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MA TEFL

**My Changing Classroom**

**Module 5 Essay**

MN/03/04

Has your experience of the content of this MA course led to changes in your attitudes, beliefs, and/or teaching behavior? If so, what are the changes, and where on the cline of change would you put them? Would you characterize the changes as part of a personal 'paradigm shift', or as aspects of 'continuous change', or 'incremental change'?

Approx. 4400 words

22 pages

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## **Introduction**

Change is multi-faceted and evident at all levels of organizations (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:19). In my own situation, working at private English conversation schools in Nagano, Japan, I have seen calls for change from the corporate head office, local managers, teachers, students, and within myself. Whatever the source of innovation, change involves modification of individual behavior and underlying beliefs and attitudes (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:17).

One example of personal change involved beginning my MA in TEFL studies through the University of Birmingham. Change is “systematic” (Edwards and Kennedy 1998:19) in that “it takes place in an environment that consists of a number of interrelating systems” (Edwards and Kennedy 1998:19), so isolating the effects of my MA studies on my classroom difficult. Nevertheless, I believe my studies have had a positive effect on my teaching attitudes, beliefs, and behavior, and this paper identifies and classifies those positive effects. In the first section, a literature review will introduce different models of innovation and change. The second section will address my classroom and changes in my teaching, and the third section will attempt to classify the changes as Paradigm Shift, Continuous Change, or Incremental Change.

### **1. Literature Review: Systems of Change**

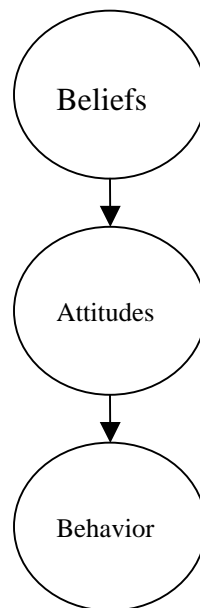
Change is essential to any social system, including schools and teachers (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:2). In the last three years of working at English conversation schools, I have seen a government-sponsored program change school policies, participated in new textbook launches, and experienced the regular turnover of personnel that seems to characterize conversation schools in Japan. Personally, I have changed employers three times, gotten married, and drastically modified my social behavior outside the classroom. Each change, whether institutional or personal, has been a reaction to outer forces (the

government) or inner forces (desire to have a family), and each has effected my self-perception of teaching and my classroom behavior.

### **1.1 Beliefs, Attitudes, and Behavior Defined**

Change, while evident through behavior, is linked to internal changes in beliefs and attitudes (Edwards and Kennedy 1998:17). In this paper, behavior represents a person's actions, attitude represents a person's explanation of their behavior, and belief represents an explanation of why their attitudes are effective. For example, if a teacher decides to reduce in-class drilling time, this would be a behavioral change. The behavioral change is likely linked to a change in attitude, perhaps a conviction that drilling may not be an effective teaching strategy. The change in attitude could in turn reflect a change in belief regarding how students learn. Perhaps the teacher has gone from believing in a behaviorist approach toward language learning to believing in natural language acquisition. Figure 1 illustrates the hierarchical relationship between behavior, attitudes, and beliefs.

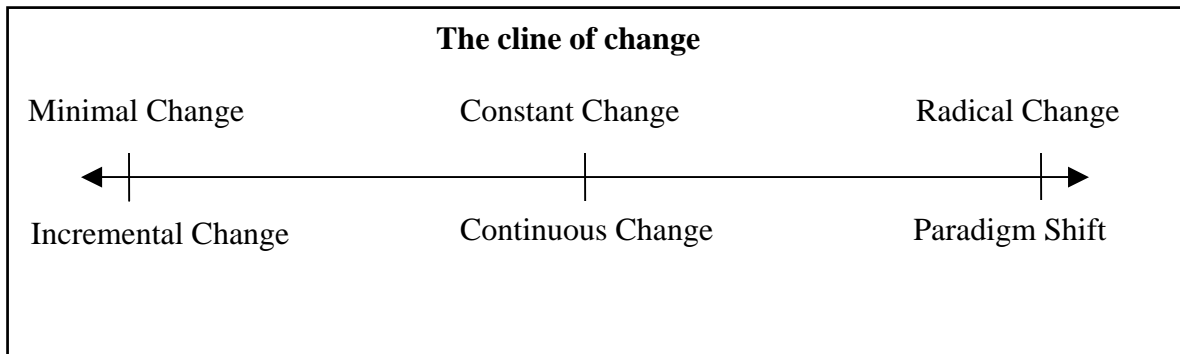
**Figure 1: The Relationship between Behavior, Attitudes, and Beliefs**



Note the directional arrows are one-way, thus a change in behavior doesn't necessarily indicate changes in attitudes or beliefs. Behavioral change could be mandated by law, thus people's behavior may reflect compliance with the law, yet their attitudes and beliefs may hold the law in contempt (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:10). Conversely, a change in beliefs or attitudes would imply a change in behavior, as a person works to rectify a discrepancy in how they act with new beliefs.

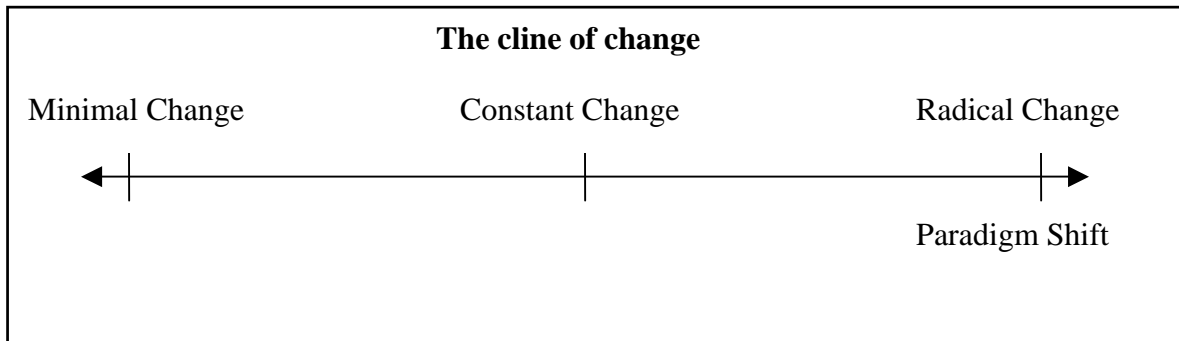
To quantify change, it is first necessary to understand different models of change. Following is an explanation of "paradigm shift", "continuous change", and "incremental change". Figure 2 offers an illustration contrasting the different types of change by placing them on a cline.

**Figure 2: The Relationship between Paradigm Shift, Continuous Change, and Incremental Change**



## 1.1 Paradigm Shift

**Figure 3: Paradigm Shift**



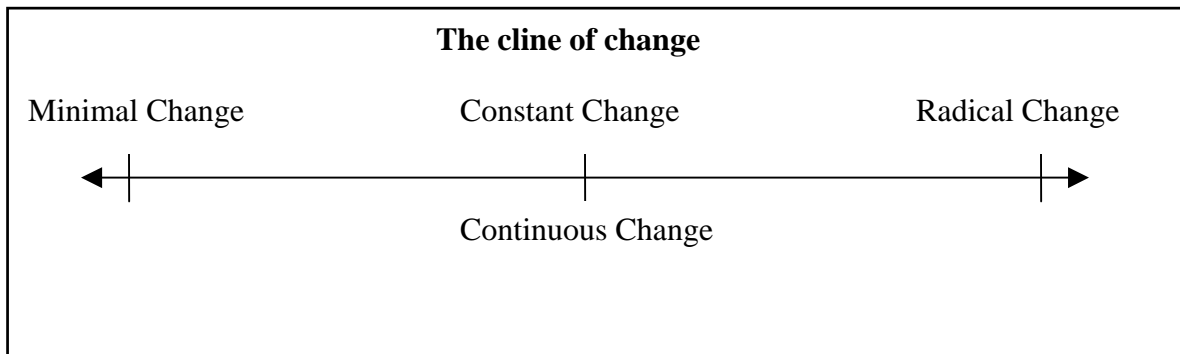
As illustrated in Figure 3, paradigm shift represents radical change, and is also referred to as “discontinuous change” (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:72) or “revolutionary change” (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:72). This type of change involves completely changing a system’s operations, so can be the most stressful and disorienting of the three different types of change (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:72). Kennedy and Edwards explain how paradigm shift involves adopting a new world view or “Weltanschauung” (1998:72-73).

An example of Weltanschauung may be found in Jones (1995), who explains how in setting up a self-access center in Cambodia it was necessary to question whether autonomy in learning was truly necessary, or if it was a Western value incompatible with the demands of the collective Cambodian culture (Jones 1995:230). This questioning encouraged Jones to modify his Western beliefs about how a self-access center should function. Adaptation of the self-study center concept to reflect collective Cambodian values involved changing the western ideal of orientation toward individual study (Jones 1995). Single desks enclosed by partitions were traded for less private, interaction-friendly square tables without partitions, where up to eight participants could interact (Jones 1995:231). The new set-up reflected change in attitude and behavior regarding the self-study center, and change in beliefs about how self-study should function. Such a change from the isolated, independent learner to a learner interacting with other students

during self-access time might be considered a “Weltanschauung”, where the Western designer personally changed to accommodate Cambodian students’ needs.

## 1.2 Continuous Change

**Figure 4: Continuous Change**



As illustrated in Figure 4, continuous change falls in the middle of the cline of change (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:68). Continuous change involves monitoring the internal and external environments to identify discrepancies between the two that could indicate incipient need for change (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:68). This constant monitoring serves to break the cycle of paradigm shifts, where external pressure radically alters the internal classroom environment (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:68). Kennedy and Edwards refer to the discrepancy between the classroom and external pressure as “dislocation” (1998:69). When the constant monitoring and questioning of continuous change reveals dislocation, it can be analyzed with the intention of bringing the inner and outer environments into juxtaposition (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:69). Continuous change involves constant monitoring of the external and internal environments, and can be contrasted with paradigm shift, which disregards the outer environment until a crisis of dislocation erupts and radical change becomes necessary. Continuous change requires constant evaluation of internal beliefs, attitudes and behavior to ensure consistency with

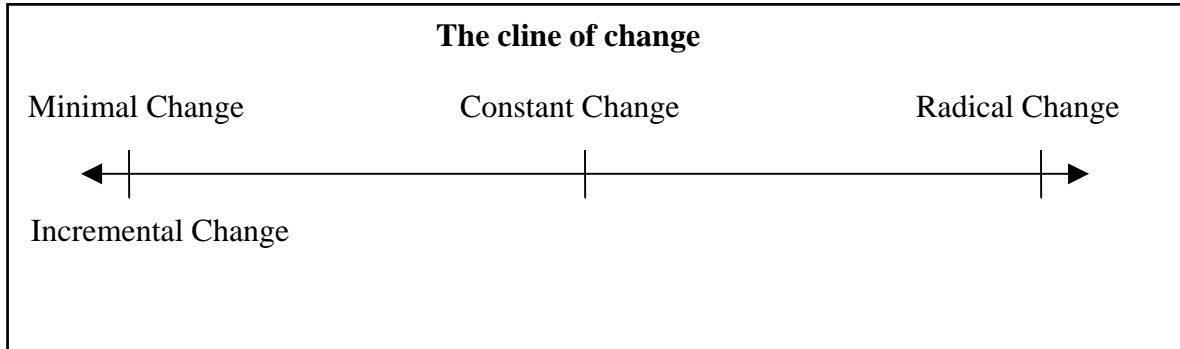
the external values of students, parents, school administration and society at large (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:68).

Williams and Burden (1994) offer an example of an innovation which may exemplify continuous change: a school principal attempted to merge independent English and French immersion programs by asking teachers to trial the innovation and inviting outside evaluators to offer suggestions (Williams and Burden 1994:23-24). Had the evaluators introduced the newest teaching strategies and techniques to the teachers, the evaluation and innovation would have represented discontinuous change, where outside evaluators forced a new paradigm onto the school's teachers. Instead, the evaluators encouraged the teachers to discuss the innovation and work together cooperatively to solve their mutual problems (Williams and Burden 1994:26-27). The first stage of the innovation could have been considered a paradigm shift, with the principle forcing a new system onto the teachers, whereas Williams and Burden (1994) helped the teachers assume control of the project, creating an opportunity for continuous change. Before the dislocation between the principal's pressure to change and the teachers' resistance and confusion became a crisis, the teachers changed their attitudes and beliefs toward the principal's request, maintaining equilibrium between internal and external pressures (Williams and Burden 1994:26). If the teachers continue regular meetings to evaluate the program and its environment, they can maintain the continuous change model, evaluating how inner factors (the program, the curriculum) match outer factors (student satisfaction, parental impressions). However, if the teachers' meetings fail to question the changing inner and outer environments and only look inward, then they will perpetuate incremental change, which is covered in the next section.



### 1.3 Incremental Change

**Figure 5: Incremental Change**



On the cline of change, Incremental Change represents the minimal amount of change needed to continue the survival of a system (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:65). Incremental Change concentrates primarily on changes in behavior within a system, and tends not to question attitudes or beliefs. In Jones' development of the self-access center, there is a "Self-Access Advisory Committee" (Jones 1995:232), which could serve to implement incremental changes for the center, in that the Committee maintains the native Cambodian collective style of learning, and is "regularly convened to evaluate aspects of the centre's functioning and discuss possible changes" (Jones 1995:232). Run by students, the committee may concern itself with making the center more functionally efficient, rather than debating radical adaptation of the attitudes or beliefs originally used to build the center.

## 2. Changes in My Teaching Resulting from my Studies

This section describes changes to my classroom motivated by my MA in TEFL studies. The first part will introduce my classroom; the following sections will discuss the changes resulting from my studies, including changes from drills to interaction, from

prescribed language models to authentic language data, from PPP to discovery learning, from disregarding student questions to nurturing student questions, and from cultural insensitivity to cultural sensitivity.

## **2.1 My Classroom**

Since beginning my MA studies, I have changed employers three times: I started at AEON, a national chain school, moved to a locally owned conversation school called English for You, and am currently self-employed. Throughout these changes the demographics of my classroom have remained stable. I have between 2 and 6 adult Japanese national students at the false beginner level, and occasionally at higher levels of English achievement. Motivation varies considerably, though many students are self-described housewives and consider their studies a hobby. I teach business classes as well, which consist of mainly male students. I also teach private lessons and children's conversation classes. The changes to my classroom in this paper will focus on my adult classes.

## **2.2 Changes to my Classroom**

This section details the changes to my classroom that reflect the influence of my MA studies.

### **2.2.1 Change from Drills to Interaction**

My first employer mandated that teachers across Japan use the same lesson format, which followed a “Warm-Up, Pre-Activity, Listening, Drill, Dialog, Exercise” sequence. In each lesson one grammar point was covered, such as “used to/would”, “present perfect and present continuous”, “conjunctions”, “verbs for giving opinions”, etc (Shirakizawa

1999:iv). The sequence represented a PPP methodology, presenting the target language during the Pre-Activity and Listening, perfecting the language through drilling and practicing a dialog, then producing the perfected language in a series of role-play exercises. Changes to my lessons at this early stage involved perfecting drill cards and developing role-play exercises that used the target language and appeared natural.

Currently I rarely use drilling except as pronunciation practice for difficult vocabulary. Instead, I attempt to set up a situation, role-play or real, where students need to interact. For example, in a recent business class students role-played meetings where they represented a committee in charge of planning a Christmas party. Rather than drilling language, students negotiated the role-play scenario and appropriate language simultaneously. I was a language advisor, helping them come to terms with vocabulary and language forms they were already using, albeit imperfectly. The students, rather than me or the text, chose the classroom language. After a review of the language used during the role-play, they repeated the task again, allowing them to further refinement of students' language skills. Finally, students listened to a recording of a meeting from the textbook's audio tape and compared language from the recorded meeting to their own conversation.

This change in my teaching behavior, from prescribed drilling to allowing language to "emerge" (Krashen and Terrell 1996:32) through the context of the lesson reflects a change in my beliefs toward language learning. The Language Teaching Methodology course (Edwards, Shortall, Willis, Quinn, and Leeke 1996) helped me realize that the methodology I was originally taught assumed "learners acquire whatever structure is presented to them and then move on to the next one" (Shortall 1996:31), a philosophy which doesn't reflect the actual process of language learning (Shortall 1996:31).

I now believe language learning is cyclical and requires students to modify their internal language to accommodate new language data they encounter (Skehan 1996). In other words, language isn't learned, but instead "emerges" (Krashen and Terrell 1996:32); thus it is the teacher and classroom's role to assist in language acquisition, but the actual

acquisition process is student-driven. While the teacher encourages meaningful communication, students push themselves beyond their current language level, challenging and improving their internal language systems (Brown 2000:73).

### **2.2.2 Change from Prescribed Language Models to Authentic Language Data**

Before my MA studies, a heavy course load and limited planning time forced me to rely on the textbook as a fast way to design and develop a lesson. I also believed authentic language was too advanced and difficult for students, despite my own personal struggle with authentic Japanese outside the classroom.

Presently I try to incorporate authentic language into my classes. For example, when a private student recently explained her need to read and write E-mails more effectively at work, we incorporated previously written e-mails into a lesson. The sources represented authentic data, as they were originally intended exclusively for communication, and the original context of the communication was readily accessible. While the e-mails I contributed posed vocabulary challenges, she seemed to appreciate their authenticity. The objective in analyzing the e-mails wasn't to pinpoint mistakes or concentrate on grammar forms, but to determine how she could communicate more effectively in future e-mails.

Incorporating authentic materials into my classes helps address two issues: the first is the tendency for inauthentic materials to inhibit natural language acquisition, and the second is the need for students to develop ambiguity tolerance and meaning negotiation. These points are further addressed below.

Traditional textbooks, structured according to increasing orders of grammatical complexity, generally progress through verb forms, covering simple verbs, continuous verbs, past vs. present, etc (Skehan 1996:18). While there is a correlation between natural acquisition and verb forms, learners don't progress from one verb form to the next

in linear order (Krashen and Terrell 1996:28). Instead, learning is cyclical in that different grammatical forms interact in a student's developing grammar, so learners should to compare and contrast how different forms and rules fit together (Skehan 1996:18). This comparing and contrasting process could be made more difficult through the sterile presentation of progressive verb forms. Alternatively, the comparing and contrasting process could be complimented through the use of authentic materials, where language exists in a natural communicative state and different grammatical forms tend to co-exist.

Ambiguity tolerance and meaning negotiation are another justification for the use of authentic materials. As Johns (2001:102) explains, most school-based reading programs emphasize "reading aloud, translation, and close examination of difficult points of vocabulary, idiom, and syntax". Johns (2001:102) contrasts such education with self-taught learners who develop strategies for puzzling out the meaning of texts, which involves "concentration of the message conveyed by a text rather than on details of the code" (Johns 2001:102). The effectiveness of such strategies is perhaps implied by the phenomenon of lexical cohesion, where words within a text may be treated as synonymous, even though in a broader lexicon the same words wouldn't be associated with one another (Moon 2000:65). Moon offers an example of such reiteration, reproduced in Extract 1.

**Extract 1: Example of Reiteration** (Moon 2000:63)

*Pirates target Harry Potter*

China has brought forward the launch of the first three Harry Potter books by a week to combat *bootleg publishers*.

In the above passage, "pirates" and "publishers" are associated through the context of the passage, even though in a different context, the two words may not be associated. Such association might be difficult to realize if students are encouraged to translate the above

passage into their native language. But the association may be encouraged through attention to the message the passage conveys and not individual vocabulary items.

### **2.2.3 Change from PPP to Discovery Learning**

With my first employer the objective was to have students produce desired language by the end of a 50-minute lesson. The next week the target would change and the challenge would be to have students produce the new language by the end of another 50-minute lesson. The attendance system discouraged sequentially linked classes, as any one student could take any available class for a given unit, regardless of who the teacher was. I didn't know who would be coming or how many students I would have for a given class, and my lessons reflected this uncertainty. I used drill cards made before class, and relied on display questions which demanded answers that correlated to the unit's language form even if they didn't correlate with fact. The lesson objective was to finish with a communicative role-play or exercise where students used the drilled forms, a methodology criticized by Willis (1990:4) as not truly communicative, but instead a time where students continue to practice prescribed forms.

I now try to have lessons follow students' interests and not rely on pre-determined language forms. Instead of using the present perfect in contrived situations, I try to address themes relevant to students' lives. For example, a recent lesson concerned students' New Year traditions. The present perfect form came up, as did many other forms. During the lesson, I pointed out incorrect usage, and encouraged students to correct themselves. The focus wasn't using prescribed language forms, but determining and using the appropriate vocabulary to describe their traditions. The objective was communication—my questions were referential because I really wanted to know what students' New Year's traditions were, and the language form of the answer was secondary to successful genuine communication.

Realizing that student success doesn't correlate very well with teaching method initiated the above changes. I came to believe that teachers who "engage students" are more indicative of success than methodology (Lange 1990:246). Learning involves primarily internal processes, thus requiring exposure to large amounts of meaningful language, which in turn requires meaningful communication (Skehan 1996). Thus, while my original lessons looked like a school classroom, with heavy use of display questions, the language produced was based more on memorization than meaningful communication. My current classroom, which looks like a discussion circle, uses referential questions and offers opportunities for students to produce communicative language I can help to correct and explain. In the original model, I told my students what they needed to know; in the current model my students tell me what they want to know.

#### **2.2.4 Change from Disregarding Student Questions to Nurturing Student Questions**

Originally, my lesson objective was to complete the weekly prescribed textbook unit prescribed in a 50 minute class. Thus, with six different drill cards, a dialog, and two exercises to complete, a question regarding why the text had, "When I was young, I lived in *a* grey house" instead of, "When I was young, I lived in *the* grey house" only disrupted my prepared timeline of activities.

While I understand that particles are difficult for learners to master (Shortall 1996), I have also come to understand that learner questions indicate what my students are interested in, offer opportunities to nurture curiosity, and giving me a chance to provide exercises where students can deduce the answers to their own questions. In the past I would have provided an answer to the above question "on the fly"; today I search for instances of language that can help illustrate the difference between "a" and "the" in a discourse, perhaps helping students deduce that "a" may indicate new information, and "the" may indicate information previously present in the discourse. Thus, planned class activities may be set aside as we explore an issue important to the students.

### **2.2.5 Change from Cultural Insensitivity to Cultural Sensitivity**

Relying on American standards for appropriate student behavior, I tended to view Japanese students as anomalous in the beginning. Japanese students appeared weak, uncertain, and incapable of asking questions. A lack of student initiative became a source of frustration as I tried to push my students to ask more questions. Yet when students did ask questions, they seemed irrelevant, as they generally concerned particularly obscure aspects of grammar about which I had little knowledge myself.

Now I try to understand that Japanese culture is different from the Western culture in which I was a student, and ‘good’ Japanese students are expected to act differently from their Western counterparts. As a teacher in Japan, it is my job to understand how my Japanese students think they should act and work with them. Anti-training of Japanese habits is not only misguided, it implies that the Western culture I represent is superior. Instead, I should prepare students for cultural encounters so they are conscious of their own expectations and the expectations of the culture they encounter. My job doesn’t involve curing students of being Japanese, but involves helping students understand how other cultures might interpret the Japanese and preparing them for possible questions and misunderstandings.

This change is largely a result of realizing that cultural values are largely imbedded in a person’s consciousness at an early age, differ across the world, and are resistant to change (Hofstede 1997:8). Values are also transparent, so a person represents their culture and its values even if they’re unable to see or explain what those values are (Hofstede 1997:8). Should the bearer of a given value system consciously strive to change their internal system, it would be difficult. Thus it isn’t the job of a language teacher to re-train students on how to be students. Instead, the language teacher, especially in a foreign country, needs to be aware of local values and adapt lessons and teaching systems to reflect students’ cultural wants and needs.



### 3. Classifying the Changes: Paradigm Shift, Continuous, or Incremental?

Classifying the above changes isn't simple, as each change has a complex relationship between my previous and current attitudes and beliefs toward teaching. Table 1 summarizes the changes in my teaching before my studies, at the beginning of my studies, and currently. My different stages of development, Before the MA Program, Beginning of Studies, and Currently are discussed further in sections 3.1-3.

**Table 1: Summary of Changes in my Teaching**

|                       | Belief  | Attitude   | Behavior  | Type of Change  |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|---|
| Before the MA Program | students can be taught pre-determined forms, i.e. the PPP system; classes are uniform in appearance and execution               | demanding an instant production, teacher-centered classroom where teacher/textbook determines the forms covered in class                                 | heavy drilling and dependence on exercises with pre-determined forms                                  | Incremental—my objective was to refine the classroom strategies I already used to make them work more efficiently       |
| Beginning of Studies  | effective alternative to PPP exists; classes should be uniform in appearance and execution                                      | needed to concentrate on my MA studies to learn the best methodology for language teaching   | tried a variety of different teaching methods, with mixed success; seemed to return to the PPP system | Paradigm Shift—Methodologies themselves are open to scrutiny and, indeed, should be scrutinized                         |
| Currently             | language 'emerges' as result of meaningful communication—no perfect methodology; classes can be different depending on students | learner-centered attitude, teacher is a facilitator and students' motivation determines language they are interested in; learning is an internal process | student-teacher and student-student interaction in the target language—no prescribed forms            | Continuous—need to monitor TESL profession and my students to help negotiate the best lesson format for me and students |

### **3.1 Before the MA Program—Incremental Change**

This stage represents the first row of Table 1.

In general, before taking this Program, I pursued incremental changes where I concentrated on fine-tuning the methodology presented at my original training. My beliefs, attitudes, and behavior remained stable and changes were incremental, involving micro-modifications such as making drill cards clearer or fine-tuning dialogs to make them easier for students to use.

A characteristic of incremental change is that it fails to keep pace with the environment at large and thus paves the way for more deep-seated paradigm shifts (Kennedy and Edwards 1998:68). As I struggled to come to terms with the reality that “levels of attainment in conventional foreign language learning are poor” (Skehan 1996:18), I was forced to question if I as a teacher were failing, my students were failing, or the approach we were mutually using was itself faulty. My challenge was to become a better teacher, and this challenge led to the beginning of my studies, which is addressed in the next section.

### **3.2 Beginning of Studies—Paradigm Shift**

This stage is represented in the second row of Table 1.

The start of my MA marked a time of personal paradigm shift as I questioned the value of my original training and began considering alternatives. In particular, I rejected as ineffective the drill-intensive PPP methodology advocated by my first employer. At this stage I struggled to implement different teaching methodologies, including task-based learning (TBL), which was particularly difficult since the textbooks I was using at the time were based on a PPP-approach to language learning. I hoped to implement a personal paradigm shift, adopting the most effective alternative methodology to PPP.

My challenge was to study diligently and determine the best language teaching methodology, but my MA resources seemed to indicate trends rather than absolutes regarding effective classrooms. One such trend was student centered lessons, where students took control of the classroom and became involved in the lesson planning and execution (Nunan and Lamb 2001:30). Yet learner-centeredness isn't a methodology as it doesn't include instructions about the best way for a teacher to teach. Instead it advocates a dialog between the teacher and students concerning the best direction for lessons.

Other trends that represent the successful classroom include the teacher engaging learners in genuine communication through the use of reference questions rather than display questions, using tasks to encourage genuine communication, and encouraging students to search for meaning rather than concentrating on vocabulary.

While interesting and engaging, none of the above represented a methodology I could adopt. Thus, according to my measure I was failing—my classes failed to implement a single methodology consistently, and thus couldn't be held to a universal measure of effectiveness. This dilemma encouraged yet another paradigm shift where I questioned whether there is a single, universally effective teaching methodology. This questioning came to fruition as my present belief system, and is addressed in the next section.

### **3.3 Currently—Continuous Change**

Row 3 of Table 1 helps to illustrate my current state of development.

My teaching currently reflects continuous change, where I constantly evaluate class success and students' needs and desires, and in turn ask how my lessons can become more effective. This change results from realizing that it is unlikely only one universally superior teaching methodology exists. Instead, students' motivation and opportunities for genuine communication have more of an effect on learning than a teacher's preferred

methodology. Thus rather than asking the question, “Did I effectively present today’s grammar point?” after class I ask “Did my students attempt to communicate during the lesson?” This new questioning represents continuous change as I work with my students to facilitate in-class communication. Methodology is tertiary, as I set up tasks or role-plays when necessary, and concentrate on grammar or vocabulary when students’ feel it necessary. With some classes this facilitation involves role-plays, while in others it involves discussing my students’ and my previous week.

## **Conclusion**

Teaching is itself a process of innovation, with the intention being an innovation of students’ language. My system of teaching has progressed from innovation as the process of refining an already existing curriculum, to a process where students teach me what they need to learn and reflect on their own language, working to innovate their language and my classroom to facilitate communication.

When beginning my MA studies, I saw myself as a kind of technician, implementing the methods handed down from more experienced and able trainers who knew the best teaching methodologies. My objective in studying the MA in TESL was two-fold; to take on board alternative methodological strategies and to elevate myself above the level of technician to a qualified ‘expert’, capable of training technician-teachers who lacked the education, experience, and training garnered through my studies.

Currently, I no longer see teachers as technicians, but instead see them as classroom researchers capable of charting the best course for their own sociocultural classroom environment. They are equally capable of inventing new methodologies or adapting existing methodologies to fit the unique needs of their own classroom, a perspective encouraged by Nunan (1992:xii). Table 2 illustrates my changing perceptions of the role of teachers in the TESL/TEFL environment.

**Table 2: My Changing Views of Teachers, Developers, Trainers and Administrators**

|                               | Teachers   | Administrators, Textbook Developers, Teacher Trainers   |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Before MA studies             | Technicians—require training from experts; not qualified to question knowledge passed down from experts  | Experts who determine the best methodologies for teachers and textbooks   |
| What I Learned in the Program | teachers are themselves experts within their own contexts, while academic experts are often isolated from EFL and ESL teaching contexts—thus teachers should take their own responsibility and initiative in personal professional development and development within the profession | experts are subject to contention and disagreement, and tend to promote/perpetuate the existing paradigm or a paradigm of their own devising, while in reality it is likely there isn't one perfect methodology for language teaching—effecting language teaching requires incorporation of several different methodologies |
| Currently                     | teacher as a researcher and expert in their own right—responsible for making their classroom reflect their needs within their unique environment, equally capable of developing own research or materials  | offer productive research and tools for teachers, but can't tell a teacher what will always work best in their classrooms—it is up to teachers to interpret/adapt new findings and materials to their own situation   |

Looking to the future, I anticipate I will struggle to hold to the constant evaluation and innovation analysis necessary to ensure a healthy student-centered, relevant, effective classroom. As time passes, it will likely be tempting to fall into a routine that is both familiar and not student-dependent. Maintaining the discipline of teacher research and constantly taking interest in new beliefs through continued reading within the field of TEFL/TESL may help to keep my energy and interest within the classroom high.

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