CASE-BASED PEDAGOGY USING STUDENT-GENERATED VIGNETTES:
A PRE-SERVICE INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS TOOL

Amy Cournoyer
Boston University School of Education
amybc@bu.edu

This qualitative study investigated the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy as an instructional tool aimed at increasing cultural awareness and competence in the preparation of 18 pre-service and in-service students enrolled in an Intercultural Education course. Each participant generated a vignette based on an instructional challenge identified and/or a learning challenge experienced in an intercultural educational setting. The instructor-researcher used the case method approach in the analysis of the 18 student-generated vignettes. Using Shulman's (1986) conceptual framework of teacher expertise as the target for investigating the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy as a teacher preparation tool, the study sought to identify aspects of teacher knowledge and teacher thinking about intercultural education and praxis that were facilitated via the use of case-based pedagogy. Interviews, video-taped discussions, pre and post-case discussion reflection papers, and critical incident reports were coded. The results of the correlation and case study analyses indicate a strong influence of case-based pedagogy on teacher knowledge of the variety of ways in which culture shapes us all; teacher capacity to relate theories to personal and professional intercultural experiences; teacher understanding of how cultural factors impact educational contexts; and teachers' abilities to design culturally responsive lessons as well as design curricula that promotes intercultural awareness and competence in multicultural educational settings.

INTRODUCTION

Because of the growing ethnic, cultural, racial, linguistic, and religious diversity in our schools, there is an urgent need for teacher educators of all disciplines to develop in pre-service and in-service teachers the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively teach in diverse settings (Crawford, 2004; Nieto, 2000). However, synthesizers of the research on teacher education have consistently concluded that despite more than two decades of multicultural reform, little has really changed in the ways teachers are prepared in college- and university-based programs (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Lee, Menkart, & Okazawa-Rey, 2007). The issue of

multicultural education is of paramount importance in the 21st century as diversity becomes progressively more reflected in our schools (Banks & Banks, 2009). Voices calling for multicultural education in teacher education programs agree that all educators must develop culturally sensitive curricula that integrate multicultural viewpoints and histories, apply instructional strategies that encourage all students to achieve, and review school and district policies related to educational equity. In addition to being prepared for teaching in multicultural settings, the forces of globalization have pushed teacher education programs to consider ways of encouraging educators to help their learners acquire the knowledge and skills required to become effective citizens in the global community (Banks, 2003; Byram, 2008). As language and culture are often viewed as inextricably linked, second and foreign language teachers, in particular, possess the power and facility to emphasize global citizenship in their classes. In a globally interdependent world, language educators can equip their learners with the ability to communicate across many boundaries. Realizing that potential, the field of second and foreign language teacher education has emphasized the need for intercultural competence in language classrooms (Byram, 2008;Kramsch, 2009). Specifically, language learners need to become aware of and analyze the cultural phenomena in their own society and others; they need to acquire the skills, attitudes, and critical cultural awareness necessary to communicate interculturally.

This qualitative study investigated the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy in an attempt to answer the call for multicultural education, global citizenship education, and intercultural competence in language teacher education programs. The study used student-generated vignettes as an intercultural awareness tool in the preparation of a diverse group of pre-service and in-service second language educators enrolled in an Intercultural Education course at a post-secondary institution.

Despite the increasing importance attributed to the cultural dimension of second and foreign language education, a survey of language teacher education programs suggests that culture is addressed to a small extent, if not superficially (Kramsch, 2009; Teddick, 2008). Moreover, the scant research on second language teacher education programs points to the preponderance of courses throughout the country that rely heavily on lecture style and cover a tremendous amount of language learning theories without focusing on culture. Day (1991) argues that there is an overemphasis on the rationalist model in second language teacher education. Ur (1992) explains that the rationalist model approaches teaching as a science and in this model knowledge is imparted to the learner and it is anticipated that the learner apply this new knowledge to practice. Although the rationalist model emphasizes content knowledge, it does not address the pedagogical content knowledge, curricular knowledge, or normative knowledge required in the field of language education. Moreover, the fact that the rationalist approach is typically conducted in lecture style defies educational theories and is poor modeling of

practice. In addition, in the rationalist model, the experiences of the student teacher are rarely incorporated into the curriculum. In the researcher's opinion, poor teacher modeling and the lack of a bridge between theory and practice will not provide future language teachers with the teacher knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, intellectual empathy, decision-making, problem-solving, or analytical skills that they need for success.

Research Questions

In an effort to understand the type(s) of learning facilitated by case-based pedagogy for this particular group of students, the instructor-researcher focused on the following four questions: What aspects of teacher knowledge about intercultural education are promoted via the use of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes? What aspects of teacher thinking about the importance and effects of culture on language learning and teaching are facilitated via the use of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes? How does the use of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes influence praxis? The design of the research questions was a cyclical, organic process. The researcher started with the general question of what kind of learning does case-based pedagogy facilitate. Subsequently, following a review of the literature on case-based pedagogy in other fields, the questions became more specific. Finally, after transcribing and coding the data, the questions were fine-tuned even further.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Research points to poor modeling of good teaching practice as one of the key problems with teacher education (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Tom, 1997; Goodlad, 1990). In an attempt to search for a more effective way to transmit knowledge and prepare educators for their profession, the case method has been introduced and proven useful in the field of teacher education (Merseth, 1996; Shulman, 1987). The case method and case based teaching has been used in teacher education programs as an instrument for the development of reflective teachers who make informed decisions (Harrington, 1995; Merseth, 1996; Shulman, 1987; Powell, 2000). Although various studies point to the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy in the preparation of teachers in general education courses and in subjects such as science and reading, scant research exists in the field of language education. Even more alarming, research on language teacher education programs is sparse and fragmented (Teddick, 2005; Richards & Nunan, 1990). There are various theoretical frameworks that support the use of the case method and cases in teacher education programs. The case method approach to teacher education enables teachers to share their expertise (normative knowledge) and critically examine their own assumptions and beliefs; a process that is supported by

sociocultural theories of learning, theories of cognition, adult learning, and constructivism.

First, justification for the case method approach to teaching and learning can be found in two cognitive theories of learning: situated cognition theory and schema theory. In situated cognition theory, learning is viewed as emerging and social rather than individualistic and mechanistic (Greeno, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991; J. Shulman, 1992). Situated cognition theory advocates that learners be immersed in a learning environment that closely approximates the context in which their new thoughts, knowledge, and concepts will be applied (Schell & Black, 1997). Teaching cases is also substantiated from theoretical understandings of the value of "narrative" forms of thinking as opposed to abstraction and generalization (Bruner, 1987; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Narratives include opportunities to develop and combine personal and professional knowledge (Conle & Sakamoto, 2002). Bruner's work suggests that situated knowledge is attached to specific moments in an individual's life that are memorable and that significant moments in teaching can be recalled in great detail. Cases incite learners to explore situated knowledge. The stories are associated with the emotion of teachers and learners and thereby enable students to more readily retrieve and combine in detail teacher knowledge of context, the profession, and of the self.

In addition, in schema theory, organized knowledge is viewed as an elaborate network of abstract mental structures which represent one's understanding of the world. (Anderson, 1977). Research in schema theory concludes "…that simply telling novices what experts know will not produce expertise because telling a novice, for example, how an expert opens the classroom lesson does not tell the novice how the expert arrived at that decision" (Huling-Austin, 1992, p.176). The case study method enables teachers to learn how to build problem representations when making decisions. As cited in Huling-Austin (1989) the cognitive schemata of experts store elaborate, complex and interconnected knowledge about patterns, curriculum and students that allows them to rapidly apply what they know to specific cases (pp. 176-177). By providing teachers with exposure to a plethora of cases, the knowledge of principles, patterns, scenes, and procedures will have a better chance at being stored in their long term memory; enabling them to make rapid, informed decisions.

Second, the use of case-based pedagogy is supported by theories of adult learning. Knowles (1970;1984) used the first to attempt a comprehensive theory of adult education via the concept of andragogy. He identified adult learner characteristics and therefore distinguished adult learners from children by using five categories as the premise for the definition and distinction: (1) Self-concept: As a person matures his/her self concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directed human being. The case method promotes responsibility for one's own

learning by putting the onus on the learner to think critically, analyze and problem-solve. (2) Experience: As a person matures he/she accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning. The case method requires students to draw from their own professional experiences in the classroom. 3) Readiness to learn: As a person matures his/her readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles. (4) Orientation to learning: As a person matures his/her time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem centeredness. (5) Motivation to learn: As a person matures the motivation to learn is internal (Knowles, 1984, p.12).

Figure 1. Case-based Pedagogy
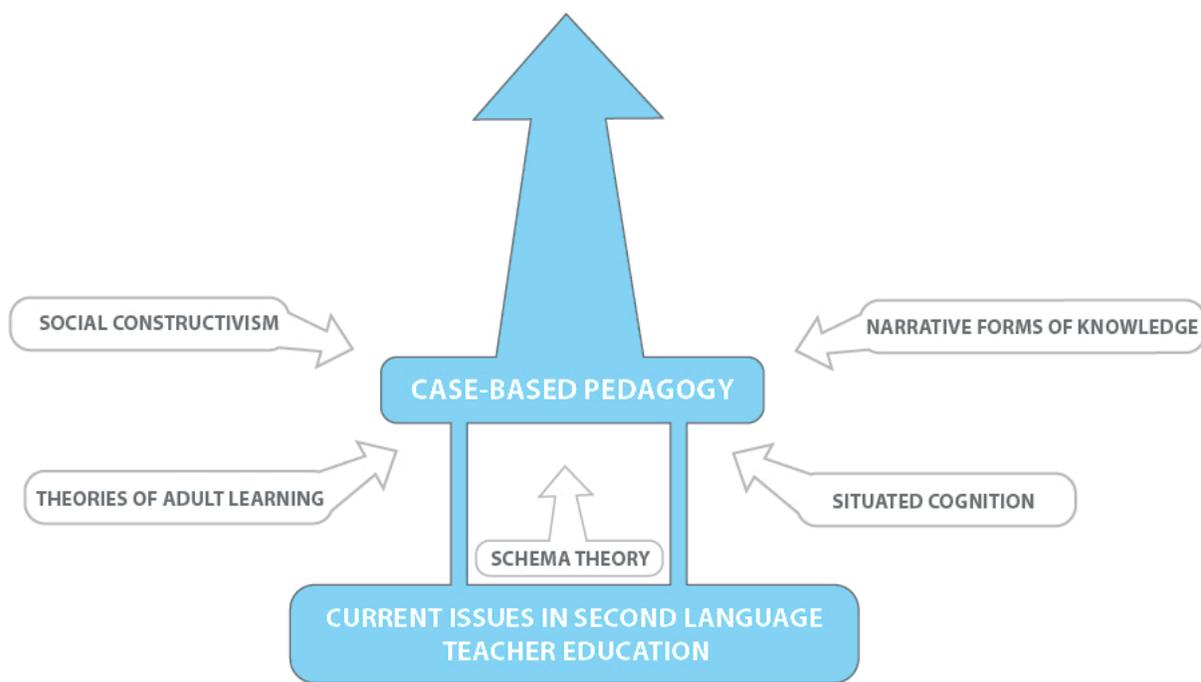
Finally, case-based pedagogy is supported by constructivist view of learning. In a constructivist approach, learning is viewed as an active, social process where students discover principles and concepts on their own and with others (Brown, Collin, & Duguid, 1989). Through a constructivist approach, we can allow teachers to examine their own beliefs and practices in a non-threatening environment. Case-based pedagogy, which is learner sensitive in nature, models and fosters quality teaching in the constructivist view. In a case study, students utilize both their prior knowledge and content knowledge when interacting with a text; these are pillars of constructivist theory of learning, which argues that this is precisely how students develop meaning. This

approach would foster a sense of student agency since the learners take ownership for their own learning and that of their peers. The moral elements of teaching receive considerable attention in a case study method since students and teachers co-construct meaning together. Figure 1 above illustrates the conceptual framework that supports the use of case-based pedagogy using student-generated cases.

METHODS

The setting for the study was an Intercultural Education course required of all Master's students in TESOL and offered to all modern foreign language and bilingual education graduate students at a School of Education in a large metropolitan university. The participants comprised a group of 18 students: 12 international students from China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Korea, and Taiwan and 6 US American students. While 17 of the participants were pre-service teachers, 3 of them were in-service practitioners. Of the 18 participants, 14 were females and 4 were males.

In line with theories of participatory action research (Freire, 1970), the instructor of the course simultaneously assumed the role of participant observer and viewed the class as a community of learning. The researcher has been teaching in the Harvard Institute for English language programs for nine years and one of the courses that she is responsible for teaching is English for the MBA. In this role, she prepares students for the Harvard Business School case study experience. In the course, students review the language and content of the cases but also get ready for the pragmatics and fast-paced interaction of a case-based lesson since such an interactive style of learning is quite divergent from what they may have ever experienced in their native country. After preparing them, a Harvard faculty actually runs them through an actual case-based discussion. This experience inspired the researcher to consider that if case-based pedagogy has been adopted by Harvard as the primary method of instruction to prepare future managers for real-life situations that require a knack for quick but informed and effective decisions, could such a pedagogical strategy be an equally efficacious way to prepare future educators for diversity? Using this experience as evidence of its efficacy and having few other resources to draw from with reference to effective preparation of language teachers, the researcher endeavored to investigate case-based pedagogy as a practical method for preparing language teachers.

A qualitative research method was adopted for the design of the study. The following methods of data collection were used to investigate the research questions: formal 30-45 minute interviews with all 18 participants, nine 90-120 minute audio-taped case-based discussions of student-generated vignettes, memos and observation notes, pre-case decision essays, post-case reflection papers, and critical incident reports. These specific methods of data collection were chosen because it was assumed that they have the greatest potential to capture the information needed to answer the research

questions. For the purpose of this study, all interviews, audio-taped discussions, pre-case decision essays, post-case reflection papers, and critical incident reports were coded into theoretical, substantive and/or organizational categories and associations were made with data from memos and observational notes. Comparisons were made between each delineated incident from the data to understand similarities and to identify differences between and among theoretical, substantive, and organizational concepts.

The apparatus for the case-based pedagogy included student-generated vignettes, instructor questions, and student opinions, comments, ideas, and beliefs. The procedure consisted of three phases. During phase one, the instructor- researcher required students to compose a one-two page vignette, or mini- case study, describing an intercultural challenge identified and/or experienced while teaching or learning in an educational setting. These vignettes were a written representation of a real intercultural classroom dilemma they had experienced. In the writing of the vignettes, student had to present pseudonyms in the place of the real names of the subjects or school involved, keeping the details the same. The instructor–researcher required the participants to provide a detailed description of the school, the instructional program, the classroom, and the characters involved (i.e., teachers, students, administrators, parents, etc.), and of the dilemma itself. The vignettes had to be written in third person and needed to provide a narrative account of the intercultural issue. They were informed that as writers of the cases, their perspectives should remain neutral; the case could have no stated conclusions or arguments. The teacher edited the vignettes for accuracy and content before distributing them to the class. After reading each student-generated vignette, in the order stipulated by the instructor-researcher, the participants were required to compose pre-case decision essays which were due on the day of each class meeting. In these essays, students were expected to write a decision on the best solution to the intercultural issue in question on that particular day. The following points had to be included in the essay: (a) Options, (b) Criteria and Rationale, (c) Analysis of Options, (d) Recommendation (of the best choice among the options), and (e) Action Plan (Ellet, 2007).

Phase two consisted of case-based pedagogy using the student-generated vignettes. At each class meeting, students arrived prepared to discuss the assigned case. After having read the case and written a pre-case decision essay, they all came to class with solutions and formulated opinions about the intercultural issue at hand. While discussing the case with one another and the teacher, the students elaborated on what to do in a particular case or how to solve the problem. The in-class case analysis stage included such questions as:

> What are the issues here?

> How does this same situation look from another character's viewpoint?

What went wrong here?

What would you advise the teacher to do at this point?

What might the teacher have done earlier to prevent the crisis?

What changes might prevent this problem from happening again? (Kleinfeld, 1990, p. 5)

In class, case discussions were audio-taped. Although video-taping may have provided rich details, the instructor-researcher felt that the tape recorder was far less intrusive. Moreover, the most relevant data to the research questions could be found in the discourse analysis.

Subsequent to each case discussion, students were asked to email the instructor a post-case reflective essay that responds to the following questions: In what ways did the case study influence your thinking about the case? Did you change your original decision or did the discussion reaffirm your position? What points hadn't you considered prior to the case discussion? How might the information you gained from this case be applicable to your current instructional setting and/or future instructional settings? What did you learn? What are you inspired to learn more about?

At the end of the semester, the participants were interviewed by the instructor-researcher. Due to the participants' busy teaching and class schedules, interviews were scheduled on three different dates in the last month of the semester. Therefore, the first and second groups of students who were interviewed were unable to cite the last two case discussions in their responses. Nevertheless, the instructor-researcher felt that their experience with the other case provided enough data and experience from which to draw responses.

Validity threats were addressed via the triangulation of sources**,** a search for and *acceptance* of "discrepant evidence," member checks, and additional readers of transcribed transcripts. The combination of coded interviews, audio-taped discussions, memos and observation notes served to corroborate the instructor-researcher's findings. Validity threats were also dealt with via requesting input from the participants with reference to my conclusions in subsequent informal conversations. Finally, observation notes were taken during formal interviews and memos were written after each case-based discussion.

RESULTS

Knowledge of How Culture Shapes Us All

In order to comprehensively and effectively analyze the educational and intercultural

issues raised in the vignettes, students often shared with each other aspects of their childhood and school socialization to offer insights to the context, support solutions, or expand on and/or negate cultural viewpoints addressed in any singular vignette. Data from the interviews and video-taped case-based discussions indicated that this interchange of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives enabled students to gain a broader understanding of how culture powerfully influences our own and other people's thoughts, behaviors, and values.

Adam explained:

> *In a sense, I think I now understand the, uh, like the ways (pause) in which
> a person, (pause) becomes a member of their family and community in
> places like Turkey, China, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, the United States of
> America and Korea*. Does that make sense? *I guess*, t*he vignettes
> enabled us to teach each other about our socialization processes more
> than a book could. (laugh) This was very impressive and educational and I
> do not think I would have the opportunity to learn so deeply and
> profoundly about other peoples' ways of becoming who they are.*

Culture is the underlying framework which shapes all that we think and believe and value (Byram, 2008; Clayton, 2003). The structural integrity, coherency and stability of our beliefs, values, and behaviors are rooted in our culture. Intercultural communication is sometimes frustrating and difficult when communicating with an individual who does not share the same cultural lens. Fatima, a student from Saudi Arabia, explained how the intercultural dialogues promoted via case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes made her consider the causes of frustration:

> *In order to address these complex, real-life intercultural dilemmas, we had
> to dig deeply into each others' cultures, like really deeply. We talked about
> surprising, uncomfortable, and interesting aspects of each others' cultures.
> (deep breath) Sometimes I felt upset during these discussions because
> my international peers did not agree with (me) or see things the same way
> I did. And, well, what I now realize is that my strong reactions to some of
> the vignettes we analyzed was, uh, well, it was a result of the way my
> culture molded me to think and see the world. (laugh) Not to say that we
> have to accept everyone's way as right, but in order to have successful
> intercultural exchanges, we have to be aware of, be sensitive to the way
> we all view the world….So, in addition to helping me understand
> sociological and anthropological theories, the discussions we had in class
> gave me an awareness of other people's cultural upbringings.*

Many international students from collectivistic societies remarked that they were not fond of the vignette analysis in the beginning because the expectations for active participation ran counter to how they had been socialized to behave in school.

Xuehan, a student from China observed:

> *At first, (hesitation) I did not like it at all because I was not used to it. I mean, in China, you speak when you are spoken too. The teacher is the source of all the knowledge. We are just expected to listen. Speaking out would seem too aggressive and impolite. It is just not expected. Now I realize that this thinking is because I come from a hierarchical group orientation. Many of our vignettes were results of clashes between people from collectivistic and individualistic societies. I was shy to share my ideas because I did not want to look like a show-off in front of my peers. I did not want to be the nail that stands out.*

When I asked Xuehan what she thinks of the vignette experience now, she added:

> *Now I like them very much because they helped me to understand my own reactions as an international graduate student in the US. I understand my own negative feelings in classes here and reactions to others is probably due to the fact that we are all influenced by our environments. Although I am still a collectivist, I can also participate with people from individualistic cultures. I think I can succeed in both societies now that I understand the rules of the game.*

In one of our vignettes, an intercultural dilemma was described in which two Danish students were expressing to their Chinese teacher during a language lesson their desire to modify the content of the course by studying more political issues. The Chinese teacher was very frustrated. During the case-based analysis, there was an illuminating dialogue about this between the participants:

Jia Lin, from China observed:

> *The teacher was very upset because in China we are taught never to question authority. The teacher created the curriculum because she has knowledge about what the students need. Even if the students feel unhappy with the course, they should not question her in class or cause her to lose face*.

Evelyn, an American student, replied:

> *That is really interesting and, well, ya know what, I think it connects to what we just studied about Wurzel's theory on family orientations and*

values. (laugh) I think the Danish students were used to a more democratic group orientation in the classroom. They probably could not understand why the teacher was upset.

Banu, a Turkish student added:

This is so interesting! I mean, I think that is why some of us were even reluctant to speak up at first during these case-based talks, right? (laugh) I mean, like maybe there was a fear of being perceived as too aggressive.

Jia Lin concluded:

Exactly. But now I realize that it is actually the opposite here in this orientation. We are considered passive and not good students if we don't speak up whereas in China, (pause) you would not be considered as a well-behaved student if you spoke up so much.

Stacey, an American student remarked:

So maybe this is how stereotypes start to happen. Ya know, I am embarrassed to admit this, but I used to think that all Asian students were either kind of shy or didn't prepare for these discussions because at the beginning they didn't speak up. Obviously, I now know that that is absolutely a stereotype.

The instructor inquired:

This is fascinating! I wonder if the international students also had a similar impression of their American peers…

Kyung, a Korean student stated:

(laugh) Well, now that we are talking about stereotypes,(deep breath) I used to get upset in classes with Americans because I felt like they were abrupt and never gave me an opportunity to share my thoughts in small groups.

In my observation notes, I expressed that the whole class was laughing, almost with a sigh of relief to have a public acknowledgement of each other's misunderstandings. This dialogue, spurred by the vignette, suggests that the students in the course were able to gain insights into the ways their culture influenced their classroom behaviors. During the interviews, many participants mentioned that this particular case-based discussion actually helped them to improve their interactions with students from different cultures in other courses. Amanda admitted that the discussions themselves functioned as a forum in which she could ask probing questions to her international peers that she

would have never been able or felt comfortable to ask before. As a result of these discussions about real-life issues, she expressed that she gained knowledge of the way culture shapes us all:

> *It is just interesting to see with our classmates from all over the world that they experience the same problems and feelings in cross-cultural educational situations. So, even though value orientations may differ, we all, as teachers in ESL contexts and even students in multicultural classes, experience the same types of problems. That kind of helped bring us together as a class.*

In a separate interview, Yu Jin, a Korean student stated something similar:

> *I have more awareness of how being raised in a collectivistic or individualistic society shapes us. Now I can find problems that before I would not have even noticed. I would have just ignored. It helped me to open my eyes to my own socialization, expectation, and norms and those of my classmates.*

Finally, the evidence from this study suggests that the vignette experience facilitated the participants' awareness of their own ethnocentric attitudes, or their *in*ability to view other cultures as equally viable alternatives for organizing reality. A number of students noted that the experience of analyzing the cases helped them to see the issues from perspectives other than their own. Jae Sung, a Korean student, observed:

> *The analysis is so much more than writing a vignette just once and reflecting on it on your own; by discussing my vignette with others I came to realize that there are several perspectives of our characters and several solutions to conflicts. It was more profound for me.*

Judy, an American student explained how the vignette experience aided her in understanding the content of the course:

> *I really enjoyed it. Instead of just reading these little scenarios in books and the author tells us what our reactions should be or the cultural reasons why are reactions are the way that they are in cross-cultural dialogues, we learned from each other's responses and reactions about the ways that culture effects communication.*

Intercultural Content Knowledge and Praxis

Shulman (1986) asserts that the case study method provides opportunities for pre-service and in-service teachers to amplify various facets of their teacher knowledge. An analysis of the coded interviews and vignette discussions from this study supports this

theory. In particular, data from the interviews suggests that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes promoted both content knowledge and praxis. According to Shulman, content knowledge refers to the "structure of knowledge" – the theories, principles, and concepts of a particular discipline. The evidence from the study suggests that the vignette experience deepened the participants' knowledge and heightened their awareness of the following theories and concepts in intercultural education: ethnocentrism, racism and prejudice, gender socialization, emic and etic perspectives, high and low context cultures, and communication styles. Another aspect of teacher knowledge that seems to have been facilitated by case-based pedagogy for this group is praxis, the process of bridging theoretical knowledge to practice. *All* participants admitted that case-based pedagogy facilitated and expanded their understanding of praxis. The following remarks substantiate the claim that through case-based pedagogy, the participants were able to see real-life applications of the abstract theories. In an interview with Stacey, she explained:

> *It helped me to understand the theories. Sometimes you think you know the theories, but in reality you have no idea how to apply them to real-life examples and I feel that the vignette discussions allowed us to make the connection.*

In a critical incident report, Xuehan noted:

> *Because we used them to analyze the problems in almost every vignette, I have a better understanding of various topics such as childhood and school socialization, prejudice and stereotypes, Kluckhohn's Value Orientation model, and Hall's high and low contexts theory.*

Amanda added:

> *It is very practical. When you are teaching on your own you usually do not have an opportunity to sit around and discuss cross-cultural issues and come up with theory-based explanations.*

In her critical incident report, Weiting, a Taiwanese student, reported that the case-based discussions deepened her understanding ethnocentrism and awareness of her of ethnocentric tendencies:

> *The vignette experience made me realize that my own ethnocentric attitude was probably the reason why I was having difficulty making friends with people from other cultures. I have become more tolerant and realize that not everybody has to think the same as I do and maybe become more easygoing. For example I had a trip with a friend that I met here who is from a different culture. We have a lot of differences between*

us in terms of lifestyle so we encountered a lot of issues when sharing the same room. For instance, we eat different foods and we had to make a lot of compromises. So, I just tried to be more tolerant because I know we are from a different culture. Before the vignette discussions, I probably would have just thought he was a weird guy and that there was something wrong with him. We would have had a lot of arguments during the trip. But now I realize that we are not all socialized in the same way. I think thanks to the vignette discussions, I was able to reflective more deeply on childhood socialization and ethnocentrism when making friends here at the university.

Date from the study indicates that two case-based discussions reinforced the topic of gender socialization and bias in intercultural settings. In response to a vignette written by a Turkish woman in the class whose former Saudi student dropped out of her program and returned to his home country because he could not accept being taught by a female teacher, students said the following:

Jae Sung stated:

This vignette helps me make connections I had never considered. I had never thought about the impact of my presence as a male teacher in a dominant male society.

Fatima replied:

Yeah, and it reminds me of the Sadker reading that talked about how boys and girls received very different types of education.

Martha, an American student, added:

Well, clearly this guy was taught a certain gender bias when it comes to teachers. Whether that was taught at home and reinforced in school and the community, we do not know. But, this could have been prevented.

The Instructor chimed in:

How?

Fatima responded:

Well the school should provide a cultural orientation before classes begin and gender should come up in the discussion.

In response to Jia Lin's vignette about a teacher's reaction to an aboriginal girl's attitude towards marriage and professional life as compared to that of her peers, many students

admitted that they had never really considered the need to be sensitive to students' gender socializations. Yang, a Chinese student reacted to Jia Lin's vignette during our interview:

> *I remember Jia Lin's vignette the most because it was interesting and I feel more related to me. It's like more likely to happen to my teaching situation in the future. It made me realize that some of my female students will not have the immediate goals as I do of attending college and pursuing a professional career path. I know we read about gender bias, but I never really thought about how it could affect my teaching so much until we discussed this vignette.*

An analysis of the interview transcripts suggests that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes reinforced students understanding of the roots of prejudice and racism. In a critical incident report, Amanda shared an example that happened to her recently:

> *Some students from Pakistan were asking me during a cultural orientation, "Are we done now? Is that it? Are we done for today?" This behavior seemed very rude and offensive because it appeared as if they are not enjoying the orientation and they don't want to listen to what I have to say. I had never worked with Pakistani students before this moment and this negative interaction could have caused me to think all students from Pakistan are impolite. But as a result of our discussion of Adam's vignette, which dealt with racism and prejudice, I was able to take a deep breath, and think "O.K., I should take this as a learning and teaching opportunity rather than allowing it to plant the seeds of prejudice." Therefore, I decided to have an open discussion with them about the the purpose of such orientations and expectations for behavior during orientations here compared to similar situations in their context. It was a very fruitful discussion; one that I never would have dared to have before our vignette experience. It made the concept of stereotyping that we studied in class extremely clear.*

In addition to content knowledge and praxis, the pedagogical content knowledge that Amanda gained from the vignettes is an awareness of dominant culture expectations and the importance of being explicit. In a similar vein, Yu Jin admitted during an interview that the vignette experience altered her view of her Latino peers:

> *Maybe in the past, I would think Latinos were too aggressive and dominant. I would ask myself, "what is wrong with them?" But, now I started to understand and appreciate their differences. After the vignette*

discussions I came to realize that I was prejudice [sic] against them because (they) had different value orientations. I was able to switch or change my method depending on which student I am working with.

Evidence from the study suggests that the participants were able to better understand cross-cultural differences in non-verbal communication. For example, in a post-case reflection Sandra noted:

Now, when I have problems with my students, I sort of pause and consider why this student is behaving this way. I wonder and investigate whether or not this behavior has anything to do with his or her cultural background, rather than just seeing it as bad behavior and disciplining them. For instance, when an Asian student did not look me in the eye the other day when I was talking to her, instead of thinking she was rude or disrespectful, I actually took a step back and realized that she may have different non-verbal communication norms. In fact, I realized that she may have actually been trying to show me respect.

Judy discussed how one of the case-based discussions raised her awareness of cross-cultural communication styles. She explained:

I remember the vignette about the little Korean boy in a second grade American school who got in trouble for biting another little boy on the shoulder in attempt to make friends. The teachers assumed he was being violent and he just didn't understand. It just makes me think that sometimes the teacher jumps to the conclusion that a student with different ways of expressing things is bad or violent without really thinking it through.

During this particular vignette discussion, my Korean students explained to the other students in the class that gently biting each other on the shoulders is a non-verbal expression of friendship. They also went on to say that this behavior is seen as perfectly normal in Korea. The students from other countries were shocked and had assumed, like the teachers in the vignette, that the boy had behavioral issues.

In addition to non-verbal communication knowledge, Yang, a Chinese student, explained in a post-case reflection that a particular vignette aided her understanding of the conceptual framework of high and low context cultures:

Honestly, I did not understand (the) concept of high and low context cultures until we discussed Amanda's vignette. Now I realize what (a) high context culture truly is and I recognize that I come from such a culture. For example, we tend to talk around the topics rather than being direct about

what is bothersome to us. However, when I communicate with colleagues or students from low context cultures, they may need me to explicate my disagreement. I cannot assume that they understand the message based on the context.

Finally, some students reported that case-based pedagogy aided their understanding of emic and etic perspectives. In a critical incident report, Fatima explained:

Because I studied in a private school with an international curriculum, I proudly assumed that I had both an emic and etic perspective of American culture. But, by engaging in vignette discussions with my American peers, I see that I did not grasp the concepts. Indeed, I only had an etic perspective of American culture.

Adam added in an interview:

Well, I thought I was prepared to teach and understand all of my students as an insider because of my study abroad experience. (laugh) Now I know that I was way off! The vignette discussions taught me that I am coming from an etic perspective. I should really caution myself from assuming I know this insider perspective simply because I have traveled to another country.

The content knowledge and praxis acquired from case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes was succinctly encapsulated in Judy's metaphor for the experience:

It is like the mother bird teaches the baby bird how to fly. We all have the knowledge, but the vignettes help us to really acquire that knowledge by applying it to real life situations.

Culturally Reflective Practitioners

Schön (1983) introduced the concept of reflective practice as the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning. Most educators would agree that reflective practice is a paramount aspect of professional practice. Data from the study suggest that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes promoted the process of cultural reflective practice for the participants by encouraging them to reflect on how cultural factors impact educational contexts. For instance, some of the participants reported that the vignette discussions caused them to reflect on how their own cultural identity, values, and beliefs should be explicitly shared with their students when describing classroom policies. Additionally, all of the students expressed that they should consider the impact of classroom policies from their cultural perspective on students from different cultural perspectives. Consider Jae Sung's observation:

I realized that not all of my students share the same value orientations as I do. Before the vignette analyses, I had enforced certain rules or policies for classroom behavior without really explaining why. I had assumed that my students all viewed education through the same cultural lens as myself as a Korean man. But, now I will share my cultural expectations to that policy but I will also have to understand the impact of that policy from their cultural perspective as well. I had assumed that I did not need to explain why they need to do certain things and comply with the policy. Because of the cultural implications, it is valuable to spend time with them early on and give reasons for following the policy.

Stacey admits that the vignette analyses have enabled her to become a culturally reflective practitioner with the diverse group of high school English language learners students she teaches:

I learned to be more reflective and to understand really how I am teaching my classes and how I interact with students. The analyses helped me to develop the skills that I need to be active cognitively, and the ability to analyze my own behavioral skills, my cognitive skills, and my classroom management skills. So, while I am working with the class, I am more conscious than I was before of cultural competencies toward being more effective in the moment. It really caused me to self-monitor. I am more aware of my choices as a dominant culture authority and the implications of these choices for my students.

In addition to being critically reflective of the effects of their own culture on the educational context, many of the participants also reported that the experience encouraged them to consider how their students' cultures impacted the learning context. Amanda shared a recent experience:

We had opportunities to see solutions that actually work. If we step back and use this tool, this way of thinking, then we can look at the situation more objectively, rather than emotionally. So, for example, recently, at my school, (pause) just using everything we have learned in the vignette discussions, I was able to stop and pause and think about what I perceived to be as my students' off the topic comments about a book we were reading. They were not following the line of analysis I had anticipated. But, I stopped and thought, that maybe this is coming from their culture and not sort of react so quickly and negatively about it (pause) or jump to negative conclusions about the students. So even though this behavior seemed strange to me, I stopped to think that maybe

it is normal for them. Maybe they interpret and discuss stories differently in their culture.

With reference to the vignette about the Korean boy who was punished for biting another boy on the shoulder, Amanda explained:

It is so important to figure out where the student is coming from and what their real intention is and then maybe explain the cultural differences and not just assume that he is a bad boy.

Culturally Responsive Teaching, Curricular Knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge

The data suggest that participants' abilities to design culturally responsive lessons as well as curricula that promote intercultural awareness and competence in multicultural educational settings were facilitated via case-based pedagogy with student-generated vignettes. Gay (2000) defines culturally responsive teaching as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them. For this particular group, the evidence suggests that case-based pedagogy facilitates curricular knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986; Shulman, J.,1992). Specifically, data gleaned from the interviews suggests that case-based pedagogy influenced how participants prepared for curricular planning and instruction in multicultural settings. In fact, all participants admitted that the vignette discussions encouraged them to design curricula that fostered equitable educational opportunities for all students. For example, when asked what she had learned specifically from the cases, Banu stated:

I will investigate my students' backgrounds first before I meet the class. Before this vignette experience, I would have never thought about doing something like that. But now I see how crucial it is to successful educational outcomes.

Other students mentioned the importance of being a teacher as ethnographer in order to design appropriate curricula. Consider Martha's reflections in her critical incident report:

One of the first things we are taught in our language methods courses is to consider our students prior knowledge and experiences. The vignette discussions made me realize that this is vitally important when designing curricula for multicultural classes. Some of the concrete ideas that I got from this experience are to try to find out as much as I can about my students' backgrounds before class even starts. I can do this by researching information about their culture and language and prior

educational experiences. I will also use the idea of dialogue journals as a window into my students' lives.

Many students reported that this experience encouraged them to include diverse content and perspectives in their curriculum and teaching. Doug, an American student, described the curricular and pedagogical knowledge as well as culturally responsive strategies he learned from the case-based discussions of student-generated vignettes:

> *I am able to look at classroom problems from different perspectives and when I am speaking to students, I want to make sure that everyone's perspective is being heard. There were several vignettes where the teacher just took their own ethnocentric point of view and was blind to the other side. So when I choose materials, I want to make sure that they are balanced and tell a comprehensive, global view of the historical event. I also realize that not all students learn in the same way and so I try to vary instruction and methods to address different learning styles and intelligences. Before the vignette discussions, I hadn't considered that not all of my students learn the way that I do. Also, with my instructional strategies, I want to make sure that I allow all students to share their opinions or perspectives, even if it is not aligned with my own experiences and understanding.*

In both interviews and critical incident reports, quite a few participants described the influence of case-based discussion using student generated vignettes on their curricular knowledge. Stacey remarked:

> *After these discussions, I realize that my current curriculum is very biased. I need to bring in materials that extend beyond one perspective.*

Weiting also discussed the new curricular ideas she learned and plans to incorporate in her language classes:

> *As a language teacher, I always taught grammar and vocabulary. I now have ideas of how to teach culture. What's more, I want to try to bring in guest speakers for a more emic perspective. I also want to encourage my students to have multicultural perspectives and break out of their own ethnocentric view. That may be difficult, but perhaps I can start by bringing in a wider range of global topics and perspectives.*

In post-case reflection of a vignette analysis that brought up sensitive perspectives on China and Taiwan's relationship, Jia Lin remarked:

*I had never imagined that we could openly about the issues between
China and Taiwan. It was a topic that caused tremendous discomfort and
tremendous learning. I do not think I would have bring this topic up in my
country, for reasons you may imagine, but I do think it educated a lot of
my peers from the US, Europe, and the Middle East who were not aware
of the issue. I really think it is important to talk about tough issues like this
to enlighten others.*

Shulman (1987) established the term pedagogical content knowledge to define a
required facet of teacher expertise. He contended that teachers need to know how to
transmit in depth knowledge of a particular subject by skillfully making it accessible to
students. Evidence from the coded transcripts suggests that case-based pedagogy
promoted pedagogical content knowledge for many of the participants. For instance,
some participants noted that the case-based discussions provided them with the
knowledge of instructional selections from among an array of teaching methods and
models. Kyung described her desire to model respectful engagement in her classes:

*What I got out of this experience is that I should strive for more sensitivity
in my relationships and interactions with students. Maybe that can be a
lesson for my students on how they should treat each other.*

As mentioned in the section above, many participants expressed that the vignettes
made clear the importance of being transparent and explicit during the teaching and
learning process. Judy's reflection exemplifies this point:

*I cannot assume that everyone understands the learning process in my
class. I should be clear about my objectives, goals, and expectations.*

Participants' responses indicate that case-based pedagogy promoted the tailoring of
and adaptations to instructional activities based on the specific students in the
classroom. For example, Fatima explained:

*I am now going to use thoughtful grouping and try to incorporate a range
of instructional activities for the range of learning styles, interests and
readiness levels of my students.*

Evelyn reported:

*The vignette discussions made me aware of the detrimental
consequences of ignoring your learners' backgrounds and preferences. I
hadn't realized that I was just teaching in the way that I like to learn. After
this experience I think that I will try to design activities that meet the needs
of field sensitive and field independent learners and of learners with*

*different intelligences. One multicultural strategy is cooperative learning.
Your suggestion of thoughtful grouping based on cultural backgrounds
made me realize that we can encourage our students to understand each
other better by assigning them to work with the "other."*

DISCUSSION

There is very little research into the most effective ways to transmit intercultural theories and awareness and multicultural education strategies in second/foreign language programs aimed at preparing quality teachers. However, based on theoretical perspectives, the results of this study, and evidence drawn from other content areas, there is a strong indication that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes could be a very effective way to prepare language educators. In this section, the findings of the study and their implications for the preparation of language educators are explained. In addition, shortcomings in the investigation are identified and suggestions for future research are presented.

The results of the correlation and case study analyses indicate a strong influence of case-based pedagogy on teacher knowledge of the variety of ways in which culture shapes us all. The intercultural dialogue and exchange of ideas and opinions offered the participants an opportunity to learn about and from each other's cultural lenses. Through the discussions, they came to reflect on their own socialization and its impact on cross-cultural dialogues. The students from collectivistic societies obtained a deeper understanding of their own frustrations in individualistic classroom settings and vice versa. In addition, the case-based discussions of student-generated vignettes heightened many of the participants' awareness of their own ethnocentric attitudes.

An analysis of the data suggests that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes facilitated the participant's acquisition of content knowledge. Specifically, the participants' knowledge of various theories and concepts in intercultural education such as ethnocentrism, racism and prejudice, gender socialization, emic and etic perspectives, high and low context cultures, and communication styles was reinforced. Also, the evidence points to the influence of the experience on the participant's capacity to relate theories to personal and professional intercultural scenarios through praxis.

By encouraging them to reflect on how cultural factors impact educational contexts, data from the study suggest that the vignette discussions promoted the process of cultural reflective practice for the participants. Particularly, the participants reflected on the implications of their own cultural identity and presence as a teacher in a multicultural setting. Moreover, they considered the influence of their students' cultural identities on the learning and teaching process.

Finally, evidence from the study points to the potential of this instructional method to promote pedagogical content knowledge. Specifically, evidence suggests that it served as a means to promote teachers' abilities to design culturally responsive lessons as well as curricula that promote intercultural awareness and competence in multicultural educational settings.

There are some shortcomings that can be identified in this investigation. First, the duration of the study is a limitation. In the future, it would be more reliable to have a longitudinal study. In addition, to confirm the effects of case-based pedagogy on participant learning, perhaps a study that followed the teachers into their classrooms during their first years of teaching would increase validity of the findings. However, it would be hard to control for variables. The sampling size was small so it would be constructive to investigate the learning that takes place as a result of case-based pedagogy in multiple courses to support the findings.

CONCLUSION

As second and foreign language teacher educators, we have the capacity to empower future language teachers to serve as agents of change in the lives of their students by creating equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups. Moreover, we can build effective programs that help pre-service and in-service teachers acquire and teach the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate, and communicate with peoples from diverse groups. Our courses can and should promote the understanding of the concept of culture, the variety of ways culture manifests itself, and the importance of exploring their own cultural backgrounds.

This study aimed to describe the scope and type of learning that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes facilitates in an Intercultural Education course. Specifically, it aspired to gain a clearer understanding of how case-based pedagogy influences teacher knowledge, thinking, and praxis. The results point to its potential as an intercultural awareness tool. Since very little research currently exists in the field on ways to promote intercultural awareness and competence as well as to effectively prepare teachers for diversity, perhaps this study could open the door to new possibilities by encouraging teacher-educators to pursue further research on the use of case-based pedagogy as a viable instructional approach for promoting intercultural awareness.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amy Cournoyer (M. Ed. Harvard University; Ed.D. Candidate, Boston University) is a Lecturer in Education at Boston University's School of Education. In addition to teaching Intercultural Education, Methods of Teaching Modern Foreign Language and English as a Second Language, and Issues in Bilingualism, she is the Project Director of the Boston University School of Education/Somali Development Center Adult ESL Literacy Collaborative.

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