be one based on the collection of ethnographic data. As already mentioned, this project was not a pure ethnography, as I began my investigation with a hypothesis in mind. However, it used many of the same principles and tools as ethnography, and was based upon ethnographic data. As this project was concerned with investigating the ideologies and discourses of a setting, I felt it was important to conduct a research



project that would have as wide a scope as possible, and in which I would be able to investigate a range of data from which particular points of interest could be identified, cross-referenced, and triangulated to form a larger picture of the underlying ideologically-laden assumptions of the program. My aim was to investigate ideology in the DACP, and as such it was necessary to gain as many different sources of data in order to get a clear idea of the discourses and ideologies that could be discerned as helping to structure and drive the course. This positions me as a researcher who “see[s] the task [of ethnographic research] as to deconstruct accounts in order to understand how they were produced and the presuppositions on which they are based. Here the ethnographer’s role comes close to ideology critique” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This also positions me as conducting what Habermas (1972) terms ‘emancipatory’ research which “represents the interests of those who are placed outside of any specific power structure” and which underlies “all ‘critical’ research agendas working towards social change” (Evensen, 2015, p. 12). In other words, my orientation towards the project was to uncover ideological presuppositions, and was therefore, in a sense, politically motivated, but only in the same way that all social and institutional action is politically motivated to some degree. My own experience working on the DACP at Akarenga University led me to believe that there really were 'positive' ideological undercurrents at work in the program concerning equality for teachers, and it was these that I initially set out to investigate and uncover. However the reflexive nature of the project led me to a reconsideration of these views. The research took a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). As Strauss and Corbin (1994) describe it, grounded theory is a process by which “theory evolves during actual research, and it does this through the continuous interplay between analysis and data collection” (p.273). I chose this approach because, as Strauss and Corbin (1994) note, “a theory is not a formulation of some discovered aspect of a preexisting reality “out there”...theories are interpretations made from given perspectives as adopted or researched by researchers” (p.279), an attitude which matches the

constructivist orientation taken in this project, and which also accords with my position as a researcher who has a particular view on the topics under investigation. My initial observations led me to collect data related to those observations; data which then led me to reformulate my ideas about what was happening in the course, which then led to more data collection, and so on. There was, through the process of investigation, an ongoing correspondence between the data being collected and the theories being developed, which I will describe in my data chapters.

In the following short sections I will describe my own positionality as a researcher, the setting and boundaries of the program chosen, and then will move on to discuss the kinds of data collected to investigate these questions.

### **5.3.1. Researcher positionality**

It is widely accepted in social research that voice and position of the researcher will have some effect upon both the orientation towards the project, and the interpretation of the findings (Holliday, 2016). As such, I feel it is important that I acknowledge my own perspective on these issues. As someone who considers myself on the political left, who has the professional background described in chapter 1 (which has led to particular views on issues faced by 'native' and 'non-native' speaker teachers), and who has a longstanding sympathy towards, and agreement with, the politically-motivated academic work of writers in applied linguistics such as Phillipson (1992), Pennycook (1994), and Holliday (2005), it is undeniable that my own preconceptions and perspectives will influence the way I interpret the data collected in this project. I do not believe that this will make my interpretations invalid, but it is still important to note where my sympathies lie, and how they are likely to influence both my orientation towards this project and my interpretation of the results. I also note again here my rationalist leanings, as these sympathies may bleed into the ways in which I carry out my analysis and interpretations of the data. As Ashworth (1999) notes, it

is important to 'bracket' our presuppositions, holding them up for scrutiny, while attempting at the same time to ignore our own orientations towards the topic and consider the phenomena impartially. As someone taking a critical approach to my research, I do not see a particular need to set my presuppositions and beliefs aside (Hatch, 2002) - in fact I consider this an almost impossible task - but I do feel the need to declare them here, and hope that, despite the fact I am taking a critical stance, my willingness to change the focus of my project shows that I am being reflexive rather than dogmatic.

### **5.3.2. Setting and boundaries**

As Hammerley and Atkinson (2007) note, it is "common for research to be stimulated by previous experience in temporary or permanent jobs" (p.24), and this is very much true in the choice of location for this study, as described in the introduction. My experience of working on a number of different ELT programs in Japanese universities had revealed the extent to which they appear to function as small and rather isolated settings within the wider structure of the university in which they operate. The DACP at Akarenga University was one of these programs, and was positioned, as these programs typically are, on the periphery of the university. The program was started in 2009 to improve the English ability of the undergraduate students in the university, and was mandatory for all students to pass. The course consisted of one 90-minute class per week to groups of between seven and nine (ideally eight) students, meaning around 40 instructors were employed on the course at any one time. The staff in the DACP were positioned separately from the wider university structure, both for linguistic reasons (often having low proficiency in Japanese), and for organisational reasons, due to the fact that they had the official role of 'instructors' rather than 'professors' or 'lecturers', and were rarely in the position of being able to discuss issues or ideas directly with the course managers - instead being required to go through intermediaries such as

administrative staff or program managers. This set up clear boundaries as to the setting of this program. It would not be true to say that the program was completely isolated from the rest of the university, as the politics of the university played a role in its creation, its development, and certain aspects of its management, which I will elaborate on later. However, it is certainly true that apart from these small levels of interaction (and intervention) the program operated more-or-less autonomously. It was also physically situated away from the rest of the university, in a building at the very edge of the campus, where all of the teachers shared their team rooms, and where most of the classes were held. As such, my project was designed to investigate a course developed, conducted, and taught by a group of people with little formal interaction with the rest of the university and with a highly structured set of practices and guidelines, as I will describe in the data chapters of this thesis.

### **5.3.3. Generalisability**

Readers of this thesis may be concerned that the study of one particular program is unlikely to provide results which can be generalised out to other settings. The term 'generalizability' "is defined as the degree to which the findings can be generalized from the study sample to the entire population" (Myers, 2000, p. 5). Generalizability is seen as a virtue in the natural sciences, and hence these sciences rely on large sample sizes and other procedures designed to maximize the extent to which they can be generalised. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is often criticized for its small sample sizes and lack of generalizability. However, while generalisability is the goal of much research, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) argue that "sometimes ethnographic research is concerned with a case that has intrinsic interest, so that generalisation is not the primary concern" (p.32). I believe this is one of those cases, as the DACP at Akarenga University seems to have been unique among Japanese tertiary EFL programs,

and that uniqueness itself makes the process of understanding what was going on within this program of intrinsic value. Secondly, I would argue that findings emerging from discovering the deep ideological roots underlying the structures and practices of one particular EFL program can help other teachers or researchers to recognise or begin to explore these things for themselves in their own educational settings, which may then lead to change in those cases. As Myers (2000) notes, “in many situations, a small sample size may be more useful in examining a situation in depth from various perspectives, whereas a large sample would be inconsequential” (p.5). Indeed, were it not for me undertaking this critical project, I may still have held my initial assumptions that native-speakerism had been successfully removed from the DACP, allowing the deeper problematic ideological concerns to remain unexamined. For these two reasons, I think this study has clear value.

#### **5.4. Data collection**

Several different sources of data were collected to create a thick description of the department in which this research was conducted, with the richest level of detail possible. Thick description is a term used by Geertz (1973) to describe a key approach to the validation of ethnographic description. Thick description can be described as an approach focused on “constructing texts in which rich descriptions are salient and in harmony with analytic interpretations” (Cho & Trent, 2006, p. 328). Rather than attempting to produce generalizable research results which uncover universal truths, “those concerned with thick description purposes delve into interpreting locally constructed meanings from the emic or insider’s worldview” (Cho & Trent, 2006, pp. 328–329). Cho and Trent (2006) note that the major validity criteria for thick description include triangulation, descriptive data, and recursive member checking. All of these points were included in this project, as I shall elaborate on in the following sections. This does not guarantee complete objectivity in the

findings (nor do I wish or believe it possible to do so), but it does improve their validity and will hopefully help the readers of this thesis to understand how the conclusions were reached.

#### **5.4.1. Field notes and participant observation**

My first source of data was taken from my own experiences working on the Akarenga University DACP. Over the two years in which I worked there and was engaged in this project I kept extensive notes of what I felt were important or critical incidents, either in casual team room conversations or in faculty development sessions. These notes are very much informed by my own perspective, but they contain quite telling information about the discourses that were common among the instructors in the course. As my own perspective is likely to inform the ways in which I read and interpret these notes, this data will be cross-referenced with the other forms of data collected in order to, as much as possible, minimize my own bias and attempt to balance my own perspective with those of my participants. The notes themselves were certainly a jumping off point for a lot of the issues discussed in this thesis, but my perspectives over time have changed in reaction to the other data collected and my developing understanding of what was happening in the DACP at Akarenga University.

As a teacher working on the program, I held an 'inside' position. This has both advantages and disadvantages. As Lofland, et al. (2006) note, having an 'inside' position makes it easier to form strong relationships with informants and to observe the practices of the program, however it also brings with it the danger that practices will appear normalised, and thus key data will be missed or ignored. In order to combat this, I tried to keep this issue in mind while taking notes, and had regular discussions with a colleague who was also engaging in his PhD research. These regular discussions helped me to focus on key incidents and maintain my awareness of what was

happening in the program. I was open with my colleagues about the fact I was conducting research, and about the topic of my research. While it is possible that this knowledge influenced the behaviour of the instructors on the program, I doubt this to be the case in any important sense. I feel that many of them were very skeptical about critical approaches to research in general, and were uninterested in what I was doing. In fact, on leaving the program I was given a card signed by all the instructors wishing me luck with my PhD in 'nativism', which demonstrates how little interest there was in the project.

Another important set of notes was taken when I attended the JALT 2015 conference and saw a public presentation by two of the instructors about some research they had conducted on what was called the 'inverted curriculum'. This led to one of the most important aspects of my findings, and was followed up in subsequent interviews with the two instructors in question.

#### **5.4.2. Interviews**

For this project, a total of ten interviewees were selected; two program managers, four 'native speaker' instructors, and four 'non-native speaker' instructors. As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) note, "when studying a large organisation, one may not have the time and resources to interview all the occupants of a particular role, and may therefore try to select a sample of them that is representative" (p106). As there were many possible interviewees that could have been chosen for this project, I chose informants based on their closeness to the course (the program managers interviewed were the first three employed on the course), their particular sensitivity to the issues of native-speakerism that were under investigation, and their length of experience in the course. I also attempted to find candidates who represented a level of national and professional diversity, in order to minimise the possibility that the findings of the study would apply only to a subset of the ELT professional community who shared these traits. I will describe each group in turn and explain why

I felt their contributions would be particularly important and valuable for this project. I will then explain how the interviews were conducted. As a former colleague, it was not a difficult matter to contact any of these interviewees, and all of them readily agreed to take part in the project on the usual condition of anonymity. I was also able, through my personal contacts, to select interviewees that I felt would be most useful for the project. I was at no point restrained in my selection of these informants. For each interviewee I will provide a small amount of background information which may inform their perspective or contextualize their beliefs and principles.

#### *Program managers*

The two program managers that were interviewed were chosen for a few different reasons. Primarily, they were selected as suitable interview participants because they were in charge of the course and were therefore likely to be particularly knowledgeable about the running of the program, the hiring of teachers, and the design of the teaching approach. More specifically, the two program managers were chosen because they were what Dean, et al (1967) call, in their typology of informants, 'outs'; that is they were former managers who were involved in setting up the program from the very beginning and who had since moved on to other work. I felt that this would make them more likely to talk about their experiences in setting up and running the course, and would also likely make their statements more candid, as they would be less likely to fear professional retribution for any information they gave. This was important, as the professors running the program itself, and the program managers in charge at the time this research was conducted, were very nervous about research being conducted into the program. In fact, final consent to carry out the research was given with the disclaimer that "everything you are collecting is either public or voluntary. We can't stop you." Therefore, having informants who were both involved closely in the creation and running of the program, and who were also free to talk about their experiences, was



enormously valuable. Additionally, the program managers who were interviewed were chosen due to their varied backgrounds, and their deep level of involvement in English language teaching. One informant was Scottish, and the second from New Zealand. A third Japanese program manager initially agreed to take part in the project, but after leaving the DACP just prior to data collection, stopped responding to emails. I interpreted this as a desire to no longer be involved in the project, and ceased communication. Both interviewees had extensive experience working both in ELT and in Japanese higher education, and one was undertaking doctoral studies. My initial choice to interview program managers from a variety of national backgrounds, with similar professional experience, was made in order to help highlight any emergent discourses that were a property of the ELT profession, rather than a property of a shared cultural chauvinism or set of assumptions. Unfortunately, necessity dictated that both would come from similar cultural backgrounds. However, as I will highlight, they were well-aware of critical issues in ELT, and did not display many overt cultural biases. The two interviewed program managers were also the two with the longest experience, and who had the larger hand in the design and administration of the program. The two participants were (all given names are pseudonyms):

**Richard:** An EFL teacher originally from Scotland who has lived in Japan for many years and was the first person recruited both as a teacher and as a program manager on the DACP at Akarenga University.

**John:** An English teacher from New Zealand who lived in Japan and worked at several institutions before being recruited to the DACP. Hired originally as a teacher, he was soon promoted to program manager.

### *'Non-native speaker' teachers*

For the next group of interviewees I selected four teachers who would be called 'non-native speakers' under the ideology of native-speakerism. These four were chosen because they had experience of two or more years in the program and would therefore have a good sense of it, were equally qualified, and came from range of national and professional backgrounds. I also chose these four instructors because they did not have any personal ties to those who were in higher professional positions in the course, as was the case with some other possible candidates. The varied backgrounds of the four was important because, as with the program managers, I felt it would highlight industry-wide discourses and assumptions that emerged from their answers, rather than pointing towards more localised discourses that may have resulted from more homogenous backgrounds. I have decided to include some autobiographical information on these instructors, as their previous experiences as 'non-native speaker' teachers in Japan provides important context for certain of their statements and beliefs quoted in this thesis, particularly in sections 6.2 and 6.3. These four instructors were:

**Keiji:** A Japanese English teacher who grew up partly in Canada and partly in Japan. Keiji is an almost fully bilingual teacher who notes that he finds his English limited only occasionally in terms of vocabulary. He taught at schools in Japan as an assistant language teacher and as a freelance conversation instructor before starting work on the DACP at Akarenga University. He noted once in a casual conversation that he often is considered ineligible for jobs simply because he "has the wrong colour passport".

**Wen:** Wen is a Chinese English teacher who completed his undergraduate and postgraduate studies in the United States. After graduating from his master's degree, his first job was in the

DACP, and he is currently considering whether to stay in the country or return to the US to seek employment or further postgraduate study.

**Heng:** A Singaporean teacher who has lived in Japan for a number of years. He considers himself a native speaker of Singaporean standard English, and has worked, like Keiji, as an ALT in high schools in Japan. He completed his postgraduate studies through distance learning at a university in the UK, and found the job at DACP after finishing his master's degree.

**Keiko:** A Japanese teacher who spent several years completing postgraduate study in the US, and also teaching part-time at the university level before returning to Japan. She was instrumental in setting up some of the professional development groups which will be discussed later on, and so was considered a good source for information on these groups, especially as they took on more significance in the project.

#### *'Native-speaker' teachers*

For this project I also interviewed four 'native-speaker' teachers, again from a variety of national and professional backgrounds. As with the previous groups of interviewees, these teachers were chosen on the basis that they had extensive experience in the DACP, and did not represent a homogenous background with the possibility of homogenous assumptions or beliefs which that could entail. I felt that while these teachers may not be as sensitive to issues of native-speakerism as their 'non-native speaker' colleagues, their voices would be important in helping to highlight assumptions of discourses that underlay the structure and organisation of the course. The teachers were:

**Mark:** An American English language teacher, who completed his ELT postgraduate training in The US, and spent much of his professional life teaching in university level ESP and EAP courses before coming to Japan. The DACP at Akarenga University is the first job he had overseas.

**Josie:** A South African EFL teacher, who first came to Japan on the JET program and joined the DACP a few years later. Josie took a very political view on her teaching and on the course, which is reflected in some of her statements in the thesis.

**Joseph:** An American teacher who worked in India for the Peace Corps before coming to Japan. Joseph has two master's degrees in education-related fields.

**Peter:** A British language teacher who has lived in Japan for fifteen years, teaching first at conversation schools, before moving up to the university level. Pete has a masters degree from a UK university, and Akarenga was his first job teaching at the tertiary level.

The ten informants chosen here, I believe, have the most appropriate background to be able to give valuable and important insights into the program, both in terms of its professional culture and orientation, and also in terms of their own personal experiences of working on this course. This data on its own will not, of course, be sufficient to base findings upon, and so will be supplemented not only with my own field notes, but also with artifacts collected from the setting and detailed descriptions of the work environment; the setting in which the professional discourses of the program play out.

Some of these interviews were conducted face-to-face, and some over Skype. All of the

participants were given the choice of where and how they would like the interviews to be conducted, with some opting for relative privacy and some opting for more public areas. I believe these choices were down more to convenience than anything else, and were not particularly significant to the study. The interviews were first intended to be semi-structured, but soon took on a more 'conversational' tone (Burgess-Limerick & Burgess-Limerick, 1998), and I entered each of them with a list of topics, rather than questions. Interview sessions began in a very open ended way, with a question such as "Can you tell me a little about your professional background and how you came to work at Akarenga University?" I then made notes about important points brought up by the interviewees during their responses, and asked more targeted questions in order to pursue topics that I felt were important and relevant to this study. The interviews were approached in this way consciously, as I wanted the data to be as rich as possible. During the first interview the list of questions was quite static, and the questions were more direct. This yielded rather thin data which confirmed some of my expectations, however it was during a more conversational break in the interview that something unexpected and important emerged, revealing an aspect of the topic that I had not considered up to that point. In order to try and capture as much of the complexity of the situation as possible then, I opted for a more open-ended approach to questioning, with the option of pursuing topics of interest or asking more direct questions if I felt a topic was being avoided or ignored. Burgess-Limerick and Burgess-Limerick (1998) argue that semi-structured interviews are overly restrictive and researcher-directed, and advocate a more conversational approach. This approach was very fruitful as it produced new avenues of inquiry which changed the orientation of the investigation quite dramatically over the course of the project.

During the course of my data analysis questions began to arise which had not been covered in the interviews. In order to gather this data, I spoke to DACP members who were not part of my initial research sample. Some information was gathered through emails to the current program managers

(at the time of writing), which were answered in a short, matter-of-fact way. One particularly important set of data about the reading circle and the reflective practice group (discussed in chapter 8) was gathered through an email interview with a DACP teacher referred to as “Eddie”, who played a part in setting up both groups.

### **5.4.3. Documents and artifacts**

While the interviews described in the previous section were important parts of the data, and the statements by candidates could be used to support or contradict each other, in order to create a more detailed 'thick description' of the program, I also engaged in the collection of documents and artifacts which I felt were relevant for the project. In addition I made written descriptions of the settings in which the program was carried out. Documents and artifacts have long been seen as an important part of ethnographic research, and this is particularly true of ethnographic studies conducted in work settings, because documents are integral to the lives of workers. I attempted to choose artifacts that were particularly relevant to the topic of the project, and focused particularly on the following kinds of artifacts collected from the program. These artifacts would then be analysed in the context of the statements from the participants, and my own field notes.

#### *1) Qualifications held by instructors*

I felt for the purposes of this study that it would be important to find out where the instructors on their course earned their qualifications. This was because as Pennycook (1994) notes, “the export of applied linguistic theory and of western-trained language teachers constantly promotes inappropriate teaching approaches to diverse settings” (p.159), a point that is reinforced by Holliday (1994b), who argues that that "the most prestigious MA, diploma, and training courses for teachers are carried out either in BANA [British and North American] institutions, or in institutions

in other countries which are staffed by BANA personnel” (p. 5). Appleby (2010) further notes that this is still true today, and leads to a situation in which "periphery universities [become] consumers of knowledge from the center rather than producers of locally mediated knowledge" (p.26). If the qualifications gained by instructors on the DACP were all from centre universities this could point to a Western 'native speaker' orientation on the part of either the university, the program managers, the course directors, or even the teachers themselves. Certainly, any particular focus would point towards potentially problematic notions of professionalism on the part of those involved in the course. In any case, this data was gained on a one-to-one basis, and for many of the instructors was later made available publicly on the university website.

## *2) Official documents*

In order to get a deeper insight into the development of teachers beyond that gained from the interviews conducted with program managers, I initially collected official documents related to the DACP, such as faculty development schedules, faculty development and orientation documents, and (importantly), the instructor handbook, which contained much of the important descriptive data that I wanted to use. These documents were collected and analysed along with my own field notes taken during the course of my research. The purpose of collecting these documents was to analyse them in terms of the discourses represented therein related to the teaching approach in the DACP.

While I was initially given permission to use these documents as part of my research, during the course of writing this thesis the management of the DACP changed, and permission to quote from these official documents was unfortunately withdrawn. This posed a challenge, as it rendered much of my collected data, particularly that concerning the description and structure of the course, inadmissible. I was, however, able to find all the necessary information in other, publicly available sources. These sources included the DACP website, which was a website set up to advertise the

course to prospective students and instructors. I was also able to quote extensively from the DACP Journal, an academic journal published annually by the program, a common feature of Japanese university departments (see Kamada, 2007), which featured contributions from both program managers and instructors, and in which much of the key information about the structure of the course, and the official perspectives on the practices of the course, was reproduced.

### *3) Course textbooks*

A final set of artifacts collected were the teaching materials themselves, in the form of the textbooks used on the course. There are textbooks produced for each of the four levels of the course (moving from higher to lower proficiency students), and each of these are constantly updated based on the input of instructors, though this input is often rather limited. The textbooks examined in this study were all editions that were produced and used during the time in which I worked as an instructor on the Akarenga University DACP course. The presentation of material within these textbooks was felt to be important as it may point towards cultural representations or the use of stereotypes in dialogues, or towards revealing aspects of the organisation of the materials and the methodology. In either case, these textbooks, acting as one of the main parts of the course could contain valuable information against which the statements given in the interviews could be compared, and so an examination of their data was felt to be a necessary part of the study.

In order to provide a concise and clear perspective on the materials that were collected as part of the research, I have compiled the following table showing the different sources and amounts of data collected during this study:



Type of data	Notes on Data
Field notes	These were written in a journal over the course of two years working in the program.
Interviews	Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten participants: four ‘native speaker’ instructors, four ‘non-native speaker’ instructors and two (former) DACP program managers. All interviews took place during the second year of the research. Each interview was between 40 minutes and one hour long. See Appendix A for interview schedule.
Instructor qualifications	The nature of instructors’ qualifications was gathered on a one-to-one basis, and occasionally from public sources such as the DACP website. This data was compiled into an excel spreadsheet (see Appendix B).
Official documents	Official documents used as sources of data were the DACP website, and the first two volumes of the DACP in-house journal.
Course textbooks	The textbooks developed by, and used in the course. Four copies of the most recent editions of these (those used in the second year of the research) were used as data.
Supplementary interview material	Two short supplementary interviews were conducted after the main data collection period had finished. These were conducted as need for more information arose during the course of data analysis, and were conducted over email with one program manager and one instructor.

**Figure 3: Sources of data**

## 5.5. Ethical concerns

As Dörnyei (2007) notes, ethical concerns are “more acute” in qualitative than in quantitative research because “qualitative research often intrudes more into the human private sphere” (p.63-64). As such in this section I will briefly explain explicitly the ethical considerations which played into this project and the steps I took to address these. Pelto (2013) notes that “the main principle concerning ethical perspectives in ethnographic research is to protect the privacy, anonymity, confidentiality, and safety of your informants” (p.53). With this in mind, the institution, program, and all participant names were anonymized or given pseudonyms. However, with such a specific setting it is possible that the location could be identified, and even the identities of the participants themselves uncovered; as Pelto (2013) notes, “in many research projects it is nearly impossible to disguise the location of the research and thus to protect the anonymity of certain types of informants” (p.55). Because of this, it was very important that I received informed consent from all involved in the study and to make sure that they were aware of, and comfortable with, the fact that my interactions with them might be made available as part of the project in the form of data. At the start of this project, my coworkers were made aware of my research and my research topic, and were also aware that I was keeping a journal. Additionally, on occasions when I recorded in my journal something someone had said to me (when not part of an interview), I made sure either to give that person a pseudonym or to omit their name. All interviewees signed consent forms after being given a description of the purpose and aims of the study. Participants were aware that they were free not to answer questions, as indicated by them doing just that in some cases during their interviews, as in the following extract:

**Rob:** But do you think that there was any pressure from above, from higher up about that?

**Richard:** Well, that's a very difficult question, isn't it!

**Rob:** [laughs]

**Richard:** That I don't think I'm comfortable talking about.

**Rob:** Okay.

Additionally, interviewees were made aware that their participation was voluntary and that they could refuse to participate at any time. Indeed, one participant withdrew without giving any notice or reason, as was their right.

Consent was sought from the department to access documents related to the program such as the instructor handbook. However, this consent was withdrawn by the program after a change of management during my research. I respected the expressed desires of the program, and instead found alternative sources for the key data I wished to use in the project, principally taken from published sources including websites, journal articles, and magazine articles. In a small number of cases I felt it was important to use a piece of data which I did not have consent to reproduce, such as student feedback comments. In these cases I avoided reproducing the work in any identifiable way by creatively rewriting the data in a way which preserved the integrity of the original source without betraying anonymity or violating consent.

Finally, as someone working in the program at the time the research was conducted, there are some ethical dilemmas surrounding my 'insider' status. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) take issue with the dichotomy between 'outsider' and insider', arguing that "the very distinction...is problematic" (p.87), on the basis that people have multifaceted identities, some aspects of which position them as insiders and some as outsiders. However, as Mercer (2007) notes, there are two major dilemmas related to insider research. The first of these is how much information about the study should be revealed to colleagues, and the second concerns the use of 'incidental' data, or that

collected from informal interaction. In the first case, there is a possibility that giving participants all of the information about your study may bias their responses, while giving them too little may be seen as manipulative and dishonest. In this study I chose to fully inform my participants about the nature of my study, in some cases having to define terms such as “native-speakerism” for them. I felt this was important, as my colleagues were qualified professionals who I thought may be able to add some value to my observations if they were fully informed about the nature of my study, and indeed this turned out to be the case. I also did not feel any great conflict in using ‘incidental’ data in my study, as it was made clear to colleagues that I was keeping a journal for research purposes, and they were aware that things they said may become part of that data. However, as already stated, I ensured that such data was not attributable to an individual when writing my notes. While the status of being an insider throws up some ethical questions, I felt that the steps I took, as described in this section, adequately addressed these concerns.

## **5.6. Analysis**

As mentioned earlier, the analysis of this data was done through what could be described as a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). While it is important to note that there are many different perspectives on what constitutes grounded theory (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007), I use the term here quite broadly to simply mean that my theories were formed dialectically through the collection and analysis of the data, rather than data being collected simply to test a pre-existing hypothesis. While I initially approached this project with quite a clear idea in my mind of what I was setting out to investigate and discover, the more data I collected the more my approach to this project changed. I was initially interested in how native-speakerism had been overcome, and equality had been achieved between the 'native' and 'non-native' speaker teachers on the DACP, however through investigating this topic I began to uncover deeper levels of

native-speakerist practice which were complexly rooted in different areas of the management of the university. On top of this, I discovered surprising attitudes and acts being performed by the teachers on the program, all of which I will discuss at length in the coming chapters.

These different conclusions emerged from the data over time, and new data often yielded important insights which, in order to fully explore, required the collection of further data and the revisiting of interviewees. In other words, while I initially approached the data with the intention of investigating something I very strongly believed to be true, the reflexive nature of the project led me to change the focus of the research quite dramatically over time.

#### **5.6.1. Coding**

The patterns emerging from this process also played an important role in how the data was coded. At first, interview data, statements from interviewees, field notes, documentary evidence, and other data were placed into the following broad categories. These categories emerged during the process of coding as themes became prominent and identifiable. I arrange them below in a specific order to reflect the organization of the data chapters which will follow

- Teacher equality
- Course professionalism
- Teaching approach
- English-only policy
- Acts of resistance

However, these categories were later broken down further into subcategories which helped to show relationships between the data in a more complex and revealing way. The subcategories were

designed to code the data more subtly, and were intended to aid in the triangulation of inferences from the data. They were as follows:

- Teacher equality
  - Equal hiring and opportunities for renewal
  - Equal opportunity to teach all levels of students
  - Equal opportunity to lead FD sessions
  - Equal duties and responsibilities
  - Equal influence on the design of the course
- Course professionalism
  - Unified curriculum
  - Teacher qualifications
  - Faculty development sessions
  - Orientation week
- Teaching approach
  - Activities
  - Rationale for use
  - Effectiveness
  - Difficulties for students
- English-only policy
  - Reasons for instigation
  - Positive views
  - Negative views
- Acts of resistance

- English only policy
- Reading circle
- Inverted curriculum

### **5.6.2. Respondent validation**

During the research process, it is important to validate the conclusions being drawn from data by discussing them with the subjects of the research. As Torrance (2012) argues, “respondent validation involves research participants responding either to forms of initial data, e.g. transcripts of interviews, or observations of activities, in order to check them for accuracy, or to first drafts of interpretive reports to respond, again, to their accuracy, but also to the interpretive claims that are being made” (p.115). This ‘respondent validation’ (or member checking), is considered important as it helps to “establish a correspondence between the sociologist's and the member's view of the member's social world by exploring the extent to which members recognize, give assent to, the judgments of the sociologist” (Bloor, 1978, pp. 548–549), and to see if participants consider the conclusions valid (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) note, there are conflicting views on the utility of respondent validity, with some people feeling it is of relatively little use, especially if participants are not aware of their biases, or find the conclusions troubling.

In this study, I felt that it was important to engage in respondent validation, because the people I was investigating were professionals working in an academic setting, from a variety of backgrounds, and often engaging actively in research themselves. I therefore felt that their reactions to my interpretations of their statements would be valuable and possibly shed new light on the issue. I decided to engage in respondent validation as soon as the interviews were over. Once each interview was officially concluded, I would relate my understanding of what had been said, within the context of the program and the other data gathered, to the informant. I then

engaged in a discussion with each person to see how valid they felt my interpretations were. In nearly all cases, the respondents recognised the validity of my interpretations, even if they did not agree with them completely, and this occasionally led to new ideas being expressed. For example, when confronted with some of the issues I had identified around the English-only policy in the program, one of the program managers was quick to point out that this policy was mandated by the university, leading to a very fruitful discussion of the influence of university policy on the management of the course. In one case, the conclusions I was drawing were strongly challenged by one of my interviewees. However, this was an interviewee who made what I considered to be the most problematic statements in the interviews, with very stereotypical and generalised views of students and a hostility to critical methods in language education. As such, I feel there was a lack of willingness on this participant's part to engage reflectively with the ideas under discussion, and a lack of awareness about their own biases. Often, I must confess, my attempts at respondent validation were met with disinterest and did not lead anywhere particularly interesting. However, where new information or challenges to my ideas did emerge, I have attempted to incorporate them into the data analysis.

### **5.6.3. Triangulation**

'Triangulation' refers to the process of strengthening conclusions through the collection of different kinds of data that all point towards the same thing. The use of triangulation in social research has been criticized due to a supposed "lack of awareness of the different and incommensurate ontological and epistemological assumptions associated with various theories and methods" (Blaikie, 1991, p. 115), particularly as it appears to assume that there is an uncoverable truth which triangulation will point towards. However, in this project I see triangulation between different sources of my data not as a method of uncovering the truth, but rather as a way of increasing the



internal coherence of the description provided and increasing the validity of the description given. The respondent validation described above was one form of triangulation engaged in during the study. Each of the participants was given relevant statements from previous interviews as part of the emerging picture. In fact, I occasionally built this into the interviews, asking participants questions such as "one of my previous interviewees described the course in the following way (...) what do you think of that description?" This led to interesting examples of both agreement and disagreement, but mostly agreement. One interesting example of this in the data was the idea of evidence underpinning the pedagogical approach taken on the program. While the instructors interviewed felt that the teaching approach was based on empirical evidence, the program managers denied this, stating explicitly that the approach was based largely on 'principles' rather than evidence. This is an example of how an attempt at triangulation was unsuccessful, but in fact led to another interesting insight which was confirmed through triangulation with the accounts of other program managers. The respondent validation therefore played a role in helping to triangulate points of interest in the data and find connections between things the participants were saying.

However, this alone is not enough to establish truth about what was happening in the program. Inferences drawn from different data sets were tested against other kinds of data collected, and when discrepancies were noted further data was collected to investigate these. For example, some participants complained that the faculty development sessions of the course were not useful, and were simply there to reinforce ideas about correct teaching on the course, while some felt they offered a valuable opportunity for professional development. Further interviews and observation of the semi-official 'reading circle' demonstrated a split among the instructors in terms of their perceptions and what they understood to be the point of faculty development sessions. Here, again, is an example of how a discrepancy emerging in the data led to a new avenue of enquiry.

#### **5.6.4. Theory formulation**

To construct the theories which are presented in this thesis, I used a broad form of analytic induction through which phenomenon are first defined, then investigated, leading to reformulations of the hypothesis and (sometimes) of the phenomenon itself, with the process repeating until a satisfactory theory is constructed which covers all the observations (Becker, 1998). While I understand that this is a messy process, with unresolved problems regarding the assumption of such a theory on deterministic laws (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 188), it seemed the right approach to take in examining this context, and indeed in any piece of research in which one enters a field to discover what is happening, rather than testing hypotheses experimentally. While I began with a clear idea of a phenomenon (a department in which native-speakerism was not present), and a hypothesis (due to a high level of professionalism), I soon found through the gathering of data that this was partially correct but largely incomplete, and this led me to reformulate both the phenomenon under study and my orientation towards my proposed hypothesis. While this may not lead to easily generalizable theories, which analytic induction generally tends towards, I believe that the data sets gathered from this project, and the theories constructed based on them may be useful to researchers investigating similar settings in the future, even if those settings are not exactly the same. The theories that emerged from this process will be presented in the following chapters.

#### **5.7. Conclusion**

In this chapter I have outlined why I chose to conduct a study based on ethnographic data, taking a constructivist approach to this project. I have also described my methods of data collection and analysis, and given a rationale in each case for why I chose to conduct the project in this way. In addition, I have made it very clear that this was a reflective piece of work, and there was a dialogic

relationship between the collection of data and the development of theory. I think this is a very important aspect of the project as it is through the virtues of this approach that a nuanced and rich thick description of the program could be built, from which interesting theories could be constructed.

I believe that this is a case of intrinsic interest, and while it may not produce fully generalisable theories, I believe the theory developed in the following chapters about the way in which the ideology of native-speakerism operates within this program could well inform future studies which take place in similar institutions, and could also help program managers to try to resist the 'institutional' native-speakerism described here. While I acknowledge my own position as a researcher, I feel that the triangulation that took place in the form of the collection of different kinds of data and the testing of the salience of observations among these different kinds of data allowed a picture to emerge that describes well the workings of the program. I will now move on to present the first set of my findings.

## **6. Equality in a 'professional utopia'**

### **6.1. Introduction**

As explained earlier in this thesis, my initial belief when beginning this research project was that the Discussion and communication program at Akarenga University had managed to avoid native-speakerist practices, and had instead constructed a program which was truly equal for all of the instructors on the course. This was based on my own casual observations of the program as an instructor working within it, and on the things I had heard from other instructors working on the program. One particular comment that stood out for me was from an instructor who would later become an interview subject, Keiji. During an informal conversation in our shared office, Keiji expressed the opinion that the DACP was the only program in which he felt he had been treated exactly as an equal, rather than as a 'non-native speaker' with the attendant assumptions and assigned duties that this entailed (as documented in previous chapters). As I wrote in my journal:

Interesting talk with Keiji today. I brought up native-speakerism (he hadn't heard of it).

He said he was discriminated against because of the colour of his passport in other jobs, but not in the DACP.

This was a feeling that was expressed by many teachers in the program during my tenure there, and there was never a sense, at least in my own perception, of teachers being treated differently due to their perceived speakerhood. I will maintain in this chapter that this initial impression of equality was, in fact, largely correct. I will argue that there really was a sense of equality and professional parity in the DACP, and instructors really were treated as equals and expected to perform exactly the same roles and duties as each other, without regard to perceived speakerhood or national

background. In other words, I will argue that the DACP was free of what I earlier classified as 'overt' native-speakerism. However, as should be clear from my arguments in chapter 4, this should not be taken as a complete picture of what was happening on the program. In the chapter following this I will argue that despite the equality present among instructors in the DACP, it was still, in many respects, framed in a native-speakerist way. Indeed, readers should pay close attention in this chapter to the development of the notion of 'professionalism' in the context of this equality, because this will play a key role in the 'native speaker' framing of the course that will be described later. I will outline in this chapter how overt native-speakerism was eliminated from the course, resulting in the equal treatment of teachers, provided they were willing to follow the philosophy and practices of the program. These beliefs and practices were coded as 'professionalism', and were one of the main ways in which the 'native speaker' framing of the program was disguised and normalized.

I will first explain some of the motivations which led to the apparent equality in the course (described by one interviewee as a "professional utopia"), and the equal treatment of teachers. I will then look at the deeply rooted notions of "professionalism" and the professional discourses which were implicated in the construction of this equality, many of which were connected to the strong belief on the part of the course instructors, the program managers, and even the institution itself, in the necessity of having a unified curriculum and a shared theoretical base for practice. I will turn first to the level of equality experienced by the instructors on the program, as this will help to put the rest of the discussion in this chapter into context.

## **6.2. Instructor equality**

As described earlier in this thesis, my experiences of working in Japanese universities led me to view the DACP in a very positive light. In previous jobs I had been treated differently from my

Japanese counterparts, both in positive and negative ways, due to my perceived 'native-speaker' status and the assumptions about my professional skills and abilities which flowed from this. When entering the DACP, I very much had the impression that it was an environment that other institutions and language programs should aspire to, in that every instructor on the course was treated with an equal level of respect and dignity, and were required to do the same jobs and fulfill the same duties regardless of their perceived speakerhood or national background. Before examining the structures on which this equality was based, I will explain how this equality manifested in the program.

#### **6.2.1. Hiring and contacts**

As can be seen in the job advertisement in Figure 4, teachers on the DACP were required to have a master's degree in TESOL/applied linguistics, or an equivalent qualification, with some instructors hired on the basis of a TESOL diploma, or a master's degree in an unrelated subject plus an initial teaching certificate such as a Cambridge CELTA. During my fieldwork, program managers alluded to the fact that early in the development of the course instructors were occasionally hired on the basis of having a large amount of experience in language teaching, or being in the process of doing a postgraduate degree, and this was the case for several of my coworkers. I myself was hired halfway through my MA in applied linguistics, although I did have a CELTA and a DipTESOL. There was no 'native speaker' requirement in job advertisements for the DACP during my time as an instructor (again, see Figure 4), and it was explicitly stated by my interviewees that this was not an important criteria for them when it came to the hiring of instructors. John, who was working as an DACP manager at the time of the research, stressed that the focus in recruitment was on qualifications and ability to do the job:

**John:** ...when I started what, there was two English people, two English, three American, two Japanese, one Chinese, and me, and it was kind of mentioned I think a few times, like we've got an eclectic bunch. So there was that kind of thing floating around but to be honest when we first went through the hiring in 2010 we had to get 35 people. So a lot of that was just trying to get 35 qualified, experienced teachers is not easy. So it wasn't—we weren't trying to sort of, trying to get certain amounts of natives to non-natives or anything like that, it was just basically who was qualified and who could do the job.

In this extract, John stresses that qualifications and ability to "do the job" were, at least for him, the most important things needed by an DACP teacher. When asked if he felt the speakerhood of candidates was in any way an important criterion for teachers working in the DACP, he responded with a simple "no". Later in this chapter I will analyse the motivations of the program managers in more detail when it comes to the hiring of teachers, and will discuss in more depth the significance of "doing the job", but for now it is enough to show that 'native' or 'non-native' speaker status was of no importance to the program managers responsible for hiring. This is even enshrined in job advertisements placed on recruitment websites by the department (see Figure 4):

2. Qualifications	<p>A person falling under any one of the following categories is eligible to be appointed as an English Instructor.</p> <p>(1) A person who has obtained a Master's degree in English-language education and who has personal knowledge of and experience in English-language education at the university level; or</p> <p>(2) A person who has obtained a Master's degree in a field other than English-language education and who has personal knowledge of and experience in English-language education at the university level; or</p> <p>(3) A person who has obtained a Master's degree in English-language education or in other field and a CELTA qualification, and who has personal knowledge of English-language education at the university level; or</p> <p>(4) A person considered to be similar to any of (1) through (3) above and who specifically has knowledge of and sufficient experience in English-language education at the university level; or</p> <p>(5) A person considered to be similar to any of (1) through (4) above and who is specifically sufficiently experienced in English-language education at the university or high school level.</p> <p>*Applicants of any nationality are welcome to apply.</p>
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**Figure 4: 'Qualifications' section from DACP job opening**

Figure 3 shows the "qualifications" section of the public job advertisements made by the DACP, in which not only is nationality or speakerhood not mentioned as a necessary condition for applicants, it is even explicitly stated that "applicants of any nationality are welcome to apply". This explicit statement shows the commitment that course had to diversity and to their non-discriminatory hiring policy, at least on the surface. This was confirmed by their hiring practices. During the period in which my fieldwork was conducted, there were 59 instructors who worked on the course (not all at exactly the same time, it should be noted), 47 of whom were 'native speakers' and 12 of whom were 'non-native speakers'. While this may seem discriminatory at first, my interview data with program managers revealed that this was proportional to the number of applications received from teachers with different backgrounds. This can be seen from my interview with Richard:



**Richard:** That just seems to be a fact for a vast number of reasons, right? So therefore the number of, like, we were asked why don't you hire more female teachers? And we weren't actually seeing, like, I don't know what the figures were, but the number of applicants, far fewer female applicants than male applicants.

**Rob:** Right.

**Richard:** And I think all things being equal, then in terms of the quality, experience among those people then we would like to consider things like gender balance. Why? Not as an abstract value of itself, but just for the experience of the people working within the program. Like if you're the only one - like, if you're the only guy, and there's like forty-one women there [laughs] well, maybe that's not so good, right? So just so that it could be, you know, a comfortable environment for as many people - dynamic or familiar or just yeah. But I don't think we ever really got to that stage.

**Rob:** Right.

**Richard:** I don't know that we ever got to like here are two completely capable people, but this one's female, we less female - we have less women, let's hire that person.

**Rob:** Yeah. How about in terms of "speaker-hood", if you could call it that? Did, like, what was the proportion of applicants from kind of native speaker so-called backgrounds?

**Richard:** Again, I don't know the data here, but it was far larger numbers of native speaker teachers.

**Rob:** Right.

**Richard:** Yeah, far, far larger.

Richard, in this extract, begins by talking about gender balance among teachers, noting that while

they attempted to achieve a balance of men and women in the course, they received a far higher number of applications from men. Similarly, while they accepted applications from teachers of any national or linguistic background, regardless of perceived speakerhood the pool of teachers they could choose from was limited by the number of applicants. It seems fair to conclude from this that while the number of 'native speakers' was higher than the number of 'non-native speakers' in the course, this was proportional to the number of applications received, and does not indicate any particular bias in hiring.

In the DACP during the time of my research, teachers were hired from a variety of national backgrounds including Japan, America, China, Singapore, Russia, South Africa, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. In principle, as described earlier, the job was open to anyone, although applications were only received from these countries, according to the program managers (as shown in the extract above). We may question the veracity of their statements, but bearing in mind that participants from numerous backgrounds were in fact hired, there seems little reason to doubt them on this count. This imbalance may point to larger biases present in the industry as a whole (i.e. this program being perceived as 'native speaker'-only, as many such programs in Japan are, thus limiting the number of applicants from different backgrounds), however this analysis is concerned only with the situation in this particular program, and there seems to be little evidence pointing to a native-speakerist bias in the hiring procedures of this course. Unfortunately requests to see the employment applications made to the program during this research were refused, as the university considered this information confidential (rightly so, it may be said).

Contracts on the DACP were initially renewed yearly up to a total of three years (later extended to five - see Figure 5 for a job listing in which this is demonstrated), and this was the case both for the 'native' and 'non-native' speaker teachers on the program. When I first joined the program I was hired on a three-year contract, which was later extended.

Conditions	One-year contract, possibly renewed up to four times (for a total of 5 years maximum upon the mutual agreement of both parties)
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**Figure 5: 'Conditions' section from DACP job listing**

While other research has indicated that contract limitations are more often applied to the 'native speakers' in Japanese universities (Houghton & Rivers, 2013b), and that Japanese teachers are more likely to be offered tenure-track jobs in institutions of higher education (Nagatomo, 2012), in the DACP this was not the case. Both hiring and contract limitations were applied equally to all instructors regardless of national or linguistic background. This is demonstrated through the fact that all teachers received the same contract during the time of my fieldwork, and after five years all instructors were required to leave the program.

In summary, the hiring and recontracting of teachers on the DACP during the time that this research was conducted was fair, and did not indicate any overt native-speakerist bias. While it may be the case that patterns of job applications reflect larger native-speakerist attitudes at work in Japanese ELT as a whole (and we may consider this a likely possibility), nothing in the data collected for this project indicated that hiring or recontracting was biased either for or against 'native' or 'non-native speaker' teachers.

### **6.2.2. Duties and responsibilities of instructors**

Hiring is, of course, only the first step in a job, and the treatment of teachers once employed is equally, if not more important to analyse for signs of native-speakerism. In order to address this, in the following sections I will describe each of the duties and responsibilities of the instructors on the

course, and explain how these duties were equally assigned to teachers regardless of background. I will then move on to examine the beliefs which lay behind this equality in the treatment of teachers. This analysis will be based on several sources of data; on my own notes as a participant observer in the program, on artifacts collected from the site of the research, and on interview data gathered during my fieldwork.

### *Teaching*

As a teacher on the DACP, I was required to teach 90-minute discussion-based classes to first year undergraduates in the university, teaching the same basic lesson thirteen times a week (with one lesson free to act as a cover teacher for sick or otherwise absent colleagues), which was the usual workload for an instructor (see Figure 6).

#### **Regular Semester**

Instructors teach 14 lessons per week throughout each 14-week semester. Each lesson is 90 minutes. Typically, instructors will be scheduled to teach two or three lessons per day. Instructors are expected to devote two 90-minute class periods a week to office hours and one class period a week for Faculty Development sessions with Program Managers and peers, in addition to preparing daily lesson plans.

Monday to Friday (Periods 1, 2, and 3) Saturday (Periods 1 and 2)	First period	9:00-10:30
	Second period	10:45-12:15
	Third period	13:15-14:45

**Figure 6: Semester description**

During my fieldwork, students were divided by proficiency level, with very low-level students being placed in Group IV, and very high level students in Group I (see Figure 7).

### **i. Course Textbook**

Course textbooks have been developed for four separate levels of ability (Levels I – IV).

**Figure 7: Textbook levels**

Some of the students in Group IV could be so low in terms of proficiency that they had very little ability to express themselves in English at all, while those in Group I were frequently returnee students who had spent a period studying or living abroad and who were, in many cases, as fluent as their instructors. In many institutions of Japanese higher education, the higher-level groups would be classes reserved for the 'native speaker' instructors, due to the fact that programs like the DACP are focused on oral communication, and 'native speaker' teachers are considered to have a higher level of fluency and idiomatic control than their 'non-native speaker' counterparts (see (Medgyes, 1992, 2001). However, in the DACP this was not the case. During my fieldwork I generally observed the instructors were assigned to teach Group I classes based not on their background, but on the amount of experience they had accrued in teaching the course. Typically, after one year of teaching, an instructor was approached by their program managers and asked if they would like to teach the Group I classes. I was approached by one of my program managers after to teach the Group I classes after about one year in the course. As I wrote in my field notes:

Today Richard asked me if I would be willing to teach the Group I instructors, as I've now been in the program for a year. I've heard it's more difficult, but agreed to it. It should make a change from regular teaching. We had a brief discussion about the needs of the students, and particularly the need to 'sell' them on the functions.

Instructors had the choice to refuse, but very few did - general opinion expressed during my time in

the course indicated that teaching Group I students was something of a challenge, and served to break up the routine of DACP teaching, as can be seen in my quote above.

In terms of teaching, instructors were treated in exactly the same way, regardless of national or linguistic background, and classroom duties were not assigned on the basis of perceived speakerhood. There was, in other words, clear professional equality among all of the teachers on the program with regards to their classroom duties.

### *Research*

Each year, the instructors in the DACP were required to do a professional development project which was again referenced in both the instructor handbook and the DACP journal (see Figure 8) and was something I experienced throughout my time on the program.

- c) Instructor duties including: independent work at home, teacher observations, and professional development

**Figure 8: Instructor duties**

This generally involved a piece of classroom research based on a teaching activity, an approach to feedback, or something similar, and these projects were usually experimentally based pieces of research conducted over several weeks in each semester. The results of the first semester's research were usually published and distributed internally to other members of staff, while the results of the second semester's research were published in a journal produced by the department (in-house journals are very common in Japanese institutions, as explained by Kamada (2007) which was distributed to instructors, to other universities, and copies of which were held in the national library of Japan. Figure 9, taken from the second issue of the DACP journal, shows that "every year, the

program asks [DACP] instructors to complete a piece of writing as part of their professional development...This journal is a collection of their contributions to this ongoing dialogue."

██████ Program Managers believe that one way to combat this challenge is to document what happens in ██████ classrooms through instructors' eyes. Like all language teachers, ██████ instructors make a variety of on-the-spot decisions in classrooms, develop activities, and experiment with different instructional approaches, all in order to facilitate students' learning. The ██████ program regards these ideas and experiences as valuable resources in ascertaining the effectiveness of teaching discussion skills in an EFL context. In many teaching settings, however, teachers' ideas and practices are not recorded, meaning valuable research into language teaching and learning is left unwritten. Therefore, every year, the program asks ██████ instructors to complete a piece of writing as part of their professional development to share ideas about effective teaching and learning within the ██████ teaching community. This journal is a collection of their contributions to this ongoing dialogue.

**Figure 9: Faculty development description**

A copy of part of the contents page of the first issue of the journal (with identifying information redacted) can be seen in Figure 10, with articles based on professional development projects.

<b>Section Four: Action Research</b>	4-1
<b>Part 1- Fluency</b>	
1 Impact of Fluency Activities on English Discussion Skills	4-3
2 Reducing the Performance Disparity between First and Second Speakers in the 4/3/2 Speaking Activity	4-9
3 Measuring Fluency	4-16
4 Fluency 3-2-1 – Effective- Yes! But Do They Like It Too?	4-20
<b>Part 2- Discussion skills</b>	
1 Using Discourse Organizers to Promote Interaction in Discussion	4-26
2 If You Want to Have a Good Discussion: Student Use of Conditional Statements and Questions	4-32
3 Priming More Advanced Follow-up Questions with Sentence Models	4-37
4 Different Approaches to Encouraging Students to Ask Follow-up Questions	4-44
<b>Part 3- Feedback</b>	
1 Investigating Teacher Praise and Direct Feedback as Motivational Tools in the Classroom	4-49
2 Exploring Guiding Principles of Feedback with Students and Teachers	4-56
3 Using Teacher-centered Feedback to Combat Unnatural Turn Taking in English Discussion Classes	4-67
4 Studying the Effectiveness of Formative Feedback	4-73
5 Research into the Effectiveness of Peer Feedback in a Discussion-based Classroom	4-77
6 Peer Feedback: Do Our Students React to It as Positively as Teachers Wish?	4-83
7 Goal Setting in Discussion Class	4-89
8 Comparing the Effectiveness of Different Kinds of Self-Assessment Questionnaires	4-93
9 Self-Assessment and Target Language Production	4-99

**Figure 10: Journal contents**

Instructors were free to do whatever project they wanted, or even to refuse to do a project (although few did, as the almost guaranteed publication in the in-house journal was seen to be advantageous in future job applications), and these conditions were applied equally to both 'native' and 'non-native' speaker teachers. All instructors were required to do a project, and could choose any project they wanted (although my own experience attests that 'critical' projects were strongly discouraged, which is somewhat telling).

Perhaps most interestingly for the purposes of this section is the procedure regarding the editing and reading of papers for publication in the journal. Often, journals in Japan require papers



written by 'non-native speaker' authors to be proofread by a 'native speaker': a highly dubious practice that would seem to disregard actual linguistic ability in favour of some notion of intuitive correctness, one of the major myths surrounding 'native speakers' (Moussa and Llurda, 2008). In Japan, this process is often called a "native check" or ‘ネイティブチェック’ (Toh, 2014); see the example in Figure 11.

教授会)	
封筒不足分があれば図書館へ依頼	リ 選
ネイティブチェック依頼	査
すべての論文について査読	
印刷所への見積依頼	
見積の開封と印刷所の決定	

Figure 11: 'Native check' in a university document

However, in contrast to other journals, the DACP journal did not require its submissions to undergo a 'native check', no matter the background of the authors. In addition to this, no particular model of English was demanded by the journal in terms of spelling, grammatical peculiarities, or any other linguistic features. This was confirmed in the following reply to a question sent to a program manager via email regarding the editorial policies of the journal (with the understanding their reply would be used as part of this research):

We generally follow APA guidelines in terms of formatting for the journal, with a few small and minor exceptions. In terms of variety of English (American, British, Australian,

etc.), that is up to the author. Every article is checked for typos and general readability - typos are usually fixed directly by the proof-reader, while any changes that would affect meaning are done by the author (occasionally in collaboration with the proof-reader). The proof-readers are PMs, but there is no principle about native or non-native speakers - i.e. non-native PMs also proof-read.

Although the program manager only mentions Western varieties of English in this statement, the fact that authors from other language backgrounds were regularly published in the journal indicates that this policy extended to other varieties of English too. The statement also shows that proofreading was carried out by both 'native' and 'non-native' speaker program managers, once again demonstrating that there was no overtly native-speakerist bias at work in the production of the journal.

The way that research was carried out and published in the DACP journal was, as far as can be ascertained, completely equal among all instructors and no particular model of English was privileged over others, nor did the editorial process rely on 'native speakers' from inner-circle countries to check the English being used. There was, in other words, no overt native-speakerist bias present in the process by which research was conducted and prepared for publication in the DACP journal.

### *Faculty development*

Instructors in the DACP were required to undergo regular 'Faculty development' (termed 'FD' hereafter), a process which was nominally focused on improving the knowledge and skills of instructors, although, as will be shown in later chapters, there is a question as to whether or not this was the true purpose of the FD. The claimed purpose for the FD, as stated in the instructor

handbook, was to help instructors to professionally develop, to critically reflect on their teaching to collaboratively plan lessons and materials together, and to share knowledge, experiences and ideas. Faculty development was carried out through orientation weeks at the start of each semester, weekly 'faculty development' (FD) meetings, lesson observations, and the research projects described earlier. While there were many different forms of FD, the most constant were the weekly FD meetings, where all the teachers gathered to do training or discussion tasks set up by both the program managers and by other instructors. While an instructor, I observed that these FD sessions were sometimes to practice things such as assessment procedures, and to make sure that everyone was performing within the margin of error for these kinds of tasks, while at other times they were held to introduce new ideas for instructors to try in the classroom, although, as I will discuss later, this may not have been the true purpose of these sessions. In my fieldnotes I recorded an example of an FD focused on tests:

This week's FD meeting was about assessment in preparation for the next test. The instructors marked a ten-minute video and we discussed grading. The new procedure was making "I think..." count as a point in the test because it's technically a clause.

While the majority of these sessions were organised and hosted by the DACP managers during my fieldwork, FD meetings were occasionally run by instructors who had either requested or been invited to present an idea or an alternative activity to the other instructors on the course. During my time working on the program I saw presentations given by both 'native' and 'non-native' speakers in equal number - in fact, the presentations given by the 'non-native' speaker teachers were slightly more common, proportional to their representation in the program. During my time as an DACP instructor, I saw twenty-one FD sessions, seven of which were given by 'non-native speaker'

teachers. Why this was, I would not rush to speculate, although it may have been due to certain teachers who would be classed as 'non-native speakers' - particularly the Japanese teachers - having a more academic orientation, or a higher level of investment in their work. As one of my interviewees, Keiko, explains:

**Keiko:** A lot of people, a lot of native teachers comment on me that it's always Japanese teachers who stay late. [laughter] And I think it's most of the time true that we, maybe there are a different reasons, but I think Japanese teachers seem to be paying more attention to planning or comments, I don't know, compared to the other teachers.

Once again, the ways in which these FDs were organised and run did not evince any discrimination on the basis of speakerhood or nationality, and the number of instructors both participating and presenting in these sessions was closely representative of the makeup of the body of instructors on the program during my time as an instructor.

### *Observations and feedback*

As in most teaching jobs, teaching observations were conducted regularly in the DACP, occurring once a semester for most instructors, and twice in the first semester of employment for new instructors. The purpose of the observations, as stated both by the program managers and in official internal documents was both to make sure the curriculum maintained its unity, and to support teacher development. During my fieldwork I experienced observations several times. These observations were initially conducted by program managers, but as instructors became more comfortable with the teaching approach and methodology, the sessions shifted more towards peer-feedback, with classes being videotaped and the videos sent to other staff members, who then

watched the video and took notes. The instructors then had a meeting to share their opinions, criticisms, and recommendations for each other's lessons. After this meeting, instructors met with one of the program managers who would discuss their lesson and offer advice.

This observation system operated in exactly the same way for both 'native' and 'non-native' speaker teachers, and instructors were required to give feedback in exactly the same way, no matter their linguistic background. As a teacher on the course, I was regularly observed by both 'native' and 'non-native' program managers, as well as by fellow instructors. In all cases I felt that I was being observed and evaluated by a peer and an equal, and often received valuable advice. I recorded one example of an observation feedback session with a Japanese instructor (pseudonymously named Nami) in my research journal, the entry for which reads:

Today's feedback session was with Nami. We gave each other conflicting advice, which was interesting. I told her I thought her instructions were too simple, and that she could try speeding up her voice or using more complex language. She said that my instructions were too difficult, and she felt the students weren't always clear on what to do. In the end, we both resolved to try each other's approach in the future and see what happens. I'm not convinced about her ideas, but this is the kind of thing Farrell said to do<sup>2</sup>, so I should probably try it out.

There are numerous possible reasons for the difference in our instructional approaches, but the important point for the purposes of this analysis is to note that both instructors were meeting each other on an equal footing, and each taking something away from the encounter to try in their future

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<sup>2</sup> This refers to Thomas Farrell, whose workshop on reflective practice I had recently attended.

classes. During my time on the program I frequently saw this kind of collaboration and discussion going on between teachers, but the formalised nature of the observation feedback sessions made the equality and mutual respect and responsibility among teachers clear. This mutual respect is another piece of evidence showing that the program largely avoided native-speakerism, particularly, it seems, in terms of the "cultural disbelief" (2005) regularly observed in language teaching programs, in which teachers from non-Western backgrounds are considered to be culturally deficient and to have little to contribute to classroom practice or to ELT theory (though I will argue in chapter 7 that cultural disbelief could be found manifesting in other ways in the program). In the DACP, teachers and program managers regularly engaged in both structured and more informal discussions about aspects of their practice, and take each other's ideas on board.

#### *Coursebook evaluation*

As a teacher on the course, I was required to use a coursebook produced by the program managers and comprising wholly original material. These books were the basis of the course and were used by all DACP instructors during my fieldwork. The textbooks were commonly updated on a year-by-year basis during my time as an instructor to improve the suitability and teachability of their content (i.e. matching of particular sets of functional language to appropriate topics in which the functional language was easy to use). This process was aided by a coursebook evaluation conducted at the end of each year (see Figure 12 for a description, taken from an article in the DACP journal), which every instructor on the course was expected to complete.

### TEXTBOOK REVISION

Each edition of the EDC textbook is revised on an annual basis in order to remain compatible with the changing local context. The revision process therefore reflects the development of curricular principles while adhering to the original objectives of the course and furthering overall course aims. This revision cycle is described in Figure 1 below.

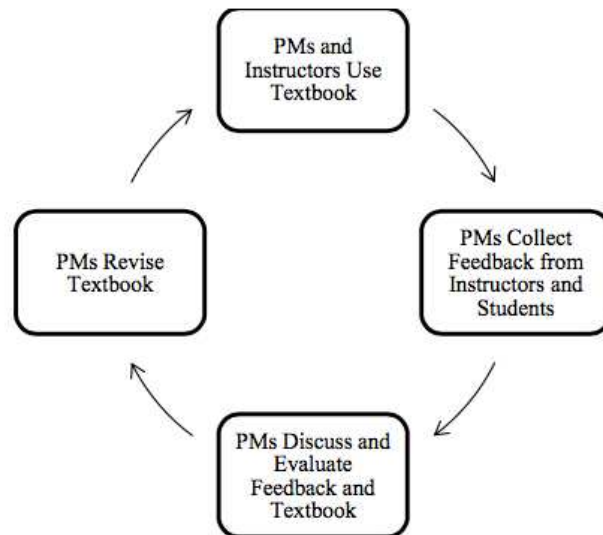


Figure 1. EDC textbook revision cycle.

### Figure 12: Textbook revision from DACP journal

I refer in my field notes to the fact that this was seen as a "chore" by many instructors, and often we would joke about all circling the option "3" (i.e. 'no change') rather than seriously considering the questions. Each instructor received a document to fill in via email in which they could rate each section of the book (readings, dialogues, practice activities, discussion questions) on a scale of 1-5, and then suggest changes or improvements. This process involved all instructors, and contributions were given equal weight from all. There was no distinction between the instructors, and during my time in the program I was aware of numerous suggestions being accepted (and rejected) from both 'native' and 'non-native' speakers, though I did not note down specific examples of these in my field notes. There is one passage from my journal which is somewhat telling in this regard:

My suggestion for new Group IV phrases for the 'paraphrasing' function was ignored again. That's two years in a row.

The foregoing discussion, based on observations, research notes and interview data gathered during my fieldwork, shows the extent to which instructors on the course, both 'native' and 'non-native', were treated equally in all aspects of their work, and demonstrates how the course managed to successfully avoid overtly native-speakerist attitudes in the treatment of, and assignment of duties to, instructors on the DACP.

### **6.2.3. Images and advertising**

While I was teaching on the course, the DACP developed its own website, containing information about the course, about the in-house journal, and about the instructors working on the course. Each teacher was presented on the introduction page with a photograph and a short paragraph introducing the instructor and their professional background. As all instructors were presented in the same way, there was little to suggest the course was trying to sell itself through this representation of its 'native speaker' instructors. There were four main pages on the DACP website,





**Figure 13: Image of a Japanese instructor on the DACP website**



**Figure 14: Image of foreign instructor on the DACP website**

and each was headed by a large, eye-catching photograph. Two of the photographs were illustrative of the university campus and the university library, while two contained photographs of instructors, one showing a White British instructor, and one showing a Japanese instructor (see Figure 13 and

Figure 14). This is further in evidence in the images chosen to advertise the course in a popular higher education magazine, where again the images are balanced (Figure 15 and Figure 16).

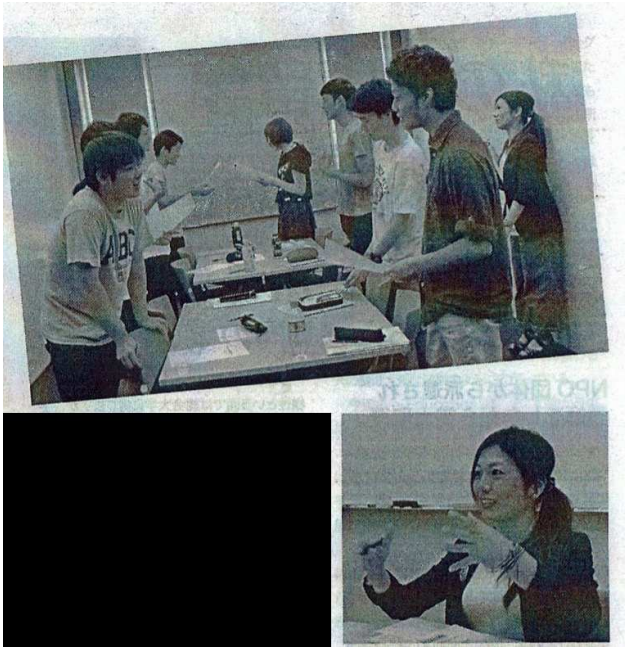


Figure 15: Image of Japanese DACP instructor in magazine



Figure 16: Image of foreign DACP instructor in magazine

As explained in chapter 2, English programs in Japan often use the images of the 'native speaker' (that is to say, the archetypal model of a white, Western person) in order to sell their courses (Seargeant, 2009). This may be seen in advertisements in which white faces are prominently displayed, or it may be in the overt use of the term "native speaker" (in Japanese "ネイティブスピーカー") mentioned in the advertising copy of schools and universities, including, regrettably, in my own institution. In contrast to this, the DACP at Akarenga University never used this terminology as a way of selling courses during the time frame of my research, and the images it included seemed to be balanced, in that they contained instructors from a variety of national or ethnic backgrounds.

The images do not appear to be slanted in favour of depictions of 'native speakers', as only one such instructor is pictured, and this is balanced with a Japanese instructor also pictured. While in these two examples the Japanese instructor is facing away from the camera while the foreign instructor is pictured face-on, it should be noted that this arrangement was reversed in previous years, though unfortunately I was unable to get photographs of these earlier images for inclusion in this thesis, as they had changed before my fieldwork began and requests to access copies of the photographs were refused. In fact, the images used to sell the course seemed to be more focused on the beauty of the campus and facilities than the background of its instructors. Unlike many schools and universities in Japan, Akarenga University's Discussion and Communication Program did not use exoticised images of foreign people as a selling point of its course, and balanced images of these instructors with Japanese counterparts.

#### **6.2.4. Perceptions of teachers**

Finally, I would like to give some perspectives on this issue from the 'non-native speaker' teachers

employed on the course. While it is important to look at all of the other factors that can be interpreted to show that treatment on the course was fair and equal, this analysis would be incomplete without listening to the voices of those who were employed on the course and would actually be subject to any discrimination. As such, in this section I will include relevant passages from the interviews I conducted with 'non-native speaker' teachers on the DACP, in order to show whether or not they felt that they experienced any discrimination. The first of these perspectives comes from the interview I conducted with Wen, a young Chinese teacher who entered the DACP fresh from his postgraduate studies in the United States. In the following extract, Wen gives his perspective on whether there was any discrimination in the DACP:

**Wen:** In this course or in this field in general. I think still in Japan people in general, public in general, still favour native speakers.

**Rob:** So in this course do you think that - so there's diversity, and in Japan native speakerism is kind of an issue. Do you think that there is any native speakerism within the course?

**Wen:** [long pause]

**Rob:** [laughs]

**Wen:** Well, personally speaking, based on my experience, I never had any conflicts or any talks or discussions that caught my attention or alert me some people may discriminate against me cos I'm from China. I never had such kind of feelings. But honestly, surely, compared to Americans or British, my English is not perfect and of course sometimes I feel there's a limit in terms of my language ability, but I don't think it affects my teaching, and I don't think people judge me much or even if they did, they didn't show it, so yeah, I don't feel any issue or problem here being Chinese and teaching

English communicative course here, yeah. And not only from - I think because of diversity, cos we not only have native speakers, we also have Japanese instructors as well, and instructors from other countries, so yeah. And I think as I say maybe people here went through a selective process to get in, so they have some education and yeah, yeah.

While Wen seems to express a certain lack of confidence in his language ability, which has been referred to in the native-speakerism research literature as "self-discrimination" (see Reves & Medgyes, 1994), he does not seem aware of any discrimination or judgment against him based on his national or linguistic background. It may be that he is simply not expressing these feelings due to the history that I (the interviewer) and he (the interviewee) had of working together on the course, or because of my 'native speaker' positioning, which may have caused him to downplay any feelings of discrimination he may have had. However, this seems unlikely as he was more than happy in the same interview to voice his dissatisfaction with other aspects of the course and his working conditions, and he was also fully aware of my political and ideological beliefs. Wen's words also have the ring of verisimilitude about them, because they match with the stated views of the other 'non-native speakers' interviewed for the project. Keiji, who was born in Japan and spent much of his childhood in Canada, first outlined his own feelings about his speakerhood in our interview:

**Rob:** So as - maybe you remember, maybe you don't - the topic of my research is about native speakerism. So first of all, do you consider yourself a native speaker of English or not?

**Keiji:** That's a really difficult question to answer. I have mixed feelings about that. Yes, I do consider myself a native, as a native speaker, but sometimes - hmm, I don't know -

but I think, you know, being, reaching the age of 40 already - 41, actually - I don't think I can match the vocabulary size as a 41 year old person who was probably born and raised in the UK or the US. So from the point of view I think maybe people - I don't know - that's what kind of puts me on the wall. Should I consider myself native or not? But, I don't know, language competence-wise, I would say yes.

While Keiji states that he considers himself to be a 'native speaker', with some small reservations regarding vocabulary size, he notes that he has received discriminatory treatment in the past based on his Japanese heritage:

**Rob:** Okay. Do you think your background has ever affected - well, I mean, have you ever experienced anything like discrimination or anything like that because of your background and your...?

**Keiji:** As a teacher, you mean?

**Rob:** Yes, yeah, yeah.

**Keiji:** Well, I would say yes. Before Akarenga I tried out for a few positions. That university position, I was forced to teach reading and writing, which I did not really prefer, I would have preferred the communicative, the speaking skills side. But since I had the Japanese name and exterior they were like, no, you're teaching reading and writing course so I'm like, okay.

Keiji describes in this extract his experience of professional discrimination, and how he was tasked with teaching classes because of his appearance and nationality, which he would have preferred not to teach. While he would have liked to have taught speaking skills, he was instead, as a Japanese

teacher and a perceived 'non-native speaker', assigned reading and writing classes. This is reflective of other studies which show that Japanese teachers are often given more 'serious' classes such as grammar and writing, while 'native speaker' teachers are generally tasked with teaching oral communication or conversation classes (Nagatomo, 2012, 2016). However, Keiji states that on the DACP course he did not receive any discrimination of this kind:

**Rob:** And so you said before Akarenga, so have you ever had any experiences of being treated differently, again, because of your background, at Akarenga or, you know, compared to the other instructors?

**Keiji:** Not from the Akarenga staff and stuff, thinking [about] it from a teacher perspective, no. But, you know, naturally from others teachers and stuff they will ask the Japanese teachers including me with help with Japanese and stuff and that. But I don't think that's a kind of a negative kind of treatment, so no.

**Rob:** So in terms of the responsibilities of the course - in terms of the actual things you're expected to do as part of the course, do you think that there's any difference in the treatment of teachers from different backgrounds?

**Keiji:** Not really, but I don't know, this is probably an exceptional case, but when Akarenga started introducing Japanese into the Group IV textbooks some of the Japanese instructors, me included, were asked to actually make the Japanese for the textbooks which I think that's probably about the only thing I've been asked for with my Japanese background.

While Keiji describes a kind of discrimination here, it is mostly concerned with the program managers and teachers on the course taking advantage of his Japanese linguistic expertise and

bilingualism. This could be read as a form of 'positive discrimination', but this is certainly not reflective of the kind of discrimination described earlier in this thesis, or the kind of discrimination Keiji himself describes as having experienced at previous points in his career. Like Wen, Keiji did not feel he had experienced discrimination during his time in the DACP.

From the data presented here, it seems clear that 'non-native speakers' on the course did not feel discriminated against. This is in line with the other observations provided earlier in this chapter regarding the treatment of teachers, and the advertising practices of the course. The DACP certainly appears to have been a place in which teachers, both those perceived to be 'native speakers' and those perceived to be 'non-native speakers', were treated equally (albeit with the occasional request to complete a task using their bilingual abilities or proficiency in Japanese). This was expressed by both of the participants who explicitly discussed this issue in the interviews. While it is possible that these voices are a minority, and that other teachers may have been treated differently, the combination of these statements with the other observations made about the course makes this seem an unlikely scenario.

With this information in mind regarding the equal treatment of instructors and the non-discriminatory advertising practices of the course, it is easy to see why, when initially approaching this project, I felt that issues of native-speakerism had been successfully resolved in this program. I will attempt to problematise aspects of this in the coming sections and chapters, but first I wish to examine some of the possible reasons for why the program was structured in this way.

### **6.3. Reasons for equality**

It is interesting to consider how this situation was arrived at, and interview data from Richard, the longest-serving of the two program managers, and the only interviewee who had been with the



course from its inception provided three reasons for the equality seen in the course: an institutional reason, a personal reason, and a professional reason. I will describe all three below, with reference to interview data.

### **6.3.1. Institutional and personal reasons: Diversity as an intrinsic good**

In describing his initial experience of being hired on the course, Richard mentions numerous issues that were experienced by himself and the other teachers, in terms of the lack of general organisation of the course and a lack of clear direction in terms of materials. In the midst of this, he mentions that teachers were selected consciously by the professors in charge of creating the program to provide a diversity and variety of backgrounds:

**Richard:** So one of the problems was the teachers that were recruited weren't recruited to teach with any specific methodology or without any background in mind. From what I understood, it was I think we were all hired because we represented different backgrounds or we had different like English-speaking communities or yeah, I think they wanted to say yeah, we're culturally interesting and culturally exciting for our students.

**Rob:** Right.

**Richard:** Therefore we have, you know, someone from China, someone from New Zealand, someone from the States, someone from the UK, some Japanese teachers, it was a mix. So when there's no syllabus, there's no methodology, there's no textbook, there's no understanding about what the teacher's role is in the classroom, you basically have nothing.

In this extract, Richard is shown to briefly touch on the topic of diversity in the hiring of DACP instructors, and hints that this was done purposefully by the professors in charge of the course in

order to display some level of cultural diversity to students. Richard then quickly moves on to another topic. However, I felt this was an important point, and decided to pursue it for a while with further questions. When drawn back to the issue of diversity, Richard gave an interesting institutional reason for the level of diversity present in the selection of instructors:

**Rob:** So do you think when you started out the teachers were selected, there was a conscious effort to have diversity there?

**Richard:** I can't back that up with anything, but my - cos I can't understand why the people that were hired were hired.

**Rob:** Right.

**Richard:** Because in terms of how - like if we sat around the table, how we spoke about teaching, there was no common ground. And so my own understanding of the interview, there was very few questions that actually related to what I might do in a classroom.

**Rob:** Right.

**Richard:** And so trying to look for something, and also hearing the professors themselves speak, I think they put quite a high priority on the concept of culture, I think.

**Rob:** Right.

**Richard:** And maybe it's to do with the fact that they were associated with teaching intercultural communication; that was their background. So in that sense it's kind of understandable. And not to say that that's the forefront, but I think that was a thing.

In this extract, it seems clear that from Richard's point of view, the initial focus on diversity in the hiring of instructors was largely due to the fact that the professors in charge of the program were from the intercultural communication department, and as such valued having instructors from a

variety of national and linguistic backgrounds. Other interviewees expressed similar beliefs about the reasons for diversity in the hiring process. For example, Joseph, one of the 'native speaker' teachers interviewed, gave a similar response to the question of why he felt there was diversity in the hiring of instructors:

**Rob:** And so in the program there are lots of different teachers from lots of different national and linguistic backgrounds. Why do you think that is?

**Joseph:** Yeah, that's a good question. [laugh] I think maybe the program managers have a clearer idea, but I think part of it is maybe at Akarenga or in this program there's some idea of English as a tool, a communication tool, and not so much this is the correct or this is the standard English and this is what we need to teach or what we need students to produce. So I think the variety of English is irrelevant to, yeah, what teachers teach at Akarenga. So I think in that way it doesn't matter what nationality or what variety of English or what standard of correctness the teachers speak with.

**Rob:** So you think it kind of doesn't matter at all?

**Joseph:** Yeah, well I think that's the [laugh] one way. And then I think they also do want to have that diversity as good in its own right. I don't know what that good is exactly, I think it's good, I couldn't describe how, why it's good, but I think there is some sense in the program that diversity is good, we should have diversity, and it doesn't hurt anything.

Joseph in this extract seems to echo Richard's sentiment that the diversity in the course was a good "in its own right" - almost an intrinsic good. This appears to mirror Richard's view that teachers on the course were initially hired from diverse backgrounds as a way of displaying cultural diversity to their students. Joseph gives another reason here, connected to English as a

communication tool, and therefore no particular variety of English being preferred or privileged over any other. I will discuss this in more detail below (see section 6.3.2).

Richard seems to have initially held some reservations about the idea of hiring teachers as a display of ethnic diversity, because he feels that these teachers were not hired on the basis of their teaching ability, which therefore made it very difficult for the program to run smoothly as everyone was pulling in different directions. For these reasons, he refers to this time as "horrific... perhaps the worst working experience of my life." However, once he was made a program manager and placed in charge of hiring, he maintained the diversity present in the national and linguistic backgrounds of the instructors on the DACP. Partially, he admits that this was purely a personal or political preference on his part:

**Rob:** Do you think - well, having teachers from different backgrounds, like different "speaker-hoods", speaker-based backgrounds, working together at the same level on the same contracts, doing the same job, you know, doing, you know, kind of hosting FD sessions and that kind of thing...

**Richard:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Rob:** Was that something you were trying to achieve, or was it just a -

**Richard:** For me personally, like, if I'm completely honest, I would like it to be like that. Personally I think that's a nice environment to work in, but I don't know, I wouldn't like to extend that value to any other human being that I work with. [laughs]

**Rob:** Okay.

**Richard:** And I would try not to let that slip because I don't know, you can't say that that objectively is better than an all-Japanese environment. I mean, there are plusses and minuses to all these things, right?

**Rob:** Why would particularly - Or, why do you think that's something you'd like?

**Richard:** Just because of my own background! [laughs]

**Rob:** Okay!

**Richard:** [laughs] It's a pure personal bias! I mean I come from a background that's like mixed Scottish, English, Spanish, Irish, it's a whole host of things, so and I'm interested in different cultures, I'm interested in talking to people from different cultures, I find it's dynamic. I mean, there's a reason why I'm not living in the nest still, right? [laughs]

**Richard:** And I've sought that out and I like that international environment. I think a lot of the teachers do as well. But the only thing I can say is that I wonder if sometimes in Japan there's a preference or perhaps there's a stereotype of a native speaker teacher.

**Rob:** Right.

**Richard:** And I think, you know, that's propagated by *eikaiwa*. If you look at who they're putting on the posters, and look at who they're using to sell the concept of English, it's a certain thing, isn't it?

**Rob:** What is it, do you think?

**Richard:** I think it's white. If possible blonde.

Richard is clearly aware of the political issues surrounding the 'native'/'non-native' speaker issue in Japan, including its racialised undertones, and indicates that he is opposed to this. He describes the kinds of stereotypes of English teachers found throughout the Japanese ELT industry, where white, blonde teachers presumed to be of Anglo-American origin are displayed as enticement to prospective students (Seargeant, 2009), and describes, in contrast, his own preference for a multicultural and multinational working environment. Certainly, as I demonstrated earlier (see section 6.2.3), the DACP does not rely on explicit native-speakerist imagery to promote or sell

itself, and is careful to balance the representations of its instructors in advertising material and on its website. The reason Richard gives here for maintaining diversity in his hiring of instructors is due to his own political and social persuasions. In other words, as with the professors he describes who initially set up the course, for Richard diversity in the ethnic, national, and cultural background of instructors is an intrinsic good. However, he also demonstrates considerable self-awareness in saying that this is a purely personal preference, and that it is not possible to objectively say that this would be better than an all-Japanese environment (or, presumably, an all-'native speaker' environment either), and at least voices an unwillingness to force his beliefs on other people. Therefore, while Richard may have a personal preference for an internationally mixed pool of instructors, and while this is likely to have played a part in the make-up of the instructors on the DACP, this is unlikely to be the whole story for why the program maintains the diversity and equality among instructors that it does. In fact, there are two other reasons given both by Richard and by other interviewees, including Richard's fellow program manager John, which seem to be stronger and more convincing reasons for instructor equality on the DACP.

### **6.3.2. Professional reasons: English as a tool, and 'doing the job'**

Two strong themes emerged from my research into the reasons for, and causes of, equality on the DACP, and both of these appear to be connected strongly to notions of professionalism. The first of these concerns the model of the language that was taught on the course, and the second, related, reason concerns the ability of instructors to 'do the job'.

#### *English as a communication tool*

As noted earlier, numerous studies have shown that in ELT in general and in Japanese ELT in particular, there is a strong preference among both institutions and students for standard

Anglo-American Englishes to be taught. Despite the decades of research and theorising on the topic of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and English as an International Language (EIL), there has been little change in the practices of the profession, with its continued focus on Anglo-American models of English and 'native'-normativity. However, in the DACP, this did not appear to be the case. Rather than focusing on the teaching of a particular model of English, with the specific pronunciation features, vocabulary, idioms, and grammar that would accompany this, the DACP instead focused on the use of English as a communication tool. This is given by Joseph, one of the 'native speaker' teachers, as one reason for equality on the course:

**Joseph:** Yeah, that's a good question [laughs]. I think maybe the program managers have a clearer idea, but I think part of it is maybe at Akarenga or in this program there's some idea of English as a tool, a communication tool, and not so much this is the correct or this is the standard English and this is what we need to teach or what we need students to produce. So I think the variety of English is irrelevant to, yeah, what teachers teach at Akarenga. So I think in that way it doesn't matter what nationality or what variety of English or what standard of correctness the teachers speak with.

In this extract Joseph clearly demonstrates that from his perspective the fact that English was seen as a communication tool on the course meant that the nationality and variety of English used by the teachers didn't matter, because it was irrelevant to whether or not they were able to teach the language used on the course. This sentiment is echoed in the statements of other participants. Mark, another of the 'native speaker' teachers interviewed, also expressed a similar, though somewhat differently focused, point of view:

**Rob:** So in the program there's kind of a variety of teachers, like lots of different, speaker backgrounds, national backgrounds. Do you think that that's a positive, a negative, a neutral thing?

**Mark:** I think it's definitely a positive. I think it's definitely a positive. I think for these Japanese students they do have some sort of ideal about English, and it's typically American English, so even to have them exposed to different accents and different stylistic choices, to broaden their scope of what they perceive to be acceptable I think is important. Because I do think they are very form-focused and they do have an ideal of what it means to speak English, which is really not reflective of the reality of what goes on around the world.

By referring to the importance of exposing students to "different accents and different stylistic choices, to broaden their scope of what they perceive to be acceptable", Mark implicitly invokes ideas of world Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca, and English as a communication tool. Mark believes that Japanese students are generally focused on learning American English, and that having a mix of speakers of different national and linguistic backgrounds gives students the opportunity to experience the "reality of what really goes on around the world", which we can assume refers to the spread of English and English as an international language.

An example of the neutrality of the language presented in the course can be found in an incident which occurred roughly one year after I had begun working in the program. One of the communication skills the students were expected to learn and employ during discussions on the course was "reactions", which were generally short, content-free utterances such as "I see", "really?", "right", and so on. These were not intended to provide much more than feedback to the ideas other students were presenting in the discussion. While a reaction like "really?" may be



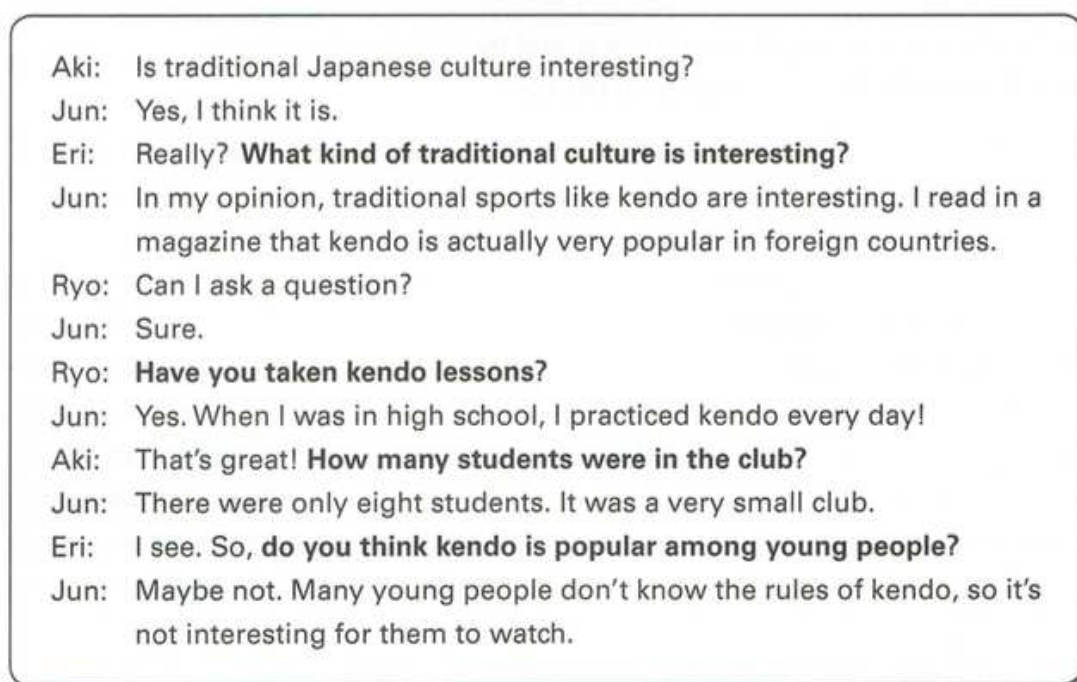
interpreted as expressing surprise, it could equally be taken as simply indicating that the listener is paying attention to what is being said. Some instructors felt that these reactions were too rigid and were not suitably natural for flowing conversation. One instructor, an American, decided to suggest some new reactions to be included in the course in the future, canvassing suggestions anonymously from other instructors (which yielded some humorously-intended suggestions such as "shit!" and "Jesus Christ!"). He then took the most popular of these suggestions to the program managers and suggested that they incorporate them into the textbook. One of these popular suggestions was "that sucks", and this phrase became the subject of much debate among DACP instructors. As I noted in my journal:

The reactions debate is still going on. It seems like the American instructors see 'it sucks' as something natural and neutral. A lot of the other non-American teachers (me included) think it's very Amero-centric. It would probably help to have corpus data.

While many of the North American instructors felt this was an appropriate addition to the course, teachers from other backgrounds were somewhat less comfortable, arguing that it seemed to be a phrase with cultural specificity (North American slang, in particular), and was thus unsuitable for the course, which was supposed to be internationally focused. The program managers ultimately agreed with this assessment, and chose not to include the suggestion in the redesigned coursebook. This was reflected in the rest of the language taught on the course, which consisted of sets of functional language aimed at helping students participate in discussions, such as "giving opinions", "checking understanding" and so on (see Figure 27, Figure 28, Figure 29). Some of these phrases taught might seem rather stilted to many people; for example, "do you think most people would agree?" and "personally speaking, I think..." have a rigidity that does not fit easily in informal

conversation. In fact, during one of my orientation sessions, a program manager confided that he sometimes worried that the course was creating its own DACP-specific form of discourse that would not be applicable outside that context.

As I have indicated in the foregoing discussion, in the DACP English was considered to be, and was treated as, a communication tool. It was not linked to any specific cultures or countries. In fact, in the DACP textbook, the most frequently mentioned country was Japan, and the four student names used in the model dialogues were always given Japanese names (Jun, Hiro, Aya, Mei, Aki, Ken, etc.). Both of these points can be seen in Figure 17:



Aki: Is traditional Japanese culture interesting?  
Jun: Yes, I think it is.  
Eri: Really? **What kind of traditional culture is interesting?**  
Jun: In my opinion, traditional sports like kendo are interesting. I read in a magazine that kendo is actually very popular in foreign countries.  
Ryo: Can I ask a question?  
Jun: Sure.  
Ryo: **Have you taken kendo lessons?**  
Jun: Yes. When I was in high school, I practiced kendo every day!  
Aki: That's great! **How many students were in the club?**  
Jun: There were only eight students. It was a very small club.  
Eri: I see. So, **do you think kendo is popular among young people?**  
Jun: Maybe not. Many young people don't know the rules of kendo, so it's not interesting for them to watch.

**Figure 17: dialogue from DACP textbook**

In other words, English was treated as something that can be used to communicate with others without having any specific ties to particular nationalities or cultures. This may have been, as indicated by Joseph, one of the driving forces behind the professional equality between teachers on

the program. As English was not tied to any particular culture in the context of the DACP course, it did not need to be taught by those perceived to be representatives of that culture, and indeed, it may even have been considered by some of those either teaching or overseeing the course to be a benefit to have teachers from different backgrounds who could show English to be the international communication tool it was presented as.

*Ability to 'do the job'*

While the conception of English as a tool for international communication was one factor driving the equality of instructors on the DACP, a second related reason was equally strongly expressed by both teachers and by program managers. In our interview, Richard provided another reason for the maintenance of diversity among the teaching body. This reason was a professional reason, involving the ability of instructors to adapt to the methods and approaches of the course:

**Rob:** Right. And so when you moved from, well, into the position of hiring teachers, was that something you tried to maintain consciously or was, you know, what did you have in mind when you were hiring people?

**Richard:** The first thing that we had in mind was - at that stage, when we were able to implement our own recruitment process, we focused very much on teacher's approach to teaching. So we knew what kind of methodology, we knew what the textbook was, we knew what methodology we'd like teachers to follow, therefore it was a case of are people aligned with that? So nothing radical about communicative language teaching. And given the levels of the students, they could manage to do the class in English. Also, given that they only had one class a week to develop their speaking skills, and we didn't know - because it wasn't unified across the other courses with presentation writing - we didn't know if they were using

English at all in any of those classes, we just wanted to give students as big a chance as they could within that short time to develop as speakers, therefore we needed teachers who naturally were aligned with that philosophy and weren't going to come in and say see their role as being lecturer, or to want a large amount of creative freedom, who would understand why things were the way they were.

We can see from this extract that Richard shows a strong preference for instructors to be chosen pragmatically on the basis of their ability or willingness to conform to the prescribed values of the program, and not to require too much freedom and creativity in their approach to teaching. John, the other program manager interviewed, made a similar point when asked if he felt the speakerhood of the teachers was important for those employed on the course:

**Rob:** So in the DACP there's quite a mixture of teachers in terms of national, linguistic, and professional backgrounds. Was that something that was done on purpose or is that kind of just a happy accident?

**John:** Yeah, I'm not sure, cos when I started what, there was two English people, two English, three American, two Japanese, one Chinese, and me, and it was kind of mentioned I think a few times, like we've got an eclectic bunch. So there was that kind of thing floating around but to be honest when we first went through the hiring in 2010 we had to get 35 people. So a lot of that was just trying to get 35 qualified, experienced teachers is not easy. So it wasn't - we weren't trying to sort of, trying to get certain amounts of natives to non-natives or anything like that, it was just basically who was qualified and who could do the job.

**Rob:** Right, okay. Do you think the native or non-native-ness of the teachers matters in

any way for this course?

**John:** No.

**Rob:** Why not?

**John:** Well, I think especially with this course, there is so much focus on student-to-student interaction and the goals and objectives are very specific so, I mean, I dunno, I haven't really thought about the non-natives and natives being suited for either types of courses, like I know there's an idea that natives are best for teaching speaking or communication or whatever, but there's not much modelling going on, so if you're worried about pronunciation or those kind of issues I don't think it's really a problem.

John expresses in this extract that an important qualification for those hired on the DACP was that teachers could "do the job", and that it was immaterial whether or not these teachers were 'native speakers' or 'non-native' speakers. In fact, while he seems aware of certain stereotypes about the skills and abilities of perceived 'native speakers' and 'non-native speakers' (i.e. "natives are best for teaching speaking or communication or whatever"), he explicitly states that he did not really consider whether the speakerhood of a candidate made them suitable for this particular job, focusing instead on their ability to teach the course as prescribed. John also, importantly, states that one reason speakerhood was unimportant is the context and structure of the course, stating that:

**John:** ...especially within this course, there is so much focus on student-to-student interaction and the goals and objectives are very specific.

In other words, the way in which the course was constructed, with a heavy focus on student-to-student interaction meant that the speakerhood of the teachers was, for John, irrelevant,

so long as they could meet the specific objectives of the program.

It is worth, at this point, reiterating the structure of the course. In each class, teachers followed a very clearly set series of activities and procedures. First, as soon as the bell rang, instructors handed out a quiz for students to answer based on their homework reading, for which they were allotted 3 minutes. After this, the students engaged in a 3/2/1 fluency activity (adapted from Maurice's [1983] 'fluency workshop'). The teacher then introduced the functional language for that week's lesson (which will become an important feature in the next chapter), and the students engaged in two lengthy discussions together in English, after each of which the teacher provided feedback. Teacher talking time was extremely low, and student speaking time was very high (in one observation of my own 90-minute class, I spoke for a total of under ten minutes, while my students spoke cumulatively for over 70 minutes), and activities were tightly packed into the available space of the lesson. Teachers had very little opportunity to innovate within this class time, and it could be a struggle simply to fit in all of the expected activities, let alone attempt to include any new ones. This is what Richard is referring to when he discusses the role of the teacher in the class, and the necessity of finding instructors who were "aligned with that philosophy" and did not "see their role as being lecturer, or...want a large amount of creative freedom". For John, this is what was meant by "doing the job". For both of these program managers, it appears that as long as teachers could follow the highly-structured lesson model of the DACP, their 'native' or 'non-native speaker' positioning was irrelevant.

Instructors appeared to share the same idea of professionalism within the course. Mark, one of the 'native-speaker' instructors expressed a similar point of view during his interview:

**Rob:** So what would you say a competent teacher needs to be? What is a competent teacher for you?

**Mark:** A competent teacher should understand the curricular goals and come to the classroom with a plan, and be aware of how the things they do in the classroom affect the students.

**Rob:** Right.

**Mark:** And there's gonna have to be some minimal level of speaking and listening proficiency of English as well. I don't think that - in this program - I really don't think that it's necessary to be native level, but enough to be looked upon by the students as the expert.

Mark, in this extract, again refers specifically to the idea that "in this course" it was unnecessary for a teacher to be "native level". In fact, for him, a competent teacher should "understand the curricular goals and come to the classroom with a plan, and be aware of how the things they do in the classroom affect the students". While Mark believes that some English proficiency was necessary for the teachers on the course, he does not feel that this 'native level' proficiency (which, of course, is a disputable term) was of primary importance, and believes in contrast that it was secondary to things such "curricular goals", which, again, links to the idea of being able to "do the job". This is further emphasised in the words of Heng, one of the 'non-native speaker' teachers on the course. During Heng's interview, which I will examine in more detail later, he refers to "teaching classes professionally", and when asked what this means says:

**Heng:** Professionally as in like everything that the DACP, well, following the DACP principles. So for example we have this fluency and then they will just do everything like clockwork. Fluency, after that they have their presentation then first presentation, second presentation, discussion one, discussion two. They would do everything like military

style.... Yeah, I think that's professional in the DACP sense.

In this sense, it seems that for the DACP it was immaterial what the background of the instructors was, in the view of the program managers and instructors, as long as they could meet the requirements of the course and 'do the job'. This would seem at first glance to be unproblematic - indeed, this is very much the goal of many 'non-native speaker teacher' advocacy groups such as TEFL Equity Advocates or the TESOL NNEST Caucus (Kamhi-Stein, 2016). However, it is important to examine what the course consists of before declaring that the problem of native-speakerism has been solved in this program, which will be the subject of the next section, and the following chapters.

Richard made a very strong statement during his interview for this project, in which he called the DACP a "professional utopia". This struck me for a few different reasons, first because of its implied exceptionalism of the course in the Japanese ELT landscape, and secondly because of the focus on some standard of professionalism as a benchmark for quality. The notion of professionalism was one which reoccurred throughout my fieldwork, and which was used, as I shall demonstrate later, almost as a synonym for the practices of the program itself. The professionalism spoken of here was connected very closely to the concept of the "unified curriculum", a central aspect of Akarenga University's educational philosophy, and in order to understand the analysis made in this thesis it will be necessary to look at professionalism in the DACP in the context of the unified curriculum.

#### **6.4. Professionalism in the context of the unified curriculum**

One important incident which occurred during the course of my fieldwork was the arrival of an anonymous email, accusing members of the DACP of bad behaviour including dating students,



drinking heavily, using drugs, and a host of other irresponsible acts. The reaction to this from the instructors was very strong, with one sending an irate email to the managers of the program expressing outrage that these accusations had been made against "the most professional group of teachers I have ever worked with". The teachers on the course prided themselves on their professionalism and so too did the management. Professionalism appeared to be strongly connected to the development and maintenance of the unified curriculum.

Akarenga University spent much time developing a unified curriculum for all the subjects in the university so that all their students received the same educational experience and outcomes. The manifestation of the unified curriculum in the DACP was rather more severe than in other sections of the university. As already stated, the lessons in the DACP were highly standardised, and activities were tightly packed within their 90 minutes, meaning teachers had very little opportunity to innovate or try new approaches within the classroom. While this on its own may seem restrictive, it is also important to note that while other academics in the university taught a unified curriculum (i.e. all law professors would provide lectures on the same topics to their students), they at least had the benefit of teaching several different courses and lectures. This was not so in the DACP. As the DACP was a first-year course, and was mandatory for all first-year students, the roughly forty instructors working on the program at any one time taught almost exactly the same lesson thirteen or fourteen times a week. As the lessons rarely changed from week to week, this meant instructors were teaching lessons with almost exactly the same structure (modified only by new language being plugged into the "presentation" section) two or three times a day, six days a week, for up to five years. The strictures of the unified curriculum on the DACP have implications for what was considered "professional" and what actions were considered "professional behaviour" on the program. The term "professional" seemed to have two key meanings in the DACP. The first was connected to the unity of the curriculum itself. Peter, one of the 'native speaker' instructors makes it

clear that to him, the professionalism of the department was tied to the unification of the curriculum:

**Rob:** So would you describe this as a professional department?

**Peter:** I would, I would. Having worked at other universities, it's definitely very professional.

**Rob:** In what sense is it different to other universities?

**Peter:** There is a clear structure, if you have a problem you know who you have to talk to. There's a continual desire to make the program the best it can be. The textbooks are constantly reviewed. We talked before about the FDs. These are kept going, the argument that it's just reinforcement is one point, but that's part of professionalism, to keep people on message and to ensure there's oversight.

There is a significance to Peter's words here that will be explored in the next chapter, regarding the 'reinforcement' that is part of the FD sessions. However, for the time being it is interesting that for Peter, the concept of professionalism was connected to the program's "clear structure", to keeping people "on message", and to making sure there was "oversight" in the course. In other words, for Peter, the professionalism of the course was grounded in the unity of the curriculum, and the existence of a clear set of rules and principles that were followed and maintained. John, one of the program managers, makes a similar point when asked about DACP compared to other universities:

**John:** I think it is fairly unique in that the teachers know that they're gonna get observed and so I think that that kind of gives some extrinsic motivation to sort of focus on mastering the lesson structure and so on. That's not really the point of the observation,

but I think, you know, I've worked at lots of universities where teachers don't get observed and they basically just go and do their own thing...You can see that even in so-called universal curriculum, teachers are giving students other topics to write about or different structures, that aren't ones in the textbook, so I think that in a lot other Japanese contexts teachers are used to just doing as they see fit.

**Rob:** Right.

**John:** Which can be a good thing, and also can have problems, I guess. But I think that was a fairly unique thing about the Akarenga system was that all the teachers were on the same page. It was an interesting transition to watch. It didn't start out that way but going into teachers' rooms and hearing them talk about what they were gonna do for their function presentation or how they were using self-reflection sheets and things like that, it was a lot of shared dialogue and to a very specific degree, whereas a lot of the conversations I hear in teachers' rooms in other universities' seem to be more about either personal interests, like I'm doing this and I really like this approach to what I'm doing, or coping strategies like that textbook's really terrible, what are you doing to get by? But it doesn't seem to be at the level of specificity that I used to hear at Akarenga teaching rooms, which I thought was a nice thing, yeah.

John, in this extract, shows that for him what was remarkable about the course, and what set it apart from other universities in Japan, was the fact that the curriculum was unified and the teachers were all teaching the same material. Once again here, we see notions of professionalism strongly connected to the idea of the unified curriculum.

John's words also reflect the second connection made between the idea of "professionalism" and the unity of the course. John notes that the tight structuring of the course also had knock-on effects

on the instructors and their interactions. While in his previous experiences he saw teachers discussing their "personal interests" and approaches together in staff rooms, in the DACP John reports that teachers were engaging in more specific discussions on how they planned to carry out particular details of the DACP lesson structure. In other words, the professional interactions of teachers became, through the impositions of the course on their teaching, focused mainly on small variations in how they could achieve the goals of activities within the lesson structure. Peter's statements in his interview, again, reflect this:

**Rob:** Do you think there's anything particular you'd say about what's required to be a professional of a teacher in this context? In this department?

**Peter:** In this department. [short pause] Don't get jaded.

**Rob:** Okay.

**Peter:** Yeah, always understand that yes, there are limits imposed, but at the same time your challenge is to push those limits. And I think the managers, the heads of the program, would probably always be open to new ideas, so nothing stays as it is forever. As a professional teacher, you should be hoping to make a change where you can see one's necessary.

For Peter, it seems that professional behaviour in the context of the DACP was connected closely to following the structures of the course. While he says that "your challenge is to push those limits" as a teacher, he also indicates that the limits were there for a reason. While he argues that "nothing stays as it is forever", in the three years I worked on the course, there were no substantial changes made to the lesson structure. This will, again, be a point returned to in the next chapter. In the DACP, it seems clear that 'professionalism' was closely connected to, on an institutional level, the

unified curriculum and the standardisation of materials and lessons, and on a personal level, the ability of instructors to carry out these lessons without getting too "jaded" or complacent. This is reflected in text taken from the DACP website (quoted and slightly altered to maintain anonymity) that:

We seek talented candidates who have the following qualities:

- ability to achieve the goals and objectives of the Discussion and Communication Program, while teaching classes responsibly and with enthusiasm

The 'native' or 'non-native speaker' status of instructors of the DACP was, as I have demonstrated in this chapter, immaterial, as long as teachers were suitably qualified and were able to 'do the job' in a professional way. While this seems unproblematic, the foregoing analysis of what is meant by 'doing the job' and what is meant by the term 'professional' in the DACP hints at something deeper running under the surface; something connected to beliefs about 'correct' methodological and procedural approaches to classroom teaching. I term this the 'DACP discourse of professionalism', which is something that will play a part in the next chapter. I believe that this discourse was one of the main factors which helped propagate and maintain the 'native speaker' framing of the program.

## **6.5. Conclusion: Equality, and the retreat of overt native-speakerism**

In this chapter, I have argued that the DACP was, as I initially believed, free from overt native-speakerism and discrimination. The teachers on the course were treated with the same level of dignity and respect and assigned the same duties regardless of their perceived speakerhood, or their national or linguistic background. The program hired people from a variety of different nationalities, and did not make the ethnicity of its instructors a major point in its advertising or the

representation of its classes. Additionally, the 'non-native speaker' instructors interviewed for this project stated that they did not feel any discrimination from other staff members or from the administration on the course. In short, there was a level of true instructor equality in the DACP.

As to why and how this equality was achieved, I identified several key points. Firstly, I demonstrated that to many of the Japanese professors who set up the initial course, and to the program manager who first took over the responsibilities of running it, diversity among the teaching body was an intrinsic good, making the program a more interesting work environment, and also exposing the students to a variety of people from different national backgrounds. However, I also identified two professional reasons for why equality has been maintained in the course. The first of these was the idea of English as a global communication tool, and the belief outgrowing from this that it was not necessary for teachers to be representatives of particular cultures or varieties of English in order to be effective instructors. The second of these professional reasons was the hiring of instructors who would be able to "do the job"; that is teachers who would be able to align themselves with the teaching philosophy of the program and the tight strictures of the lesson and course design. I connected this with the discourse of "professionalism" in the program, and discussed the implications of the term "professionalism", both in the context of the course, and with reference to the behaviours of individual teachers. I have argued that professionalism in this context was closely tied to the unified curriculum, and that teacher professionalism was linked strongly to the adherence of teachers to these methodological principles. I further argued that this discourse of professionalism was one of the main driving factors behind the equality on the course, and have hinted at the ways in which this may, paradoxically, have been connected to a deeper level of native-speakerism present in the DACP.

While it is certainly true that the DACP was free of overt native-speakerism, I have suggested that there was a more covert form of this ideology at work in the program, operating at a more

structural level; the 'native speaker' frame. It is this that I shall explore in the following chapter.

## **7. Technology, training, and the ‘native speaker’ frame**

### **7.1. Introduction**

I have attempted to demonstrate in the previous chapter that the Discussion and Communication Program at Akarenga University was free from any overt native-speakerism in the form of employment discrimination, unequal assignment of roles and duties, or a specific focus on Western-normative models of English. I have also argued that 'professionalism' was highly valued in the DACP, and that this was implicated in the professional equality on the program. However, I do not believe that this is a complete picture of the program. In this chapter I will describe, through a critical analysis of the data gathered during my fieldwork, what I consider to be evidence of the ‘native speaker’ frame present in the course, in which assumptions about appropriate educational technology, as well as chauvinistic attitudes towards the local setting and the desires of students were embedded within the structures of the course, underlying the practices of the teachers and the program, and operating at an almost invisible level. To conduct this analysis, I will focus on two key areas: methodological issues, and DACP training and development. In the previous chapter I described the important role that 'professionalism' had to play in the DACP and that this was largely connected to the idea of 'doing the job'. This of course raises the question of what 'the job' entails, and in this chapter I seek to show how the discourse of professionalism in the DACP was implicated in helping to promote teaching practices that were underlain by problematic, culturist assumptions about Japanese students, and about the Japanese education system. I will further argue that the professional equality described in the previous chapter was a direct result of the promotion and reinforcement of these principles and practices through the training and faculty development sessions of the DACP.



## 7.2. Four native-speakerist assumptions

In this section I will discuss four underlying assumptions of the DACP which I argue demonstrate the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program. These four assumptions, stated briefly, involved:

- 1) The ways in which the course positioned itself as a necessary corrective to the Japanese education system. The course implicitly framed the Japanese education system through simplistic and outdated stereotypes as a problematic ‘Other’ featuring only teacher-fronted classes focused exclusively on the inculcation of declarative grammatical knowledge. This is despite over a decade of reform in Japanese education aimed at improving the communicative abilities of students. The methodology of the DACP was justified through the notion that it aimed to proceduralise this declarative knowledge; to take the ‘unproductive’ language taught in earlier stages of Japanese education and make it ‘productive’. I argue that this framing of the course in opposition to the Japanese education system was native-speakerist because it Othered the local education system through outdated stereotypes, and presented itself and its methods as a corrective to these practices, thus implicitly placing Western ELT on a higher footing than Japanese ELT.
- 2) The uncritical use of totemic Western ELT practices and educational technology, including:
  - a. The ‘PPP’ (present, practice, produce) lesson structure which is common in ELT despite being highly contested by researchers.
  - b. Sequentially ordered sets of functional language as the focus of instruction, which are again popular in ELT, despite there being very little evidence to prove the effectiveness of organizing or introducing language in this way.

- c. Student-centeredness and reduced teacher talking time, taken to such an extreme that the teacher had almost no role in the class.

These totemic practices can be read as native-speakerist for two reasons. Firstly, the assumption that these common practices were effective and appropriate, despite unclear evidence, shows an uncritical belief in the superiority of Western ELT approaches. Secondly, this uncritical use of Western ELT methods contrasts markedly with the highly critical attitude taken by the course to the practices of the Japanese education system, which the DACP justified itself in opposition to. In other words, the DACP was highly critical of the practices of the Japanese education system, while uncritically employing disputed Western methods of ELT. While it may be questioned whether these methods are exclusively Western, I provide statements from the program managers showing how their choice of methods was influenced by communicative and task-based language teaching.

- 3) The ways in which the structuring of the program and the language taught on it seemed intended to ‘train’ the students in how to communicate, in what they should learn, and in how they should learn. The assumption that students were deficient in terms of communicating with each other, and needed training in how to do this, again seems to suggest a native-speakerist Othering in the program. The course also focused on ‘negotiation of meaning’ as a key skill for the students. I argue that this was native-speakerist because it seemed to assume that the students needed training in how to be autonomous, thus Othering the students by assuming they needed to be trained in this. The course also dismissed frequent student requests to learn vocabulary, instead opting to train them in strategies of negotiation of meaning and circumlocution. In other words, the DACP aimed to train the students in what and how they should learn, ignoring what the students wanted or felt they needed to learn.

- 4) the employment of an extremely strict 'English-only' policy, which was rationalized as a necessity within official course documents, despite admissions from the program managers that it was not based on evidence, and was rather adopted in order to satisfy public perceptions of what a 'good' ELT course should be. This is an example of what Phillipson (1992) calls the "monolingual fallacy", or the chauvinistic dismissal of the use of the mother tongue in the classroom, which can again be seen as native-speakerist.

In the sections that follow I shall elaborate on each of these points in turn and provide evidence to support my conclusions. These conclusions may not be immediately obvious, and will require some unpacking. As such, in each section I will state what I believe was happening in the course, provide the data from which this conclusion was drawn, and then provide a close analysis of the data detailing how this conclusion was reached. While this is a slightly unorthodox approach to presenting ethnographic data, I believe that with a discourse as deeply hidden as the one I am describing, it is important to explicitly state what I perceive to have been happening before presenting the data.

While I will be describing and critically discussing the structure, the practices, and the educational technology of the program in this section, I would like to stress that I do not intend to criticise this technology itself for being inherently bad, or to claim that its use was intrinsically problematic. On the contrary, I feel that the educational technology employed in the DACP was, in many respects, effective and successful. I also do not intend to draw a binary distinction between 'Japanese' and 'Western' ELT, nor to claim that things such as 'autonomous', 'communicative', or 'learner-centered' are in some way intrinsically Western concepts. To make such a claim would be native-speakerist in itself, as it would imply that I believe the Japanese could neither develop these concepts on their own, nor make a decision to adopt such practices. Rather than criticizing these

practices or claiming them for the West, I am seeking to highlight the ways in which these practices were framed and justified by the course designers and teachers. In other words, I am not saying that these practices *are* Western and that it is therefore inappropriate to use them in non-Western settings. Rather, I am arguing that these practices were *perceived* as Western, and the Japanese education system was *perceived* as lacking these concepts. I wish to show how a deep analysis of the framing of these practices reveals a native-speakerist Othering of the Japanese education system and Japanese students by the program, the program designers, and the teachers.

In earlier drafts of this chapter, it was suggested that I was relying too heavily on Holliday (2005) to build my argument. While I appreciate this concern, I feel that this is justifiable, because it is through this work that the concept of native-speakerism was first fully laid out. As explained in previous chapters, the concept of native-speakerism has been seriously diluted in public discourse, and many of the larger political implications it was originally developed to describe have been dropped from the definition. I also argued that the conception of native-speakerism found in Holliday (2005) is a unification of several different realms of thought in critical applied linguistics. As such, while I refer to Holliday (2005) extensively in this chapter, I also provide references to other writers who either influenced his description of native-speakerism, or whose work supports this description. As a final point, I believe that it is important to talk about Holliday's work because it is through this work that native-speakerism was first conceptualized. If I were writing about linguistic imperialism, I think it would be important to make extensive reference to Phillipson (1992), and the same holds true for many other concepts which are strongly related to a particular theorist. In this case, as it is Holliday's work from which this theory originates and in which it has (arguably) found its fullest expression, I believe it is defensible, if not necessary, to make extensive use of his discussion in my own work on the topic.

### **7.2.1. Assumption 1: Japanese educational technology is inherently flawed**

The first of the four native-speakerist assumptions I will point to is the notion that Japanese educational technology is in some way inherently flawed, and was therefore in need of 'correction' with the technology of the DACP. The stated aims of the program included practical goals connected with improving the discussion skills of students. However, these aims were justified through what I see as a native-speakerist critique of the Japanese education system, which was based on outdated and simplistic stereotypes of Japanese English classrooms as teacher-fronted and having little to no communicative focus. Further, this implied critique focused on the notion that the Japanese education system largely taught the 'wrong' skills (reading, writing, and translation), and that the role of the DACP was to correct this by taking a highly oral-focused approach. In other words, I will argue that the framing of the program was native-speakerist in that it used stereotypes to construct the Japanese English education system as a problematic Other in need of correction with (perceived) Western communicative approaches, and also made Western-oriented assumptions about the relative importance of various English skills (speaking, reading, writing, etc.). I will first outline the course goals and the aims of the program, and then show how a close analysis of these stated goals and aims, when combined with my own experiences as a teacher on the program and statements from my interviewees, can be seen to contain an implicit native-speakerist Othering of the Japanese education system.

Figure 18, taken from the DACP website, gives a brief summary of the purpose of the course:

- The [REDACTED] is a required course in the General Curriculum.
- Classes are composed of 7-9 students.
- The goal is to improve students' speaking abilities and discussion skills.
- Instructors follow the unified syllabus prepared by the university.
- Instructors provide feedback to their students by filling out a class assessment after each lesson.
- Instructors will also be scheduled to teach intensive "Repeating Courses" for students who do not pass the regular semester course.

**Figure 18: Further description of DACP course**

According to this extract, the purpose of the course was to "improve students' speaking abilities and discussion skills" for first year incoming freshman students. Similar sentiments could be found in many of the public and official documents produced by the DACP in both English and Japanese. On the DACP website, which is aimed at both the general public and at prospective instructors, the same principle aim of the course was repeated, as can be seen in Figure 19 below:

The main goal of [REDACTED] is to help our students learn how to participate effectively in English discussion, and thus provide them with confidence in English communication. Another goal is to contribute to the development of English education through the improvement of our English Discussion program. We are looking forward to working with those who share our goals and who have a strong interest in being a part of our program.

**Figure 19: Course goals**

There was clearly a strong focus on communication and discussion in the program. The course prioritised oral skills, communication strategies, fluency, and communicative competence, a fact that can be seen in the following quote from the introductory article in the inaugural issue of the DACP journal, which imparts the belief of the course designers that in terms of teaching discussion, fluency is "the most important aspect of language to develop in classes" (see Figure 20):

To enable students to improve their discussion skills, we see fluency development as being the most important aspect of language to develop in classes. While recognizing that

**Figure 20: Beliefs of course designers**

It seems that improving the fluency, communicative competence, and discussion skills of the students was the primary goal of the DACP.

However, while this was the most commonly stated practical aim of the program there seems to have been another goal of the course. This goal was focused less on the linguistic knowledge and skills that the students would gain from the course, and more on the attitudes towards language study that the program would instill in the students. In the same issue of the DACP journal, the program managers authoring the introductory paper state that “students will also come to understand the limited utility of linguistic knowledge and gain an understanding that it is only through experience of communicating in a foreign language that one becomes an effective communicator” (see Figure 21).

they can enjoy using English to learn more about themselves and others. Students will also come to understand the limited utility of linguistic knowledge and gain an understanding that it is only through experience of communicating in a foreign language that one becomes an effective communicator.

**Figure 21: Secondary course aims**

In other words, alongside the communicative-skill based goals of the DACP, there was a secondary aim: to inculcate in students an understanding that "linguistic knowledge" (i.e. declarative knowledge of language) is not very useful, contrasting this with communicative language learning as the route to becoming an "effective communicator". It thus seems that the DACP had both explicit goals in terms of imparting linguistic competence and knowledge to students, and also

more implicit goals concerning leading students towards adopting particular beliefs and attitudes about both the utility of various English skills and the best ways of gaining those skills through language study.

While this may seem like a relatively benign set of goals and aims, I believe that there is a subtle discourse hidden within this concerning the larger Japanese education system in which the program is operating. One common criticism of Japanese English education is that it is overly focused on translation and grammar, and that it does not include enough time for speaking. This stereotypical view contains the implicit assumption that oral expression and communication should be the primary goal of language learning, and it seems that the DACP had positioned itself as ‘correcting’ this ‘flaw’ in the Japanese education system. This attitude among the teachers of the DACP is illustrated by the extract from my interview with Mark below:

**Rob:** Okay. Do you think that there’s anything unique about this program compared to other areas of Japanese English language education?

**Mark:** Oh, definitely. The research that I’ve been doing has kind of crossed over into at some point looking at the compulsory education of Japanese English language learners and the vast majority of the literature about the current obligatory English education in Japan is that it’s very test-driven and form- and accuracy-driven and there is almost zero focus on language in use in a meaningful manner.

**Rob:** Right. And this program is?

**Mark:** I believe so. I may be wrong but I do believe that!

**Rob:** Right, right. Okay. Do you think that there are any particular difficulties that Japanese students have when entering this kind of program?

**Mark:** Oh, absolutely. You know there is! [laughs]



**Rob:** I know nothing, I know nothing! [laughs]

**Mark:** Yeah, for many of these learners this is a very divergent teaching and learning experience for them. The Japanese classroom in general is very top-down and they are taught to be passive learners where they do not interact with the teacher, they listen or don't listen and sit quietly and take notes or not and they don't question anything, they don't ask questions to the teacher and there are...which is problematic for language learning. And they're also not accustomed to working in groups and they're being thrust into a situation where they need to give their opinion and they're raised in a culture which has traditionally taught them to sit there and shut up and don't get in the way. And so in a way we're asking them to behave in a manner which is contrary to their entire cultural experience.

In this extract, Mark first describes what he sees as the unique characteristics of the DACP when compared to Japanese English classrooms, and then describes the difficulties that he believes students are likely to encounter when entering the DACP. These difficulties are, in his estimation, caused by the problematic Japanese education system that the students are used to. Employing some of the terminology that Holliday (2005, 2006) notes is commonly used to 'Other' students from non-Western backgrounds, Mark describes the Japanese students' educational experience as 'passive' and characterizes their classes as exam-focused and highly teacher fronted, with the students reluctant or unable to ask questions or challenge the authority figure of the teacher. Mark is so confident about this that he even projects this belief onto me, the interviewer.

While Mark may be an outlier in his overt 'Othering' of Japanese students and by extension the Japanese education system using native-speakerist stereotypes and terminology, it is possible to detect a more subtle, but still significant discourse Othering Japanese English education and

educational technology among the DACP course designers and teachers. This was generally expressed using more neutral language than Mark, but the same sentiment remained. When first joining the DACP the reason that I was given for the strong focus on fluency, almost at the expense of every other language skill, was that Japanese students have spent the last several years studying grammar and translation, and because of this they have a latent declarative knowledge of English, which has yet to be proceduralised (to use the terms put forward by Anderson, 1982). As such, the focus of the DACP on oral fluency and communication skills was described to me during the orientation week as a way to proceduralise all of the students' supposed unused declarative knowledge. While I did not make a specific note of this in my research journal (I evidently did not see it as important at the time, though I have a clear memory of it), the same justification can be found in the following passage taken from the inaugural issue of the DACP journal (Figure 22):

While recognizing that fluency itself is a complex construct that can refer to many different aspects of language use, we base most of this discussion on Schmidt's (1992) general definition that fluency is based around the development of procedural knowledge, i.e. how to **do** something with the language one is learning.

**Figure 22: Declarative to procedural knowledge**

This also seemed to be an accepted idea among the instructors on the program, as explained by one of my interviewees, Peter:

**Rob:** What are the expectations of the program?

**Peter:** Basically, understanding that a lot of students are coming into our classes with grammatical knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, but haven't been given the opportunity to converse and actually make that knowledge productive. So I think the understanding is

that we're not teaching grammar, we're not teaching vocabulary, we're just providing a platform for the students to develop fluency within discussion of various topics in English, yeah. The managers let us know that it's a unified curriculum and everyone should be teaching the same way and gave us very clear guidelines for the activities that should occur in class.

Peter very clearly expresses in this extract the idea that students are entering the course with declarative grammatical and vocabulary knowledge gained from their previous English study that needs to be proceduralised, and as such the job of the DACP was to "provide a platform for the students to develop fluency".

In other words, the justification for the DACP was that the students had spent their previous schooling studying grammar and vocabulary, and as such had explicit declarative knowledge about language, but did not have an implicit or procedural knowledge of this as they had not been engaging in communicative learning. Peter's use of the word "productive" in the previous excerpt is very telling, as it implies that the Japanese education system imparts only "unproductive" knowledge, which we can take to mean grammar, translation, and reading, rather than oral communication skills. The assumption that underlies this idea, as I read it, is that that by focusing on grammar, vocabulary, reading, translation, and so on during their regular schooling, Japanese students are not learning truly 'productive' or 'useful' skills; the implication being that oral communication skills are the most 'productive' and 'useful' skills, and are the skills that language education should be focused on. It is therefore, according to this logic, the job of the DACP to translate these earlier learned skills into something 'useful'; that is, oral communicative competence.

This was one generally accepted justification for the existence of the course during my fieldwork,

as can be seen in Figure 21, in which one of the goals of the course was described in the following way:

...students will also come to understand the limited utility of linguistic knowledge and gain an understanding that it is only through experience of communicating in a foreign language that one becomes an effective communicator.

In other words, the language study the students had previously been engaged in, focusing on "linguistic knowledge", was of "limited utility", and they had to "gain an understanding" that communication (in this context represented by the methods of the DACP) was the correct way to learn language. In my interpretation, this was the first major underlying assumption of the DACP: that it existed to compensate for perceived flaws in the earlier stages of the Japanese education system which focused mostly on grammar, reading, and translation, and not on the more 'useful' skills of oral communication considered to be of primary importance in Western ELT. Bax (2003) refers to this as "the CLT attitude" (p.279), and it is also possible to link this to the 'oral-first' staging of lessons in behaviourism and communicative language teaching as described by Holliday, (2005). According to this assumption, Japanese English education is problematic in providing the 'wrong' English skills, and must be corrected with the very specific technology of the DACP, focused heavily on developing oral skills.

This problem with this assumption, as I see it, is not simply that it is a criticism of the Japanese education system, which in itself would not be a problem. Rather, it is the fact that this criticism is based on the following implicit beliefs:

- 1) Japanese English classes are heavily teacher fronted, and focused only on grammar and translation.
- 2) Speaking skills should be of primary importance in English education.

And concluding from this that:

- 3) Therefore, the DACP is required to compensate for the lack of oral work in Japanese English education.

I believe that both assumptions above are wrong, and that they point to evidence of the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program.

Point 1) is little more than a stereotype. It is an image of Japanese (and more generally, non-Western) classrooms based on the kind of simplified stereotyping described by Susser (1998) and Canagarajah (1999b) almost twenty years ago, and which is still common among foreign teachers coming to work in Japan (as my interview with Mark, quoted earlier, goes to show) and can be found in much scholarly work (see chapter 4 of King, 2013 for an example). This stereotype persists in the face of over a decade of reforms in Japanese English education, which began around 2002/2003 with the publication of documents by the ministry of education including the 2003 ‘action plan’ to cultivate “Japanese who can use English” (Butler & Iino, 2005), with the aim of “educat[ing] Japanese youth to be able to use English in the workplace” (Hashimoto, 2009, p. 21) through an increasing focus on oral communication skills. These reforms have included the hiring of more assistant language teachers (Shibata, 2010, p. 126), increasing the English proficiency of Japanese school teachers, implementing English-only policies (Hashimoto, 2013a), and making English a requirement for elementary school children (Fennelly & Luxton, 2011; Machida, 2016;

Machida & Walsh, 2015). While some of these practices may be objected to as native-speakerist in themselves (English-only policies, the hiring of ‘native speakers’, etc.), and while the success of some of these policies is doubted by scholars (Hashimoto, 2009, 2013a; King, 2013; Machida & Walsh, 2015), the fact remains that the image of the Japanese classroom as one which does not include the teaching of communicative English, and in which the concept of communication is not even well understood (the insistence that students must “gain an understanding” of these concepts implies that they do not already have an understanding of the benefits of communication for language learning) is little more than a persistent and simplistic stereotype. Indeed, research by Lawrence (2017) has shown that *Yakudoku*, the language teaching method most commonly used for language teaching in Japanese schools and which is often described dismissively as a form of grammar translation, actually contains many communicative elements, a large amount of oral work, and very little in the way of actual writing or translation. As Lawrence says: “The *yakudoku* identified in this study focused on using translations to elicit oral output, via a modified form of the audiolingual method that utilised an interactive aspect derived from CLT to achieve this” (p.9). The fact that the DACP relied on this stereotype to justify its practices indicates, in my view, a ‘native speaker’ framing underlying the course, and a native-speakerist ‘Othering’ of the Japanese education system.

Point 2) is simply an assumption on the part of the course designers. Even if it were true that Japanese education does not focus at all on oral skills (which I have argued it is not), it still requires an assumption that these skills should be of primary importance for the DACP to justify itself as ‘correcting’ this perceived flaw in Japanese English education. The possibility that for many, if not most Japanese students, reading and translation skills may in fact be more useful than oral skills was never discussed during my time as an instructor. As Bax (2003) says, “the discourse of CLT [communicative language teaching] constantly sends out the message to teachers and

educators that the priority is for the teacher to generate communication - while the context is not mentioned” (p.281). The study by Lawrence (2017) shows that even teaching methods in Japan derided as ‘uncommunicative’ actually contain many communicative elements, and may indeed equip the students with necessary skills. Lawrence points out that “what is being taught to Japanese students is more akin to interpretation skills than translation skills, which... can be seen as an essential skill in an increasingly globalised world and reflects the Japanese government’s commitment to *kokusaika* or internationalisation” (p.9-10). The DACP, by assuming the Japanese education system is focusing on the ‘wrong’ skills, can be seen to have been engaging in a form of ‘Othering’ in which ‘they’ have the wrong educational technology, and ‘we’ have a duty to correct this with ‘our’ communicatively-focused methodology. I believe this again points towards a ‘native speaker’ framing in which it was assumed that a (perceived) lack of communicative focus in Japanese ELT was due to cultural deficiency or lack of understanding of how to learn languages, rather than the result of a conscious and rational prioritization of other skills.

This is not to say, of course, that oral skills are not of great value. I personally believe that they are, and I believe that the DACP approach to teaching oral skills was, in large part, effective. I also do not intend to imply that the teaching of oral skills or communicative teaching is inherently Western, as this is clearly not the case, and to make such an argument would itself be native-speakerist. As stated earlier, it is the framing of the DACP course that I intend to criticize, rather than the technology itself. It is significant that, rather than simply stating that oral skills are important and that the course was designed to help students develop these skills, the DACP justified itself through an implicit stereotyping and Othering of the Japanese education system, arguing, based on stereotypical images of Japanese classrooms and problematic assumptions about the relative importance of various English skills, that what is taught there is of ‘limited utility’ and that it was the purpose of the DACP to correct this.

The assumption that local educational technology is in some way flawed is an important part of native-speakerism as outlined by Holliday (2005), and is one aspect of what he terms "culturism", or the idea that 'non-native speakers' have nothing meaningful to contribute to ELT. The same point is raised by Phillipson (Garton, Copland, & Mann, 2016), who states that "Native-speakerism means a blind faith in the superiority of one language, culture and pedagogy" (p.242) and results in the importing of 'expertise' which is "detached from local educational realities" (p.243), a view supported by researchers such as Kubota (2001) and Brown (2000). Certainly, it seems that the DACP was "detached from local educational realities", in that it justified itself through stereotypical images of Japanese classrooms, and assumptions about the relative utility of oral skills which took little account of either the practical needs of students, or of the efforts of more than a decade that have been made to incorporate communicative teaching into Japanese English classrooms.

In effect, it seems that some of the very foundational notions on which the DACP was built can be seen to contain an implicit native-speakerist framing, which constructed the Japanese educational system, through outdated and simplistic stereotyping, as a problematic Other engaged in the teaching of 'unproductive' declarative language knowledge, and which saw the 'solution' to this as the importing of Western ELT methodology which focused on the 'productive' and 'useful' skills of communicative English. In a more explicit form, this can be seen to manifest in Mark's beliefs and comments, where he describes the Japanese English classroom as "passive", and characterizes the students as sitting quietly, pretending to listen and take notes, and being unable to question their teacher. Of course, Mark's comments are his own, and are not necessarily representative of the thought of the course itself, but I argue that they are a more explicit form of the general cultural and pedagogical bias that existed in the DACP. In other words, the course was operating within a 'native speaker' frame, in which stereotypical images of Japanese classrooms and assumptions



about the relative utility of different language skills were used as a basis and rationale for pedagogical decisions, and in which the Japanese education system was implicitly portrayed as deficient for supposedly not having the correct focus, which as I have shown is at the very least a considerable simplification of the reality of Japanese English education. This first assumption, that Japanese English education is inherently problematic and flawed, leads us on to assumptions 2 (7.2.2) and 3 (7.2.3).

### **7.2.2. Assumption 2: Western educational technology is inherently superior**

The second underlying assumption of the Discussion and Communication Program was that not only were local educational practices flawed and in need of correction, but also that Western educational practices were inherently superior to local ones. The program made extensive and largely uncritical use of educational technology which is common and assumed to be generally effective in Western ELT, and I will give several examples of this. While the DACP justified itself by pointing a critical finger at stereotypically-conceived ‘deficiencies’ in Japanese language education, it uncritically accepted ‘Western’ ELT technology, even when the evidence for the effectiveness of this technology was unclear or nonexistent. In fact, this uncritical acceptance of Western technology was expressed by the program manager John, during his interview:

**Rob:** How much did research - like research that you’d read and studied - how much did that feed into the creation of the course or the teaching approach?

**John:** Yeah, unfortunately not too much because I don’t think it’s generally [speaking]’s not a very well-researched area so I don’t think a lot is known about it.

John here admits that the teaching approach constructed was not based on theory, at least not to the

extent that he would have liked, and later in the same interview admitted that it was more “principle-based than theoretical-based”, as can be seen in the following extract:

**John:** I think with speaking it's not that much of a theoretically grounded thing anyway, so as much as possible but I think that it was more principle-based than theoretical-based.

In other words, the DACP operated under a series of principles, rather than under a theoretical framework. When asked where these principles came from. John stated that:

**John:** I mean a lot of them came from just CLT and task-based language teaching in general.

This seems rather vague, and shows John deferring to popular educational technology and methods that are emblematic of Western ELT such as CLT and TBLT. This is important, as this uncritical use of Western ELT principles and educational technology shows assumptions about the superiority of this technology. Once again, I am not saying this technology is inherently Western and could not be used in ‘non-Western’ classrooms, I am arguing instead that this technology is largely *perceived* as being Western, and the uncritical use of this technology in the DACP, when contrasted with the critical view of Japanese educational technology described earlier, reveals a native-speakerist faith in the superiority of practices which are perceived to be Western.

In carrying out this discussion I will make use of Holliday's (2005) notion of 'cultural icons' in Western ELT; that is, practices either adapted or carried over wholesale from behaviourist audiolingualism, and which retain an iconic status in the profession. According to Holliday (2005),

where audiolingualism had an “oral first” approach, so too does communicative language teaching. Where audiolingualism had “structures” that had to be mastered, the communicative revolution replaced these with “notions” and “functions”. Where audiolingualism used a PPP method, CLT uses a number of different models derived from PPP (p.47). Innovations of the communicative revolution, according to Holliday, include “learner training”, “learner centeredness”, “group and pair work”, and “reduced teacher talking time” (p.47). As noted in section 3.4.2, Holliday (2005) calls these “cultural icons” (p.45) that are important symbolic items for the Western ELT 'culture', and as such are assumed to be more effective and superior to other, more locally mediated approaches and methods through virtue of their accepted importance in the Western ELT canon. While Holliday is alone in using this term to describe totemic professional practices in the field, such totemic practices form the basis of the methods and approaches critiqued by scholars such as Pennycook (1994), Kumeravadivelu (2012), and Canagarajah (1999b). I further believe it is a useful way of framing these practices, and of understanding them in the context of the DACP where the strictly unified curriculum and teaching approach made their totemic nature somewhat more obvious. I shall therefore use Holliday's notion of 'cultural icons' to examine the practices of the DACP with the understanding that this is simply a convenient way of conceptualising certain dominant practices of Western ELT.

The DACP at Akarenga University contained many of these 'cultural icons' while at the same time introducing some of its own unique traditions, and these constitute the second native-speakerist assumption on which the DACP was based.

#### *Cultural icons carried over*

Firstly, it is important to see which of the cultural icons of Western ELT were simply carried over into the DACP lessons, and what the reasons given for this by the program managers were. In this

section I will highlight two identifiable cultural icons which were carried over from Western ELT into the DACP. The first of these icons was the overall staging and structure of the DACP lessons which followed the ‘PPP’ (Presentation, Practice, Production) approach common in Western ELT – an approach which is popular and widely used, despite having very little support from literature in second language acquisition (SLA). The second of these icons was the functional language sets that were taught on the course, which were manifestations of the ‘notions’ and ‘functions’ common in communicative language teaching, and which are closely linked to the PPP approach in that they are easily digestible chunks of language introduced at the point the course feels the students should learn them. This again is at odds with many findings in SLA. I will quickly outline the lesson plan and teaching approach in the DACP before going on to add my critique of this with these two cultural icons in mind, and show in what ways these constitute evidence pointing towards the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program. It could be argued of course that PPP lesson staging is not exclusive to Western ELT, and this is true. However, I believe that John’s comments above make it clear that the principles and practices used in the DACP were taken from CLT and TBLT, and the fact that the course designers were all Western-trained language teachers makes it unsurprising that their choice of technology would be influenced by commonly-accepted practices in that tradition.

The DACP had a very specific and highly prescribed teaching approach. During my fieldwork teachers generally referred to the teaching approach as the "Akarenga Method", and this can be seen in several of my journal entries, as in the following extract:

They seem to be willing to let a lot of research go on, but it all has to be conducted within the confines of the 'Akarenga Method'.

My use of the term 'confines' here is telling, as it refers to the specific and highly prescribed nature

of this teaching approach, which was outlined in the instructor handbook, emphasised in the orientation week, and re-emphasised during faculty development sessions. Before each class, the students were assigned a three-page homework reading to prepare them for the coming week's topic, which could be found within their textbook. Once the class began, each lesson followed the stages in Figure 23, taken from the introduction to the first issue of the DACP journal:

- The Quiz (5 mins.)
- An eight-question, multiple choice quiz on the homework.
  - Helps students review the main ideas of the homework.
  - Encourages students to read the homework.
  - Students rarely cheat!
- Fluency (10 – 15 mins.)
- A topic-related activity to develop students' ability to speak smoothly and confidently in English.
  - 3-2-1
  - To add content and time pressure to help speakers improve their fluency.
- Function Presentation (5 – 10 mins.)
- To introduce a new function and phrases to perform that function.
  - Presentations are:
    - short
    - contextualized
    - student-centered, e.g. Test-teach-test
- Practice 1 (5 mins)
- A controlled practiced of the target function.
  - The focus is exclusively on the function phrases (e.g. a gap-fill).
  - Can be performed as a written or spoken activity.
- Practice 2 (10 mins.)
- A semi-controlled practice of the target function.
  - The focus is on using the function accurately in the context of a discussion
  - Consists of four, topic-related practice questions.
- Discussion 1 (20 – 25 mins.)
- Consists of three stages:
    - A paired preparation activity
    - A 10 minute group discussion
    - Feedback
    - Teacher intervention is permitted
- Discussion 2 (30 – 35 mins.)
- Consists of three stages:
    - A paired preparation activity
    - A 16 minute group discussion
    - Feedback
    - Teacher intervention is not permitted

**Figure 23: Lesson plan**

This structure highlights the relatively restrictive time limits imposed on each stage of the lesson, and this is further emphasised by the number of sub-stages required in each of the main stages, clearly restricting the freedom of teachers within the classroom. This lead to a teaching approach

which one of my interviewees, Heng, described (in an extract I will examine in detail later) as 'military style'.

As can be seen in this lesson plan, after the quiz the students engaged in a 3/2/1 fluency activity in which they spoke for three minutes on one topic (usually, but not always presented as two questions), switched partners and repeated their ideas for two minutes, and then switched partners again and repeated their ideas finally for just one minute. The goal of this activity, as paraphrased from the instructor handbook, was:

- to relay the same amount of information each time, thus increasing their speaking speed.
- to generate ideas which could be recycled in later stages of the lesson.

For example, the fluency questions for the lesson on "public manners" can be seen in Figure 24.

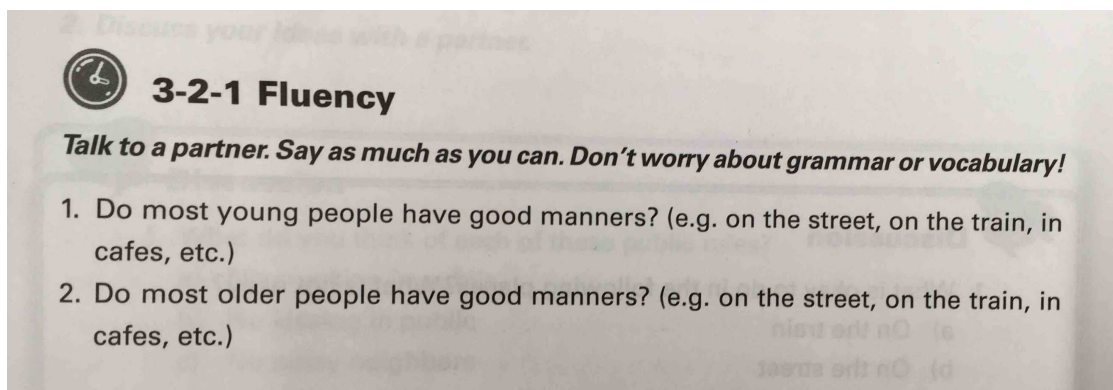


Figure 24: Fluency questions

Once the fluency activity had been concluded, according to the lesson plan in Figure 23, the students were put into pairs and the functional language presentation was carried out. This was

usually done in one of the following three ways, each of which was recommended and described in the instructor handbook (paraphrased here, as I was not given permission to quote directly):

- A 'test-teach-test' activity, in which students were given two questions to discuss for a short time while the teacher assessed their ability to carry out the function (e.g. giving an opinion). Following this, new functional language would be explicitly presented to them.
- A 'dialogue comparison' in which students were shown a fictional dialogue containing some kind of miscommunication between speakers. The students were asked to read the dialogue, and then discuss why the miscommunication occurred. They were then given a second dialogue in which the same situation was repeated, but in which the communication was successful because the speakers made use of the target phrases of the lesson. This was intended to show students both how the phrases can be used in discussion, and why they are important to use.
- A 'guided discovery' activity, in which students were presented with a sample of a "bad dialogue", and then given questions which will help them to fix the dialogue themselves using the functional language.

Following the functional language presentation, according to Figure 23, the students were asked to complete a practice activity in which they could use the new phrases in a structured way. They would then complete a preparation activity in which they would prepare ideas connected to the lesson topic. These activities were usually in the form of a simple 'ranking activity' (e.g. "put these five things in order from 'best' to 'worst' in your opinion") as in Figure 25, and would then engage in a ten minute discussion on two questions written in the course book (see Figure 26).

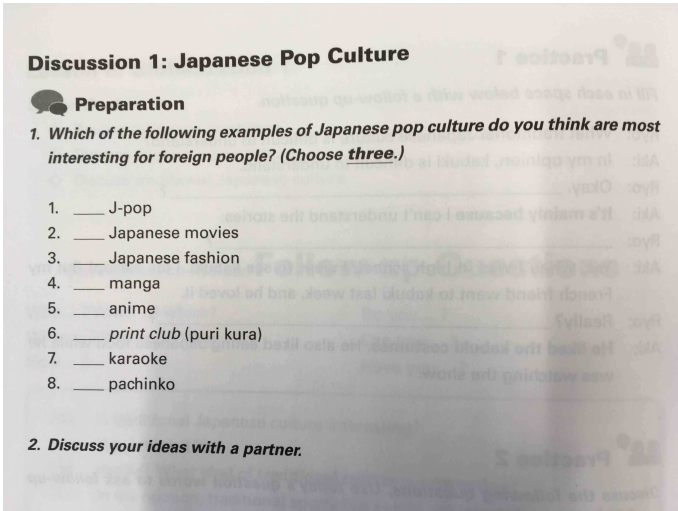


Figure 25: Ranking activity

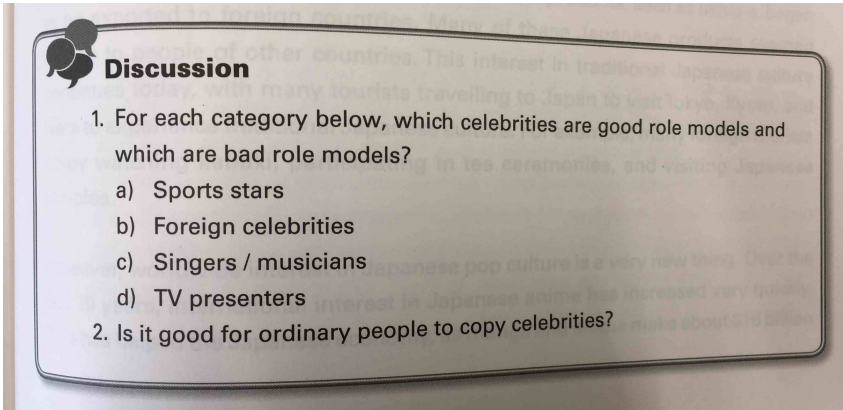


Figure 26: Discussion questions

This 'planning/discussion' cycle would then occur again with new questions and the discussion lengthened to sixteen minutes. This was the lesson plan all instructors were expected to follow.

I argue that the lesson plan outlined in Figure 23 constitutes a PPP approach, in which functional language was first introduced, then practiced in a structured way, and finally used more freely in the two extended discussions. As Anderson (2016b, p. 14) says, “Among the many lesson planning paradigms used in English language teacher education over the last 40 years, PPP has proven to be



one of the most popular and most durable (...) despite regular criticism in literature emanating from the Anglophone centre of ELT theory” (p.14), a view echoed by Jones, et al. (2015) who note that “PPP has often come under attack in a Western ELT context (...) as being an outdated, behaviourist methodology, without a basis in second language acquisition theory.” (p.3). The continued use of PPP despite attacks on the method by scholars including, recently, Long (2015, pp. 21–25) can be attributed, according to Anderson (2016a), to factors such as the compatibility of this approach with textbooks, its simplicity, and its connection to skill learning theory. However, Anderson (2016a, p. 226) also notes that “Not only did PPP originate at the dawn of CLT, but it became a core component in the realization of the weak version of CLT, the version that has proven to be the most practically viable in language classrooms and ELT materials to date” (p.226). In other words, PPP has a strong association with the communicative movement, and became a “core component” of it. This seems to support the status of PPP as what Holliday (2005) calls a ‘cultural icon’ in Western ELT. The connection between Western CLT and the PPP staging of DACP lessons is further strengthened by John’s earlier quoted statements concerning the principles of the DACP being taken from CLT and TBLT. The ‘big PPP’ approach in the DACP can thus be seen to draw directly on the traditions of Western ELT, and this uncritical use of a highly contested Western teaching method, contrasted with the program’s critical treatment of Japanese teaching approaches (see section 7.2.1), can be read as further evidence of the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program.

The second of these ‘carried over’ cultural icons, related to the PPP approach taken on the course was the teaching of functional language sets. During my fieldwork in the DACP, the primary language taught to students was very limited, consisting of sets of phrases to facilitate discussion. In the DACP these were called “functions” and “communication skills”, and appeared to be broadly similar to the ‘notions’ and ‘functions’ that were common in certain early forms of the communicative syllabus. These phrases can be seen in Figure 27, Figure 28, and Figure 29.

**SEMESTER 1 - List of Functions**

Opinions	
Asking for Opinions	Giving Opinions
What's your opinion?	In my opinion,...
What do you think?	Personally speaking, I think...
What does everyone think?	I'm not sure, but I think...

Reasons	
Asking for Reasons	Giving Reasons
Why (do you think so)?	It's mainly because...
How come?	One reason is...
Can you tell me why?	Another reason is...

Examples	
Asking for Examples	Giving Examples
For example / instance?	For example / instance,...
Can you give me an example?	One example is...
Such as?	Another example is...

Joining a Discussion	
Joining a Discussion	Asking Others to Join a Discussion
Can I start?	
Can I make a comment?	Does anyone want to comment?
Can I add something?	Does anyone want to ask a question?
Can I ask a question?	

Possibilities	
Asking about Possibilities	Talking about Possibilities
If... ?	If...

Connecting Ideas	
Asking Others to Connect	Connecting to Others' Opinions
What do you think of (my / name's) idea?	As (you / name) said,...
Does anyone agree with (my / name's) idea?	Like (you / name) said,...

Figure 27: Semester 1 functions

**SEMESTER 2 - List of Functions**

Changing Topic (p. 8)	
Checking If Everyone's Finished	Changing Topic
Does anyone want to add something?	What shall we discuss first / next?
Does anyone have any other ideas?	Why don't we discuss (topic)?

Balancing Opinions (p. 16)	
Asking Others to Balance Opinions	Balancing Your Opinion
What are the advantages / disadvantages (of...)?	One advantage / disadvantage is (that)...
Are there any other advantages / disadvantages (of...)?	Another advantage / disadvantage is (that)...

Paraphrasing (p. 38)	
Paraphrasing Others	Paraphrasing Yourself
Do you mean (that)...?	I mean (that)...
So what you're saying is (that)...?	What I'm saying is (that)...

Reporting Information (p. 46)	
Asking Others to Report Information	Reporting Information
Where did you hear that?	I heard / read / saw (that)...
How do you know about that?	(Name) said (that)...

Different Viewpoints (p. 68)	
Asking for Different Viewpoints	Giving Different Viewpoints
How about from (X)'s point of view?	From (X)'s point of view, ...
How about from (X)'s perspective?	From (X)'s perspective, ...

Experiences (p. 76)	
Asking for Experiences	Talking about Experiences
Have you ever... ?	When I was in high school, I...
Did you... ?	Yesterday / Last week / Three years ago, I...
Do you usually / sometimes ... ?	I usually / often / sometimes ...

Figure 28: Semester 2 functions

**List of Communication Skills**

Reactions		
Okay.	Really?	Oh no!
I see.	That's interesting.	That's too bad!
Right.	That sounds great!	That sounds terrible!
Uh-huh.	That's amazing!	Tell me more!
Yeah.	Wow!	Go on!

Agreeing & Disagreeing (p. 24)	
Agreeing	Disagreeing
I totally agree.	I'm sorry, but I disagree.
I think you're right.	I don't think so.
I partly agree.	I see your point, but...

Follow-up Questions (p. 54)	
Who... ? What... ? Which... ? When... ?	Do you... ? Can you... ? Have you... ?
Where... ? Why... ? How... ?	

Checking Understanding (p. 84)	
Speaker	Listener
Do you understand?	Sorry, I don't understand.
Do you follow me?	Sorry, I don't follow you.
Is that clear?	Can you explain?

Classroom English	
Could you repeat that please?	
How do you say (X) in English?	
What does this mean?	
I don't know what to do!	

Figure 29: Communication skills

The purpose of teaching these sets of functional language was to facilitate discussion amongst the students using their stores of latent grammatical and lexical English knowledge, as previously discussed in section 7.2.1. The phrases were often designed to be quite open-ended, so that students would be able to slot new ideas into them in order to achieve specific communicative outcomes. This can be seen in phrases such as "in my opinion...", "it's mainly because...", and "for example..." (see Figure 27). In the case of the DACP the specific communicative outcomes were transactional and discussion-focused; the functional language sets were designed to help the students engage in structured oral communication in the context of English discussion. Each of the functional language sets was arranged into two halves, with one half being phrases to be used when performing the role of a 'listener' ("What do you think?", "Why do you think so?") and the other half being phrases that could be employed when playing the role of a "speaker" ("In my opinion...", "It's mainly because...").

While it may not seem immediately obvious, the use of these functional language sets, when combined with the PPP approach described earlier, reveals an uncritical acceptance of highly disputed, albeit highly popular Western ELT practices. From a historical perspective, these “functions” and “communication skills” can be connected to the 'notions and functions' of CLT, and traced back to the 'structures' of audiolingualism (Holliday, 2005), and it is through this lineage that their totemic status may have developed, as with PPP. However, the structuring and teaching of language in this way is highly contested by SLA theorists. As Long (2015) argues, “the basic problem with the synthetic approach and with *focus on forms* is the assumption that learners can and will learn what they are taught when they are taught it, and the further assumption that if learners are exposed to ready-made target versions of L2 structures, one at a time, to their growing native-like repertoire” (p.21). Long further goes on to argue that PPP approaches, which focus on the selection and sequencing of language structures in advance for students (such as the functional language sets

shown in Figure 27, Figure 28, and Figure 29) rely on the proceduralisation of declarative knowledge through large amounts of practice which eventually allow faster access to new structures, attributing this view to Gatbonton and Segalowitz (1988), among others. The program managers confirmed that these were the principles on which the course was based, as can be seen in the following extract from my interview with John:

**Rob:** Right. So how did you come up with the specific methodology, you know, the stages, the fluencies, what was all that kind of based on?

**John:** I guess to some degree on Gatbontan and Segalowitz's access approach, which I think we used as a reading in one of the FD sessions back in the day. It's an article from - there are two actually, one in TESOL Quarterly and a newer one in Canadian Modern Language Journal, I think.

However, as Long (2015) points out, the effectiveness of the 'access approach' in language teaching has been in doubt for many years, and there is a fundamental divide between those who take a synthetic and those who take an analytic view towards SLA. There is, in fact, significant evidence to show that language learners have a developing 'interlanguage' which cannot be affected by the order in which language is taught, and which suggests that learners only acquire structures in the order in which they are ready to be learnt (see the contributions to Han & Tarone, 2014).

My point in noting all of this is not to argue that either a synthetic or analytic approach to SLA is true; I am not an SLA theorist by any stretch. However, I do wish to point out that the adoption of the functional language sets in the DACP, when combined with the PPP methodology used, points towards the uncritical acceptance of common methodological principles and practices of Western communicative language teaching, despite these being highly contested and the subject of much contention among SLA scholars. When contrasted with the highly critical approach to Japanese

education demonstrated in section 7.2.1, this reveals a further assumption among the course designers about the superiority of Western educational technology and the relative inferiority of Japanese educational technology.

### *Cultural icons in extremis*

The second set of cultural icons in the Discussion and Communication Program which require discussion are what I term here 'cultural icons in extremis' - that is, cultural icons taken to an extreme. I will mention two of these, though it should be noted that they are very strongly connected. These two ideas are "learner-centeredness" (in this case more accurately called "program-centeredness"), and "reduced teacher talking time". I will describe these together, and show how they provide further evidence of the 'native speaker' framing of the program.

The DACP claimed to be highly "student centered", as can be seen in Figure 30, taken from the "recruitment" section of the DACP website.

#### Goals and Recruitment

The [REDACTED] curriculum provides students ample time to express their ideas in English and receive individual support from instructors. Instructors who understand the need for a student-centered approach for such small interactive communication classes are needed to meet these goals.

**Figure 30: Recruitment section of the DACP website**

The DACP classes contained high levels of group and pair work, and teacher talking time was strongly discouraged. This had knock-on effects for the role of the teacher in the DACP. As stated by Richard, one of the program managers, when discussing the hiring process for new teachers:

**Richard:** ...we just wanted to give students as big a chance as they could within that short time to develop as speakers, therefore we needed teachers who naturally were aligned with

that philosophy and weren't going to come in and, say, see their role as being lecturer, or to want a large amount of creative freedom, who would understand why things were the way they were.

In this quote, Richard refers to desiring teachers who would not see themselves as "lecturers", i.e. as people whose job it was to dominate the class with their own teaching, or to turn the DACP class into a teacher-centered environment. The 'philosophy' that Richard mentions is one already discussed in section 7.2.1: that students should be given as much opportunity to talk and develop their fluency as possible within the limited time frame of the lesson. This focus on high student talking time necessarily involved minimising the role of the teacher. This is shown clearly in an extract from my research journal, in which I documented a faculty development session:

I helped with a feedback training session today. I did a regular 'write notes and give feedback' activity, and one of the new instructors did the same. Other people in the room were giving feedback using self-check sheets. I'm not convinced by these. John likes them, but he seems to want to make the teacher role much smaller (asking us to discuss the question "do we even need teachers at all?").

In this extract it is possible to see the ways in which the role of the teacher was minimised in classes. Instructors were asked to discuss the question "do we even need teachers at all?", implying that the role of the teacher should be minimal, and that teachers may not even be necessary. Further, this extract shows that teachers were encouraged to give feedback in the form of self-check sheets rather than in a teacher-fronted manner. This was a common suggestion made to me during my lesson observations as a point of improvement, as can be seen in the following extract from my research journal in which I recount a conversation with another instructor:

Peter and I talked about observations today, and it seems we both get told to give feedback using self-check sheets. Neither of us like to do that much, as Peter said, it's one of the few things we actually do in class!

Once again, this extract shows that the role of the teachers was continually minimised through suggestions from the program managers about how to pass responsibility on to the students; in this case in terms of giving feedback. The feedback on the DACP came in two different forms: oral feedback following the completion of lesson activities, and written feedback posted to the DACP website at the end of each class. Both forms of feedback followed a general structure (which was outlined in the instructor handbook, with example comment templates to work from): a positive example of something that had been done well in the activity or the class (accompanied by specific examples), a point to improve on, and usually some advice about how to go about improving that point. For example, in one of my observation videos I gave the following feedback to students:

Ok, good work everyone. I heard lots of really interesting ideas during this discussion and I thought you were sharing your speaking time really well. I was also happy to hear lots of today's function phrases being used. One point to focus on in the next discussion is your follow up questions. For example, Sachika said she wants to study abroad. Some good follow up questions might have been 'where do you want to go?' or 'how long do you want to study abroad for?' Try to ask some more questions in your next discussion.

This was a fairly standard form of the feedback used on the program, in which use of the target language was praised and further use encouraged.

To sum up, in the DACP the role of the teacher was to introduce new language to students, set up

activities, monitor activities and provide corrective feedback to guide students towards desired communicative outcomes and uses of the language. However, it appears that the focus on high student talking time led to the gradual minimization of the teacher's role in the classes, as can be seen from the fact that my 90 minute observed classes would regularly feature under ten minutes of teacher talking time, and over 70 minutes of student-student speaking time, as seen in the following extract from my research journal:

Today's feedback session went well. In fact Paul said it was the best lesson he had seen during this round of observations. In the lesson students had spoken for 70 of the 90 minutes, which seemed to go over well.

As can be seen from this discussion, the DACP claimed to have an extremely student-centered approach to teaching in which the necessity of having a teacher in the classroom at all was questioned, and in which teachers were hired largely on the basis of their ability to adhere to this extremely non-interventionist classroom approach. The justification of this, as given by the course designers, was to maximise the amount of time in class available for student-student interaction, and to encourage negotiation of meaning among the students without the teacher explicitly correcting their utterances (see the lesson plan in Figure 23, in which times when teachers may intervene is strictly mandated). In other words, the DACP promoted high levels of what it considered to be student-centeredness and strongly encouraged reduced teacher talking time. While the reasons for this were not stated beyond a general focus on maximising student talking time, I would argue that this is another example of Western 'cultural icons' of ELT being taken as inherently superior to local educational technology, and the statements made by Richard that the DACP sought to employ teachers who would not see their role as being "lecturers" points towards a faith in the anti-didactic tenets of Western ELT, and adds further evidence of the 'native speaker' framing of the program.



I would argue, however that this extreme focus on learner-centeredness actually had the opposite effect than that which was intended. By creating such a strict and tightly-controlled classroom environment, any decision-making power was not only removed from the teachers, it was removed from the students as well. In fact, in attempting to make the course student-centered, the managers actually made it program-centered, as decision-making power about what was to be taught, when and how, all resided with the program managers, and not with the teachers or students. This can also be read as native-speakerist, in the sense that it seems the students were not trusted to be involved in any classroom decision-making processes, pointing to a further Othering of these students by the course. In other words, while the course made a lot of its claimed student-centeredness and its reduced teacher talking time (and reduced role for the teacher in general), which in itself can be read as native-speakerist, it actually removed all power from the students and exercised a high degree of control over what the students could learn and how they could learn it, even going so far as to specify the seating arrangements and student groupings at each stage of the lesson. This is, I think, powerful evidence of the 'native speaker' framing of the course, in which students are required to be controlled and surveilled throughout the class. As Holliday (2005) says, "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" (p.58). By keeping the students on such a short leash, the DACP guarded against the possibility of its approach being questioned or altered.

I have argued previously that the DACP made use of Western techniques and practices as a way to 'correct' locally mediated approaches to ELT, and in doing so revealed native-speakerist assumptions about perceived deficiencies in the Japanese education system, pointing towards a 'native speaker' frame within which the course was constructed and justified. In this section I have furthered this argument by suggesting that the DACP fell into a set of native-speakerist traps by assuming that Western ELT practices, represented by the 'cultural icons' identified earlier, were appropriate and

superior to other approaches, despite either the evidence of this being unclear, or even non-existent. As laid out in section 3.4.2, research has shown that the perceived superiority of Western methods and approaches can be found at the heart of much ELT practice, and of many ELT projects (Canagarajah, 1999b; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Widin, 2010), and is also central to native-speakerism. The DACP, I believe, maintained this ideological stance, and the close analysis I have provided of the practices of the course have revealed negative attitudes towards the Japanese education system, and towards Japanese learners, underlying the technology used. Once again, I should emphasise that it is not these practices themselves which I wish to problematize, rather it is the assumptions that underlie them which I consider to be at issue – the practices themselves are much less important than what the practices tell us about the framing of the program and the attitudes of those who designed it. The assumed superiority of Western educational technology, unconsciously adopted, I argue, due to its iconic status, again reveals a certain chauvinism towards local methods of language teaching, and a native-speakerist bias in favour of Western methods built into the structures and practices of the DACP. This can be seen in the words of John, quoted earlier, who stated that the course was not really based on research and theory but more on “principles” which “came from just CLT and task-based language teaching in general”. In other words, this adds more evidence of the ‘native speaker’ framing of the course in which Western-normativity was assumed and Western practices were considered inherently superior to local methods.

### **7.2.3. Assumption 3: Students need to be trained**

The next assumption I will turn to regards "learner training". Learner training is another aspect of native-speakerism which involves the Othering of students through attempting to modify ‘their’ behavior to suit ‘our’ expectations. In this section I will identify and discuss three different ways in which the DACP at Akarenga University can be seen to have engaged in learner training, focusing on the ways students were trained in a) **how to communicate**, with the assumption that they were in

some sense culturally or intellectually deficient in areas such as giving their own opinions and agreeing and disagreeing with each other, b) **how they should learn**, which manifested in the training of students in strategies for learning new words as a way of fostering learner autonomy; strategies which were deemed to be more important than explicit vocabulary instruction, and finally c) **what they should learn**, particularly focusing on the wishes expressed by many students to study vocabulary being disregarded by the course. Once again, I argue that this focus on learner training points towards a 'native speaker' framing underlying the course, in which culturist assumptions were made about the communicative abilities of the students and a chauvinistic need was felt to train students in the "correct" notions of what and how they should learn, disregarding their wishes as being of little importance.

#### *Trained in how to communicate*

As I have already demonstrated, the DACP was focused mainly on communication in the format of discussion, and ostensibly the language taught on it was supposed to help students to speak fluently in English, communicate their ideas to others, and understand the ideas of other speakers. However, the functional language taught, when examined carefully, reveals what I will argue to be a native-speakerist assumption about the perceived deficiencies of students; that the students needed to be trained in how to communicate - not just in English, but in general. As mentioned earlier, the functional language taught was divided into sets (see Figure 27, Figure 28, and Figure 29), which were introduced incrementally to students over the duration of the course, starting with 'opinions', moving on to 'reasons', 'examples', 'organising discussions', and so on. This first struck me as unproblematic, and seemed a reasonable and logical way of approaching the topic. However, I began to wonder what the utility of these phrases was when, on numerous occasions, even my lower level students began the course already able to engage in discussions using phrases such as "I think..." and "because...". As I noted in my journal:

In the first lesson of semester 1, students always seem to be able to use "I think" and "because" and their listener counterparts. What are we teaching these for, if the students can already do them?

In other words, the students were accomplishing the functions without using the specific phrases that were going to be taught to them. This made me wonder what the point was of teaching the phrases we were supposed to introduce for each function, such as "in my opinion..." or "personally speaking, I think...". When discussing this with other members of staff, an answer commonly given was that the phrases we were teaching were 'more polite' and 'more suitable for formal discussion'. As I note in my journal:

We had a team room discussion about the point of the phrases. I was asking what the point of some of the phrases was - to teach discussion or just for the sake of having something to teach? Most said it was 'more polite' and 'more suitable for discussion'.

This seemed logical, but more questions were raised during an FD session on feedback which took place in the first semester of my fieldwork during which a new assessment rule had been implemented, I describe this session in my research journal as follows:

This week's FD was about assessment in preparation for the next test. The instructors marked a 10 minute video and we discussed grading. The new procedure was making "I think" count as a point because it's technically a clause. So, "I think" = an idea (2 points). Seems pointless, because "I think" on its own doesn't get a point. Basically, they get an extra point for making an idea?

In this session the instructors were watching a video prepared by the program managers of a discussion, and were scoring it to see how closely we were adhering to the scoring grading criteria. I was surprised when we went through the scores as a group to find that students saying "I think..." was scored as correct. When asked about this, I was told that students receive scores for any successful marked use of the function, even if they did not use the specific phrases taught in the course - my attention was further pointed to the existence of this rule in the newest edition of the instructor handbook. This seemed to go against the generally accepted explanation of why we taught these basic function phrase sets to the students. If it was not to teach politeness, what was it for? A possible reason for this was brought to my attention several weeks later by one of my fellow instructors, who entered our shared team room after an unsatisfactory lesson and stated that the biggest issue in the course was "to get them [students] to have ideas in the first place", as I quoted in my journal. It occurred to me that perhaps the goal of this was not to teach the phrases themselves, but rather the skills that the phrases represented. In other words, it seemed to me that this represented an example of attempting to 'correct' the perceived deficiencies of the students by focusing not on the *linguistic* 'how' in terms of expressing their ideas, but more on the *cultural* or *intellectual* question of 'how' to express ideas.

Once this idea had occurred, I began to notice more signs that pointed in this direction. For example, when teaching the "agreeing and disagreeing" communication skill, teachers often expressed frustration that the students simply wouldn't or couldn't disagree with each other, and much discussion in the team rooms concerned strategies for showing students when they should disagree, or how to highlight good opportunities to disagree. I note an example in my journal of a teacher devising a game to encourage agree/disagree function use:

Sam showed us a game he made today. In the game, the students held three "disagree"

cards, which they could put in the center of the table each time they disagreed with another student, and which they had to try and use completely before the end of the discussion. He said most of them find it fun, but for some of the quieter students it makes them feel stressed.

In other words, this game forced the students to use the phrases a specific number of times in the discussion, regardless of the communicative context, turning the proceedings into more of a competition than a conversation. In the context of comments about how the students "just can't disagree with each other", this game can be read as attempting to force the students to engage in a practice they were thought to be culturally incapable of. However, the fact that the teacher in question claimed most of the students "find it fun" seems to suggest that the cultural barriers may not be as big a factor as assumed, and lack of disagreement in discussions may have been due to other reasons such as genuine lack of disagreement, or a lack of motivation to engage in a challenging interaction in their second language.

The most extreme example of this learner training was the function for "talking about possibilities", which was simply presented as the two phrases "if...?" (for the listener) and "if..." (for the speaker), which the students were expected to fill in with conditional clauses (see Figure 31).

Possibilities	
Asking about Possibilities	Talking about Possibilities
If... ?	If...

Figure 31: 'Possibilities' function phrases

This raises a question: if it was assumed that the students were already capable of making complex grammatical utterances such as conditional clauses, why was it assumed that a 90-minute lesson was

required to teach them how to use the clauses in order to talk about possibilities in a discussion? This is a further example, to my mind, of how the course was not intended to teach the students language per se (as the function set assumed they already knew the language), but was rather attempting to teach phrases and structures which the students could fill with the language they already knew in order to carry out discussions. The underlying assumption of the "possibilities" function was that the students knew how to make complex grammatical structures such as conditional clauses, but somehow were unaware of how to use these in communication. It seems unlikely that students would know how to make conditional clauses without understanding that they can be used to talk about possibilities; that is, after all, their main function. In fact, students regularly used "if" to talk about possibilities from the first lesson of the course onwards. This is the most extreme example, but many other of the functional language sets contained the same paradox: if the students had this language, why did the course feel they needed to be instructed in how to use it? One aspect of native-speakerism is the Othering of students through assuming cultural deficiency on their part, and as Holliday (2006) argues, this can be seen in the labelling of students from non-Western backgrounds as "passive", "indirect", "reluctant to challenge authority", and so on. Indeed, the labelling of whole cultures as "collectivist" is often used as a way to explain away student behavior such as being unwilling to disagree. I feel it is not too much of a stretch to see the same kind of attitude at work in the DACP; functional language sets were selected not necessarily because they were language that the students were unfamiliar with, but because they represented concepts that it was believed the students needed guidance in: giving opinions, supporting ideas with reasons, examples, and evidence, talking about possibilities, agreeing and disagreeing, asking follow up questions, and so on. In other words, it seems that the selection of functional language sets in the DACP assumed something about the students: that they needed guidance in expressing opinions, disagreeing with each other, and generally being expressive and critical in discussions. Again, the image of the stereotypical 'Other' emerges, in need of correction. This can be seen in Mark's

comments about the students on the course coming from an educational system where they are expected to be "passive", and connects back to the adjectives used to describe learners as documented by Holliday (2005) such as "passive", and so on. Heng, the Singaporean teacher interviewed for the study summarises what he saw as some of these views among teachers on the course:

**Heng:** ... in the process you learn a lot about how other teachers teach, about a lot of hidden even prejudices that the other teachers have.

**Rob:** Okay.

**Heng:** And I think that's really interesting, especially those very western-centric teachers would see students in this light, but whereas I'm from an Asian background [so] I would understand why the student is behaving in that way in that context. And that's an opportunity for me to share my opinions about why Asians think that way rather than... Yeah, but most of the time the opinions are so strong that my opinion doesn't matter. [laughs] My opinion is not accepted. But it's a good space for us to just sit down and have a chat about not just lesson-related stuff, but what we really think about our situation, our students, about the culture itself we are teaching in.

**Rob:** Can you give an example of that kind of prejudicial opinion you were talking about?

**Heng:** There are many instructors who say students are - how to say? Not stupid! [laughs] Well, yes, it's sort of they are not motivated, they are passive, and things like that. But coming from an Asian perspective I sort of understand that in Japanese culture they rely heavily on the listener to ask questions, so they don't tend to elaborate when asked - so they always wait for the listener to ask questions, yeah, that's something that still a lot of instructors don't understand, and they kept forcing the speaker, the students, to speak up.

Which of course is not wrong thing to do; it's teaching them how to communicate in a



more international context, not just in a Japanese context, so this kind of conflict... So a lot of teachers from a more western background would try to force, so-called force the students to elaborate, and that makes the students very uncomfortable and very reticent, and they still don't understand and they concluded that Japanese students are passive, reticent, yeah, very negative view of them, yeah. Whereas from my point of view I think that's not the case, it's culturally - they are not trained to give their opinion or elaborate until they are asked a question, yeah.

Heng here argues that the problem that certain instructors identified as being the fault of the students was actually the fault of the teachers. While the teachers believed the students were being passive or reticent during discussions, Heng argues that the silence of the students was actually due to the poor intercultural communication skills of the teachers, who were simply unaware of discourse norms in Japanese society. We may object to the continuing binary division between cultures that Heng seems to suggest here, but it is certainly notable that while many of the teachers felt the students needed to be trained in how to give ideas, Heng feels the teachers were at fault for failing to be appropriately interculturally aware of their students and enforcing one view of a communication style upon them. This form of 'learner training' again seems to indicate a native-speakerist assumption in the DACP about the deficiencies of the students, which needed to be corrected by ELT professionals.

#### *Trained in how they should learn*

As Holliday (2005) argues, there is a certain educational chauvinism that emerges when teachers assert what they believe to be the appropriate methods and goals of language learning over the wishes and desires of their students, and will somewhat arrogantly attempt to train learners in the 'correct' view of learning languages according to the teacher's own beliefs and background. In the DACP, this attitude can most clearly be seen in the value placed on the fostering of learner autonomy

through ‘negotiation of meaning’. As already mentioned in the previous section, the role of the teacher in DACP classes was rather minimal, with the instructor's job reduced to introducing activities, introducing new functional language, monitoring discussions, and providing corrective feedback, with even this limited role being questioned. Pair- and group-work were strongly encouraged, and in fact were central to the design of the classes, with most activities carried out either in pairs or groups, as strongly encouraged by the guidelines in the instructor handbook. As also noted in the instructor handbook, students were expected to speak English for over 60 of the 90 minutes of class time, while high levels of teacher talking time were often picked up on as a point of improvement in observations. During my first year on the program, myself and other new instructors regularly received this feedback. For example, one of my early points of improvement on my observation form was to:

Encourage students to find out words from each other instead of relying on the teacher.

This referred to negotiation of meaning (NoM), which was often emphasized as one of the key methods employed to maximise English use in the class in order to achieve the course goals. This can be seen in the DACP journal introduction, where NoM is listed as one of the key 'affective goals' of the program (see Figure 32):

7. Appreciate the importance of negotiating the meaning of unknown vocabulary items or points with a speaker.

**Figure 32: Negotiation of meaning (affective goal)**

NoM is also listed in the same article as one of the key assessment criteria (Figure 33):

- c) Appropriate interactional behavior with others through use of reactions, marked agreements and disagreements, and negotiation of meaning.

**Figure 33: Negotiation of meaning (assessment criteria)**

'Negotiation of meaning' refers to students using their stores of English in order to repair communications without relying on outside sources such as the teacher, dictionaries, or reference books for help. During my fieldwork this was strongly encouraged by the program managers, and was prominently stated as a point to focus on during classes in the DACP instructor handbook. Specific sets of functional language were also aimed at encouraging negotiation of meaning, such as 'avoiding ambiguity' or 'checking understanding'. For example, one set of functional language was called 'paraphrasing', and the phrases can be seen in Figure 34:

Paraphrasing (p. 38)	
Paraphrasing Others	Paraphrasing Yourself
Do you mean (that)...?	I mean (that)...
So what you're saying is (that)...?	What I'm saying is (that)...

**Figure 34: 'Paraphrasing' function phrases**

This set of phrases required students to repeat their ideas using different words in cases of miscommunication, and these phrases, along with the others described above, were all designed to help students engage in negotiation of meaning rather than relying on the teacher, thus maximising the amount of English used in classes.

The course was strictly non-interventionist, and students were expected to solve miscommunications among themselves through a process of paraphrasing, guessing, and rewording without the input of the teacher or the use of Japanese. Students were also required to follow these

strategies in cases in which they did not know a piece of vocabulary. This can be seen in the following extract from my research journal:

It's very frustrating having to try to encourage NoM all the time. I understand the rationale, but today I'm not sure my students even got the correct ideas across. I knew what they wanted to say, and they managed to carry on the discussion, but I don't think they successfully communicated what they wanted to say. Wouldn't it have been easier if I could have just stepped in and helped?

NoM was encouraged as a way of developing learner autonomy in classes, allowing the students to learn new language without the help of their teacher, which connects to the minimization of the instructor's role in DACP classes.

Holliday (2005) sees learner autonomy as a problematic native-speakerist discourse in ELT, not because the concept of autonomy is in principle problematic, but because it divides teachers and students into the two groups: "autonomous" and "not-autonomous" - i.e. needing to be trained in autonomy, which again has echoes of 'individualist'/'collectivist' culturist perceptions of 'Us' and the 'Other'. The focus on NoM in the DACP and the non-interventionist policy regarding modes of instruction indicates a high level of faith in the notion of learner autonomy, and the focus on training students in strategies such as negotiation of meaning and using self-check sheets as feedback (as mentioned in section 7.2.1) instead of relying on the teacher are clear examples of a mindset in the course which positioned the students as in need of training in how to be autonomous.

The idea of teacher-centered classrooms being problematic is noted by Canagarajah (1999b) who argues that the role of the teacher in non-Western ELT contexts is often attributed to "ethno-religious practices", as can be seen in discourses around the role of Confucianism in East Asian education (see for example Susser, 1998). This is then contrasted with the 'learner-centered classrooms' of the West,

and combined with 'collectivist'/'individualist' cultural stereotypes (Holliday, 2006), creating a picture of a problematic 'Other' in contrast to the unproblematic 'Self' of the Western ELT enterprise. In the DACP the ideas of learner-centeredness and reduced teacher talking time were taken to an extreme, as noted earlier, with the teacher playing very little role in classes besides introducing language and giving corrective feedback. By taking the promotion of autonomous learning and reduced teacher talking time to such an extreme, the DACP implicitly positioned students as being in need of training in how to be autonomous. Indeed, it paradoxically set up a highly structured and controlled space in which students could exercise their autonomy, which again connects to the 'program-centeredness' of the course. Once again, I should stress that it is not necessarily the technology itself that I take issue with here, but with what the technology, and the way it was employed, tells us about the attitudes that lay behind the program. In this case, the use of a highly "program-centered" approach, coupled with the promotion of autonomy as a skill which needed to be taught to the problematic Others of the students, reveals further evidence of the 'native speaker' framing of the program.

A second way in which the students were trained was through the employment of a strict English-only policy. This will be elaborated on in the next section, so I will cover it only briefly here. However, during their interviews, instructors noted that students had to be trained to use only English in classes. For example, Joseph stated that:

**Joseph:** I think some do internalize this [English-only] rule because we have to scold them so much.

This "scolding" took the form not just of verbal reprimands, but also things such as losing points in discussion tests, where a point was lost for every utterance of a Japanese word. This represents a clear form of native-speakerist learner training, in which monolingualism had to be quite strictly

enforced by instructors in order for learners to conform. Keiji, during his interview, reveals a similar sentiment:

**Keiji:** I think by putting that kind of frame around, shackles onto those students with you can't use Japanese to communicate it gets them to, well, it's intended to get them to be creative and, you know, how to send messages through with the vocabulary they have.

Keiji's reference to "shackling" the students again seems to suggest a strongly enforced learner training, and his reference to this being needed to encourage the students to be "creative" and communicate "with the vocabulary they have" connects this point back to the promotion of negotiation of meaning. The use of English-only is therefore another area in which native-speakerist learner training was felt to be necessary in order for the students to conform to the expectations of the course, and is further evidence of the learner training I have been describing, and of 'native speaker' framing in the program.

#### *Trained in what they should learn*

Finally, the DACP engaged in native-speakerist training of students in terms of what they should learn in classes. In the DACP this could be seen most clearly in the topic of vocabulary teaching. As already noted, the DACP assumed that students already had a latent declarative knowledge of grammar and vocabulary from their high school studies, and sought to transform this into procedural knowledge (see section 7.2.1) by getting the students to engage in extended discussions where the focus was on fluency rather than accuracy or the teaching of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and so on. However, the students often did not feel that their level of vocabulary knowledge was high enough to engage in the discussions effectively. At the end of each semester the students would complete a questionnaire about the course assessing its strengths and weaknesses and giving their

opinions on it as a whole. One theme which emerged regularly (I cannot give accurate numbers on this, as instructors only received the results of their own questionnaires, and requests for more universal information were rejected) was that of vocabulary. Students often requested that more vocabulary be given to them in order to help them engage in their class discussions. The general response from the course was to encourage the use of "strategies" rather than engage in direct vocabulary instruction. For example, if a student didn't know a word they were told first to ask their classmates "how do you say \_\_\_\_\_ in English?", and if this was unsuccessful they were instructed to describe the word using lower-frequency vocabulary that they already knew. This can be seen in Figure 35, taken from the "practical objectives" section in the introductory article of the first issue of the DACP journal:

2. Approximate unknown words in English by explanation using high frequency items.

**Figure 35: Circumlocution (course goal)**

While I was not able to gain permission to show or quote directly from student feedback, I will provide below two short translations of student comments that I received pertaining to this issue:

I could learn many things in this class such as discussion skills and phrases that I can use in my life after graduating. I think topics would have been easier to discuss if we studied vocabulary for each topic.

I didn't have enough vocabulary or grammar to explain what I wanted to say, but the teacher gave me advice to help participate in discussions anyway.

These comments, from two different students, highlight the point being made here. The first comment expresses the desire for the student to have had more vocabulary input in lessons, while the second shows that this student didn't feel they had enough grammar or vocabulary to express themselves, but that they were given "advice" by their teacher to get around this problem. The advice spoken of here most likely refers to the negotiation of meaning and circumlocution described in section 7.2.2.

Once again, the argument given for this was that negotiating meaning and circumlocution are useful discussion skills, and that directly teaching new vocabulary would take up too much class time, reducing the opportunity to focus on oral fluency activities. While there was not a ban on instructors teaching vocabulary, and a small number of research projects by individual instructors focused on the incidental and discreet teaching of vocabulary (including one of my own), this major concern raised by the students was never taken very seriously by the program managers or many of the teachers. This attitude can be seen in the words of the instructor Peter:

**Rob:** So, do you think that there are aspects of the course that, so for example in terms of vocabulary, maybe it would be beneficial if the students had vocabulary in the class, or what do you think about that?

**Peter:** I don't think it would, because I think that that would detract from the overall goal of building their fluency in discussion. So I think in terms of vocabulary at least it's okay to have it there, but it's to be used at the student's own discretion. If they spot a word on the page which they feel would help them to share their idea in the discussion then they're free to use it, and they can also ignore it if they wish to.

In this short extract Peter voices the general view on the course that vocabulary instruction would "detract from the overall goal of building fluency", despite the need and desire for vocabulary



expressed by very many students on the program. We see here an example of the wishes of learners being ignored, and the chauvinistic imposition on the learners of a particular view of what should be learned and what should be given priority in the classroom. This is again evidence of a native-speakerist assumption that students needed to be trained in the 'correct' ways of learning a language according to the beliefs of the teacher or of the course. Once again, this points to 'native speaker' framing within the program, in which correct ideas of how languages should be learned were assumed, and students were then required to be trained to follow the 'correct' methods.

I believe that these three points show evidence of extensive learner training on the DACP, in which it was felt necessary to train learners in how to communicate, in what they should learn, and in how they should learn. I believe that this is evidence of a culturist 'native speaker' framing in the program, in which learners were felt to be deficient in terms of how to communicate, and therefore required training in this. I also believe that the extensive training in how to learn (with a focus on learner autonomy, taught through encouraging negotiation of meaning), and in what to learn (with the students' wishes for vocabulary instruction being ignored) are evidence of culturist Othering of the students, who it was felt needed to be trained in the 'correct' methods of teaching and learning. This strong theme of learner training points towards the 'native speaker' framing of the program.

#### **7.2.4. Assumption 4: English-only is the best policy**

The final of the four native-speakerist assumptions which underlay the course was the English-only policy of the Discussion and Communication Program. Once again, I will argue that the employment of this English-only policy is evidence of the 'native speaker' framing of the program.

The English-only policy was, along with the focus on oral skills, one of the key methods by which the maximal-English environment was sought to be attained. This is something that was explained to instructors in the orientation week, and was emphasised throughout the tenure of a teacher's contract.

I make reference to the English-only policy several times in my research journal, as in the following extract:

I'm not that bothered about the English only policy, but some of my students are using a lot of Japanese. Today I hinted that if they use Japanese during their discussion test they will lose points, which seemed to light a fire under some of them.

It was further stated in the instructor handbook (from which I am paraphrasing) that the idea of English-only must be introduced in the first lesson of the course so that the students knew what was expected, and then enforced throughout the rest of the course. Officially, this was done so as to reinforce the fluency aspect of the course - again, if students were speaking Japanese then they were, according to the logic of the course, missing out on opportunities to speak English, and were also failing to use discussion strategies taught on the course such as paraphrasing or negotiation of meaning. In the DACP the English-only policy was heavily emphasised as a way of meeting the course objectives regarding fluency-building, and justified through the notion that the policy was intended to maximise time for L2 use in the classroom.

English-only policies are common in ELT, and the idea that English-only is an effective approach is termed the "monolingual fallacy" by Phillipson (1992). According to this policy, English should be the only language used in the classroom both by the teacher and by the students. The contention that the use of the students' L1 will negatively influence their language learning is contradicted by research, which shows that codeswitching and the use of the L1 in the classroom has no negative affect on language learning, and may even have certain positive outcomes (see Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009; Macaro, 2005; McMillan & Rivers, 2011; Sampson, 2012; Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009). While Japanese was discouraged in the classroom in the DACP, the English-only policy was taken to rather extreme lengths during discussion tests. Using the same

logic as outlined earlier, that the use of Japanese indicated a missed opportunity for English or discussion skill use, the use of Japanese was actually penalised in the discussion tests. The maximum score for each test was 25, and this was split into sections such as "content", "functional language use", and so on. At the beginning of the test, students had no points in these categories and earned them through their oral performance during the test. However, there was also a section of scoring connected to "Japanese use", and in this area the students began with five points, which they lost, one at a time, for each word or phrase of Japanese spoken. This meant that a student who sat in complete silence during the test would finish with a score of five, while a student who attempted to communicate poorly while using some Japanese, could conceivably have finished the test with a lower score. As mentioned previously, there is little research support for English-only policies, and on questioning the program manager John gave a surprising reason for the implementation of the policy:

**Rob:** Right. But the DACP has an English-only policy, why is that?

**John:** I guess it's just because our university sees it as a sales point. There's no theoretical reason for it. I don't think anyone's ever been able to show that not being able to use your native language for 90 minutes will improve your abilities to communicate in the target language! So yeah I think it was a gimmicky thing. It was something that was inherent in the program from the start.

**Rob:** Right. It wasn't a choice made by any of the program managers?

**John:** No, no. I remember going into my interview in 2008 and actually asking what the policy was and being told everything should be done in English.

**Rob:** Right.

**John:** To be fair, I've worked full-time in three universities in Japan and all of those universities had the same policy.

**Rob:** Right.

**John:** I think it looks good, parents like it, that kind of thing.

In other words, the English-only policy was, according to John, an imposition on the program by the university, who he saw as attempting to use the policy as a selling point for the course, which may be because "parents like it" and "it looks good". In other words, in implementing this highly punitive and native-speakerist policy, the course was catering to native-speakerist attitudes in society at large, and those at an institutional level in particular. Once again, it seems clear that a native-speakerism lay, unacknowledged, at the heart of the principles and practices of the DACP.

Instructors, on the other hand, seemed to be torn on the issue of the English-only policy. Joseph, one of the 'native-speaker' teachers seems to struggle with this:

**Rob:** What do you think is the purpose of the institutional English-only policy?

**Joseph:** This is something I've thought about too and tried to understand because in my life and I think in many speakers' life outside of the classroom mixing is totally normal and not an impediment to learning. But I think it might have to do with brand, possibly, the branding of the program, that you as the student can make it in an English-only environment and we'll simulate this and you'll get as much English as possible in these 90 minutes. So it might be valuable from a crass branding or advertising standpoint. But I think maybe pedagogically the idea is that if we set aside this space or time then it's maximizing the input and maximizing output which is a rare chance in Japan. So you don't wanna lose a single minute or second of not using the L2. So maybe from that standpoint.

Joseph in this extract acknowledges that the use of Japanese would be no impediment to learning, but suggests that pedagogically it may be useful because it maximises the amount of time available

for English use. This is certainly a possibility, although it brings us back again to the notion of the DACP as a correction to regular Japanese educational practices up until this point. However, Joseph seems ambivalent about the rule in practice:

**Rob:** How do you think the students feel about the English-only approach?

**Joseph:** Yeah, I don't get a sense that they view it as importantly or as strictly as the institutional rule says. I think some do internalize this rule because we have to scold them so much. [laugh] I think teachers feel pressured to... Well yeah, it's actually in the handbook I think, isn't it? Lesson 1, set the tone early, that no Japanese use is allowed or whatever. And so I think students know by Lesson 1 or Lesson 2, Lesson 3 in some cases that they're not supposed to use Japanese and no one's supposed to use Japanese, so they do start policing each other. But I think that's coming from outside, I think if we just had it more relaxed or natural I think there'd be more mixing.

Here Joseph seems to suggest that for students the reason for the English-only rule is unclear, and that students only "internalise" the rule because "we...scold them so much", which even leads to students policing each other. In other words, the DACP English-only policy can be seen to feed in to the extensive native-speakerist 'learner training' on the program already described. Josie, another instructor on the course, when asked if she feels there are any political implications to the English only policy answers strongly in the affirmative:

**Josie:** I think there are, because really, who are we to say you can't use that language or languages? We're basically saying it's inferior. We're taking away their, we're pushing so hard for learner autonomy and then we take away their autonomy in terms of language use, and it doesn't make sense. And so I think that it should be not using your home language

should be encouraged, but at the same time it's very, I don't know, imperialistic to be like you cannot use it at all, only use English. I'm not explaining it very well but I do think there are political implications.

Josie makes a very strong statement in claiming that the English-only policy is "imperialistic". While she feels, presumably for pedagogical reasons, that using Japanese should be discouraged, she feels the enforcement of the English-only policy has imperialistic connotations in which it is implied that the students' L1 is inferior. This has strong echoes of Phillipson's (1992) idea of the "monolingual fallacy" upholding linguistic imperialism.

The English-only policy was then of either low or zero pedagogical value, and appears to have been implemented mainly for commercial reasons as a selling point of the program. It was implemented strongly against the students, who were penalised for any Japanese use in the tests, and played into the corrective learner training which I have argued was already part of the course. The policy can even be read as a form of linguistic imperialism, as expressed by Josie. I believe it can be convincingly argued that the English-only policy is another example of a native-speakerist assumption that underlay the DACP, and points towards the 'native speaker' framing of the program.

#### **7.2.5. Discussion**

In this section I have brought up several key methodological issues with the DACP course. Firstly, I have noted that the educational technology used on the DACP was deeply rooted in Western ELT methods and approaches. While this is not problematic in itself, I have connected this to culturist 'Othering' of the Japanese English education system and of Japanese students, and a chauvinistic attitude to local educational practices, leading to a discourse in which these were constructed as problematic and in need of correction by the Western ELT practices used on the course. I have in turn connected this to particular 'cultural icons of ELT' which could be found in the practices of the

course and which seemed to represent the problematic assumptions about 'correct' practice in ELT mainly because of the cultural significance of these practices for the group (Western, or Western-trained ELT practitioners), rather than to any kind of objective value they may have (whether or not such a thing even exists). I have further argued that culturist 'learner training' was a necessary outcome of this, in which learners were trained both in how they should communicate and in what and how they should learn, which speaks to perceived 'deficiencies' in the learners which needed to be corrected, and which again brings us back to the chauvinistic implementation of Western-normative educational approaches. Finally, I have shown how the English-only policy was used on the course regardless of its instructional efficacy, and argued that it was simply another manifestation of native-speakerist thought. In other words, I have argued that the course was run through with native-speakerist assumptions which were embedded in the professional beliefs and the practices of the program. The DACP, in short, was constructed and subsequently operated within a 'native speaker' frame in which Western-normativity was assumed, leading to Othering of the Japanese educational system and the students on the program.

This brings us back to a point raised in the first chapter: the question of 'professionalism'. In the sense that professionalism means coming to work on time, being respectful of colleagues and students, and so on, this is an unproblematic point (though it must be accepted that these too are cultural values). However, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, 'professionalism' on the DACP course was a discourse explicitly tied to notions of 'doing the job', which involved the teaching of classes that fit within the very stringent confines of the DACP lesson plan, and the philosophy of the DACP course. As Heng notes, when asked to define what he means by "teaching classes professionally" on the DACP course:

**Heng:** Professionally as in like everything that the DACP, well, following the DACP principles. So for example we have this fluency and then they will just do everything like

clockwork. Fluency, after that they have their presentation then first presentation, second presentation, discussion one, discussion two. They would do everything like military style.... Yeah, I think that's professional in the DACP sense.

In other words, a professional DACP teacher "in the DACP sense" followed the DACP practices "like clockwork...military style", without deviating from the established principles; principles which, I have argued, are implicitly native-speakerist in their framing.

Indeed, instructors were specifically chosen because they "fit with that philosophy", and too much creativity was discouraged, as stated by the program manager Richard. As such, 'professionalism' in the DACP was a discourse with a very specific meaning (as Heng says, professional "in the DACP sense"), and which was deeply implicated in carrying out practices that were closely connected to the native-speakerist assumptions and framing outlined in the previous section. I earlier referred to this discourse as "the DACP discourse of professionalism". The next step in this analysis, therefore, is to look at how the DACP discourse of professionalism was inculcated and reinforced in the minds of teachers.

### **7.3. Training, orientation, and reinforcement**

In this section I will explore the topic of training, orientation, and reinforcement within the DACP, and explore how the native-speakerist principles and practices of the DACP described in the previous section were propagated through the training and professional development of teachers.

This analysis focuses on four main points:

1. I will first discuss the qualifications required of DACP instructors, and show that all of the instructors were trained either in Western institutions, or in courses run by Western staff. I argue that this shared base of professional knowledge and belief has important



implications for the 'native speaker' framing of the program and the DACP discourse of professionalism. I term this "Centre qualification bias".

2. Secondly, I will talk about the orientation week that was required of new instructors, and show how during this week the key philosophy and practices of the program were imparted. I will describe how this was an important influence on the 'native speaker' framing of the program in terms of justifying the teaching philosophy and approach, particularly when setting itself up in opposition to Japanese English language education. I will further argue that the very strongly unified teaching approach introduced during this week creating an environment and a discourse (the DACP discourse of professionalism) in which the instructors were only able to focus on the established practices of the DACP and were unable to make any significant changes to the program. Although I believe that this was done for practical reasons rather than to consciously uphold native-speakerist practices, I argue that the effect of this was that native-speakerist practices became normalized and went unchallenged.
3. I will discuss the idea of 'reinforcement' in the context of instructor observations, and faculty development sessions. I will first show how observations of instructors' classes served to enforce a particular methodology, and limit the freedom of instructors, which had the inadvertent effect of upholding the native-speakerist framing and practices of the course, particularly in the area of learner training.
4. Finally, I will show, with examples, how despite being coded as 'development', these sessions were actually a program of reinforcement which served to limit discussion and new ideas. Once again, I argue that this inadvertently led to the continuation of 'native speaker' framing in the DACP, as established native-speakerist practices and beliefs were reified through reinforcement and the strengthening of the DACP discourse of professionalism.

The purpose of this section is to show how the native-speakerist framing and practices described earlier were normalised and upheld through the DACP discourse of professionalism, and in fact were considered to be professional best practice. I will show how through these four elements (Centre qualification bias, the orientation week, lockstep in the teaching approach, and the program of reinforcement), the 'native speaker' framing of the DACP was instilled in the minds of instructors, creating their own frames which were almost synonymous with the native-speakerist DACP frame.

### **7.3.1. Centre qualification bias**

As noted section 6.2.1, when discussing hiring and contracts, there was no discrimination in the DACP against potential instructors on the basis of their nationality or perceived speakerhood. However, there was a more subtle bias in the makeup of DACP instructors which may not seem obvious or significant at first look, and yet was a bias which seems likely to have influenced all of the following points made in this section; this is an issue which I term 'Centre qualification bias' (Lowe, 2015). The term 'Centre' comes from Galtung (1971) via Phillipson (1992), and is used to distinguish powerful Western ELT institutions (the 'Centre') from the less economically and culturally powerful areas into which ELT policy and practice is imported (the 'Periphery'). While these terms have been criticised by scholars such as Pennycook (1994) and Holliday (2005) as being crude and monolithic, the term 'Centre' still seems appropriate for my purposes here. By 'Centre qualification bias', I mean a bias in favour of qualifications, and by extension the specific knowledge and training that such qualifications represent, that are provided and awarded by institutions and educational bodies in the West. This could refer to postgraduate degrees awarded by universities in the UK, the US, Australia, and so on, and could also refer to shorter certificate courses awarded by examination bodies such as Cambridge ESOL and Trinity College London (the CELTA and CertTESOL, Delta and DipTESOL being the most common and obvious). As highlighted in the job

advertisement shown in Figure 4, the DACP required instructors to be:

- (1) A person who has obtained a Master's degree in English-language education and who has personal knowledge of and experience in English-language education at the university level; or
- (2) A person who has obtained a Master's degree in a field other than English-language education and who has personal knowledge of and experience in English-language education at the university level; or
- (3) A person who has obtained a Master's degree in English-language education or in another field and a CELTA qualification, and who has personal knowledge of English-language education at the university level.

In short, a DACP candidate needed to have some postgraduate education (preferably in ELT), or a CELTA, and some knowledge of university teaching. The awarding country of the postgraduate degree was not specifically mentioned by the advert, though the CELTA is validated by an organisational wing of the University of Cambridge. Master's and doctoral degrees in English language education and related fields can be found throughout the world, in institutes of higher education in many different countries. In Japan alone, there are over a hundred related postgraduate degrees available to people wishing to study English language teaching, English linguistics, general education, or English literature; which, although not obviously related to ELT, often requires candidates to take courses in language education (Lowe, 2015). This is not to mention the fact that Master's degrees in fields other than English language teaching are plentiful. Despite this, in the DACP the vast majority of instructors at the time this research was carried out held degrees from Centre institutions. In fact, of the 59 instructors who worked on the program during the course of

this research, only one had a Master's degree from an institution located somewhere other than the UK, the US, Australia, or New Zealand. While several instructors had studied at the Japanese campuses of American universities such as Temple University Japan or Columbia University's Japan campus, these institutions run programs largely designed and administered by Western academics, or by academics with training in the West, and so these qualifications can still be considered 'Centre' (Pennycook, 1994). Even the one instructor who had earned a degree from a Japanese university noted to me privately that the program was set up and taught by Western academics who were working at the university. This instructor also held a CELTA and a Delta. There was, in other words, a Centre qualification bias present in the DACP, which is important to note as it likely had ramifications for the particular educational technology used on the program, and the 'native speaker' framing that I have argued was present.

There is a danger here that my writing may be interpreted as attacking these credentials, or saying that they are unsuitable for Japanese university teaching, and I would like to stress at this point that this is not what I am saying. I myself work in a Japanese university and received all of my training from institutions in the United Kingdom. I do not think this means I should be disallowed from, or am in some way unable to teach effectively in my current post. However, I do believe that the training I have received gives me a certain perspective on education, and has equipped me with a certain set of beliefs, tools, and practices which influence how I teach and how I believe people should be taught. My awareness of this allows me to temper my own views by thinking critically and engaging in dialogue with my coworkers and students in order that I do not unilaterally impose decisions on my students or my classroom which are unsuitable or unwanted. I do not claim this is because I am somehow more intelligent than other teachers, including those of the DACP, nor that other teachers are negligent for not noticing this. I believe that conceptual frames are very difficult to recognize, and the fact that dominant framing is presented as commonsensical means people are unlikely to be aware of it. I believe I still carry a native-speakerist framing in my mind, which I can

only challenge as I become conscious of aspects of it.

In other words, the Centre qualification bias that was present in the DACP is not a cause for concern because such qualifications are inherently bad, or because the techniques they impart and the beliefs they instill are in some way essentially incorrect or problematic. Rather, it is because having a body of instructors or program managers equipped with similar training will unavoidably influence the beliefs and the educational technology used on the program, and the absence of training from other more diverse settings indicates a possible bias towards a form of educational practice seen as superior to more locally mediated knowledge, as I have argued in the previous section was in fact the case in the DACP. This can be seen as a form of "hidden curriculum" or "Currere" (Pinar, 1974), in which educational programs play a secondary (some would say primary) role in instilling particular perspectives and values related to the world and the subject in the students, in this case informing the 'native speaker' frame that I have argued was present in the DACP through an initial and ongoing socialization into the program. Indeed, this seems to be an unavoidable conclusion when we turn to the internal training and desired practices of the course.

### **7.3.2. Orientation and the instilling of professional expectation**

During the first week of employment on the DACP, instructors were required to attend numerous scheduled orientation sessions, which formed the first part of the DACP 'faculty development' (FD) program. This can be seen in Figure 36, which shows an extract from a DACP Journal article, written by one of the program managers.

FDs are scheduled in two main time frames. The first of these occurs at the beginning of every semester in the week prior to classes being taught, in what is referred to as an “orientation.” After this, FDs are held throughout the remainder of the “regular” semester when students are on campus and attending lessons. During these two periods, FDs are conducted for a variety of attendees: *new teachers* (i.e. those in their very first semester in the program), *specific tenure groups* (e.g. those in their third, fourth and fifth years in the program), *teachers of specific types of students* (e.g. advanced level/returnees, students with special needs), and *all teachers together* (e.g. in standardisation trainings for discussion test assessment and grading). In most cases, FDs are led by program managers, although some are facilitated by the teachers themselves.

**Figure 36: Description of faculty development**

This 'orientation week' is particularly important when considering how the DACP discourse of professionalism, and the 'native speaker' framing that it helped to uphold, was initially instilled. The sessions which made up the orientation week focused on each aspect of the course considered important, from the macro level (such as the overall structure of the lesson and the expected timings for each stage of the lessons) to the more micro level (e.g. exactly how to score the utterances of students during tests based on the number of clauses each utterance contained). Orientation sessions in total covered the following points:

- The philosophy of the program
- The structure and goals of the course
- The goals of individual lessons
- The methods of introducing functional language
- The timing of lesson stages
- The fluency activity
- The mode of assessment used (including intensive training to make all instructors' evaluations as close as possible to each other)
- Effective ways to give feedback (teacher fronted, student-student peer feedback, self-check sheets, etc.)

➤ The administrative duties of instructors

The week was rather intensive, with instructors introduced to all the main stages of the lesson, and to key aspects of the teaching approach, in a relatively short amount of time. Instructors either completed the orientation sessions together in one large group, or were divided into smaller groups to make the input more manageable. When I joined the course, only one other instructor apart from myself was incoming, and so our input sessions were relatively relaxed. However, six months later I took part in some of the training sessions for more than twenty new instructors (the turnover necessitated by the strict contract limitations), and witnessed the large-scale orientation sessions first hand. Generally, the sessions were organised in a similar way to language classes, with ideas on the topic first being elicited from the trainees and then discussed in small groups, followed by activities being carried out by the instructors such as micro-teaching, or scoring and assessing a pre-recorded video of student-student interactions. This structure was carried over into the faculty development sessions which comprised the ongoing training of the instructors. As my interviewee Keiko says:

**Keiko:** ...I think Akarenga is very consistent in providing the curriculum in addition to the training which fit the curriculum. For instance, when we had FDs, the program managers often used the strategies that we use in the classrooms. For example, they have us discuss in a group and then the feedback is also similar to what we do in the classrooms.

This can be seen in Figure 37, taken from an article in the DACP journal, in which both the types and structure of the FDs are briefly described.

Faculty development sessions (FDs) are a mixture of teacher training workshops and seminars. They target a range of instructor duties, including but not limited to, teaching practice and pedagogical theory, testing and assessment, program administration, and instructor development (lesson observations and small-scale research projects). Some FDs are more reflective in outlook, (such as reviewing lessons or progress with a semester project), while others seek to be more strategic (i.e. for lesson planning or program administration). They typically involve discussions and have a strong focus on collaboration and idea-sharing. They also aim to be predominantly teacher-centred.

**Figure 37: Description of FD sessions**

Although each session welcomed instructor input in the form of elicited answers, there was a clear outcome for each session, which was for new instructors to master or understand whatever aspect of the program was the subject of that session. Indeed, instructors who did not perform to a satisfactory level were sometimes forced to retake sessions. For example, assessment training involved showing a pre-prepared video of program managers pretending to be students engaging in a discussion, which all of the instructors would then watch and score on the course score sheets. The mode of assessment on the DACP was very quantitative, with instructors checking boxes which corresponded to the utterances of students, and the final score being a number calculated from the number of boxes checked related to the different skills and functions taught on the course. In the early years of the DACP, assessment was based largely on the qualitative judgement of teachers, but this became gradually more quantitative over time, as can be seen in Figure 38 taken from an article about assessment procedures published in the DACP journal:



*Table 1: Summary of the 2009, 2010, and 2011 discussion tests*

Level	2009	2010	2011
1. Functions	Qualitative judgment by teacher	Instances of target function use counted	Instances of target function use counted
2. Content	Qualitative judgment by teacher	Instances of original ideas and comments to previous ideas counted	Instances of long turns (>2 or more clauses long) and short turns (<1 clause) counted.
3. Communication	Qualitative judgment by teacher	Instances of reactions, questions to other speakers, and negotiation of meaning counted	Instances of reactions, agreements and disagreements, and negotiation of meaning counted
4. Language	Qualitative judgment by teacher (2 separate categories of fluency & accuracy)	Instances of misunderstood utterances and abandoned turns counted.	Instances of misunderstood utterances and abandoned turns counted.
5. Questions	NA	NA	Instances of questions asked counted

**Figure 38: DACP assessment procedures over time**

This was done, as was often emphasised to the instructors, to make sure that the scoring and grading was fair across over forty instructors and would not be too subjective. After the practice sessions in the orientation week (and in subsequent training sessions) all of the instructors' scores were taken and compared. If any one instructor's scores fell outside an acceptable statistical margin of error, they would be required to undergo further training and practice sessions until their scores were aligned with the acceptable answers based on the program manager's calculations. In other words, although instructor input was sought and could theoretically have an impact on the course long term (such as with the coursebook evaluations described in Figure 12), the purpose of the orientation week was to train instructors in the 'correct' methods of teaching and assessment, as defined by the DACP.

It is easy to understand the practical considerations which led to the orientation week being so strict in its approach, with the need to bring a large number of new instructors to an understanding of what

they were expected to do on the course, and also to make them competent to do so in a relatively short amount of time. The course was not unique in this respect, and this could be seen as an extension of the university's policy of having a unified curriculum. As can be seen in Figure 39, taken from an article in the DACP journal, the unified curriculum was considered a primary motivating factor for the approach taken to faculty orientation and development.

FDs are designed in the first instance to support the running of the program's unified curriculum by helping instructors and program managers meet its objectives. The successful operation of any unified curriculum relies on a common understanding of such goals from all members within it (Brown, 1995). This reliance increases when the ambit of the unified curriculum covers not only the teaching materials, but also the course methodology and course assessment, which requires training to maintain. Beyond this, FDs are intended to be professionally rewarding for attendees. Hence, they occupy a dual role of providing teachers with the tools they need to work effectively in the unified curriculum, while also seeking to further their professional development.

**Figure 39: Faculty development and the unified curriculum**

However, the university was unique in terms of how many instructors were trained to teach in the prescribed way, and when considering the extent to which the lessons and teaching style followed a highly pre-specified format. By the end of the orientation week, instructors were invariably able to teach in the way required of the program, and to deliver lessons that did not deviate in any significant way from the lessons taught by the other instructors on the course. As Heng, one of my informants, notes:

**Heng:** It's important to have that unified curriculum, so everyone must teach in the same way, so in case a teacher is absent somebody else can just stand in and just teach the lesson the same way without any change, yeah.

The purpose of the orientation week was, in effect, to maintain the unified curriculum, which was

very important at Akarenga University, and to make sure that all students taking the course had the same educational experience. In effect, as a result of this orientation week and the subsequent FD sessions, an observer could walk into any classroom at any point, and see the same activity being carried out in the same way by whichever instructor happened to be teaching at the time. As one instructor remarked to me when preparing to cover a class for an absent colleague, "it doesn't matter who's in the classroom".

This brings me back to the idea of being able to "do the job" as a main professional expectation in the course. 'Professional' DACP teachers were able to teach a class in the same way as all of their colleagues, barring minor differences in functional language presentations and modes of feedback, and were able to follow the prescribed lesson formula and structure without deviating too greatly or introducing too many original aspects to their teaching. Although some differences were allowed, for example in terms of the functional language presentation, the choices were limited to a tightly controlled set of options from which the instructor could choose the one they preferred. A successful DACP instructor could, theoretically, step into the shoes of any other instructor and there would be little discontinuity for the students. Through the orientation week, these ideas of professional practice were instilled in the instructors.

While the reasons given for the structure and focus of the orientation week were completely practical and pragmatic (and I have no reason to doubt that these were the true reasons), the orientation week was a key element in the creation of the DACP discourse of professionalism, and the 'native speaker' framing this discourse served to uphold. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it was in the orientation week that I was first introduced to the native-speakerist justification of the program; that it was designed to proceduralise the declarative knowledge of students, with the implication that the program was a necessary corrective to perceived flaws in the Japanese education system. By introducing this idea in the first week of employment, the DACP was able to propagate this native-speakerist framing in the minds of instructors. The teaching approach (including the PPP

lesson staging and the functional language) was also introduced during the orientation week, as were the notions of learner training. This included whether or not learners should be taught vocabulary, whether grammar correction should be a part of the program (instructors were encouraged not to focus on grammar or correcting their students' utterances – see Figure 24, in which students are explicitly told not to worry about grammar or vocabulary), and the other aspects of learner training documented in section 7.2.3. It was also in this week that the English-only policy was stressed. In other words, the orientation week was a key period in which the 'native speaker' framing of the program was established, and this helped to create an almost synonymous 'native speaker' frame in the minds of instructors. The orientation week further served to do this through the instilling of the DACP discourse of professionalism, which included the notion of "fitting with [the DACP] philosophy", "understanding why things are the way they are", and "doing the job", to quote Richard during his interview. The DACP discourse of professionalism established what professional behavior was in the DACP by imparting a philosophy and framing which contained many unrecognized native-speakerist assumptions, and coding this as "professional". The orientation week, when combined with the shared educational background of the DACP instructors served to establish and normalize the 'native speaker' framing of the program.

### **7.3.3. Observation, development, and reinforcement**

Through the period of employment, teachers on the DACP were encouraged to engage in professional development activities. As mentioned in section 6.2.2, these consisted of observations by program managers, FD sessions, and semester projects. While many instructors viewed the professional development activities on the program as being a very positive aspect of their work, I will argue that these activities were not designed to encourage 'development' per se, but were rather a covert form of reinforcement by which the values and practices of the course could be reaffirmed and strengthened in the minds of the instructors.

### *Observations*

DACP instructors were regularly observed in their teaching, beginning in their first year (two observations a semester), gradually reducing in number (one observation per semester) while also relaxing in form later in their employment. The method of observation was rather similar to that employed on training courses such as the CELTA and Delta. First, instructors completed a lesson plan document to be submitted a week in advance of the observation. After this, the lesson was videotaped and the video recording emailed to the instructor. The instructor then watched the video and made notes about various aspects of their lesson on a specially prepared document with categories such as "classroom management", "function presentation", "feedback", "timing", and so on. As the format of the lessons was effectively identical from week-to-week and year-to-year, instructors often complained that writing up a fresh lesson plan was a waste of time, as it did not show 'planning' so much as slotting new elements into place. On completion, the plan was emailed to one of the program managers who then organised a meeting with the instructor to discuss their lesson. The manager also watched the video and made their own notes on the lesson. Towards the end of my time on the DACP, instructors began to observe each other's lessons and engage in peer feedback meetings, using observation forms such as the one in Figure 40, reproduced in the DACP journal.

Peer Observation Form	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your Name:</li> <li>• Your Partner's Name:</li> <li>• Lesson Number:</li> <li>• Class Level:</li> <li>• Lesson Period &amp; Date:</li> </ul>	
<i>The following points were effective in this lesson:</i>	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
Partner's Comments on the points above:	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
<i>But the lesson can be even more effective. I'd like to discuss the following during our peer conference:</i>	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
Partner's Comments on the points above:	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
<b>Final Comments</b>	
<i>Based on the peer observation, I will continue to work on the following points:</i>	
1.	
2.	
3.	

**Figure 40: Peer observation form**

During the meeting with the program manager, the instructor was asked a number of open-ended questions based on elements of their lesson plan, the lesson itself, and their reflections on the lesson. Although the questions were open-ended, (of a "in your lesson you spent [X amount of minutes] on [activity Y], what do you think about that?") it was quite clear that the managers were highlighting some deviation from the prescribed norms of the lesson. As my interviewee Heng says:

**Heng:** ...observations [are] not like very clear, I mean true picture of what you actually teach in class, right? Because you gotta fulfil certain criteria they expect you to fulfil, and you feel nervous sometimes being recorded, people will be watching you, yeah. And when you write your observation feedback form you try to write in a way that the DACP would

accept, rather than try to be critical, yeah.

Heng notes that instructors wrote their observation feedback forms "in a way that DACP would accept, rather than try to be critical". In other words, teachers conformed to the expectations of the course rather than approaching their lesson observations to be critical and reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching.

At the end of each observation feedback meeting, the program manager and instructor would together decide on three action points for future lessons. These could be quite major, such as "make sure all lesson stages are included", but could also be more minor, such as "try a different approach to giving feedback". In the case of the latter, the suggestions to experiment were almost always to experiment with another of the limited set of options outlined in the orientation week and the instructor handbook. My own action points regularly included "try to use student self-check sheets to give feedback". This was regularly suggested, but was not something I often attempted, as I felt it was ineffective, and was simply designed to further make the teachers remote from the experiences of students and interchangeable with one another. However, during the course of my employment on the DACP, my teaching became more and more standardised, to the point that during my final observation on the program I was told by the program manager that my observation that semester was the best one he had seen, and that he had no real action points for me. In fact, I have since been told that my video from that observation has been used as a regular model during the orientation week for new instructors. While this is flattering, I believe that the reason this particular lesson was so well received was because my teaching had, by this point in my employment, become streamlined and aligned very closely with the standard expected on the course.

The foregoing discussion serves to show that the observations, while framed as 'professional development', actually functioned as a form of reinforcement of the core ideology of the course. The purpose of the observations was to check that teachers were teaching within the required standard

and delivering lessons in the way prescribed by the program. Those who were not would be forced to redo observations until it was decided that they were meeting the standards of the course. In other words, the observations were designed to reinforce the prescribed behaviours of instructors on the course, while disguising this purpose under the heading of 'professional development'.

Once again, we can see here how the DACP discourse of professionalism was ingrained in the minds of instructors through processes which, while ostensibly open and reflective, actually served to limit teachers to a narrowly-defined set of options. This had a serious effect on the native-speakerist attitude towards learner training in particular, as observations were directly connected to classroom teaching, and several of the points which observations picked up on related to the learner training described earlier. For example, in one of my own observations, the program manager speaking to me picked up on a short grammar explanation I had given at the request of a student. While I felt this was a useful piece of grammar, it was suggested to me that it would be more effective to allow the students to find this information from their classmates, and that by taking a short amount of time to teach grammar I was losing time that could be used for further speaking activities. This can be seen in the rather short and sketchy note written in my journal and reproduced below:

John said it was OK to teach grammar when I was doing the 'in, on, at' stuff today, but says I should try to get them to get it from each other instead. Why? If they knew it they wouldn't ask?

This example shows how the observations, while intended to be a way of keeping the teacher on track, had the side-effect of reinforcing the native speaker framing of the program and particular native-speakerist practices – in this case the 'learner training' that was so central to the pedagogy of the program.



### *Faculty development sessions*

Faculty development (FD) sessions were an almost weekly occurrence in the DACP during the course of my research. These were events in which instructors were gathered together in order to discuss and practice different ideas and activities. FD sessions were sometimes organised by instructors and sometimes by program managers, depending on the purpose of the session, and whether it was deemed essential or optional. While these were termed 'development' sessions, I will argue again that these were in fact a form of 'reinforcement' of the core philosophy and practices of the program. Sometimes this was explicitly so; for example in sessions focused on assessment practice, the goal was to make sure that everyone was marking their scores within the acceptable statistical margins defined by the program managers, and those who were not would be forced to undergo further retraining until they were marking within the accepted mean. However, even sessions which purported to focus on development were, in my view, more focused on reinforcement of the accepted course practices. For example, I once gave an FD session on adapting the 3-2-1 fluency activity to lower-level learners. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the 3-2-1 fluency activity was considered an important part of the course, and was the second stage of all classes after the quiz. The purpose of my presentation was to show how lower-level learners, who often struggled to fill the first three minutes of speaking time and thus did not have enough content for the following turns to be meaningful, could be helped to fill their speaking time by allowing their listening partners to ask a limited number of basic, open-ended questions. Thus, an entire 45 minute 'development' session was devoted to making a small and non-disruptive change to one of the standard activities prescribed in the regular lesson structure (and later expanded into a piece of research published in the in-house journal). Other FD sessions I witnessed included topics such as moving the fluency activity to a different stage of the lesson (i.e., to have it as a concluding activity to help students round up their ideas, rather than as an activity for generating ideas), trying a new form of feedback,

and making other small cosmetic changes that made essentially no difference to the actual structure or focus of the lesson, but gave the illusion of being serious professional development.

During my interviews, certain instructors expressed views that match with my own conclusions regarding the true purpose of FD sessions. Josie, for example argues in the following interview extract that the FD sessions are "redundant" and "artificial":

**Josie:** So you know we had the, well, we still have the FD sessions. And it's great that they have them, they have those hours slotted into the schedule. And if you put it on your CV it looks great, it looks like you've been doing all this training and stuff. But a lot of the time it just feels very redundant, cos you just talk in circles about stuff that you already have talked about like a million times before.

**Rob:** Right.

**Josie:** So yeah, that's what I mean.

**Rob:** Can you give an example of something like that?

**Josie:** Okay, so one example would be, I mean having an FD session on teaching, say, lower level classes, and it's the same content again and again. You just don't feel like you're actually learning anything. Say you've taught these classes for three years, and then they put you in one of these sessions and they're like, "How would you teach these classes?" and you're like, "Well, I've actually already been doing that." There's nothing new that I could say, that sort of thing.

In this extract, Josie does not explicitly say that the FD sessions were conducted for the purposes of reinforcement rather than development, but this can be inferred from her words. As Josie says, FD sessions contained discussions of "the same content again and again" that "you have already talked about like a million times before". It seems very unusual for an FD program to be ongoing for

several years with faculty leaving the sessions with the feeling that they are not "actually learning anything". One of my interviewees, Heng, notes that many instructors, especially those who had been in the program for several years, appeared restless and saw the FD sessions as a waste of time:

**Heng:** The thing is there are so many instructors who have been in the course for so long, and they don't really...They see it like a, what do you say, like a chore. I don't know. They have been to the similar kind of trainings long enough to know what to expect, and they don't feel that they need to be there, yeah.

Joseph, another teacher, expressed similar views:

**Rob:** Right, so you were talking about your development [on the program]...

**Joseph:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think that was the thing that stuck out to me the most. Like from day one, I guess it was only like a week before we started, we have that intensive...

**Rob:** Orientation.

**Joseph:** Orientation, exactly, yeah.

**Rob:** And what did you feel was the goal of the orientation week, of, you know, teacher development through the course?

**Joseph:** I think it, yeah, it seems to have a couple different goals. I think in one way it's like what we get out of it, like they're trying to give up some value-added experience that you can use in other positions too.

**Rob:** Right.

**Joseph:** Cos otherwise I think it can feel like you're not really developing as a teacher, teaching the same class over and over and over again.

**Rob:** Right.

**Joseph:** So it's a way to see you're actually developing and not stuck in this like dead-end job or something. [laughs]

**Rob:** Right.

**Joseph:** But I think that's for the teachers' side I think, keeping them engaged and feeling like they're getting something out of it. And then I think for the program it's also maybe to get more assured quality, like a standard level of quality in the classes and maintain that uniform curriculum too.

Joseph appears to take a more sympathetic view than myself, arguing that the FD program served a dual purpose, both to make the teachers feel they were developing and to keep them motivated, and to make sure that the program got "assured quality, like a standard level of quality in the classes and maintain that uniform curriculum too". This demonstrates quite clearly the idea of reinforcement in the FD sessions. Although they were pitched to instructors as a method of professional development, at least one of their goals, according to Joseph, was to reinforce the standard form and quality of lessons. While Joseph argues that they were also of benefit to instructors by keeping them engaged and motivated, one could (perhaps cynically) read this as the mask behind which the true purpose of the sessions was hidden. While teachers felt they were undergoing professional development, they were in fact simply having the philosophy and practices of the course reinforced in their minds. Other interview data would seem to support this supposition. Peter, for example, argues that the FD sessions offered a good opportunity for professional development:

**Rob:** Fair enough, nice. You also mentioned a little earlier about there are lots of opportunities for professional development. What opportunities are there?

**Peter:** For example, when we get together at the start of each new semester we are given the opportunity to do workshops or presentations. It's listed as one of the independent

work-at-home tasks, you can prepare a workshop if you wish to. We also are asked or encouraged to write a paper each semester which tends to kind of make us do a bit more of the academic work that some of us might not do, myself included. So yeah, it encourages us to come out of our comfort zone and try to learn to do new things and pick up new skills.

**Rob:** Right. How far out of your comfort zone do you think like for example the FD sessions take the teachers?

**Peter:** I think they take you as far as you want to go.

**Rob:** Okay.

**Peter:** Yeah, so in terms of the FD meetings, I think you take out what you put in, basically. If you're going to be honest during the discussions with other teachers and share ideas freely then I think a lot of people can learn from each other and you can have some of your understandings of theory or practice reinforced, or your mind can be changed on some things, you can learn new things and try new things.

**Rob:** And how much does that impact what happens in the classroom here, do you think?

**Peter:** I think it impacts a fair bit. Once again, it depends on the individual. If you're the kind of person who will hear a new idea and think, "Well, maybe that could work in my class," and go on and try it, then it can help. If you're more set in your ways and you believe what you're doing is already fine and there's no need for you to make changes, then of course the meetings may seem to be a waste of time. It's what you take from it.

Peter expresses in this extract a very positive view about the FD sessions, arguing that they gave instructors the opportunity to share their ideas and learn new things (though it is interesting that he independently uses the term "reinforced" during this discussion). In fact, he seems almost scornful of teachers who did not take away anything new from the FD sessions. Personally, I felt that Peter was

not engaging critically with the concepts under discussion, and so I decided to challenge this view with the statements of other teachers such as Josie

**Rob:** And, well, again, some of my previous interviewees expressed the idea that the FD sessions are perhaps not so much really about development as about kind of reinforcement of what happens.

**Peter:** I think there is that, and there has to be that. Because if you're within a program where the curriculum's unified there have to be kind of - how can I put it - there's gotta be reinforcement, yeah. People need to be reminded of what is the requirement in classes. But at the same time, it's also your opportunity to be flexible with that and say what can happen and can change within that framework. So they're as valuable as you make them.

Peter, when presented with the idea of reinforcement as the main goal of the FD sessions concedes that this may be one of the goals, and argues that this is necessary when the curriculum is unified as it was at Akarenga. However, he argues that despite this the FD sessions still allowed change to happen "within that framework" and that they were an opportunity for instructors to be flexible and make changes. This was quite a change from his earlier statements that FD sessions "take you as far as you want to go" out of your comfort zone, and so I decided to push the issue a little more:

**Rob:** In your time here - how long have you been working here now?

**Peter:** About four years now.

**Rob:** In those four years, how much change have you seen in terms of the classroom approach?

**Peter:** Not a great deal, but I wouldn't expect a great deal of change. I have seen though just little innovations. For example, one example would be the movement of something

like a fluency activity. Getting together in these meetings, people suggest different times for doing the fluency, for example, as a preparation activity rather than a warmer, at the start of the class. And you hear arguments in favour of or against certain placements, and I think that makes a change in the classroom. When you're approaching a particular topic that might be kind of concept heavy, you might want to move it later on in the class, and that would be a change, I guess.

Despite Peter's assertion that the discussions in the FD sessions could impact classroom practice "a fair bit", and despite giving the impression that a lot of change could occur in the course and in the classroom on the basis of these sessions, when pushed he admits that in the four years he had been working on the program at that point, with almost weekly FD sessions, he had not seen "a great deal" of change in terms of the classroom practices of the course. The examples he gives of change again fall into the same categories of small, insignificant changes to the established practices of the program such as moving the fluency activity to a different part of the lesson. It appears to me, interpreting Peter's words, that he had been convinced by the rhetoric of "development" used by the course, and this allowed him to believe that he had been undergoing professional development, when in fact he had been undergoing a process of reinforcement in which the key beliefs and practices of the DACP were further legitimised in his mind, and the quality and consistency of the course was maintained. Other instructors seemed not to have bought into this idea. Wen, the Chinese teacher interviewed for the project expresses what he believes to be the purpose of the FD sessions:

**Rob:** Right, okay. And then through the semester there are ongoing FD sessions. What's the purpose of those in your opinion?

**Wen:** I think the biggest purpose is to make sure that everybody follows the same curriculum, has the same style of teaching, use the same teaching curriculum, making sure

there's no misunderstandings and clarify all those maybe misconcepts of yeah, what they provided. Basically to make sure that students can enjoy equal education.

Wen is very clear that, in his mind, the purpose of the FD sessions was to maintain the unity in the curriculum and the teaching style, to make sure there were no "misunderstandings", and to "clarify" points related to the course. This seems to me to be a fair reading of the true purpose of these FD sessions - not to provide development, but rather to reinforce the principles and practices of the course, which, as I have argued, are based on essentially native-speakerist assumptions.

Once again, I believe that this reinforcement, while intended to ensure quality and a consistent standard of practice, inadvertently served to uphold the 'native speaker' framing of the program and the established practices. I noted in my journal how the suggestion of one instructor to include some writing in the class rather than doing everything orally was "gently dismissed" by the program manager:

In today's FD, one of the other instructors suggested that in the ranking activities it might be an idea for the students to have time to write reasons for their choices, instead of just box ticking, because they often have difficulty justifying their ideas. This idea was gently dismissed as impractical as it would take up time the students could be using for speaking instead and would mean other stages would have to be shortened or dropped. I like the idea, personally.

This dismissal of the instructor's idea is significant, because, as I have stated elsewhere, this preoccupation with oral work on the DACP was closely connected to the 'native speaker' framing of the program as being a corrective to the Japanese education system by using all the supposedly untapped declarative knowledge of the students and making it productive. By making sure all tasks



were orally-focused, the program was tacitly reinforcing the philosophy on which these practices were based. It also shows the ‘program-centeredness’ of the DACP, as once again the established course practices took precedence over the needs of the students or the ideas and innovations of the teachers.

The English-only policy was also upheld through the FD sessions. On several occasions, FDs were held specifically to help instructors think about ways to reduce the level of Japanese in their classes. During one FD session about DACP assessment procedures, one major topic of discussion was exactly what counted as a Japanese utterance on the program, and how this was scored during the DACP discussion tests. As mentioned earlier, for each use of Japanese during a test, a student would lose one point. However, it was unclear to instructors what counted as a Japanese utterance. It was eventually decided that any use of Japanese that carried any form of intended meaning would lose a point, while uses that were unconscious would not. For example, if a student reacted in Japanese to somebody’s idea (including even one-word answers), this would qualify for losing a point. In this way, the more explicitly native-speakerist policies were upheld in the program. In other words, this program of reinforcement further served to uphold the native-speakerist philosophy and practices of the DACP, by maintaining the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program and instilling an almost synonymous framing in the minds of instructors.

#### **7.3.4. Discussion**

In this section, I have argued, with reference to fieldwork, interview data, and documentary evidence, that the native-speakerist principles and practices of the DACP were upheld through the selection and training of teachers. Teachers working on the course came exclusively from a background of training in Western institutions, or institutions staffed by Western academics, in which the kinds of educational assumptions, educational technology, and teaching approaches that were used in the course are widely considered to be effective and appropriate. Secondly, instructors on the DACP

went through a rigorous period of training upon beginning their contract in which the core beliefs and practices of the DACP were instilled in them. This was followed by a continual process of reinforcement comprised of observations and FD sessions which, while nominally intended to be a method of self-reflection and introspection about the course and the classroom practices of the teachers on the program, appeared instead to be a process of reinforcement in which the beliefs, principles, and practices of the course were further normalised and strengthened in the minds of the instructors. It is through these processes of orientation and development that the native-speakerist assumptions about the purpose of the program, the superiority of Western ELT methods, the need for the 'training' of students, and the enforcement of the English-only policy in the DACP were maintained. In other words, this hidden program of reinforcement served to consolidate and perpetuate the native-speakerist assumptions and practices of the Discussion and Communication Program through the upholding of a dominant 'native speaker' framing, perpetuated by the DACP discourse of professionalism.

#### **7.4. Conclusion - 'The 'native speaker' frame' in the DACP**

In this chapter I have outlined what I believe to be evidence of the 'native speaker' frame operating in the DACP, and shown how this framing was inculcated and reinforced in the minds of instructors. In the previous chapter I demonstrated that the course was not overtly native-speakerist as this is commonly understood, but rather was remarkably egalitarian in the hiring and assignment of roles and duties to teachers, with no apparent discrimination in terms of their perceived 'native-' or 'non-native speaker' positioning. The DACP did not discriminate against people on the basis of their putative speakerhood, as long as they were professional and were able to 'do the job'. This is well expressed by Wen, one of the 'non-native speaker' teachers on the course:

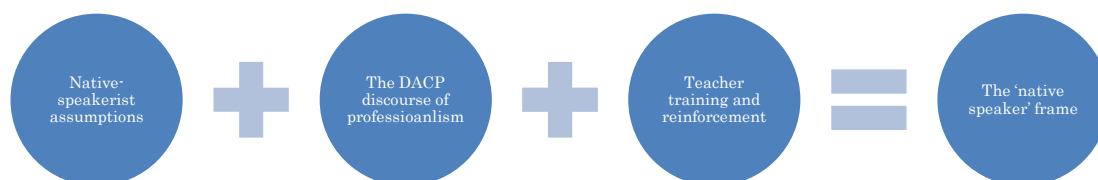
**Rob:** ...I guess what I'm asking is do you think that the fact that teachers are all expected

to teach in the same way means that the program doesn't feel any need to discriminate on the basis of nationality or whatever for teachers?

**Wen:** Yes, I think a unified curriculum is also effective, that prevents any discrimination from happening in this program because basically we're teaching the same curriculum and I think as long as you can deliver the teaching objectives, it shows that you're able to teach and it contributes to the harmony of the program.

Wen agrees that the unified curriculum of the DACP prevented discrimination because "as long as you can deliver the teaching objectives, it shows that you're able to teach and it contributes to the harmony of the program". This is, at first glance an unproblematic state of affairs, and one could even find themselves thinking that perhaps adhering to a unified curriculum of this sort is the best way to resolve native-speakerism in ELT, as I did at the outset of this research. However, it is in the arena of 'doing the job' that I have argued problematic native-speakerist bias could be found in the DACP. I have argued that problematic assumptions about deficiencies in the Japanese education system and deficiencies in Japanese students themselves, coupled with an uncritical acceptance of Western methods of language education, strongly informed the principles and practices of the DACP. I have further argued that the selection of teachers with a similar background of training in Western ELT institutions who were willing to adhere to the philosophy of the DACP course, and the inculcation and reinforcement of these principles and beliefs through the orientation week, FD sessions, semester projects, and on so, helped to uphold these practices and maintain this 'native speaker' framing. The DACP removed overt native-speakerist bias from the program by hiring and training 'professional' teachers and cultivating a discourse of professionalism (which I have referred to as the 'DACP discourse of professionalism') around the successful adherence to the practices of the program. However, to be 'professional' in the DACP context meant to follow the DACP philosophy and teach in the desired way, which, combined with the systems of reinforcement of this

ideology, involved buying into and propagating the native-speakerist assumptions of the program. This is, I think, a clear example of how the ‘native speaker’ frame can be identified, seen to operate, and seen to be reinforced and carried forward in this particular program (see Figure 41):



**Figure 41: The ‘native speaker’ frame in the DACP**

While this may sound sinister, and even conspiratorial, I would like to emphasise that this is not how I interpret these conclusions. Framing refers to implicit and unconscious biases and beliefs, and as such I believe the framing of the DACP was the result of unexamined and implicit beliefs on the part of the course creators, coupled with a desire to keep the many DACP instructors on track and the program consistent. This in turn can be connected to the idea of the 'unified curriculum', which was something required of the course by the institution itself, as was the English-only policy. In other words, rather than a conscious, ill-willed effort to insert native-speakerist principles and practices into the program and then purposefully take advantage of the FD sessions to reinforce this among the instructors, I believe that the subtle and deeply embedded native-speakerism I have identified in the course was the result of an unrecognized ‘native speaker’ frame operating in the minds of the course designers which reflected widespread unconscious native-speakerist beliefs in society and within the ELT industry as a whole. In the DACP this manifested in the framing of the Japanese education system through common but outdated and simplistic stereotypes, through uncritical assumptions about the superiority and efficacy of Western ELT approaches, and through the implicit Othering of Japanese students as being deficient and in need of training in how to communicate and how to learn

English. These assumptions were built into the justifications of the course and were reflected in the teaching methods. These justifications and practices were inculcated through the program of reinforcement represented by the orientation week, the class observations, and the faculty development sessions. It is, in my view, highly significant that instructors with educational training from Western institutions were exclusively chosen for DACP teaching positions. I think this, when combined with Richard's statement that the program managers sought instructors who could "fit with" the DACP philosophy (which consisted, in part, of an uncritical acceptance of Western ELT practices and justified itself in opposition to the supposedly problematic Japanese education system), shows that there was an unconscious bias of the course and the program managers towards a particular perspective on English language education; one which was filtered through a 'native speaker' frame and took a number of assumptions about 'correct' professional practice as normative; assuming fault in the Japanese education system for supposedly not focusing on these points.

This conclusion is troubling to me, and has been the most difficult part of this thesis to write. As mentioned in the introduction, I began this research with the assumption that the DACP was free of native-speakerism, and with the intention of finding out how this had been achieved. It was only in the last few months of my project that I began to accept the native-speakerist framing of the program, which I had resisted for some time. I believe that the fact it took me so long to recognize this myself, despite engaging in a study of the program over several years, shows the extent to which my own perspective on the ELT industry has been (and most likely still is) operating within a 'native speaker' frame. I do not blame the teachers and course designers for the framing of the DACP; rather I believe that 'native speaker' framing is systemic in ELT, and that this is an inevitable consequence of the history of the field, the current centralisation of knowledge production and professional prestige, and the desire to achieve a level of objective professional practice as described in chapter 4. With an ideology as hidden and normalised as native-speakerism in ELT, it becomes very difficult to imagine how this could ever be challenged or overcome; and yet, in the DACP I did see evidence of the

'native speaker' framing being challenged, even if inadvertently. The ways in which this was done will be the subject of the final data chapter.

## 8. Official policy and acts of cultural resistance.

### 8.1. Introduction

In this chapter I will examine the topic of 'resistance' in the DACP. As documented in chapter 7, the DACP had a particularly strict teaching methodology, which all instructors were expected to follow, and which I have argued contained many implicit native-speakerist assumptions and biases. I have also shown how the propagation of these assumptions and biases among the teaching staff could be tied to the DACP discourse of professionalism, in which native-speakerist practices (connected to native-speakerist beliefs) were coded as 'professionalism', and teachers were employed and considered to be successful based on the extent to which they were willing to align themselves with the practices and philosophy of the program. I further demonstrated how, once employed, these principles and practices were propagated through a covert program of reinforcement, disguised as 'faculty development', in which instructors were given the impression that they were engaging in critical practices geared toward their own professional development and the development of the program, when they were in fact undergoing a form of reinforcement of the core tenets and approaches used on the course.

It was noted also that some instructors understood this to be the true purpose of the FD sessions, such as Wen, who characterised the purpose of the FD sessions as:

**Wen:** ...to make sure that everybody follows the same curriculum, has the same style of teaching, use the same teaching curriculum, making sure there's no misunderstandings and clarify all those maybe misconcepts of yeah, what they provided.

Wen was not the only one who noticed the redundancy in the FD sessions (as documented earlier, Josie also had misgivings about this), and there was a more general feeling of dissatisfaction,

particularly among teachers in their fourth and fifth years working in the program. This process was the way in which the 'native speaker' frame that I have described was placed into the minds of instructors. I have up this point been very careful when talking about these frames to state that, through this process, the psychological frame of the instructors became "almost synonymous" with the frame of the program. The use of the word "almost" is deliberate, because as the quotes given earlier show, and as I will demonstrate in this chapter, the instructors in the DACP were able to enact 'frame transformations', in which they altered their frames through acts of resistance, eventually causing small transformations in the frame of the department itself.

In this chapter I will document what I term 'acts of cultural resistance' by the staff against this reinforcement and against the practices of the program. As described in section 3.5, I take the perspective that "cultural resistance creates a 'free space'" (Duncombe, 2002, p. 8), both ideologically (a free space to "create new language, meaning, and visions of the future", p.8) and materially (a "place to build community, networks, and organizational models", p.8). I will identify three different ways in which cultural resistance manifested in the DACP: two "free spaces" that were created by the instructors as a form of cultural resistance to the dominant power, practices, and the program of reinforcement present in the DACP, and one generally identified pattern of defiance against a prescribed practice. I will argue in each case that these acts of cultural resistance served to cause 'frame transformations', in which certain aspects of the program, and particularly those I have identified as native-speakerist, could be questioned by the instructors. I do not argue that the 'free spaces' were intentionally created for the purpose of resisting the native-speakerism in the DACP, rather I believe that they were mostly an unconscious form of resistance, in which the act of engaging in resistance allowed the instructors to change their perspective on some of the native-speakerist assumptions and practices of the program. I therefore believe that these acts of resistance are significant not because they are evidence of the 'native speaker' framing of the program, nor because they are examples of the instructors consciously resisting the



native-speakerism of the DACP. I will argue instead that even if these acts were not intended as resistance (conscious or unconscious) to the native-speakerist framing of the program, they show how people can move away from the dominant ideological framing of an institution such as the DACP through utilizing acts of resistance to create 'frame transformations' which, in the case of the DACP, helped teachers to move away from the 'native speaker' framing of the program. I will however, in some cases, suggest that these acts of resistance could be read as a form of conscious resistance to native-speakerism on the program, though I do not wish to make this claim strongly.

I will also mention one widespread practice which, while not falling under the definition of a 'free space' for cultural resistance as I have defined it, demonstrated an act of resistance to one of the major native-speakerist assumptions underlying the course. This practice was the widespread defiance of the English-only policy, and this is the one act of resistance which I believe could be called conscious resistance to the 'native speaker' framing of the DACP.

All of these forms of resistance occurred as my fieldwork was coming to a close, at which time I was leaving the program, and so in many cases I was unable to take part in the activities themselves. However, where possible appropriate data was collected from my interview subjects who were part of these groups, or who were responsible for organising them. I also conducted an email interview with one DACP teacher who was closely involved with setting up one of the groups, in order to get background information and data about the kinds of things discussed in the sessions. There is also a formally written and published account related to one of these groups which I will be paraphrasing sections of. However, I choose not to reference this account as I would any other academic source because to do so would sacrifice the anonymity of the program and of my participants.

## **8.2. The reading circle - Introducing new ideas**

Towards the end of my fieldwork, one very interesting development was the creation of a "reading circle" by some more senior members of the DACP staff (i.e., those who had been there for three

years or longer). The reading circle, as described by Eddie, one of its organisers, was:

**Eddie:** ...a voluntary monthly meeting of a group of instructors working at the same institution, who come together to freely discuss a 'text' of the facilitator's choosing.

It is interesting to note that Eddie uses the term "freely" to describe the form of the discussions in the reading circle, particularly in light of the conceptualization of cultural resistance as the creating of a "free space". According to Eddie, the reading circle was:

**Eddie:** ...created as a form of continuing professional development, and started as a way to maintain both ours and other instructors' interest in the profession of English language teaching.

The reading circle was not officially sanctioned by the university, and Eddie notes that:

**Eddie:** It is almost entirely instructor-run, with little to no intervention from the program managers. Program managers have never attended a reading circle session [...] As this is an instructor-run thing, the program managers have no involvement other than giving their approval of the topics to be discussed.

The final sentence in this extract implies that there is some nominal institutional control over the sessions. However, when questioned whether the program managers have ever disallowed any proposed topics, Eddie replied that:

**Eddie:** No, they've never discouraged a topic, but I do remember them giving their input on the types of questions to ask participants. This was done more so earlier on when the reading circle first started.

In other words, while topics were to some extent approved by the program managers, there appears to have been little in the way of control exercised over the reading circle by those in charge of managing the course. Eddie also notes that the program managers did not show much interest in the reading circle, and seemed to be basically unaware of what was happening:

**Eddie:** Only one PM has really taken an interest in it. The other PMs don't seem to know what's going on really. There has been a couple of occasions where PMs have forgot to mention the reading circle in orientation sessions, or talked about it incorrectly. They don't really know anything about the RP group as it is conducted outside of working hours.

The preceding extracts indicate that in general the DACP managers did not take a strong interest in the reading circle. It was mentioned to me that there was initially difficulty in finding a space in which to conduct the sessions, such as an empty classroom, because the university was concerned about the purpose of the group, and about its unofficial status. However, this seems not to have been a great obstacle, as the reading circle continued on a weekly basis for several years, up to the time of writing.

To sum up, the reading circle was a regular meeting of instructors to discuss a piece of academic writing or research that was not a part of the regular official FD program. The circle was started as a form of continuing professional development (CPD) with the aim of helping the organisers and other instructors to maintain motivation and interest in teaching. While there was initially some very mild vetting of topics by the program managers, it operated autonomously and without a connection to the

management of the DACP.

### 8.2.1. Structure

Eddie described the structure of the reading circle as follows:

**Eddie:** The reading circle is typically made up of 6-12 teachers, with a regular core of 5 teachers. Reading circles are loose in format, and have included large group discussions, pair work, presentations, and smaller group discussions....An instructor hoping to facilitate a session comes to speak to me or the other instructor with ideas, we then work together to decide on an article for example, and then create a set of discussion questions. From there, we set a date, choose a room to hold it in, and then email an invitation to other instructors. There is also a sign-up sheet in the admin office that we require people to sign before coming. How sessions go are up to the facilitator, whom for the most part had attended previous sessions.

In other words, each session was led by a facilitator, who selected a topic and a piece of reading connected to something they were interested in. The facilitator informed all of the instructors attending the session of the reading in advance, and then instructors would read the article in preparation for the session. Each week the facilitator would change, and a new topic would be discussed. The discussions were open, and there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, with people often strongly disagreeing about certain topics. As Josie says of one of the early discussion sessions she attended:

**Josie:** The discussion became quite heated. A lot of people hadn't done the readings, but then had very strong opinions, uninformed opinions!

While Josie notes that at this early stage the organisation of the group was perhaps not optimal, with certain attendees having failed to do the readings in advance, the discussion inspired some heated debate. This is perhaps because the topics chosen fell outside what was normally discussed in DACP development meetings.

### **8.2.2. Freedom: Topics and tone**

As discussed in the previous chapter, the topics generally covered in DACP faculty development sessions related to the established practices of the course, and any suggested innovations generally involved small and non-disruptive tweaks and alterations to the existing activities and approaches. In the reading circle however, due to its existence outside the boundaries of the officially sanctioned FD program of the DACP, teachers were able to discuss and think about topics that were otherwise unlikely to be brought up. Eddie, when asked about the differences between the reading circle and the FD sessions, stated that:

**Eddie:** One major difference are the topics that we've talked about, a lot of topics discussed in the reading circle would perhaps never be considered for a regular FD session.

When questioned further about this, Eddie replied that:

**Eddie:** I guess what I meant is that program manager led FDs always put an emphasis on how to better develop our teaching of discussion classes, but the reading circle would put the topic before anything, and end sessions with how we could apply things to our teaching.

Further remarking that:

**Eddie:** PM-led FD's have more of an emphasis on how to better develop our classes and serve our learners, whereby the reading circles were implemented simply as a place where people could discuss research papers etc. We do relate readings to our teaching, but this is only done briefly at the end of each session. Physically, PM's present an agenda on a powerpoint and it seems quite rigid, whereas we don't use this process in reading circle sessions.

In these extracts, Eddie explains that the reading circle differed from regular FD sessions in that the topics chosen did not always relate directly to DACP teaching, and teachers were free to explore different areas of research. Some examples of topics discussed in the reading circle included teacher improvisation, special educational needs in ELT (the topic around which heated discussion broke out, as related by Josie), L1 use in the classroom, and the concept of authenticity in English language teaching using Pinner's (2014) "authenticity continuum" - a new and innovative approach to the topic (see also Pinner, 2016). These are not topics that are likely to be brought up in regular FD sessions, and are not topics that have been explored on the course. The reading circle was a space where the DACP instructors could experiment with ideas that otherwise would not have been considered appropriate for, or relevant to, the course.

A second important point about the reading circle is the freedom instructors had regarding how discussions were carried out. Eddie is quite open about the somewhat subversive nature of discussions in the reading circle. He explains that:

**Eddie:** There are also a number of opinions and views that are expressed in reading circle sessions that probably wouldn't be shared in a regular FD session. People are quite candid,

and critical of what we do at the DACP.

Eddie states here that the kinds of views expressed in reading circle sessions would probably not be heard in regular DACP FD sessions, suggesting that these opinions may not be acceptable in that environment. When asked for some examples of this, Eddie states that:

**Eddie:** I think people were quite critical when we were discussing learners with special educational needs. People expressed their opinions about if the learners should be taking the classes or not. Also during the session about L1 use in class, people had a range of opinions about whether it should be used or not.

In this extract, Eddie gives two examples of topics that were brought up in the reading circle which challenge the official policy of the course; the inclusion of students with special educational needs (SEN), and L1 use. It is significant, I think, that Eddie cites a discussion of classroom L1 use during a reading circle session as being one of the topics which may not have been acceptable for a regular FD session. As mentioned in section 7.2.4, the L1-only policy was one of the more strongly questioned policies of the program and the fourth of the ‘native-speakerist’ assumptions I have argued were present in the course, and therefore the fact that the reading circle was using as a space in which this policy could be discussed in a way that was “candid” and “critical” hints at ways in which the reading circle became a space in which certain native-speakerist principles of the program could be challenged.

### **8.2.3. The reading circle as cultural resistance**

I believe that the reading circle can be read as an act of cultural resistance in the way defined at the start of this chapter. It was an ideological "free space", in which teachers were able to create new

language, new meaning, and new visions of the future. In this case, the new language involved the bringing of new or taboo ideas into the discourse of the DACP, which was otherwise very limited in terms of what instructors were able to discuss and experiment with in the classroom. As I have argued previously, the DACP was dominated by discourses of professionalism ('the DACP discourse of professionalism'), defining what was acceptable practice, and what a successful professional teacher needed to be in this context. I have also argued that many of the foundational principles of the DACP were problematic and native-speakerist, which I connected to a 'native speaker' framing of the program. The DACP discourse of professionalism featured particular repeated words and phrases such as "fluency", "function phrase", "3/2/1", "dialogue comparison", and so on, which all served to define professional practice within the course in very narrow terms. This dominant discourse was limiting, in that it confined discussion to established and accepted principles and practices. The reading circle, conversely, allowed teachers to discuss topics that were otherwise absent from the discourse of the DACP, and introduce new vocabulary and concepts in the minds of teachers, and potentially into the larger discourse of the program. In other words, the reading circle had the potential to bring new language and new meaning into the program by raising awareness of ideas, concepts and discussions that were otherwise absent from the course, and giving instructors the opportunity to exercise their own power in opposition to the dominant power of the DACP. It also created new visions of the future, in that the instructors discussed how these ideas could be implemented in their own classrooms, creating possibilities beyond those that were included in the official FD sessions and other so-called 'professional development' activities of the DACP. The positive effects of the reading circle can be seen in the words of Peter, who was also a strong advocate of the FD sessions:

**Rob:** Right, okay. And just a couple of extra topics. So the first one, there's been this kind of reading circle that was started by some instructors. Have you been to that?



**Peter:** Yeah, I think I've been to all of them, maybe all of them so far, yeah.

**Rob:** Great. What do you think of those?

**Peter:** I've enjoyed it a lot, because I'm not an academic, and I don't have the time - I have the inclination but I don't have the time - to do a lot of reading due to other commitments, so it's been a nice chance for me to read a short article and have a discussion on something not solely on DACP terms, so it's been a nice learning experience for me.

**Rob:** Right, okay. Do you think there's a big difference between what happens in that reading circle and what happens in the official FD sessions?

**Peter:** There is a difference, because, yeah, the topics which are brought into it are not always fully relevant to this course. However, we always do seem to get back to this course. So I think we maybe see the course in a little bit more depth and realize that perhaps there are things that perhaps need looking into, need refining, so I think it's positive to have this.

Although Peter previously expressed a positive view of the official FD sessions, and a view that the reinforcement aspect of these sessions was necessary in order to maintain course unity, he acknowledges in this extract that through the reading circle sessions "we maybe see the course in a little bit more depth and realize that perhaps there are things that perhaps need looking into", and also expresses that view that "it's been a nice chance for me to read a short article and have a discussion on something not solely on DACP terms". In other words, even Peter was grateful for being able to discuss ideas outside of the tight focus of the DACP, and he also saw the possibility that this had for leading to change in the course. It seems that for Peter, the reading circle acted as a form of unconscious resistance to the professional strictures of the course. This is even more explicitly stated by Josie, who felt the regular FD was deeply repetitive and served little purpose in

terms of genuine change, arguing that

**Josie:** I think [the reading circle]'s almost a pushback against the redundant FD, 'cos that in a way *is* faculty development.

The idea of the reading circle as "pushback" certainly raises the notion of resistance to the established practices of the course, and Josie's emphasis on the idea that the reading circle "*is*" faculty development suggests that, at least for her, the reading circle represents a true form of development, rather than the "redundant" FD sessions on the DACP. In fact, there is evidence to suggest that the reading circle may have been helping to challenge and change practices on the program. As mentioned in section 8.2.2, one topic that was brought up was the use of L1. As Joseph states in his interview:

**Joseph:** [laughs] Yeah, one of our colleagues recently led a reading group about this and it was kind of a safe place to admit how much Japanese we allow or we actually use in classes.

Joseph suggests that the "safe place" (we could say "free space") of the reading circle allowed instructors to "admit how much Japanese we allow or we actually use in classes". This is very revealing, as the English-only policy is one point that I have identified as a key native-speakerist assumption underlying the course, and it seems that the reading circle was used in the incident described by Joseph as a space in which that assumption could be challenged. Joseph describes one way in which an instructor admitted to doing this in the session:

**Joseph:** [laughs] One of - I think it was maybe lesson 14 or one of the classes that's not -

kind of you can maybe relax a little bit more. Talked about making a joke with—he drew a picture of a crab or *kani* and his name was Tash maybe, so it was *tash-kani* somehow. [laughs] And he wanted to explain a better way of saying *tashika-ni* would be "certainly" or "surely" or "of course" or something. I can't remember his translation but they were using some other form that sounded a bit off to him so he used this little Japanese pictogram joke or picture joke that involves both languages and the students seemed to pick up on that really quickly.

In other words, the native-speakerist English-only policy was questioned behind closed doors, despite being mandated in the instructor handbook and emphasized through DACP orientation and faculty development. The reading circle was an opportunity for instructors to admit that they did not follow this practice, and that they in fact made use of the L1 in their classrooms when it seemed appropriate. In this way, the free space created by the reading circle allowed instructors to enact a frame transformation, in which they could admit to going against one of the native-speakerist practices of the course, and discuss whether or not this was effective. While this is unlikely to have been considered conscious resistance to a native-speakerist principle, the ability to open up such a free space allowed instructors to question and go against the native-speakerist English-only policy. In other words, while I do not believe that the instructors intended consciously to resist the English-only policy, particularly not on the grounds that it was native-speakerist, the reading circle allowed them to think about this policy from a new perspective and move away from it, through enacting a frame transformation in which the efficacy and basis of the policy could be questioned and challenged. The reading circle thus allowed DACP instructors to be more critical about their practice and move away from a native-speakerist principle. In this way, the reading circle points to one way in which the 'native speaker' framing of a program such as the DACP could be subverted, even if this subversion is not consciously intended.

I believe that the reading circle could also be read as a more explicit resistance to native-speakerism in that it was a multilingual space created by the instructors on the DACP. This contrasts markedly with the restrictive monolingual native-speakerist atmosphere of the DACP. While the instructors would likely not have perceived this as being resistance to native-speakerism on the program, I believe that it could be read as a form of unconscious resistance to native-speakerism because the instructors used the free space of the reading circle to explicitly challenge and subvert one of the key aspects of the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program, the strictly enforced monolingualism.

The effects of the reading circle could even be seen to extend beyond the classrooms of individual instructors. Keiji, one of the ‘non-native speaker’ participants in this project, published an article in the DACP journal titled “Language simplification: Does it really do more harm than good?”, the abstract for which (Figure 42) described how the reading circle was used to question dominant practices:

**ABSTRACT**

Some instructors at the [REDACTED] modify the way they talk with their students depending on the English proficiency of the classes they are teaching. When teaching students that seem to have a high proficiency, they might talk as though they are talking to a native English speaker. The same instructor might adjust their language and use simpler vocabulary and sentence structures in order to be more comprehensible when teaching students that seem to be struggling with the [REDACTED] program. I facilitated a reading club based on an article by Sato (2015) as an opportunity for instructors, including myself, to rethink of how we communicate with students in the classroom and to rethink if we are communicating with students in certain ways for the students’ sake or for the sake of the instructor.

**Figure 42: Abstract from DACP Journal article**

This abstract shows how the reading circle was used to “rethink” established practices in the DACP, and the conclusion to the study (Figure 43) shows how engaging in this kind of unofficial discussion influenced the practices of at least one instructor (Keiji) in an important way:

## CONCLUSION

██████ instructors follow a densely packed lesson plan under a unified curriculum that leaves little luxury for repeating oneself. For this reason, time management is an issue every instructor faces. Simplifying language is one method commonly used by native speakers and highly proficient second language learners when communicating with second language learners with low-proficiency as a means to assist with comprehension. Some researchers have inferred that there are benefits for the use of simplified language in regards of the second language learners' comprehension (Ellis et al., 1981; Long, 1981) while other have suggested that there are negative effects of simplified language when examined from the perspective of native speaker language being copied by second language learners (Sato, 2015). From my personal experience, I have found that speaking to students as I would with a native English speaker does not influence my time management in the ██████ classroom even with low proficiency classes. It might be time for ██████ instructors to rethink the way they communicate with their students and ask if they are communicating with their students the way they do for the students' sake or for their own sake.

Figure 43: Conclusion of DACP Journal article

Keiji shows a change in perspective in this extract from his paper, explaining how he moved from believing that his mode of communication with students needed to be simplified, to believing that this was not in fact true. He even goes so far as to say that “it might be time for DACP instructors to rethink the way they communicate with their students”, and stating in both the abstract and the conclusion that instructors should think about whether they are doing things for the students' sake or their own sake. Keiji's questioning of whether certain actions taken in the classroom were for the sake of the students or the instructor is important, as I have argued that despite claiming to be highly student-centered, the program was actually 'program-centered' and the actual needs or wishes of the students were ignored in favour of training the students in both what the program felt was the correct way to learn, and the correct language to learn. I have argued that this was a native-speakerist form of learner training, in which the learners were seen as deficient and in need of training in the 'correct' ways of learning and teaching, against their expressed wishes. Keiji's article reinforces this point, mentioning that many choices made by instructors are necessary because of “a densely packed lesson plan under a unified curriculum”. Keiji's questioning of teacher-student communication on the program is significant because it points towards the actual needs of the students, rather than the needs of the program, being considered. This change in perspective is thus evidence of a second

‘frame transformation’, in which the ‘program-centeredness’ of the course could be questioned, and approaches more considerate of the learners’ needs could be employed. While this does not connect directly to the native-speakerist assumptions I outlined before, it opens the possibility that other, more directly native-speakerist practices could be questioned in a similar way. Once again, while I do not believe that Keiji was intending to act consciously against a native-speakerism he recognized in the program, his change in perspective towards a more genuinely student-centered outlook is further evidence of how the reading circle helped him to enact a ‘frame transformation’ in which the dominant practices of the program could be questioned and resisted, even if unconsciously. The fact that this article was published in the official DACP journal shows how the informal reading group actually began to have effects on the program more overtly, leading to what may be referred to as effective cultural resistance in which the voices of those with less power in the program started to tangibly affect the program itself.

The discussion of Pinner’s (2014) ‘authenticity continuum’ in the reading circle is also rather important, as Pinner argues that with the emergence of English as an international language and a global lingua franca, and with the ownership of English having shifted away from the West, a new conception of authenticity is necessary which recognizes the social and contextual factors which influence what can be considered ‘authentic’ language use. In fact, his recent monograph on the subject (Pinner, 2016) explicitly argues that reconceptualising authenticity this way may help to move the industry away from native-speakerism as it removes the ‘native speaker’ as the absolute authority on English use. While this does not connect directly to the native-speakerist assumptions I identified in chapter 7, the fact that such a subversive theory with such clear questioning of ‘native speaker’-normativity was discussed in the reading circle is possible evidence of a more explicit resistance to native-speakerist thought being facilitated through the free space of the reading circle.

From these examples we can see that at least to some extent the reading circle was used as a way of challenging the program's practices and sharing ways in which these practices could be challenged

or defied by instructors on the course. Two of the examples I have given here are connected to the native-speakerist assumptions described in chapter 7, and as such while the instructors themselves are unlikely to have considered their actions to be resistance to native-speakerism on the program, the examples given here show how these acts of resistance helped instructors to enact ‘frame transformations’ in which their perspectives on the program could change, and assumptions, including those that I have argued are native-speakerist, could be challenged. I have also suggested that in some cases this resistance could be read as consciously challenging the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program as the selection of topics would seem to suggest, on some level, an awareness of some of the native-speakerism I earlier identified.

### **8.3. JDACP and 'The inverted curriculum' - Changing perspectives**

The second example of a "free space" that was used to exercise cultural resistance was the "Japanese Discussion and Communication Program" (JDACP) that was started during my second year as an instructor on the program. In this section I am drawing heavily on a published academic account of the JDACP produced by two of the teachers involved with setting up and administering the course. While this is a formally published academic paper, I will not refer in the same way as I would a regular academic source, as it contains identifying information that would jeopardise the anonymity of the program and my participants. I will also be providing ‘quotations’ from this paper, but I have slightly paraphrased the wording in order to disguise the source. I have been careful in doing this that I preserve the essential substance, and have only altered the form in which it is presented. The JDACP was an idea developed by some of the Japanese instructors on the DACP, and consisted of what they termed an "inverted curriculum". Essentially, the JDACP was a mirror of the DACP, in which the instructors could experience the program in Japanese from the students' point of view. The JDACP was initially strongly resisted by the professors in charge of the DACP. The reason for this was that as it was held during work hours (though after classes, and at times when no other duties were

required) it could distract from the tasks instructors were required to carry out. Additionally, it was objected to on the grounds that instructors were employed to teach, not to learn. Even when the JDACP was presented as a form of professional development and an opportunity for instructors to reflect on their teaching practices, it was resisted for a long time. This can be seen in a short note I made in my research journal:

The JDACP was suspended again. Apparently, they won't let us do it during work hours, even if it's for professional development. It's stupid really, they make us stay here until 3, even though most people have finished their comments by 12.30 or 1.

Eventually sessions were allowed to be held after work hours, in empty classrooms that had to be specifically booked by the instructors in advance.

### **8.3.1. Structure**

The JDACP was open to all instructors on the DACP, and was held once a week in an empty classroom once working hours had finished. The classes were organised slightly differently to the DACP classes, mainly because, at least at the time in which I was able to observe and participate, there were no homework readings, and the number of participants was so great that the classes had to be team taught by all of the Japanese instructors at once. Despite this, all aspects of the regular DACP lesson, including the 3/2/1 fluency activity, the functional language inputs, the preparation activities and the extended discussions, were included in JDACP lessons. There was no limit on who could join the JDACP classes in terms of Japanese level, but after the first couple of sessions the number of instructors soon naturally winnowed down to those with a pre-intermediate/intermediate level of Japanese, with the less proficient Japanese speakers finding it too difficult, and the more proficient speakers finding it too easy. As the JDACP was pitched at the same language level as the



DACP, this meant the instructors who regularly took part in the JDACP were of roughly the same level of Japanese as their students were in English. In other words, the JDACP was an opportunity for DACP instructors to become students in the course and experience it in the way that their students did. The JDACP is described in the published account in the following way:

...we designed and conducted a language learning workshop in which we translated the materials and activities NESTs use to teach English. We called this curriculum the “inverted curriculum,” as it reverses two aspects of the NESTs’ teaching context: their role, from teacher to student, and the target language from their L1 (English) to their students’ L1 (Japanese). With increased opportunities for spontaneous collaboration with other teachers-in-training and agency regarding the reflective practice as teachers-in-training, we attempted to create a holistic mode of reflective practice.

All materials were translated into Japanese and presented to the teacher/students in the same way as in regular DACP classes. Not only were all materials presented in Japanese, a strict Japanese-only policy was enforced. As a participant, I initially found this exhilarating, as I was intensively studying Japanese at the time. I soon found, however, that the sessions were exhausting, and that it was difficult to continually use Japanese for the required amount of time.

### **8.3.2. The JDACP as cultural resistance**

Once again, the JDACP can be read as a form of cultural resistance in the sense that it represents a free space in which ideas can be challenged beyond the accepted norms of the DACP. The fact that the DACP was organised in a heavily top-down way, with decisions being made by program

managers and course designers being enforced on teachers, and with teachers able to offer very little substantial input in the way that the program was run, means that the JDACP can be read as a rather subversive activity. Teachers were able to challenge the accepted norms of the program through experiencing the program itself from the students' point of view. Additionally, as argued in the previous chapter, the DACP regularly ignored student wishes regarding course content. For example, although students regularly requested vocabulary input, this was often brushed aside by program managers and instructors as inefficient, and as an activity that would distract from the main goals of the lesson. By taking part in the JDACP, instructors were given the opportunity to enter the class with the same level of preparation as the students and see which activities were effective or ineffective, and whether students' desires regarding things such as vocabulary were valid or not. This was a significant experience for many instructors, myself included, who found the JDACP to be very enlightening regarding the effectiveness of the 'Akarenga method' and the reasonableness of our students' comments and suggestions.

### **8.3.3. New perspectives from the JDACP**

The JDACP was the 'free space' which had the most impact upon the program in terms of making concrete changes, at least up until the end of my fieldwork. Through participating in the JDACP, instructors came to question some of the foundational assumptions of the DACP as well as some of the activities and approaches used on the program, including those I have described as native-speakerist. In this section I will describe some examples of this questioning and challenging, and once again show how the JDACP provided an opportunity for a 'frame transformation' among the instructors on the program which helped them to move away from some aspects of the native-speakerist framing of the course. I will focus on two main examples, which I feel were particularly relevant for this discussion.

### *Including vocabulary*

One thing that teachers noticed when participating in the JDACP sessions was the fact that in many cases their vocabulary in Japanese was too low to seriously engage in the discussion; a complaint also common among DACP students as previously described in section 7.2.3. The JDACP teachers responded to this by handing out lists of useful vocabulary a few days before the lesson, which the teachers could use to prepare for the coming JDACP class. As recorded in the published account of the JDACP, comments from instructors about the effectiveness of the course mentioned the vocabulary lists positively (the following quotes are paraphrased from the original source):

...most participants commented on things that the majority of language learners find difficult...learning new words and expanding their vocabulary (“The JDACP handout [particularly the vocabulary and advance discussion questions] was really helped me prepare for in-class activities”), nuance (“Students might be able to ignore the exact meaning of words and phrases. I didn’t know the exact meaning of function phrases, or even how to say them, and I didn’t care.”)

The published account also notes that teachers who took part in the JDACP used these experiences to inform their DACP teaching:

Additionally, the positive and negative experiences the participants felt as learners seemed to have an effect on their own classroom practice. During the reflective interview, some of the teachers explained that they had decided to take a less strict approach in their teaching of the function phrases or requiring a range of phrases to be used: “I found that students tend to just use one convenient phrase, ‘Does anyone want to comment?’ because it was easier, not because they hadn’t learned the other phrases. Another teacher mentioned becoming aware of how much ‘wait time’ the students might need: “I found I needed

more time to consider and organize my ideas.” One teacher made a point of mentioning the usefulness of something that was not generally included in their lessons: “Vocabulary lists were certainly a big help!”

This realization of the need for vocabulary is significant, because as mentioned in chapter 7, the dismissal of student wishes to learn vocabulary in favour of training students in strategies of circumlocution was one aspect of the “learner training” which I identified as a core native-speakerist element of the program. By taking on the role of the student in the JDACP, teachers became aware of the need for vocabulary, and were able to view the issue from the perspective of their learners, which led to them making precisely the same requests as their learners for vocabulary. By undergoing this experience, the teachers had an opportunity to enact a frame transformation, in which their established frame regarding this issue came into conflict with their new experience, and they could see the issue more sympathetically from the students’ point of view. After my fieldwork had ended I learned that this practice had also crossed over not only into the teaching habits of individual instructors, but also into the official practices of the DACP itself. In the most recent editions of the DACP textbook, the homework readings are glossed for vocabulary, and particular words that it is felt students may need are highlighted next to the text, with Japanese translations provided. In other words, the experience of the JDACP and the inverted curriculum helped enact a frame transformation in the minds of the instructors, which challenged a native-speakerist principle. Rather than dismissing students’ concerns, the teachers came to realise that the students were correct on this point, and this new framing was used to challenge and shift the ‘native speaker’ frame of the DACP, with the Japanese translations creating a somewhat multilingual space as opposed to the previously totally monolingual environment of the DACP. While not an intended outcome of the JDACP, this provides evidence that acts of resistance to the DACP curriculum could serve to challenge, even if unintentionally, the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program.

### *Use of Japanese*

A second example of the way in which the JDACP challenged existing DACP practices is in the use of Japanese. While the DACP retained a native-speakerist English-only policy, the JDACP allowed instructors to see what it was like to be disallowed to use their own language in the classroom, and to make changes in their own classes accordingly. For example, the Singaporean teacher Heng felt this was one of the main things he took away from the JDACP:

**Heng:** Because, yeah, I've been through a JDACP, Japanese exchange course, and in the intervals you really want to share your ideas in your language about the topic, yeah. So you just wanna talk to someone about it, yeah. If I can't express that then I feel very oppressed and I don't know why. [laughs] I felt that way, so I allow my students in the intervals between activity one and two, I let them use their own language. Just close one eye like that.

In this statement, Heng shows that he has become more aware of the 'oppression' his students may feel due to the English-only policy in his classes, and has altered his class accordingly to allow for more Japanese use. The use of the word "oppressed" is very significant here, as it points towards an awareness, at some level, of the discriminatory nature of such a policy, and perhaps an unconscious awareness of native-speakerism in the program. By experiencing this Japanese-only policy of the JDACP, instructors became aware of these same issues in their own classes and achieved a more critical awareness of how their students might feel about such a policy. Once again, while not intended to challenge a recognized native-speakerism on the program, the JDACP allowed teachers to enact frame transformations which led them, in some cases, to move away from the 'native speaker' framing of the program and more critically evaluate whether such a policy was really in the

best interests of the students.

Once again, while I do not wish to strongly argue that the JDACP was carried out as a form of conscious resistance to the 'native speaker' framing of the program, I do believe that it could be read in that way. The fact that the JDACP was used as a space in which the monolingualism of the program could be challenged is significant, because this restrictive monolingualism is one area which was explicitly native-speakerist in the DACP. I also believe that it is significant that the JDACP was created specifically as an initiative by the 'non-native speaker' teachers on the program, with the express purpose of helping the 'native English speaker' teachers reflect on their teaching from the perspective of students, as can be seen in the section of their paper quoted earlier. While this may not be evidence of conscious resistance to a recognized native-speakerism, I believe this could certainly be read as a form of unconscious resistance to the 'native speaker' framing of the program, which would match the findings of Canagarajah (1999b). In any case, the JDACP is a very significant example of how the 'native speaker' framing of the program could be challenged by DACP instructors, either purposefully or inadvertently.

#### **8.4. Defying the English-only policy**

The final example of cultural resistance I have identified in the DACP course is somewhat different to the others already described, in that it was not about creating a free space for discussion and the exploration of ideas and assumptions, but more of an uncoordinated form of personal political resistance to the dominant practices of the program.

As noted in the previous chapter, one of the key native-speakerist assumptions of the DACP was the idea of the "English-only" policy, which was strictly enforced to the point that Japanese use was even penalised during the discussion tests. During classes students were expected to speak only in English and not to use even a word of Japanese, with only slips of the tongue being considered acceptable. This strict policy of target-language use only in the classroom existed despite the fact

that there is no evidential backing supporting English-only policies, and even countermending evidence showing they are ineffective. As discussed previously, even the program managers did not really see the policy as anything other than a sales point, and noted that it was mandated by the university that this be included in the course.

However, despite this being an emphasised part of the program, and something that instructors were reminded about during the orientation week and occasionally in FD sessions, during my time teaching on the program it became clear that essentially none of the instructors were rigorously sticking to the policy. Even those who supported the policy in principle did not rigidly stick to it, for example Keiji, one of the 'non-native speaker' instructors on the course gave several examples of how he broke the policy:

**Rob:** Okay, cool. You talked a little bit about the English only policy and you said that you generally support it, yeah. I mean, what do you think are the benefits of the English-only policy?

**Keiji:** Well, I think, you know, if you have freedom to do anything it kind of makes a person stop being creative. I think by putting that kind of frame around, shackles onto those students with you can't use Japanese to communicate it gets them to, well, it's intended to get them to be creative and, you know, how to send messages through with the vocabulary they have. And, you know, also if they don't understand it also gives them a genuine opportunity to kind of negotiate for a meaning as well. So I think those would be the two largest benefits of it.

**Rob:** Right, yeah. Do you think there are any negatives?

**Keiji:** Yeah, like I was mentioning earlier, the people with such a small receptive and productive vocabulary they don't have enough language to actually, you know, to be creative. So they can't negotiate, so they just give up, I think.

**Rob:** And do you ever break the English only policy?

**Keiji:** Yep.

**Rob:** Okay. In what situations?

**Keiji:** Well, the English only policy it prohibits students to be talking in Japanese to each other as well, but I usually let that go if one student is trying to help another student understand the instructions or what the topic they're supposed to be talking about is. I let that go. What else do I do? Since this year I've started talking to students especially in the lower level classes in Japanese before and after class. What else have I done? Oh and sometimes I also if there's a vocabulary in the textbook activity that they don't understand instead of elaborating I do sometimes if I'm pushed on time I will just use one Japanese word just to get the meaning instead of elaborating for god knows how long.

Although Keiji believes that the English-only policy is important in order to encourage or even force English use (which is a questionable goal), he elaborates several instances in which not only does he allow students to use Japanese in order to help their classmates with instructions or activities, he also uses it himself to speak to students, presumably in order to build rapport, and will even use the language to teach vocabulary if he thinks it is necessary. In other words, despite supporting the policy in theory, Keiji violates it regularly in practice.

As we have already seen, the reading circle was used as a space in which instructors admitted to using Japanese in the classroom and during my interviews most of the instructors, when asked about the English-only policy expressed some reservations, and admitted they did not follow it. For example:

**Rob:** Okay. In the program there's an English only policy. What are your views on that?

**Peter:** I don't know. I'm not super strict with this. I believe that learners should have



access to their L1 in situations that will help to learn. For instance if a student of mine turns to a classmate during a preparation activity and asks in Japanese “What does this word mean?” or “What do we have to do in this activity?” that’s not an issue for me.

For Peter, it seems that the use of Japanese was acceptable as long as it served a particular purpose pedagogically or in terms of students helping each other. Josie notes that these kinds of practices were particularly widespread:

**Rob:** Do you see that kind of thing happening, people kind of pushing back a little bit against the rules?

**Josie:** I do, yeah. Some instructors are pretty open about the fact that they use Japanese like that, yeah.

And Heng notes that when he enters certain classrooms there was more Japanese use than in others, suggesting that in these classes the use of Japanese is less stigmatised:

**Rob:** Right, okay. How about the English-only policy, how do you feel about that?

**Heng:** Honestly, it’s good. But it’s not practical. [laughs]

**Rob:** Right.

**Heng:** How do I feel? If I take over Japanese teacher’s class, I find the students speak a bit more Japanese in class, so I think maybe they use Japanese in class. I think from the Japanese English teachers’ point of view it’s okay to use a bit of Japanese. For me, yeah, it’s possible. It really depends on the teacher and their teaching style.

It appears that in general, although the DACP's English-only policy was mandated and impressed

upon instructors from the very beginning of their employment, in practice it seems that the majority of instructors did not follow this, and many either permitted Japanese use in their classes for certain pedagogical or practical purposes, while some actually used Japanese themselves for a variety of reasons related to building rapport or teaching vocabulary. In other words, it seems that the English-only policy was the subject of much uncoordinated cultural resistance on the part of the DACP instructors, pushing back against what they saw as an impractical policy, or even a linguistically "imperialistic" one, as argued by Josie.

## **8.5. Conclusion**

In the previous chapter I argued that the DACP was underlain with native-speakerist assumptions about Japanese students, the Japanese English education system, and the superiority of Western teaching methods; assumptions which, taken together, I argued constituted a 'native speaker' framing of the program. I further argued that this 'native speaker' frame was enforced through the DACP discourse of professionalism in which 'correct' professional conduct was implicitly defined as behavior which followed the norms and practices of the DACP, and that this was reinforced through a faculty 'development' program which actually served to simply reify the principles and practices of the course in the minds of teachers. In this chapter I have shown that the very strict, almost "military-style" (in Heng's words) approach to teaching on the course was challenged and subverted, in some cases consciously, and in some cases unconsciously, through acts of cultural resistance. This took the form of the creation of "free spaces" in which ideas could be challenged (the reading circle and the JDACP) and the general resistance of the English-only policy among instructors on the program. These acts of resistance allowed teachers to challenge the dominant power in the DACP by creating new spaces in which to act, and to assess for themselves whether the practices of the course were as effective as claimed. While I do not believe that this resistance was necessarily a conscious attempt to subvert the native-speakerist assumptions and practices of the program, at least not in all

cases, I believe that it allowed instructors to enact ‘frame transformations’ in which their perspectives could be shifted by creating spaces in which the dominant framing of the DACP could be questioned and challenged. While it is unlikely that instructors would have considered any of the activities described in this chapter to be acts of resistance against native-speakerism (or even recognized the native-speakerism in the first place), I believe that this enactment of ‘frame transformations’ allowed the instructors to question practices, including those which were native-speakerist, by taking a more critical orientation towards their environment. In many cases these acts of resistance led to instructors revising or questioning the assumptions I have described as native-speakerist, and thus inadvertently challenging the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program.

While I believe this resistance to the native-speakerism of the DACP was largely inadvertent, in some cases, it seemed to be more directly aimed at practices which were clearly native-speakerist. For example, both the reading circle and the JDACP were used in different ways to question the "English-only" policy and develop more multilingual spaces which challenged the monolingual native-speakerist philosophy of the DACP. Additionally, the experiences of the teachers in terms of being given vocabulary lists led them to consider things from the students’ point of view, making them somewhat less dismissive and more sympathetic to the students’ concerns. In other words, by engaging in these acts of cultural resistance, the DACP instructors used their newly-transformed frames to act against the dominant power of the DACP, leading to both a subversion of DACP practices, and occasionally to transformations in the framing of the program itself. While this may not indicate that it is possible to completely remove the ‘native speaker’ frame from the ELT industry, it does seem to suggest that it is possible for individuals and groups to engage in activities which force a reframing of their experiences, leading to the rejection of native-speakerist practices and assumptions, at least in some cases. In a sense, these acts of cultural resistance can be read as helping to construct a ‘counter-frame’ (Feagin, 2013) through which teachers could consider the practices and approaches of the DACP from a new perspective.

## **9. Conclusion**

### **9.1. Introduction**

In the final chapter of this thesis I will sum up the findings of this research project, my interpretations of these findings, and try to point towards the implications of this project for future research. I will also attempt to show how my changing perspective of what was happening in the DACP goes some way to validate and support my conclusions. Finally, I will try to outline what the value of these findings may be for future research and suggest some ways that teachers may be able to use this to recognize ‘native speaker’ framing in their own setting.

### **9.2. Major findings**

My major findings can be separated into four categories, reflected in the structure of the previous three chapters. I will briefly summarize each of these in turn.

#### **9.2.1. Professional equality**

I initially entered this project with the impression that the Discussion and Communication Program at Akarenga University was free from native-speakerism, at that time believing that native-speakerism consisted only of the overt forms of discrimination and preference for Anglo-American Englishes common, and commonly protested against, in ELT; what I have termed ‘overt native-speakerism’. My experiences of working in other Japanese institutions, and my reading of the literature in critical applied linguistics had led me to believe that the non-discriminatory hiring and employment policy at the DACP was evidence of a lack of native-speakerist bias present in the program. I therefore felt that by investigating the program I could learn how this had been achieved, and possibly help to point other programs in the same direction. My findings confirmed that, indeed, the DACP was free of any overtly native-speakerist bias in the hiring and treatment of instructors.

All instructors were hired on the same basis, and were asked to carry out the same roles and duties as each other. None of the ‘non-native speaker’ participants I interviewed felt they had faced any native-speakerist discrimination, and my investigation of the roles and duties of both instructors and program managers revealed that there was no distinction made in the assignment of tasks. This was true even in the case of tasks such as proofreading, which in many similar ELT program would be carried out by ‘native speakers’. In comparison to other ELT programs on which I had previously been employed, the DACP was remarkably equitable in its employment of instructors. To this extent, my initial hypothesis was confirmed. This equality was achieved for two main reasons, the first of which was a personal liberal belief on the part of the program managers and the university in the intrinsic good of diversity and the desire of the intercultural communication department to project an image of itself as ‘international’ through the hiring of instructors from a number of different national and linguistic backgrounds. The second reason for this equality was a professional reason; specifically, as long as instructors could adhere to the philosophy and teaching approach of the course, their background was seen to be irrelevant. I connected this to what I termed the ‘DACP discourse of professionalism’, in which the self-image of the course in the minds of managers and instructors was one of very high standards of professionalism and professional practice. This was related to having a unified approach to teaching with a shared theoretical basis, and to teachers carrying out their teaching in almost precisely the same way as each other. As long as teachers were able to adhere to this philosophy, their ‘native’ or ‘non-native’ positioning did not seem to matter. However, the DACP discourse of professionalism was built on a number of what I consider to be problematic and native-speakerist views of language teaching, particularly in relation to perceived deficiencies in the Japanese education system and Japanese students.

### **9.2.2. The ‘native speaker’ framing of the DACP**

While my initial hypothesis of instructor equality was confirmed, I gradually started to uncover a

more deeply embedded set of underlying assumptions, principles, and practices in the program, which indicated a native-speakerist orientation that I termed “the ‘native speaker’ frame”. The parity in employment on the DACP had been achieved through a focus on professionalism, or the ability to 'do the job'. In other words, any teacher who could align themselves with the philosophy and the practices of the program could be hired without regard to their perceived 'native' or 'non-native' speaker status. As long as they were capable of being a ‘professional’ DACP instructor, their background was unimportant.

This raised the question, however, of what 'doing the job' entailed, and it was in this area that the ‘native speaker’ frame I have described emerged. The course was based, as I have argued, on four assumptions that are implicitly native-speakerist in nature:

- The Japanese schooling system is flawed and in need of correction, an assumption that was based on outdated and simplistic stereotypes about Japanese (and more generally non-Western) EFL classrooms being places where no communicative teaching took place, and where students simply learned declarative knowledge of grammar and translation techniques. I argued this is not a fair depiction of Japanese classrooms, and that Japanese English classes are far more communicative than the DACP course justifications allowed for. By implicitly framing itself as correcting the deficiencies of the Japanese education system, the DACP could be seen to be engaging in a form of Othering of this system, constructing it as deficient and in need of correction with Western educational technology.
- The 'cultural icons' and educational technology of Western ELT are superior to locally produced technology. The uncritical acceptance and employment of totemic Western ELT practices such as PPP lesson staging and the sequential presentation of preselected language forms was surprising given that these are highly contested within SLA literature, and this was

particularly significant when contrasted with the critical view of Japanese ELT practices taken by the course.

- The notion that students must be trained both in the linguistic and the intellectual question of ‘how’ to communicate, which I argued suggested an Othering of the students in that it assumed a cultural inferiority; the idea that Japanese students could not communicate successfully, and needed training in how to communicate even when they had all the necessary language at their disposal. This learner training also focused on correct ideas concerning what and how the students should learn, removing any decision-making power from the students and instead training them in what the course designers felt were the best ways to learn. This was particularly evident in the way the expressed desires of the students for vocabulary instruction were dismissed, and they were instead trained in strategies for negotiation of meaning and circumlocution, which the course designers and teachers felt was more important.
- The idea that classes should be carried out monolingually, through the imposition of a strict ‘English-only policy’. This was so strictly enforced that one of my participants referred to the teachers “scolding” students for their Japanese use, and each use of a Japanese word resulted in students losing points on their discussion tests and in their regular lessons. This focus on monolingualism was, as the course designers noted, done more out of a desire to impress parents and students than for any pedagogical reason. This points towards a wider ‘native speaker’ frame within society, through which view of ‘correct’ ELT practice, and resultant pedagogical decisions are influenced and informed.

These four assumptions pointed to the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program. While the program did not appear to feature any overt native-speakerism in the form of employment discrimination or the bias toward an Anglo-American model of English, it was still based on native-speakerist assumptions about stereotypical non-Western Japanese classrooms, about the superiority of Western

ELT methods, about the cultural deficiency of learners, and about the need for a monolingual learning environment. In other words, the practices of the DACP were filtered through a ‘native speaker’ frame. In fact, it seems to me that this ‘native speaker’ frame was also operating within my own mind at the outset of this project (and possibly even now), as it was only after two years of fieldwork and data analysis that I began to understand and recognise the native-speakerist assumptions present in the program.

### **9.2.3. Training and Reinforcement**

Any teachers who were able to adhere to this philosophy and operate using the strictly defined 'Akarenga method', which was based on these assumptions, were able to teach on the program. In this way, I argue that 'overt native-speakerism' had been dealt with in the program, but in a way that served to disguise the more deeply rooted issue of the ‘native speaker’ frame, which operated under the surface of the course at the level of the assumptions that informed decision-making.

This framing was inculcated, strengthened, and normalized in the minds of instructors in a few key ways. The first of these was the selection of teachers who all had a similar background in terms of their teacher training; with all having been trained in Western or Western-staffed institutions. This shared body of knowledge and practice created a space in which other educational beliefs or understandings were unlikely to be considered. For example, while the program employed a number of Japanese teachers, none of them had experience of teaching in the Japanese school system and all of them had studied in the West, leaving their nationality in subordination to their training in terms of language education. This shared background in education and applied linguistic theory made it easier, I argue, for the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program to go unrecognized. This was further compounded by the orientation week that new instructors were required to attend. During this week the key aspects of the course, including the native-speakerist justifications for the program, the problematic ‘learner training’, and the English-only policy, were introduced. This intensive week



served to introduce all of this in one package which was presented in a neutral and reasonable way, establishing the DACP discourse of professionalism, and the main ideas and terms that underlay this. This discourse served to mask the 'native speaker' framing of the program behind language which was focused on practicalities and professional concerns. In this way, the 'native speaker' frame of the program was introduced to instructors through a neutral discourse of professionalism, rendering it almost invisible. It was only after two years of fieldwork and analysis of my data that I began to realise the existence of this framing, which shows how deeply embedded it was within the normalized discourses of the program.

This framing was then reinforced through a system which was coded as 'faculty development', when in fact its true purpose was to reify the practices of the program and make sure that teachers were operating, and continued to operate, within its strict methodological boundaries. This took two forms, the first of which was observations, which were nominally focused on improving the effectiveness of teaching, but which served to reinforce the standardised teaching of the program and to limit the ability of teachers to challenge the 'native speaker' framing of the program. Examples I gave of this included the English-only policy, and the ways in which teachers were encouraged to engage in learner training in the 'correct' ways of learning rather than in the direct teaching the learners seemed to be requesting. The second form of reinforcement was the faculty development sessions, which again, while being coded as professional development, were actually a method of reinforcing the standardized teaching techniques of the program. Similarly to the observations, this was shown through the ways in which these sessions limited the possibilities of instructors to try activities which deviated from the strictly oral-only method of teaching; a method which was based on the native-speakerist assumptions about the supposed need to proceduralise the declarative knowledge taught in Japanese schools. Through this program of reinforcement, the DACP discourse of professionalism was further inculcated in the minds of instructors, and it was through this discourse that the native-speakerist assumptions and practices of the program were disguised and

normalized. Through this process of normalization, the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program was strengthened and the psychological frames of the instructors were brought to align more closely with the framing of the program. While unintentional, this reinforcement served to uphold and perpetuate the ‘native speaker’ frame in the DACP.

#### **9.2.4. Cultural resistance**

Finally, I found that teachers on the DACP, seemingly in reaction to the restrictive roles they were placed into by the DACP, were engaged in acts of cultural resistance, in which they created ideological free spaces where the principles and practices of the course could be safely challenged. I identified three acts of cultural resistance which the instructors were engaged in; two ‘free spaces’ which they created, and one more general pattern of resistance to an established practice. The first of the free spaces was a reading circle, which involved exploring topics in the academic literature that may not have been brought up in the regular FD sessions. Topics included authenticity in ELT, the use of L1 in the classroom, and the kind of teacher talk engaged in. While this was not necessarily intended to be a place in which the ‘native speaker’ framing of the program could be challenged, it inadvertently led to certain practices being challenged, including the English-only policy and the program-centeredness of the course. The second of these free spaces was the Japanese Discussion and Communication Program. In the JDACP, instructors engaged in the highly subversive (within the tightly controlled environment of the DACP) activity of exploring the course practices from within, from the perspectives of students on the course, finding that being disallowed from using their L1 felt “oppressive”, and also realizing that the circumlocution strategies they were expected to train their learners in to find vocabulary were unsuccessful. These two discoveries allowed the instructors to see the program from the students’ point of view, and this resulted in ‘frame transformations’, whereby the psychological frames of the instructors were shifted by their experiences, pushing them out of alignment with the dominant ‘native speaker’ framing of the

program. This led in some cases to changes in the practices of the course, such as the glossing of vocabulary. Finally, I found that teachers performed an uncoordinated collective defiance of the English-only policy. None of the instructors I spoke to strictly followed this policy, and many actively went against it in their practice. While these were not conscious acts of resistance to the 'native speaker' framing of the program, the aspects of the program that the teachers chose to resist are significant, as it was these aspects in which much of the native-speaker framing could be found. It is also significant, to my mind, that these native-speakerist principles were challenged by teachers coincidentally while engaging in acts of resistance against the program. This shows the extent to which the principles and practices of the program were underlain by native-speakerist assumptions.

#### **9.2.5. Summary**

To summarize, while the DACP contained a high level of professional equality, I found that the course itself was based on a number of problematic native-speakerist assumptions which pointed to a 'native speaker' framing in the program. Teachers were employed on completely equal terms, as long as they were able to buy into the philosophy of the DACP, which implied a tacit acceptance of this framing. This philosophy and the educational technology which arose from it were then reinforced through a process which was termed 'development', but which was actually a form of reinforcement of the beliefs, values, and practices of the program. Finally, I found that teachers were engaged in multiple forms of cultural resistance to these practices, some of which led to actually changing the practices of the program itself.

I would like to stress that I absolutely do not intend to draw a binary 'us' and 'them' distinction between Japanese and Western ELT, as if such a distinction were valid or possible. Rather, I hope that I have shown that problem lies not with the practices themselves, but with the assumptions that underlie the practices, which I believe to be based on the kind of problematic binary just described. I do not believe that the practices of the DACP were inherently problematic, but I believe that within

them, and within the ways they were presented and justified, it is possible to see evidence of the ‘native speaker’ frame; a particular set of assumptions based on a Western ‘native speaker’ way of looking at and understanding the world.

### **9.3. A change in orientation**

As mentioned earlier, my initial orientation towards the Discussion and Communication Program was highly positive. I believed, based on a rather naïve view of the issue, that native-speakerism had been eliminated from the DACP. I was also positively orientated towards the program for a personal reason, involving my treatment at a previous institution. As such, it took me a long time to reach the conclusion presented in this thesis; that native-speakerism had not been eliminated from the program, and that rather the program itself was framed through a ‘native speaker’ lens. This is a conclusion I resisted for quite some time, and it was only in the final six months of my project that I came to accept these findings. This is important I feel, because the working of the ideology I have described is not obvious; it is subtle and difficult to detect. As such, I believe that had I approached the project from a more critical orientation it is possible I could have ‘read in’ my interpretation to the data. I think that the fact I came to this conclusion reluctantly from an initially highly positive perspective adds support to my arguments, because these were not the conclusions I was looking for, however they were the conclusions I found. While of course it is impossible to be completely objective about issues such as this, I believe that my change in orientation shows I was willing to follow the evidence where it led, rather than attempting to fit the evidence into my particular narrative. I also think that this change in perspective indicates the extent to which my own perceptions at the outset of this project were filtered through the ‘native speaker’ frame I have been describing.

### **9.4. Implications**

With the movement against overt native-speakerism and the consequent gradual retreat of explicitly

discriminatory language and practices, it is easy for those in the ELT profession to believe that this means the issue of native-speakerism has been dealt with, and is no longer a serious concern. This was, after all, the position I held when initially approaching this topic. As such, I believe the value of this study is in showing how the ideology of native-speakerism can still operate under the surface of a program, even when the program in question appears to have overcome any bias in terms of hiring of teachers or the assignment of duties and roles. This study has shown how the ‘native speaker’ frame can continue to exert an influence in the design and implication of ELT courses that otherwise appear to be free of native-speakerist biases, and thus continue to propagate the ideology of native-speakerism within ELT. Indeed, I believe this study highlights how surface-level expressions of equality can serve to mask more pernicious and unacknowledged attitudes at the core of these programs.

While previous research on native-speakerism and Western-normative ideologies, such as work by Holliday (2005) and Kubota (1999), has posited that such insidious ideologies may be at play in ELT programs and settings, the major contribution of this study is in providing empirical evidence of the hiddenness of native-speakerism in a particular ELT setting, and in supplying a detailed description of how this ideology manifested in this particular location. In order to advance discussion of native-speakerism in ELT it is essential to provide strong empirical evidence both showing that the ideology exists, and detailing where and how it operates. This is particularly important as critics of native-speakerism research have levelled the accusation that there is a lack of empirical support behind the concept (Waters, 2007b). As such, this study provides much-needed empirical grounding for claims of native-speakerism as a deeply-embedded ideology in ELT. In addition to this, the thesis also has value in providing a methodological lens through which to analyse such data in the form of the ‘native speaker’ frame. In conducting this research, one of the challenges I faced was finding a suitable framework through which to interpret the data, and the concept of ‘native speaker’ framing is one

which I feel could be utilized by other researchers wishing to conduct similar research in their own setting.

While I cannot claim that my findings here will be generalizable to other ELT programs, I hope that this research will help others working in different educational settings to consider how the 'native speaker' frame could be influencing and operating unseen in the assumptions and structures of their institution, even if not in exactly the same way described in this thesis. Ideology is a difficult thing to eradicate, and I believe there is a danger in making small cosmetic changes to programs in terms of diversity of hiring, and assuming this means the issue of native-speakerism has gone away. As noted earlier, there has been something of a semantic shift in the meaning of the term 'native-speakerism', from the larger political issue Holliday (2005) originally conceived of it as, to being an ELT analog of explicit racism, referring only to the unequal treatment of those seen as 'non-native speakers'. Of course, addressing such unequal treatment is very important, but there is a danger that by focusing only on this aspect of the ideology, we mask the more subtle embedded form it takes in the assumptions, principles, and practices of English language teaching. I hope that this thesis has highlighted some of the ways in which this may occur, and may help people to recognize the hidden 'native speaker' framing that may be present within their own teaching context.

I can imagine that these conclusions will be troubling to some. The implications of my argument are that native-speakerism is very deeply rooted in our profession, present at the levels of unrecognized assumptions and biases, and perhaps even impossible to eliminate completely. This is certainly a huge challenge to language teaching professionals, and may even be a very daunting prospect. After all, if even an extremely well-meaning program like the Discussion and Communication Program at Akarenga University, which has taken great care to prioritise professional standards over spurious native-speakerist hiring policies, can be read as engaging in native-speakerism, it seems that there is nothing that can be done to avoid and overcome this ideology. I would certainly agree that such concerns are legitimate, and troubling. It may in fact be

the case that native-speakerism is so deeply rooted in ELT that it is impossible to remove it completely, that the ideology is inexorably built into the foundations of the profession. This is a fatalistic conclusion, but that does not mean it is wrong. However, I believe that there is a more optimistic view that can be taken on this. I believe that a heightened awareness of the hidden ideology of native-speakerism in ELT can allow course designers and teachers to recognize and challenge their own, and their institution's, native-speakerist assumptions, and thus move towards a more egalitarian and culturally aware form of ELT practice. This research project has shown how even unconscious resistance can lead towards challenges against the dominant framing of a program, which provides evidence that such a challenge is possible. This is certainly not an easy task, and it may be frustrating to find that under one layer of native-speakerism lies another, as the ideology may dwell at several different levels of assumption and belief. However, I believe that even if it is impossible to eradicate native-speakerism completely from ELT, it is possible to move towards a situation where native-speakerism is more easily recognized and challenged. This is analogous to racism, which, while unlikely to be eradicated completely from society, is increasingly recognized and understood at various different levels of social and personal organization and expression, and is increasingly challenged. I believe that this is a worthwhile goal; to continually work towards being *less* native-speakerist, without the expectation that it is possible to be completely free of the ideology. Indeed, I think this is a crucial goal if we are to continue to work towards the global ownership and use of English as an international language.

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## **Appendix A: Sample interview agenda**

The interviews conducted in this study were semi-structured and occasionally took a conversational turn. As such I am unable to provide a simple interview schedule. However, I will here give an example of an interview agenda used with one of my interviewees, Wen.

Topics:

- Background and introduction to DACP
- Why did he study abroad?
- Feelings on entering the program
- Experiences of orientation session
- Any change in attitude towards the program
- Any feelings of discrimination on the basis of speakerhood
- Purpose of unified curriculum
- Purpose of faculty development

The final interview covered most of these points, though not necessarily in this order.