การวิเคราะห์ความรู้ความเข้าใจของครูชาวต่างชาติด้านกลยุทธ์การสื่อสารในบริบทของการสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศในประเทศไทย

An Analysis of an International Teacher's Cognitions of Communication Strategies in the Teaching English as a Foreign Language Context in Thailand

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บทคัดย่อ

        แนวคิดด้านความรู้ความเข้าใจของครูโดย Borg (2018) ได้นำมาใช้เป็นกรอบแนวคิดในงานวิจัยเชิงตีความ กรณีศึกษาความรู้ความเข้าใจของครูนานาชาติด้านกลยุทธ์การสื่อสาร (CSs) ภาษาอังกฤษในชั้นเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศในประเทศไทย ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ครูนานาชาติขาดประสบการณ์สอนและไม่ได้รับการอบรมด้านการสอนก่อนเดินทางมาสอนในประเทศไทยในระดับชั้นประถมศึกษาจนถึงระดับอุดมศึกษา นอกจากนี้ ผลการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลจากการสัมภาษณ์ชนิดกึ่งโครงสร้าง การสังเกตการจัดกิจกรรมการเรียนรู้ และบันทึกการจัดการเรียนการสอน พบปัญหาการประยุกต์ใช้กลยุทธ์การสื่อสารของครูเนื่องจากครูขาดการพัฒนาด้านวิชาชีพ งานวิจัยนี้อาจช่วยอธิบายความสำคัญของการพัฒนาวิชาชีพของครูนานาชาติในประเทศไทย โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งกลุ่มที่ไม่ได้ศึกษาด้านการฝึกหัดครู

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คำสำคัญ: ความรู้ความเข้าใจของครู กลยุทธ์การสื่อสาร ชุมชนการเรียนรู้ทางวิชาชีพ ครู นานาชาติ ภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศในประเทศไทย

Abstract

Employing the concept of teacher cognition by Borg (2018), this interpretative case study explored the case of one international teacher and his cognition of communication strategies (CSs) in his English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class in Thailand. The international teacher came to teach in Thailand without prior experience and training and has since formally taught from the primary to the tertiary level. Semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and class video recordings revealed problems concerning CSs use, which the teacher attributed to his lack of professional training. This study sheds light on the importance of professional training among international teachers in Thailand, especially those without formal teacher education.

Keywords: Teacher cognition, Communication strategies, Professional learning community, International teacher, Thai EFL

Introduction

In the broadest sense, teacher cognition (TC) refers to what teachers "think, know, believe, and do" (Borg, 2003: 81) while communication strategies (CSs) are "any attempt(s) to enhance the effectiveness of communication" (Canale, 1983: 38). Research shows that the dynamics within a teacher's beliefs system "strongly affect" (Haim & Tannenbaum, 2022: 1) how they decide to communicate with their students in the English language classroom (Borg, 2003, 2009 cited in Haim & Tannenbaum, 2022), ultimately "affecting students' academic performance" (Chen & Abdullah, 2022: 1). Thus, how a teacher communicates content, and how comprehensible it is to

students, can make or break how they will acquire a language (Nunan, 1991). However, despite both concepts' practical and crucial implications in English language teaching (ELT), especially in foreign language teaching contexts, language teachers' cognitions of their CSs remain an underexplored empirical research focus. In this research, we explored this gap by focusing on the case of an international English university teacher in Thailand, which adopts teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) context.

In the Thai TEFL context, the international English teacher is the closest model and source of English communication many Thai students can interact with regularly in the classroom. However, teacher beliefs and experiences studies show that international teachers in Thailand face difficulties in their classroom interaction with Thai students due to linguistic barriers (Methanonpphakhun & Deocampo, 2016). These challenges are amplified by the international teachers' sensed insufficient induction programs for novice teachers, administrative support (Chuchuen, Tubsree & Suthithatip, 2017), and also ambivalence from Thai colleagues (Burford et al., 2019).

These realities and contexts make an international TC of CSs case in Thailand worth exploring. International English teachers who might be facing difficulties and looking for strategies to adapt in their classroom communication can reflect on their practices or be introduced to CSs through this study. Moreover, decision makers in educational institutions in Thailand can get a view of how international English teachers may be navigating their way around challenging classroom communication using CSs and see the gaps that they can help bridge through appropriate professional development support. For this study, our core research question is: "What is the international English teacher's cognition of communication strategies?"

Theoretical Framework

    Conceptualizing Teacher Cognition

        Within the last decade, constructs such as 'emotion,' 'sociohistorical,' and 'identity' (see Burri, Chen, & Baker, 2017; Borg, 2012; Barkhuizen & Mendieta, 2020) have become acknowledged components or alternative terms within TC inquiry apart from the traditional teacher beliefs (Munby, 1984). Borg (2018) put forward a more contemporary definition for TC research:

        " Inquiry which seeks, with reference to their personal, professional, social, cultural and historical contexts, to understand teachers' minds and emotions and the role these play in the process of becoming, being and developing as a teacher" (p.20).

        All the abovementioned aspects characterize TC as the unseen aspect of teachers' lives (see Borg, 2018) which influences their professional practice. A framework of teacher cognition as reflected in various TC studies was synthesized by Borg (2003):
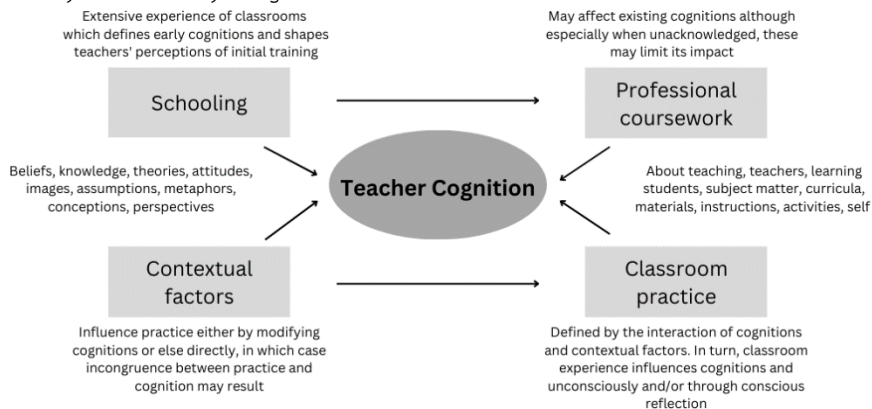
Teacher cognition, schooling, professional education, and classroom practice (Borg, 2003: 82)

       The teacher cognition framework above has been supported by recent contemporary empirical studies on language teachers' cognition presenting an interplay of factors that point toward TC formation. For instance, a qualitative case study by Öztürk and Gürbüz (2017) found that language learning experiences before being a teacher, such as schooling, novice teaching experiences, and institutional contexts, including having experienced colleagues to work with during their novice years, help teachers develop their cognition, shape their principles, and make decisions in the classroom based on learner profile and class situation. These factors were also found in other qualitative studies that utilized a different approach. For instance, an ecological systems study (Mohammadabadi, Ketabi & Nejadansari, 2019) found that TC was "a product of the joint effect of several factors at various ecosystem levels" (p. 657). Such factors included emotions, language proficiency, prior learning experiences, self-efficacy, and working relationship with colleagues, among others.

       In another study, Wei and Cao (2020) found that certain teacher practices may be due to particular contributing aspects. For example, they saw the association between writing teachers' use of different writing corrective feedback types with their prior contexts (language learning, teacher training), the surrounding contexts (local cultures, limited resources), or the classroom practice itself.

       Nonetheless, the latter study also shed light on another theme in TC theory research: the congruency between cognition and actual practice. Wei and Cao (ibid.) saw inconsistencies between the teachers' reported feedback strategies and the actual strategies used. Ghasemi's (2018) study also focused on this aspect, particularly looking at the cognitive dissonance that would

arise when a teacher's beliefs, thoughts, and experiences collide and remain conflicted in the teacher's mind, potentially affecting teaching output quality.

Some points emerge from these select studies. First, there are a plethora of contributing factors that can contextualize a teacher's cognition. These factors or contributors come from various periods in a teacher's personal and professional life. Second, these factors, invisible to many, influence visible aspects of the teacher's cognition, crucially, classroom practice. Nonetheless, for the third point, there are times when what a teacher thinks or believes does not reflect their actual practice.

Communication Strategies

Literature shows that the majority of the seminal theoretical papers on CS present them in predetermined sets or taxonomies (Færch & Kasper, 1983; Tarone, 1980; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; Canale, 1983).

Færch and Kasper (1983) forwarded the traditional CS view, in which CSs "are potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal" (p. 36). Within the traditional view, there are two behaviors and strategies that can be adopted by a CS user, namely, 'avoidance behavior' which leads to a 'reduction strategy' or 'change of goal,' and 'achievement behavior' which leads to the 'achievement strategy' or keeping the goal.

Tarone (1980) defined CSs in an interactional sense, that to produce strategies of language use, there should be a "mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared" (p. 288). Færch and Kasper (1983) emphasized in their review of Tarone's interactional view that meaning structures include "linguistic and sociolinguistic structures" (p. 72). Within the interactional view, a speaker may also choose to either avoid (i.e., not use any CSs) or attempt to use CSs until the meaning is successfully conveyed.

Upon doing a review article on the taxonomies and definitions of communication strategies in the second language (L2) context, Dörnyei and Scott (1997) considered all prior major CS views and created an extended CS taxonomy. They defined "the scope of CSs to include every potentially intentional attempt to cope with any language-related problem of which the speaker is aware during the course of communication" (p. 179). This scope covers, for instance, time-stalling strategies.

The most comprehensive taxonomy might be from Dörnyei and Scott (1997), but in CS literature, the broadest definition of CSs seems to be Canale's (1983). Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) review mentioned Canale's conceptualization of CSs as "any attempt to enhance the effectiveness of communication" (p. 179). This generalist conceptualization seems to match Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) synthesis of major CS views:

> "Thus, a communication strategy in the most general sense is
> a plan of action to accomplish a communication goal; the
> enhancement of communication effect is certainly such a goal"
> (p. 179).

These CS views and concepts were some of what contemporary CSs researchers used in their empirical studies. Al-Gharaibeh and Al-Jamal (2016) conducted a mixed-methods study to determine which CS 10th-grade teachers and students in Jordan use in EFL contexts. To do so, they utilized observation checklists and questionnaires adapted from Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) extended view taxonomy. The researchers found it interesting that although teachers used CS, they were not particularly conscious of their use.

Similarly, Rofiatun (2018) also employed Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) taxonomy to qualitatively analyze the CS use of one English teacher at a senior high school in central Java. Utilizing observation and interviews, Rofiatun (2018) found that codeswitching was the CS mostly used by the

research participant to motivate and increase student confidence in speaking in class.

As for the Thai EFL context, Boonkongsaen (2018) collected quantitative data from 151 Thai EFL high school teachers, using the CS questionnaire of Toomnan (2014) which was generated from Dörnyei and Scott (1997), Nakatani (2006), and Zhao and Intaraprasert (2013). A frequency analysis showed that Thai EFL teacher respondents highly utilized self-reliant CS, that is, without direct spoken communication (e.g., paying attention to other speakers' paralanguage). Interestingly, most teachers reported that they used CS more for maintaining conversations rather than managing communication breakdowns which related more to the definitional concept of CS as being problem-oriented (See Færch and Kasper, 1983; Tarone, 1980).

Notably, the cited studies were set at the secondary level rather than tertiary, which is this study's context. Furthermore, we found that the published papers on CSs at the university level focused on students' CSs (e.g., Kongsom, 2016; Tappoon, 2022) rather than teachers.

Although there have been qualitative CS studies (e.g., Rofiatun), it was more prominent that CS research has been primarily conducted quantitatively and collectively, aimed at generalizability. Nonetheless, our core objective was not to type the CSs that would cover all international EFL teachers at Thai universities. Rather, we focused on TC as the overarching concept of this research, elucidating the invisible aspects of one international teacher's cognitions of CSs, going more in-depth, and focusing on personal teacher narratives and accounts. Thus, for this small-scale and in-depth research, we adopted Canale's (1983) extended and generalist CS view to complement our chosen methodological paradigm—interpretivism.

Methodology

To truly elucidate the rich data of one international lecturer's cognition of his communication strategies, we adopted the interpretive case study (see Merriam, 1998) and the generic inductive approach (see Liu, 2016).

Participant

Undertaking this study through volunteer sampling, our research participant is one male American teaching English at a public university in Northeast Thailand for almost five years. In this study, we will anonymously refer to him as 'John.'

Research methods

Both self-reported and observed data were gathered in this study through the following research methods:

Semi-structured interview

Our primary research method was a semi-structured interview, which included two elements (i.e., open questions and probes).

Direct observation

Direct observation (see Creswell, 2014) strengthened the lecturer's account and helped provide a clearer perspective of the interplay of his cognitions and practices, for instance, whether his CS cognitions and his actual uses of them were aligned.

Classroom videos

Accompanying the observation as a supplementary research method is recording the observed class where the lecturer taught. Given the schedule availability of the lecturer, we were able to record nine hours of classroom talk. The video recordings helped us triangulate our findings and interpretation of the data.

Data Analysis

We adopted Liu's (2016) generic inductive approach, a model similar to grounded theory albeit more flexible for smaller empirical studies like in this case. In this process, we began data analysis by simply reading the interview texts and searching for broad categories in relation to the research aim, which was to explore the teacher's CS cognition within the Thai TEFL context—the interplay of his personal and professional beliefs, thoughts, experiences, and practices. Then we combined similar categories and continued coding until we arrived at the final themes. To enrich the analysis, we triangulated our findings with data from direct observation and classroom videos. With the initially coded interview data, the direct observation notes were transcribed and included in the coding. Then we added the data from the transcribed classroom videos to see the convergence of the teacher participant's beliefs, thoughts, experiences, and practices related to CSs in the Thai TEFL context, producing a more solid account of the teacher's cognition—theory and practice—and how they interrelated with the teacher's professional life.

Findings and Discussion

In this section, we wove two themes that formed John's TC of CSs into our discussion of relevant research as well as our interpretations.

John's background story as an English teacher

As John shared his CSs beliefs and practices, he recounted his journey as a novice English teacher. He had never taught English before coming to Thailand but decided to become one since "teaching is about the only thing available for foreigners" (John, Interview, 2020). As it is common for foreigners to apply for teaching jobs through Thai agencies whose primary employing qualification was being a native English speaker (Barby, 2013), John had success with a recruitment agency that placed him at a primary school in his

Thai wife's province. John shared that he accepted the job offer despite not having prior experience or educational background in ELT because he thought that institutional support like training and access to resources would be made available to him in the school, enabling him to become a professional teacher. However, he shared that his expectations and need for professional development were not supported.

Professional Development through PLC

To the researchers' knowledge, there is no policy-level project at a regional or nationwide scale that specially caters to the professional development of foreign English teachers in Thailand, especially those who have no prior teaching experience. Instead, most of the professional development policies or mandates available in published research and government documents mention only Thai teachers or English teachers in general (See Education in Thailand 2019-2021 by Office of Education Council, Ministry of Education). This policy context might have filtered through John's reported paucity of professional support from his employers as well as Thai colleagues.

For instance, he shared his experience when he was teaching at the school level:

> "They kinda just... go teach English. What do you want me to teach?" And they say, "Conversation. Speaking." And I said, "What exactly do you want me to teach?" So, there was no guideline." (John, Interview, 2020)

At the school, he was assigned with two Thai co-teachers, who, in his own words, did not share much rapport with him and thus, giving no opportunity to devise any CSs for his primary students:

> "One of them didn't do anything with me, didn't communicate with me, didn't help me. The other one taught everything, and I just helped her. She would speak in Thai most of the time, and

then she would turn to me and say 'Say this!' and I would say that [laughs]. So, it was just up to them. I didn't have much say." (John, Interview, 2020)

When he moved to teach at the tertiary level, he had similar concerns with the institutional guidance when he first settled in:

"There wasn't even a textbook. And then, coming here, in university, again, there wasn't much guidance. 'Here, you're teaching these courses.' Then that's it. But there were really, no guidelines, no instructions. But the required ones [core courses], they did have textbooks. The old, outdated textbooks. What do you mean? What is this course?" (John, Interview, 2020)

However, compared to his experiences with his colleagues at the primary school, he had a different experience with his university colleagues who happened to be other new foreign teachers:

"I and other colleagues [i.e., other international lecturers] started halfway through the term. We just like, had to jump in and go with that... no content, no materials... and so, we were like, scrambling to make up the courses together as we're going..." (John, Interview, 2020)

We found John's reported experiences congruent with what other studies accounted for, such as international teachers' unmet expectations of quality teaching materials like textbooks (Methanonpphakhun & Deocampo, 2016), receiving ambiguous teaching plans to work with without any professional guidance (Ulla, 2018). John's concerns seem to have influenced his self-perception of his competencies as an English teacher and user of CSs in the Thai EFL context:

"It's probably far... Far below what it should be. I mean, I'm not a qualified teacher in any way. I have some experience, but I really haven't been trained." (John, Interview, 2020)

However, in the abovementioned experiences, John's working rapport with his then-new foreign colleagues was a positive development for him because finally, he had people to work closely with. This working group may be considered John's first professional learning community (PLC) (Stoll et al., 2006), a platform where he could discuss and share his beliefs, prior experiences, and ideas with other teachers. Most importantly, in that PLC was where he could learn together with his colleagues through their interactions. In this way, John was gaining on-the-ground professional experience with his PLC.

John's PLC changed his working dynamics from having no help and no voice to having a say in which CSs would be appropriate for their respective classes. John shared a specific situation from his meeting with other foreign colleagues three years into his teaching profession:

"We talked at the meeting... A teacher (i.e., a new teacher in the team) was talking about communicative learning (i.e., Communicative Language Teaching/CLT). And he's like, 'This would be fantastic.' But then, we (i.e., PLC) that had experience teaching said, this isn't going to work with this class (i.e., a speaking class). It's hard to explain. But experience says that, well, you could try that, but it's not really going to work." (John, Interview, 2020)

John's on-the-ground working experiences with his PLC helped him form context-based beliefs and make practical decisions, that is, not using a well-accepted approach in Thailand like communicative teaching because, in

his experience, it did not work for his context. The PLC helped him verbalize his thoughts regarding his contextual experiences.

Contextual experiences

The interview data showed the major influence of contextual experiences, which are the actual events that transpire in the Thai EFL classroom, on his cognitions. As we can see from his account, he sufficed the lack of formal training opportunities by reflecting with his PLC the outcomes of their teaching experiences and making decisions from there. For instance, John shared that he "just goes through it in the class and figures things out along the way," adding that in his class, "there's no fixed set of teaching techniques" (John, Interview, 2020). He emphasized his lack of formal training as the reason for going with a more experimental approach:

> "I'm not an expert or something… I don't have any professional training whatsoever… So, most of the techniques I use are based on trying what could work as the class happens… something like trial-and-error…" (John, Interview, 2020)

This overall 'trial-and-error' approach adopted by John underpinned his CSs cognitions, the second theme.

CSs cognitions

John's CSs cognitions were a dynamic interplay of his core definition of CSs and his actual practice in class.

Core definition of CS

John succinctly defined a CS as:

> "Any way that gets the message across. Any way that establishes understanding of both parties. So, strategies would be any way that that could happen. Anyway that works." (John, Interview, 2020)

John's CS definition was both broad and interactional and echoed Canale (i.e., any attempt(s) to enhance the effectiveness of communication) (1983: 38) and Tarone (i.e., a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared) (1980: 288).

When asked about how he interpreted or identified a CS as such, he shared his process:

> "Whatever I figured out, I taught myself from online… 'cause I'd look up, you know, ESL lessons or I'll pick a topic and try to make something out of that… I usually go for ESL because it has the most results." (John, Interview, 2020)

He would then apply the online resource he got in his class. If it worked, then he would regard that particular resource as a CS for his Thai EFL class. Hence, his CS devising process was congruent with his definition of CSs as "any way that works." He explained further what his defining phrase meant:

> "Try stuff that's new to see if it works. Don't stick to one way. However, trying different ways doesn't always work. So, sometimes going back to some things that already have worked, that's what I do." (John, Interview, 2020)

Actual practice

Further explaining his definition of CS as "any way that works", John talked about instances in his EFL teaching practice when he employed different strategies in his class: (1) employing a new strategy in his context (e.g., forced activities like games) to engage passive students in class, (2) allowing students to speak Thai in the class, and (3) musing on what can be done to improve classroom pedagogy. The following paragraphs expound on what each abovementioned CS entails in John's context.

Forced activities

John's primary example of CS involved trying new activities which were created from his discussions within his PLC. In particular, the new activities were about transitioning from only using the exercises written in the textbook to employing external "forced activities" like games to get passive students to engage more in an oral communication class:

> "Me and another colleague [anonymously named Mark] have taught this speaking class. It's a speaking class, but it's really difficult to get them [i.e., passive learners] to speak. They don't have the ability, or they aren't just interested. Before, we follow the book, and the book's kind of boring, and dry, and we try to make it interesting and we try to bring up forced activities like games." (John, Interview, 2020)

Since getting passive students to engage more pertains to classroom management (Reeve, 2009), the interview data above shows that John regarded classroom management strategies as equivalent to a CS. In his case, there was an interplay of autonomous support (i.e., the game John made) and control (i.e., how he executed the activity through instruction-giving and managing the game) (Reeve, 2009).

His account of creating forced activities like 'games' corresponded to the direct observation of his non-English major-speaking class wherein he asked the students to...

> "... play a game where pairs work on finding clues scattered in the classroom and use the clues to guess vocabulary that they have already learned from the textbook." (Classroom direct observation, December 2019)

Prior to starting the game, he repeated the game rules four consecutive times and made sure that everybody understood the instructions. This particular action is similar to the CS self-repetition (Yule &

Tarone, 1997), which refers to "repeating a word or 'string of words' right after they were said" (cited in Dörnyei & Scott, 1997: 190).

However, John found his implemented forced activities to be unsuccessful. As he said in the interview:

> "Mark's class took to it much better. My class tried it [the game], but it was really difficult to get the activity going because they didn't answer questions… they don't have the ability or they aren't just interested. I don't really know what they think." (John, Interview, 2020)

To elucidate this data, we looked for some background information about Mark. Apparently, Mark had a professional training background in English language teaching (i.e., a Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages or CELTA). This training experience might explain why Mark was able to employ the forced activities more successfully than John. According to Kalinowski, Gronostaj, and Vock (2019), professional development opportunities such as training can help teachers extend their "professional knowledge" (p. 3) into establishing classroom activities.

This finding from the verbatim data above was also confirmed by the class observation and video recording data which showed different difficulties faced by the students and the solutions employed by John to manage the game:

> "The game is introduced, and they look more active than when they were discussing the textbook with the teacher since the game requires a lot of moving around the classroom, but many were cheating the rules of the game like 'no Thai allowed' and 'don't share clues or vocabs', especially with those who couldn't figure out the answers." (Class observation data, 2019)

As for the video recording and class observation, we saw how he tried to solve challenges during the implementation of the activity which included (1) reprimanding those who were not following the rules and (2) assisting those who were following the rules and trying to complete the game tasks.

For instance, in the video recording of the observed class, we found that John spent most of the time reprimanding those who were not following the game rules (Class video, 2019). This was confirmed by the class observation data:

He walked up to some students who were sharing answers and briefly said, "What are you doing? You're gonna be disqualified." The students didn't reply to John. They continued speaking in Thai and John left them and moved on to another group. (Class observation data, 2019)

Aside from that, John was also focused on assisting students in getting the answers correct. For instance, John said to one pair who were actively consulting with him as to whether their answers were correct,

"Something different. Make sure it's spelled correctly... You're missing stuff..." (Class video, December 2019).

On the other hand, in the interview, John's statement, when he recalled the observed game, implied that he believed he was using the CS simplification at that time:

"I did whatever I could to get through that activity at that time. Like, I tried to change it, to simplify it... to try to assist it..." (John, Interview, 2020).

CS simplification (Al-Gharaibeh & Al-Jamal, 2016) directly means "simplifying the topic you are talking about" (p. 39) by using words and structures that students can easily comprehend. As John noted in his interview, he did simplify his speech, however, within the context of his

students (i.e., a non-English major repeaters' class), it might not have been the case.

He further shared in the interview what he planned to do post-activity:

> "I needed to come back [i.e., to his lesson planning] and had to modify the activity to be more suitable to the student's language level or do another English activity or maybe just let them choose something easier like 'Okay, what do you guys want to do? Music? Videos? Kahoot?' Just do what worked before." (John, Interview, 2020)

This interview data echoed his aforementioned CS belief of returning to old activities that work if the new ones failed.

Allowing Thai in the classroom

Another practical example of John's CS belief in trying new things was the adjusting of his personal belief in the benefit of L2 immersion to allowing his students to use their L1 (Thai) in the classroom except during practice. John explained the reasons behind his belief in L2-only and the adjustment of that belief to accommodate his students' use of Thai:

> "And so as far as communicative strategies, the exposure I think is a big part... just being exposed to it. However, it's hard to get that like my daughter who picks up English so well just through daily exposure. That's part of our life. Whereas the classroom, it's part of the class. And with the students in the classroom and in daily life, it's just Thai." (John, Interview, 2020)

According to Yphantides (2013), the belief in L2-only has been a long-time occurrence among teachers (See Cook, 2001), especially among native English speakers (See Rivers, 2011) who might assume that how they acquired their L1 (English) would also apply to L2/L3 learners. The same belief may have had echoed John's former perspectives in managing his class by not

allowing his students to use Thai. His belief in allowing Thai except during practice was evident in both the observed and self-reported data:

> Some students were helping each other answer the book and they were speaking in Thai the whole time. "The teacher is okay with it." However, during one speaking practice activity, "many students were speaking in Thai and the teacher told them to only speak in English." And as evidenced by the video recording, John told those particular students, "What?! English! English!" (Classroom observation and video data, December 2019)

And in the interview, John shared what he thought and experienced regarding his English-only policy during practice activities:

> "I still implemented English anyway 'cause that's the least I can do to immerse them in the experience of using English. But they're still mostly chatting away in Thai." (John, Interview, 2020)

As this study found, other classroom research within the EFL context (Ko, 2005; Espinoza-Herold, 2013; Wei, 2013; Yphantides, 2013; Shvidko, 2017) reported that EFL students do not support English-only speaking policies in the classroom primarily because of its difficulty (Ko, 2005; Wei, 2013; Yphantides 2013), the codeswitching nature of L2 speakers (Espinoza-Herold, 2013), and even the extent to which L2 policies can be demoralizing (Shvidko, 2017). Nonetheless, as John had already made a compromise between his personal L2 beliefs and his students' context, he would need to keep on looking for 'new things' until he finds the strategies that would work for his Thai students without fully giving up on his entire belief system. According to Kim (2011), meeting halfway would be a beneficial practice because there is…

"… an importance within teachers' awareness of students' learning experiences and the need to negotiate within the given teaching context without completely giving up the teachers' own beliefs about learning and teaching a second language" (p. 123).

Ultimately, the results gathered from the data demonstrate that John's cognition of CS was contextualized by different factors, primarily experience (e.g., trying and learning what works) and exposure to students' contexts (e.g., language diversity) over the course of his professional development. Data revealed that for John, CS had something to do primarily with how he managed his class rather than his actual speech, which definitely had something to do with beliefs drawn from his personal and professional experiences. For instance, the "forced activities", which came about from his PLC, were mostly done to motivate non-engaged students and supplement "dry material." In another aspect, John allowing L1 in the classroom but only to a certain extent and him never using Thai came from his personal belief and positive experiences with immersion, for instance, with his daughter. These findings show the relevance of examining teachers' background stories to shed light on their classroom practices, especially in multicultural settings such as Thai EFL where many teachers come from different countries and have their distinct beliefs.

Exploring John's TC of CSs showed that to use CSs in his Thai EFL class, he sufficed his lack of formal training in ELT by drawing ideas from his on-the-ground teaching experiences and his PLC with other international colleagues. Although these components of his professional teaching life helped him make practical choices, some of which worked and some did not, we saw some major challenges in his CSs cognition that could hinder the success of his actual practice. The major concern was that he knew something did not work but could not pinpoint why. For instance, in his previously

mentioned account, he knew that communicative learning did not work for his lower proficiency class but he could not explain why to his colleague. He also knew that his Thai students could not actively participate in his forced activities while a similar class could, but he could not pinpoint exactly why. Because he could not find the root cause of what would make a strategy fail or successful, he had to keep on experimenting with different strategies, which affected how his class activities turned out (e.g., his games did not go as planned). Exploring John's TC of CSs revealed the gaps in his teaching repertoire as caused by a lack of formal training and institutional support and a lack of confidence in his competence as a professional lecturer. However, looking into his TC of CSs also showed how he managed and did his best with the resources (i.e., online information on ESL) he had and people working closely with him (i.e., his international PLC). These findings can be applied to the study of TC of CSs, wherein, researchers and educators alike can gain a deeper insight into their cognition gaps and how they make do with such gaps in their practice. Focusing on these aspects, we can think of ways to bridge such disparities and help them leverage their existing resources ultimately benefiting not only teachers but learners in the process.

Conclusions and suggestions

Three data sources (i.e., interview, observation, and video recording) of one international lecturer in Northeast Thailand show that the lack of EFL background prior to teaching, topped with the lack of institutional support in major aspects such as course content and materials, affect teacher cognition and efficacy in carrying out CS beliefs that have been borne through past and present personal and professional experiences. In this regard, institutional support is clearly much needed to help develop the international teacher's CS cognition and practice repertoire. As for research, more TC empirical studies on international English teacher groups from various backgrounds (e.g.,

L1, educational background, experiences) are needed to further contextualize international English teacher cognition in Thai TEFL.

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