

the chances would increase for the memo writer to be female. These unspoken assumptions underlie the language forms chosen as well as the intent and potential of the discourse.

Stepping back to the first level of analysis, the level of discourse, Fairclough considers the following: How does the language chosen reflect the experience of the subject? What relation does it propose between speaker/listener, writer/audience? What ideology is implicit in the choice of words? How complex is the utterance, presupposing what cognitive level of understanding? What classification schemes are drawn upon? What metaphors are used, what type of imagery conjured up?

Using the fast-food memorandum as an example, the terse, businesslike tone of the discourse assumes that sender and receiver share value of impersonal factual communication, with minimal social "strokes" necessary as a part of the interaction. Indeed, sender and receiver may never have met personally. Sentences are brief, with a shared vocabulary common to the chain as a whole. The communication is as timely as it is brief, with the assumption that it will be carried out in a timely fashion.

Fairclough's second level, interpretation, is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction, setting each text within the institution of production which constitutes a wider matrix as context for the text. This level of analysis foregrounds the interaction conventions that constitute institutional preconditions for discourse. The intended action which serves as a goal of the discourse is based upon institutional objectives. This level of analysis also ac-

counts the internalized perceptions of the "other" that determine the personal and professional boundaries that confine and define discourse.

Again using the example of the fast-food memo, the intended action is that each outlet in the chain begin the promotion at the same time. No threats of enforcement are included, assuming that each franchise member is a willing participant and will not violate shared procedures. The assumption is also that the memorandum is a part of a sequence of directives, each of which is filed and constitutes grounds for legal action should the franchise holder not act within institutional norms.

This level of analysis is an inquiry into the belief set underlying the discourse, including views about the institutions that provide a working set of expectations for each conversant. Another feature of this belief set is the internalized relationship to the institution and its authority structure that delimits discourse. The interpersonal and institutional components of language are evident in any discourse, and form a rich texture for analysis. Students are fascinated to receive insights into language use that can be simultaneously simple and sophisticated. Critical language study provides a complex vehicle for analysis based upon Fairclough's three levels of analysis.

(This is the first of a two-part article)

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Some Thoughts on Teacher Self-Development and Action Research

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If I look back at my own experience of teaching in Japanese universities for the past ten years, I see that one of its as-

pects has been a process of freeing myself from tendencies to think in certain ways that are not helpful. My "devel-

opment" as a teacher has thus not been to fill myself with more information. Instead, it has involved letting go of the idea that there is something wrong with being confused or of not understanding how to teach. If I were not ignorant I would not need to learn. This is not to deny that I can learn from what others—teachers or researchers—have to say. Rather it is an affirmation that wherever I am in my development, there is nothing to be ashamed of. I can feel confident in an "unreasonable" way—not for the reason that I have read X number of books, or that I know something which somebody else does not, but simply because I am human being who wishes to do good work and is prepared to listen, observe and learn.

Another aspect of my development has been an increasing awareness of the primacy of my own experience and intuitions. It is easy to be overwhelmed by the "experts" or published researchers—often, if not usually, people who have chosen to go deeply into a narrow field of inquiry. I sometimes need to remind myself that no matter how well read I become or how well I grasp this or that theory, knowledge of this kind does not lead to enjoyment and a real feeling of competence without observation and reflection on what is going on in and around me in my actual teaching.

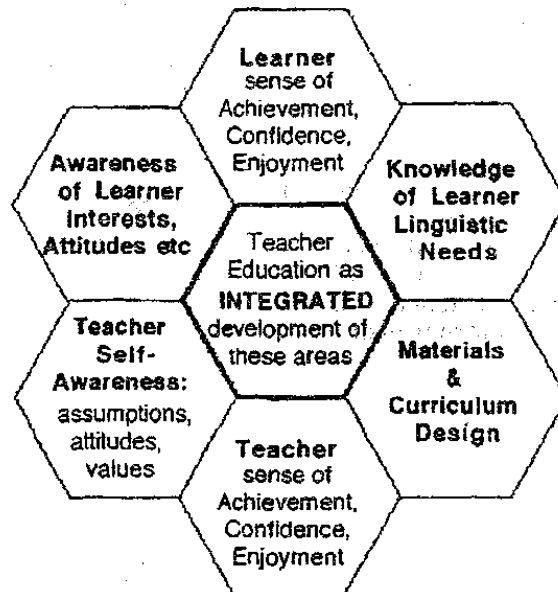
Now, it so happens that to observe and reflect on what is going on in and around me at any moment or for a period of time is quite a tall order, because it is rather complex. Here are just a few of the questions: how do people learn a language, what are my own students learn-

ing (if anything), what do they need to learn, how do they like to learn, what are their motivations, how can I motivate them, how can their interest and attention be maintained, etc. There are also questions concerning myself: how can I enjoy my work more, what underlying "messages" am I giving the students, how can I be more observant, sensitive, etc., how can I be more effective and efficient?

It seems to me not unreasonable to expect conscientious teachers to be interested in all these questions, but somewhat unreasonable to expect them to be specialized researchers or "authorities" in any of them. What teachers can be authorities on is what they have lived through themselves: their own experience.

The outer hexagons of the diagram below illustrate the personal "fields of enquiry" that have emerged for me as a teacher/action researcher. While they are personal, they also seem to offer a useful framework to the teachers whom I teach.

I have indicated, with the center hexagon, that I see development of all these areas in an integrated way as central to teacher education. This does not mean that I feel critical of teachers who go into one of these areas more deeply or systematically than others at a given time. It simply reflects my feeling that to be a good teacher involves synthesizing insights in all these areas, remaining at the same time open in all of them, and remembering above all that we are human beings first, teachers second.



—Kevin Mark