



语言课程转型中的 教师发展话语研究

(英文版)

刘美兰 著

A Study on
Discourses of
Teacher Development in
Language Curriculum Transformation



上海交通大学出版社
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本书是全国教育科学规划之外语教育研究专项课题“基于课程团队与学术团队的合作与互动的外语教师发展”(编号:GPA115078)、汉考国际科研基金项目暨全球中文教育主题学术活动资助计划(编号:CTI2020B07)、第十批“中国外语教育基金”中标项目“后疫情时代下高校英语教师的教研互助共同体建构模式研究”(编号:ZGWYJYJJ10A036)、中国计量大学哲学社会科学重大专项“‘一带一路’战略下的语言教育与语言服务研究”(编号:2017SKZX020)的研究成果。

前 言

当前我国的语言教育正在经历着从“西学东渐”向“东学西渐”的悄然转向,我国语言教育,包括外语教育和汉语教育,必须进行相应的调整和转变。

长期以来,高校外语教师由于对自身学科的狭隘定位而找不到发展的出路。由句法结构和语言点构成的单一学科知识对象把高校外语教师的视野禁锢在狭小的学科框架里。外语教师在长期的听、说、读、写教学中逐渐成为语言知识的搬运工,缺乏充足的学术研究力。从教师发展来看,我国大部分外语教师教育课程仍以外国语言学和应用语言学为单一的学科理论指导。语言教师怎样才能获得有效的发展?什么样的学校文化才能促进语言教师的专业成长?

在国际上,语言教育界提出了一系列把语言学习和课程作为社会活动的理念,通过“学习共同体”(Lave & Wenger, 1991)把教学与社会、学校及职业活动更加紧密地联系在一起,通过研究性的活动吸收跨学科的专业知识。莱夫(Lave)和温格(Wenger)(1991)把学习看作是一个参与实践共同体以获取技能的社会化过程,这个过程需要教师通过参与交流来协商身份。克拉科(Clark 2001)把学习描述为一项重要的社会实践活动,学习者在实践共同体中随着参与程度的加深逐步构建身份。而实践共同体可以超越机构组织和学科的界限而存在于交叉的地带。我们有必要对交流边界区展开探究,因为不同学科、不同领域边界地带的实践往往会成为转型的力量源泉。

本书重在探讨通过打破学科界限而带来的一系列变革对语言教师发展的影响,拟探究如下几个主要问题。

(1) 教学机构变化引起的跨学科话语实践活动对教师身份的转变和教师学习共同体的形成有什么影响?

(2) 在课程转型变革中,各类教师实践共同体的话语交流对语言教师知识的建构产生什么影响?

(3) 有哪些制约教师发展的机构因素、管理因素及文化因素? 这些因素怎样影响语言教师的知识建构?

笔者所在学校的外国语学院连续三年组织了三次跨学科教师发展会议和一次国际学术会议。会议均采用开放式的组织方式,会前收集每个教师的研究兴趣、学术方向及教师学术研究群的动态,不同的学术群体召集成员讨论各自的研究方向和工作计划,教师以论文摘要的方式在会议上呈现最近的研究动态。这四次教师会议为教师创造了开放式的学习空间,在这个学习空间里,学科以混合式的状态存在着,学科话语在协商中不断孕育出新的能量。沟通学作为新的学科元素与传统的语言学、翻译学、文化学、标准化研究等学科边界交叉碰撞形成新的话语实践。通过一系列的跨学科、跨文化的话语实践活动,外国语学院现有的学科屏障被打破,学科结构得以更新。多元文化对话产生了新的知识,带来了教学和研究方法上的创新。教师利用机构文化以及学术群中的语言资源来协商跨学科、跨文化身份。由学科交叉而形成的开放的、多元的、具有对话性的空间构建了教师的跨学科身份,改变了学科知识结构中以语言技能为主体的结构,这不仅帮助教师实现了教学与研究身份的统一,也实现了外国语学院的机构文化转型,同时也把学生的成长、职业的发展融入到教育实践中。

受理性科学主义的影响,国际上对教师知识的构建、教师发展的研究多采用实证研究的方法。而我国对教师知识和教师发展的研究大多以理论探讨为主。本书结合中外研究范式和方法,采用话语分析和民族志研究(ethnography)的方法对语言教师知识展开研究,进而认识教师知识的本质并探究教师的发展。

本书以笔者所在高校的语言教育改革和课程转型实践为例,展现了语言教师是如何通过系列会议的话语实践活动进行学科转变从而实现外语学院的机构文化转型,探索新的外语学科思路。话语分析展现了外语学院通过整合、重构外语学科体系,在语言学、文学、教育学、管理学、沟通学、文化学、哲学等领域建立起跨学科的、有东西方文化内涵和国际视野的新外语学科体系。这样的跨学科转变为外语教师学科身份的建构提供了更为广阔的空间,从而为语言教师自身的发展搭建了平台。

此外,本书采用叙述研究的方法来探讨教师知识的本质和教师身份转变的过程。教师的经验故事能让隐藏着的个人知识发出声音,教师以叙事的方式在机构转型中建构新的自我身份。教师各自的故事展现了他们如何通过日常的教学活动发现自己的研究兴趣和爱好,并利用各种途径开阔视野,加强学术能力培养,同时实现教师身份转变。当研究逐渐融入日常教学时,教师的教学和研究身

份逐步统一起来,这样就能实现教师自身的真正发展。

基于上述研究,笔者提出了一个跨学科、超学科的新型外语学科,这个新型的外语学科立足于语言与文化,与教育、历史、哲学、文学、社会、政治、经济等学科或领域建立起新的联系与交叉。这种新学科的产生不囿于传统的学科发展模式,而是超越学科界限,产生跨学科对话的转型,通过讨论、协商和反思建立具有共同理念的教师实践共同体,从而推进教学改革和研究创新。由此团队的学科发展和个人的学术研究聚集在一起实现教师的教学和研究和谐统一。课程改革不是一个自上而下的行政化实施过程,而是一个解放教师、发挥教师主观能动性的过程。唯有主动实现自身的转变,教师的专业化发展才会有持久的动力。

教师在实践共同体中的学习和成长经历带来的个人的转变就是教师的职业发展,其蕴涵的知识建构来源于教师日常的教学、研讨及学术会议。在长期的探索实践中,笔者所在大学的外国语学院找到了一条具有自身特色的改革发展途径,而不是盲目追从现有的改革模式,值得学习借鉴和推广。但书中难免有不足之处,请读者批评指正。

Foreword

Harmony in the Diversity

Dr. Meilan Liu's ethnographic case study focuses on the disciplinary transformation and curriculum innovation in a Foreign Language College, which reveals some of the major issues that innovation and change face in the field of language education in China. The study combines discourse analysis of the organizational culture, teacher dialogues submitted to a narrative inquiry across disciplinary boundaries. It highlights how practices may support identity growth among language teachers through their participating more actively in the institutional community life. Institutional boundaries are explored as discursive spaces for teacher transformative learning experiences. Restructuring institutional discourse and transcending the prior conceptual boundaries creates dynamics of meaningful interaction, a space of truthfulness characterized by dialogical diversity, in which teachers grow through a process of identity integration in their evolving community. The prior sense of limitations—what was believed impossible—opens up, which gives a sense of transformative force for a new learning culture. The pathway towards self-development is thus open through disciplinary and curricular innovation.

For instance, Li Mei perceives that language is carried on a middle path, which is a path of the middle, in reference to her Laozi roots. As language is more than language, it unfolds a subtle *semiosis*, a meaning-making process that is both cultural and pragmatic, and transcends language itself. Discourse transformations precede disciplinary changes and the sense of self-development among the teachers interviewed. Thus for teacher Sun, the confrontation of western and eastern philosophies enriches her teaching and brings more than a historical reflection: she learns from such exchanges as Russell's visit and Dewey's pragmatic explorations on Chinese soil, Max Weber's puritan capitalism, which may reflect modern China in its stepping into stages of both a search for moral harmony and a search for more

balanced economic lives. These hot issues, teacher Yue feels, can bring heated discussions with uncertain conclusions, but the opening-up of shared critical reflection creates a more inclusive classroom. Students may find new ways of conceiving life and they become more creative.

Most often one voice only is being heard in the language class, as the textbook seems monologic. Polyphonic voices in the classroom are not only enjoyable but the dialogical dimension enriches communication and create opportunities for a deeper approach to contents. For English majors, the focus on media studies offers new career opportunities. A deeper perception of what contents the medias convey in specific contexts may help the learners as well as the teacher to draw their attention to new spaces for applied practice so students can grasp the subtlety and scope of language meanings in the medias.

Overall Meilan Liu's research is an enjoyable journey for the reader who gently starts uncovering the nature of teachers' knowing and understands how teaching can be connected to life. It helps us rethink multiplicity to develop habits of mind that are healthy for a perception of harmony in the diversity.

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Introduction

This work investigates the experience of a group of teachers on English Language Teaching (ELT) in the university where the author works and the innovative flourishes. The author started to examine how the university institution sought the innovative pathway through disciplinary reconstruction and how the change of the structures provided a discursive space for teacher's knowing and growing. The author also examined teacher's learning experience within the space provided by the discipline transformation and curriculum innovation.

This part includes the background, significance, context and overall theoretical framework for the study.

1.1 Research Background

As a language teacher who works in the foreign language school in a university, I'm deeply impressed by students' bitter experience of learning language, as language is always taught as an independent and conceptualized subject knowledge. With the language curriculum and classroom teaching focusing on pure skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing formulated by examination items, students think what they learn in the classroom is unrelated with the society, especially the workplace demands and what they learn in campus seems irrelevant to their future career goals. Yet the teachers exerted great efforts to teach students foreign languages due to various pressures from the examinations. Gradually it is found that the more the teachers afford, the more repulsive the students are. So the questions are put forward: How could the language teachers make English learning become an interesting rather than suffering experience for learners? What's wrong with our classroom teaching? What's wrong with our textbooks? What's wrong with

language teachers? It is obvious that EFL field has lost insight of educational and social concerns that are fundamental to institutional teaching and learning (Bilton, 2009).

As a language teacher, my ultimate purpose is not playing the role of transmitting language knowledge, instead, I am eager to develop myself, but I am not certain what should be my direction. I often feel that I am quite aimless, unable to see what beyond the boundary of textbook and campus. After learning the experiment of the language curriculum innovation in a nearby university in Zhejiang Province, I began to understand that the curriculum innovation in language classes remains a faraway dream without broadening the horizon of language teachers. So I started to think about how to make some changes in foreign language education in our department. Under the influence of some scholars in our field and of relevant literature, I come to realize that language education has developed with insights borrowed from different disciplines, such as discourse studies, culture studies and communication studies. With the integration of various discipline perspectives, I feel that I can walk out the confinement of language field and begin to broaden my horizon. I find myself wandering at disciplinary boundaries.

Communication studies, discourse studies, culture studies and organizational studies, all of the new fields enriched my vision as a researcher. My colleagues' communication studies have all gone beyond a single discipline and we find we are working at boundaries of culture studies, anthropology or even Chinese classics. Some teachers who study education show their research interests in the cutting edge of educational innovation beyond the traditional discipline. I believe it is a right path to continue working at disciplinary boundaries for a language teacher and a researcher in educational reform. I observed the training models of professional teacher development of an expert outside our university, which is characterized by transmitting externally defined and prescribed techniques (Freeman, 2001; Richards, 2008) to teachers whose previous experiences and beliefs are ignored. When I recall my experience of being trained as a language teacher several years ago in a training program in Shanghai, I remember that the mentors lectured us every morning on mastering content at the linguistic and meta-linguistic levels and practicing classroom methodologies and techniques, earnestly wishing we could take in everything that they taught us and then applied them in the classroom practices in the afternoon. The idea of embedding theory into practice for teacher education which is mainly based on expert knowledge and analytical rationality is being increasingly challenged, and the awareness of complex nature of teacher

development has resulted in a shift toward more constructive and critical approaches to teacher education rather than creating a scientific knowledge for teaching. Researchers now conceptualize teacher knowledge arising from teachers' daily practice and experience. Teacher education has come to consider teachers as autonomous thinkers, who have the ability to theorize their practices and practice their personal theories. Borg (2003) has described teachers as "active thinking, decision-makers who make instructional choice by drawing on very complex, much personalized, product-oriented and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thought and beliefs". It is recognized that teachers' working from what they called "personal, practical knowledge" in teaching is the true pursuit of teacher development.

Normally, teachers are only regarded as the implementer of others' ideas and knowledge, while curriculum innovation or pedagogical reform tends to focus on teachers' resistance to or distortion of new curricula or on a lack of teacher capacity in subject or pedagogic knowledge. As Wu (2005) points out that "educational change has been hijacked as a discursive mechanism to manipulate teachers' professional life". Under the constant pressures to "enhance" their teaching with the latest pedagogical idea from the West, such as communicative teaching methods, task-based learning, student-centered learning, project-based learning, inquiry practices, language teachers in China were "so battered by the ceaseless demand for novelty that they were at severe risk of 'burn-out', of becoming 'cosmically tired' of the job they were doing so well". No matter in primary education, secondary education or tertiary education, teacher development has become a process of "putting procedures in proper place to ensure compliance, docility and the creation of schools as institutions whose main concern is to meet the requirements of centrally devised diktats" (Allwright, 2003).

Since the early 1990s, accompanied with the expertise in educational science, Chinese education has gone through steady expansion of scientific-technological epistemology across all levels of schools. Inscribed through rules and standards to calculate the space of learning and its imagined outcome, what is rational is absorbed into what is considered as "scientific". Knowledge is codified into a single standard language of science. In the field of foreign language studies, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar are seen as essential components of the subject knowledge. The legitimate form of knowledge recognized in the classroom mainly focuses on structural description of language form in terms of "language points" (Allwright, 2005), or isolated language skills formulated by examination

items. Languages are taught as something that can be measured, classified, analyzed, reasoned and exemplified as “universal knowledge” (Wu, 2005). This study intends to question what is taken for granted as “universal knowledge”.

My university, which is affiliated to the National Bureau of Quality Supervision, has particular disciplinary strengths in “quality supervision and inspection” in the quality supervision and management field. The whole university is relatively small with around 13,000 students, but the campus is a new one with a massive library and modern teaching facilities. The faculty of foreign language was founded at the beginning of 21st century, the administrative structure of the faculty mainly consists of three departments, that is, English Department, Department of Communication and Culture, Department of College English. The teachers affiliated to the Department of College English are the majority of our academic staff and teaches College English for non-English majors. Most of them are young female teachers with BA or MA degrees. The teachers affiliated to the English Department and Department of Communication and Culture usually have higher degrees or qualifications.

During the curriculum innovation period, a series of changes have taken place in the foreign language school. A series of top-down administrative structure change along with the disciplinary restructuring were conducted, followed by the curriculum system change. In order to restructure the disciplines, at the very beginning of curriculum innovation, the staff retreat conferences have been held consecutively for three years. What was the purpose of the change of the discipline structure? Why was there a need to undertake change of the administrative structure? How did teachers make sense of the change initiated by the foreign language school and how could they get engaged in the meaning-making process? In what way did the discipline restructuring affect teacher learning? What role does the discipline change play in the institutional development as well as teachers' personal development?

From the very beginning of curriculum innovation, there have been many activities intentionally organized for teacher learning, such as summer training programs, public lectures, staff retreat conferences and so on. Various activities such as staff retreat conferences, seminars and online discussions for naming a new discipline were organized, some of which are informal activities organized by the faculty and some by the teachers themselves. All of these are relevant to my interests in teacher knowledge and learning.

Three months after our curriculum innovation, a top-down curriculum system

change was initiated. The curriculum system for the English Department was restructured with three new majors, including Business and Communication, Interpretation and Communication and Second Language Teaching. Many new courses are included in the curriculum accordingly. At the same time, in the Department of College English, “a series of communication courses” are designed for students of non-English majors. How communication, as a new cultural element, was brought into English language studies? How had the curriculum system change been carried out? How did the teachers in this faculty make meaning of it and how did they react to it? Having observed that staff’s initial dubious attitude towards embedding “communication” into the new curriculum planning, I was intrigued to find out how such a transformation of meaning scheme may affect teachers’ professional learning.

At the beginning of my study, I learned that the university president felt a strong need for an innovation in the faculty of foreign languages, therefore sought for a new director with a clear transformation vision outside the university. A distinguished professor from the most prestigious university in our place was found and employed to help us find a suitable way to design the new curriculum system. Since the invited professor is only part-timely employed by our university, I was asked to follow up with this professor’s work in our faculty, so I had the opportunity and experience to get access to the disciplinary transformation and curriculum innovation so directly. From the email exchanges with the new director, I see “communication” as a new means for language discipline transformation, then discipline transformation and curriculum system change were proposed by the director of foreign language school, who has explained why “communication” as a new vision is important to the field of language studies and why the discipline structure needs to be transformed towards disciplinarian through a lot of email communication and faculty meetings.

In June of the year when foreign language school launched curriculum innovation, for the first time in the faculty, an academic conference named “Regional Symposium on Interpretation Pedagogy: Profession, Culture and Communication” was organized with the participation of scholars from many universities in the surrounding regions. The preparation of the conference took about three months, just prior to the conference, the news of one teacher’s research paper “The communicative model of interpretation studies” getting published in a renowned research journal in translation studies brought light to the members working in this field. The email messages exchanged among the members at that

time showed that some of the teachers still had a reserved attitude towards the idea of integrating the discipline with communication studies. Through organizing and participating the conference, the staff members came to realize that the embedding of communication studies into the existing discipline, especially interpretation studies, created a unique feature which was regarded as the disciplinary strength and strongly affirmed by other scholars in the field of translation, and interpretation studies at the conference seemed to attract a lot of attention. The successful organization of conference lighted the hope and widened the vision of the staff.

It is expected that this study will be useful to understand the development of institutional culture for teacher learning and identity transformation. It may also shed light on how transformative learning of language teachers can be enacted in the local context of a university. The investigation of teachers' experience in discipline transformation and restructuring calls for attention to the role of developing school culture in teachers' professional learning. It is believed that this study can also provide possible solution to the identity crisis of language teachers. The following questions are put forward in this research: How does the institutional culture impact on teachers' professional learning? How might disciplinary boundary practice, such as the organization of staff conference be supportive of identity development of language teachers? How might teachers construct knowledge through the engagement in collaborative inquiry with their colleagues? What are the individual teacher's experiences of identity exploration in the discipline restructuring? What role does the managerial discourse oriented at manipulation play in teacher's knowledge and learning? Three aspects of learning are investigated, namely, institutional boundary practice as a discursive space for learning, individual teacher's learning experienced within these spaces as well as collaborative inquiry during curriculum innovation. Both personal knowledge and communal knowledge are simultaneously investigated as they are two interrelated aspects of teacher learning.

1.2 Related Researches

Here are the related researches pertinent to this study. In this book, apart from this overall review of related researches, each part will be headed by a theoretical introduction which is the construction of theoretical framework by drawing upon relevant theories.

Since this is a study on the disciplinary transformation of language institute and