

# Management and Leadership Literature for Professional Development in ELT

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This article begins by briefly describing my introduction to Education Leadership from experience in having taken a single term of it during my master's degree in TESOL. It then explores my continued learning of general leadership communication as well as leadership in ELT autonomously through different types of literature, including mass market leadership literature, and literature in ELT teacher supervision and school management. Each of these sources targets a particular need and audience, and this article makes suggestions of particular types of literature for readers who may be interested in learning about, or who have an eye to moving into, leadership in their own particular language teaching context in Japan.

## Introduction

In their 2004 article, “Reconsidering research on teachers’ professional identity”, Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop write, “From a professional development perspective... professional identity formation is... not only an answer to the question ‘Who am I at this moment?’ ...but also an answer to the question: ‘Who do I want to become?’” (Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004, p. 122). The present article seeks to introduce a readership of language teachers to leadership literature as a path available for their professional development. This is done by giving an account of my journey of development in this area, from formal study for credit to engaging with academic resource books to mass marketed business materials. Through emphasis on communication and motivation, leadership is an area closely aligned with language teaching, though not often included in master's degrees in TESOL/applied linguistics. Educational leadership connects with business leadership, which overlaps with self-help literature. Pragmatically, professional development in leadership for people with postgraduate qualifications in language teaching has the potential to lead to managerial positions in a variety of educational situations in Japan.

## My Journey

I was fortunate during my master's degree in TESOL to have been granted permission to study educational leadership for a term. This was because I had already graduated from a one-year university ESL teaching certificate in Ontario. In an area like TESOL/applied linguistics, which could include anything involving the use of language and culture, educational leadership is particularly useful for language teacher development. Many concepts taught in educational leadership overlap with the types of things taught in second language education.

The course I took in educational leadership started me on the path of reading many of the most popular books on leadership, as well as related areas such as Daniel Goleman's work on emotional intelligence (*Emotional Intelligence* and *Working With Emotional Intelligence*), and I felt that it was an area that I wanted to develop. Although neither was tailored specifically to language teaching, I enjoyed the course in educational leadership as well as the material on general leadership, and through them came to see school functions, and my role in the school, differently.

At the time I took the course, I was working as the sole senior high school ALT at the school. I was hired directly, and was responsible for lesson planning and assessment. There can be a sense of professional separation between non-Japanese

and Japanese teaching staff at some schools, and although I had good relationships with some of the teachers, I viewed my role at the school as somehow apart from that of the Japanese teachers. Due to my reading for, and communication with others taking the course in educational leadership, I started paying more attention to how the English department as a whole was run, particularly with how Japanese teachers communicated with each other. This wider view of how the department worked continued to the level of the school, and naturally progressed when I eventually moved to university teaching. This course, and general leadership literature that I developed an interest in because of it, also gave me a better understanding of organizational behaviour.

For further development in this area, I investigated a number of short-term online professional certificates in leadership for ELT, but most seemed to just repeat some of the information that I had already learned between the course in educational leadership, and my own study of leadership literature. In the end, I researched leadership in ELT specifically through two further resources: Kathleen Bailey's *Language Teacher Supervision A Case-Based Approach*, and *From Teacher to Manager Managing Language Teaching Organizations* by Ron White, Andy Hockley, Julia van der Horst Jansen and Melissa S. Laughner. What follows is an extremely brief overview of the types of things covered in each of these four experiences in learning about leadership, in the order in which I did them. The hope is that readers may get a general gist of the area, from which they can choose one or more types of resources that could help them in their particular teaching context.

## **1. Leading and Managing in Learning Organisations - one term course at Deakin University, 2009**

This was my introduction to the area of leadership in education. I am limiting my discussion in this article to the Study Guide for this unit- a set of lecture notes for the unit that direct students to read certain articles from the essay packs at a given time. At the time, this course (called a 'unit' in Australian parlance) was required of people doing a master's degree in educational leadership, and it was also available as an education elective- a course that could be chosen to fill an elective slot for people doing a range of graduate degrees in the education department. While I was taking this course, there were also students working on master's degrees in general leadership (business leadership) taking the course as an elective. Because this course was required for a master's degree in educational leadership (the degree requirement of K12 school leadership, that is principals and vice-principals), it had a heavy emphasis on the K12 principalship, but as a course available to a range of graduate degree areas in education, it also covered a lot of ground that served to place schools in the context of the modern, or post-modern, workplace. In the introduction to the Study Guide for this unit, amongst the target audience of the unit are "those who do leadership in their classrooms" (Deakin Faculty of Arts and Education, 2009, p. 2), which is part of why this course was a good introduction- it included classroom leadership.

The Study Guide is not really divided into chapters, although there are several sections. The first is "The Social, Cultural and Economic Contexts of Organizations", which is broken down into the following subheadings: i) Paradox, contradiction and ambiguity, ii) Globalization, Social Organizations as Corporations, iii) The Marketization of Public Service and Educational Organizations, and iv) Cultural Dimensions of Organisations. The second section is titled "Learning Organizations", and is broken down into sections as follows: i) Conceptualizing the Learning Organization, ii) Forms of Knowing in Learning Organizations, and iii) Learning Network Theory. The third section of the Study Guide is "Leading and Managing Organizational Change" and is broken into sections as follows: i) Leadership and Organisations, ii) Who leads?, iii) Leaders as change managers, iv) Social and Emotional aspects of change, v) Systemic disposition and middle management, and vi) Ethical and Moral Leadership and Social Justice. Together, these give the reader an overview of the course, so they can decide if it is an area worth exploring as a single course for their own development as teachers.

One notable difference between leadership in the K12 sector, especially pertinent at the senior high school level, and leadership in ELT is the range of specialization of teachers. In a typical senior high school, the principal will have begun as a teacher of one subject before pursuing a master's degree in educational leadership (for example, he or she may have begun as a teacher of history), and yet will be supervising departments of teachers whose subject specialization the principal may have very little knowledge. For example, the history teacher turned high school principal may have very little knowledge of chemistry, although the science department reports to this principal. Conversely, while language teachers whose training is

from different countries in the anglosphere may not have learned very similar things in their graduate programs in TESOL/ applied linguistics, they are all teachers of language. This has an effect on the type of communication between departments.

## **2. An example of leadership literature for a general readership: John C. Maxwell's *How Successful People Lead***

There is an entire industry producing books on leadership that are targeted towards business people. General mass market books of this type are available in English at most bookstores in Japan that have a designated English language floor. Together with an Internet search on educational leadership or leadership in ELT, language teachers could obtain a good amount of information on the area from which to start. Some of these books are good introductions to leadership for people without an academic background in business, and some may require more knowledge. These types of books overlap considerably with some of the books classified as self-help in bookstores. One of the most well-known business books since the 1990s is Stephen R. Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, and it is categorized on the back cover jacket as "Business / Self Help".

In this section I use a very short book, John C. Maxwell's *How Successful People Lead* as an example of the type of literature that is useful in learning about leadership in particular, and one that is accessible enough to be useful to busy language teachers looking to learn a bit about this area. Like the Deakin course, this book is not targeted at language teachers, but what it offers can be of use to language teachers, both in terms of thinking about their own teaching style and relationships with their students (an issue often overlooked in the usefulness of leadership for teachers literature), but also in their relationship with other teachers and their supervisors in the workplace.

In Maxwell's *How Successful People Lead*, the author describes five levels of leadership. The author points out that a leader can be on different levels with different people simultaneously, because these levels are based on the leader's relationship with others. The first of these levels is "Position [in which] People follow you because they have to" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 5). In the Contents, this section is subtitled "It's a Great Place to Visit, but You Wouldn't Want to Live There" (Maxwell, 2013, p. vii). The second level is "Permission [meaning that] People follow you because they want to" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 7), which is subtitled in the contents as "You Can't Lead People until You Like People" (Maxwell, 2013, p. vii). The third level is "Production [subtitled with] People follow you because of what you have done for the organization" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 8), which is subtitled in the contents as "Making Things Happen Separates Real Leaders from Wannabes" (Maxwell, 2013, p. vii). The fourth level is "People Development [which is explained by] People follow you because of what you have done for them" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 9), and is subtitled in the contents with "Helping Individual Leaders Grow Extends Your Influence and Impact" (Maxwell, 2013, p. vii). Finally, the fifth level is "The Pinnacle [explained as] People follow you because of who you are and what you represent", and subtitled in the contents as "The Highest Leadership Accomplishment Is Developing Other Leaders to Level 4" (Maxwell, 2013, p. vii). In the body of the text, the author describes a level, then lists the upsides to it, the downsides to it, and finally the best practices of the level.

Maxwell describes a type of leadership that would resonate with teachers from inner-circle English speaking nations. The type of communication and relationship that leaders have with subordinates varies across cultures. Japanese society and school operations have been described as "based on seniority, and authoritarianism" (Desjardins and Obara, 1993, p. 169). Maxwell's book could be of particular use for those English L1 teachers without a background in leadership, but who have been placed in positions requiring them to oversee other English L1 teachers, who have diverse educational backgrounds. Examples of these types of positions could be supervisors or co-ordinators of English programs and instructors at the secondary or tertiary level.

### **3. Kathleen Bailey's Language Teacher Supervision A Case-Based Approach**

Bailey's book is part of the Cambridge Language Teaching Library series, and is about supervising in the university setting. The tone of the prose style is similar to other texts in the series, and so will probably be familiar to language teachers with diploma or master's level qualifications. It is North America-centric. She states that the goal of her book is to fill a gap in the professional practice preparation of Applied Linguistics (Bailey, 2006, p. xiv). She approaches supervision as a blend of leadership in "general education" (the K12 system, in which principals and vice principals have master's degrees in educational leadership) and business leadership. The author's claim is that it is really a mix of the two types of leadership discussed above, but the book frames most information in ways that closely mirror TESOL training in graduate programs. This is a book for people who do not want to feel like they have gone off the beaten TESOL path. It can also be of use to people who have spent their career in an EFL context rather than an ESL one to get an idea of what life is like on the other side. For teachers who like to think of language teaching as being a part of a greater communications role, this book is less likely to help you feel like you are branching out, but for teachers who already have a master's degree or higher in language teaching and want to understand educational leadership, this is a useful resource.

Bailey's book is divided into fifteen chapters as follows: i) Doing Supervision: Roles and skills, ii) Awareness and Attitude, iii) Autonomy and authority, iv) Issues in observing language teachers, v) Manual data collection procedures, vi) Electronic data collection procedures, vii) The post-observation conference, viii) Mitigation and microanalysis of supervisor discourse, ix) Purposes, participants and principles in language teacher evaluation, x) Criteria for language teaching evaluation, xi) Supervising preservice language teachers, xii) Supervising teaching assistants, xiii) Supervising in-service language teachers, xiv) Supervising non-native-speaking teachers, xv) Supervising in-service language teachers. This work would be helpful to anybody whose role is in overseeing post-secondary language teachers, even those with a background in educational leadership or business leadership, because it draws the two fields together and looks at them through the lens of language teaching.

### **4. Ron White, Andy Hockley, Julie van der Horst Jansen, Melissa S. Laughner From Teacher to Manager Managing Language Teaching Organizations**

This book is quite different from all of the other resources I had read on leadership. This is a book on management, not leadership. While Bailey's book reads like it is based on education and Bailey applied leadership theories to it, *From Teacher to Manager* (FTtM) is based on the structure and day to day management of business organizations specifically related to English Language Teaching, which the authors refer to as a Language Teaching Organization (LTO). It has a heavy emphasis on running your own private language school. There are, however, nods to other teaching contexts: each chapter begins with a vignette of different teacher characters having a leadership problem.

This difference between this book and the other resources could be of benefit to teachers. Training for careers often entails learning about the ways these organizations are run and how the parts and roles within them fit together. The more foreign language teachers understand the different contexts in which they or other language teachers may find employment, the better. It is not uncommon for language teachers to eventually begin their own small language teaching school, even if it is done on a part-time basis and just grows out of teaching private lessons. Understanding how language schools operate may be useful information for people who may eventually transition into, or do research about, this area. It would also be very useful for those who are already in a leadership role in language schools or cram schools, and want to start their own company.

This book is a basics about business, and although it is superficially about running an LTO, it could be applied to other small businesses as well, as can be seen from its chapter contents: i) managing the LTO, ii) organizational behaviour and management, iii) human resources management, iv) marketing and sales, v) customer service, vi) strategic financial management, vii) operational financial management, viii) academic management, ix) managing change, and x) project

management). It gives a good primer for teachers who may like to be able to branch out into teaching business English but are worried that their educational backgrounds may not have prepared them for it. FTtM makes an attempt to be an “all things to all people” type of a book by making reference to teaching at universities, but it approaches it as just another leadership role similar to running an LTO. It definitely enables language teachers (many of whom have academic backgrounds outside of business) to branch out in their knowledge.

## Conclusion

Leadership in ELT is a useful area of study because from it, teachers look at their career path in a different manner. This article gave an account of my exploration of leadership for professional development, and overviewed the resources that I used: i) a course on educational leadership aimed at people planning to work in their home country’s K12 system, ii) a text about supervision in university English language programs in North America specifically, iii) the type of information presented in mass marketed business leadership literature, and iv) a book primarily on managing and running a language school. The intent with this article was to provide options for professional development for career teachers in Japan. Building a career often entails building a portfolio of different kinds of positions, and for those who hold masters level qualifications in language teaching, there are leadership positions available at language schools as well as at private elementary, junior and senior high schools. There are also formal leadership roles at the university level, usually requiring a doctorate, for which Kathleen Bailey’s *Language Teacher Supervision A Case-Based Approach* would be an excellent resource. Very often, language teachers with years of experience are in informal leadership positions within their departments, helping new teachers in course and material creation, and in offering advice where and when they can. The resources described in this article could be of use to those teachers as well.

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