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International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching
Volume 3 (June 2016)
edited by Michael Lessard-Clouston & Xuesong (Andy) Gao

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About the International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching

The International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching (IJC&ELT) is the official journal of the Christian English Language Educators Association (CELEA, see http://www.celea.net/) and is supported by the Department of Applied Linguistics & TESOL at Biola University (http://cook.biola.edu/programs/linguistics-tesol/). It publishes articles and reviews related to English Language Teaching (ELT), with a perspective of particular interest to Christians, and specifically Christian English language educators.

The mandate of the IJC&ELT (ISSN 2334-1866, online) includes the following aims:
• to publish articles and reviews related to ELT, using a Christian perspective
• to stimulate the integration of the Christian faith and learning and teaching in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
• to encourage and thus promote critical reflection, discussion, engaging theory, excellent research, and inspirational practice in applied linguistics and TESOL
• to provide an international approach to English language teaching and research
• to offer an open access forum that shares knowledge and applies high academic standards, including double blind peer review

As an international publication, the IJC&ELT recognizes that there are diverse Christian traditions and perspectives throughout the world and it therefore welcomes articles and reviews that deal with and address different Christian traditions and their connections to English language teaching. The main readership, however, is CELEA members, who themselves come from and bring a range of Christian perspectives to their work in ELT.

IJC&ELT Editorial Board

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Aims and Scope
The International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching (ISSN 2334-1866, online) is an international peer reviewed open access journal that publishes quality empirical, practical, review, and theoretical papers covering a broad range of issues in English language teaching and research. IJC&ELT is thus an interdisciplinary forum, publishing both original research and teaching articles, as well as stimulating reflections and reviews of interest to Christians and others in TESOL. It aims to provide an international forum for established and emerging teachers, researchers, and others committed to ELT from a Christian point of view.

Audience
The International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching is primarily intended for use in the academic community, especially for members of the Christian English Language Educators Association (CELEA, see http://www.celea.net/ or http://celea.wildapricot.org/), its sponsor. Yet IJC&ELT’s interdisciplinary nature also makes it accessible and of interest to educators of various types (including teacher trainers and those working with English language learners), curriculum developers and materials writers, Christian organizations concerned about language issues, and other interested practitioners, researchers, and theorists.

Focus and Format
With the above audience and policies below in mind, the focus of the International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching is primarily on, though not restricted to, the following areas of inquiry, practice, and thinking in English language teaching:

- applied linguistics and language and culture learning and teaching
- classroom and other best practices in TESOL
- design and development of EFL/EIL/ELL/ESL/ESP curricula and materials
- ELT skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and methodologies
- innovations in teaching and learning English as a second/foreign language
- TESOL teacher education, research, and training
- theory and practice in second/foreign language learning and teaching

As an international publication whose primary audience is Christian English language educators and other interested parties, all contributions should approach the focus or topic at hand recognizing a Christian point of view, though readers realize that this may be more detailed or obvious in some cases and yet may appear less so in other instances. Submissions may be drawn from relevant presentations (CELT or other conferences, for example) or reflect classroom practices, research, or reviews of potential interest to IJC&ELT readers.

The journal includes four distinct sections:

- Articles – reports of empirical studies, review papers or meta-analyses, theoretical position papers, etc. These should not exceed 7,000 words, including references.
- In the Classroom – descriptions of teaching activities or techniques, classroom action research, etc., within a relevant theoretical framework, not to exceed 4,000 words.
- Forum – position papers or reactions to articles or reviews, opinion or viewpoint articles, or reports, interviews, or commentary on current topics of interest. These submissions should also not exceed 4,000 words, including references.
Reviews – evaluative book, materials, and software reviews relevant to IJC&ELT readers. These will not usually exceed 1,500 words, including references.

Policies
In order to reach the widest readership possible, the International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching is published online through the IJC&ELT website (http://cook.biola.edu/publications/ijcelt/), where editorials, articles, reviews, and other relevant communications are freely downloadable in the form of PDF files. CELEA members, libraries, or other readers may print out the complete issue file for themselves. If there is interest and demand, in the future we may offer hard copy issues through a print-on-demand publisher.

Given that the focus is English language teaching, the language of the journal is English. Initially the frequency of issues will be one per year, with the hope that this may increase, assuming a sufficient quantity of quality contents that pass blind peer review. Preference will be given to articles and reviews that make clear, helpful, and fresh contributions to the field of ELT within a Christian perspective, broadly conceived. Articles, advertisements, and reviews do not necessarily represent the opinions or views of the editors, editorial review board, or CELEA. Submissions may be made by readers around the world. Accepted papers and reviews will be approved by the editors and at least two additional readers, as appropriate for the IJC&ELT based on their contributions, originality, and relevance.

Articles and reviews shall conform to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA style, 6th ed.). Authors who publish in the IJC&ELT retain copyright of their work, enabling the unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction of their article or review in any medium, provided that they formally cite the original publication in the International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching.

Manuscripts must not have been previously published or currently submitted for review at another journal. Authors should inform the editors if related research or a similar version of their manuscript has been published or is under consideration elsewhere. Authors will not be paid for articles or reviews; neither will they be charged publication fees. Authors, like readers, may freely download and print as many copies of their work in IJC&ELT as desired.

Submissions
Contributions should be in the form of Word documents submitted at IJCandELT@gmail.com. Manuscripts which do not conform to the guidelines in the Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition, 2010) may not be sent for external review. The IJC&ELT welcomes articles from both native- and non-native English speakers, yet requests that ideas in submissions be expressed clearly for a broad, international audience. Authors are responsible for fluent language use, as well as for the accuracy of any data, references, or citations they incorporate into their work. Obtaining permission to incorporate any previously copyrighted material is the author’s responsibility. The editors reserve the right to make minor editing changes without prior consultation with authors. Major editing or revisions, however, will only be done in consultation with authors.

Please see IJC&ELT's website, http://cook.biola.edu/publications/ijcelt/, for the latest information about the journal. We value your contributions, prayers, and readership.
A First and A Last

This is the first editorial I (Andy) have written for the journal and, unfortunately, it will also be the last. It has been an amazing experience to have worked with Michael for several years. When Michael and I started the journal three years ago, I had little faith in the journal’s sustainability because of all sorts of reasons. First, we started it with “no funds, no release time from work, and no technical expertise” (Lessard-Clouston & Gao, 2014, p. 2). Looking back, I feel truly amazed by the fact that we managed to publish this journal against all odds for three long years. Before the *IJC&ELT* was launched, we were concerned whether we would have enough submissions since it was an online journal with no established reputation. We felt that publications in such a journal may not count for our contributors’ academic achievements in many institutions. We weren’t sure whether we would have enough reviewers who would be willing to sacrifice their free time to review manuscripts for us. For these reasons, Michael and I have been counting on the Lord’s blessings every year to overcome all these challenges. So far, we have been doing really well with the dedicated help of our contributors, readers, and reviewers. We do receive a steady number of manuscripts, and a number survive rigorous editor and peer reviews at the journal every year, though we certainly would like to have more that make it into print. We have been particularly successful in attracting short papers on critically engaging issues. Our editorial board members and occasional manuscript reviewers have given us insightful review reports to ensure that all the accepted manuscripts meet the required academic standards for publication in this journal. We are also extremely grateful for the financial support that has been provided by Michael’s institution for a graduate student assistant.

Over the years, I did feel the stress of managing and editing a journal which was in addition to many other duties I needed to fulfill for my employer. However, I have been lucky to be working with Michael, who takes on the lion’s share of the work. The secular nature of my institution, too, has been a huge challenge in that I had to decide whether I should declare my identity as an editor working for a journal covering Christianity and English Language Teaching. I work in isolation from other Christian colleagues though we work at the same Faculty. Faith is not something that is openly discussed at my workplace. My geographical location also prevents me from deeper engagement with Christian colleagues in my academic community. For this
reason, I have been thankful Michael has had success in identifying suitable reviewers for manuscripts. I believe it is time for the journal to find someone who is better positioned to assist Michael in editing and managing this wonderful journal. In this regard, we are particularly fortunate to have Dr. Michael Pasquale of Cornerstone University joining the editorial team. Dr. Pasquale teaches linguistics and directs an M.A. TESOL program, and we are grateful that he will work together with Michael Lessard-Clouston from now on as they prepare Volume 4.

Over the last several years I have learned much while working as the journal’s co-editor. I came to know Michael Lessard-Clouston, a warm-hearted Christian colleague, much better, although my first impression of Michael was that he was quite a serious, stern person. Michael and I also learnt more about colleagues who have served on the editorial board and helped with the review process by reading and providing constructive, rigorous comments on manuscripts. We are deeply impressed by their generosity and kindness. We knew that many of them squeezed time out of their busy schedules to read and comment on manuscripts submitted to the journal. We feel truly blessed with these generous, thoughtful, and compassionate readers who are willing to evaluate and help contributors produce high quality manuscripts. As a token of our appreciation, we list them at the end of this editorial, with gratitude. We also have a group of contributors who are eager to share ideas and research into the integration of faith and professional practice. They give us inspiring ideas and models for us to emulate in our own practice. For this reason, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all our colleagues who have helped the journal in different ways, in addition to our reviewers and contributors. It has been a great pleasure for me and Michael to work with you all.

In This Issue

In this volume, we have four articles set in a variety of professional contexts. Mary Hills Kuck’s article, The Reception in Jamaica of Non-native Speakers of Jamaican Creole, discusses how Christian and other foreign English teachers who speak Jamaican Creole were perceived by Jamaican Creole speakers. The study encourages Christian colleagues to be critically aware of the ‘power’ that expatriate teachers may be bestowed with by historical heritage. It also presents a thought-provoking challenge to Christian colleagues who wish to address this power imbalance by acquiring a working knowledge of Jamaican Creole. Mary contends that Christian colleagues’ efforts to learn Jamaican Creole may not be received well and are in fact likely to be treated as a
threat by the Jamaican Creole speakers. This means that we should undertake efforts to deepen our critical engagement with the historical colonial legacy in order to achieve *accompaniment* with Jamaican Creole speakers in classrooms. Mary’s paper is a sober reminder that we should be highly sensitive to both socio-historical and immediate contexts where we utilize our learners’ language to build a mutually respectful and trusting classroom community.

Echoing Mary’s call for Christian colleagues to deepen our critical reflection on historical legacy, Eun-Young Julia Kim’s paper, *Empowering English Language Teachers Through History*, proposes to incorporate courses on critical examination of political and philosophical aspects of ELT. Traditional TESOL teacher education programs have courses in pedagogical methods so that participants can be prepared for teaching in terms of pedagogical skills and knowledge. In light of Mary’s challenge to Christian colleagues, we concur with Julia that such preparation is insufficient for teachers who teach the language in contexts heavily burdened with historical and colonial legacy. Christian colleagues need to involve themselves in critical reflections on topics related to power relations in English language teaching. Otherwise, we may fail to help bring justice in language classrooms and empower language learners even as we are empowered by the Lord.

Also addressing the power imbalance associated with the English language, Marlene Schmidt’s *Language Partners: The Church, Multiple Languages, and ESL* article argues that we should seriously consider the lack of linguistic diversity in most churches against the background of the rising number of US residents who speak languages other than English. She proposes that ESL classes should be effectively used to promote language partnership in multilingual churches. To achieve this, she identifies key strategies, such as having a clear vision, selecting appropriate pedagogy, valuing cultural diversity, and building relationships for church leaders and ESL practitioners, to consider for promoting unity among church members of different languages. We appreciate the importance of church communities as critical social networks that help immigrants adapt to new contexts by providing appropriate cultural, linguistic, and spiritual support.

A related example of such a community is dealt with to some extent in our Forum article, which is a timely interview between Alzo David-West and Amanda DeCesaro on *Teaching English to North Korean Refugees at Banseok School in South Korea*. In a world with migration and challenges in English language teaching, this article offers a glimpse into one teacher’s volunteer conversation class, providing reflections on caring for North Korean refugee students.
In addition to these thought-provoking articles, we also have three book reviews. These include Megan Reiley’s on *Exploring Parables in Luke* (by Cheri Pierson, Will Bankston, and Marilyn Lewis), Shalom Bay’s on *New Ways in Teaching Adults* (by Marilyn Lewis and Hayo Reinders), and Cristy Brink’s on *Virtuous Minds* (by Philip Dow). We believe our reviewers have provided insights into these books of professional interest to our readers. Accordingly, we hope that readers will be encouraged to read these books as they go through these reviews.

**Appreciations and Invitations**

Once again we thank Biola University’s Department of Applied Linguistics and TESOL for offering support to Michael, as well as for the platform to provide information about the journal and to publish our first volumes on the web. We recognize Michael’s Dean at the Cook School of Intercultural Studies, Dr. Bulus Galadima, for encouraging this work and for providing funds to hire a graduate student editorial assistant. Hannah Jackson has filled that role well this last year, and we thank her for her attention to detail reflected in the present issue. Finally, thank you to our readers, for whom the *IJC&ELT* exists! Please do spread the word about it to others.

The survival of a journal like this relies on the generosity and hard work of people and institutions. The *IJC&ELT* still needs to develop an updated submission and reviewing platform. Please pray for that to happen soon (and for the funds for it). Time is a key commodity when everything is volunteer. So we need volunteers, and if you want to help or offer some computer or other service we might require, please contact us. And please assist us as we try to continue to implement what God is doing – through your prayer support, submissions to the journal, and by reading it and sharing with others about it in your circles of influence. To God be the glory!

**Reference**


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**Michael Lessard-Clouston** (michael.lessard-clouston@biola.edu) is a Professor of Applied Linguistics and TESOL at Biola University in La Mirada, California, U.S.A. His recent publications include *Teaching Vocabulary* (TESOL, 2013) and articles in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, *NECTFL Review*, and *TESL Reporter*. For details, visit his site online at [https://biola.academia.edu/MichaelLessardClouston](https://biola.academia.edu/MichaelLessardClouston).
From the Editors: With Appreciation and In Recognition

The helpful individuals listed below have served as consultants and referees at various times over the last three years, in the preparation of Volumes 1-3 of the *International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching*. Many of these people have completed several reviews of papers submitted for our consideration. In printing their names below we note our debt to these helpers for their dedicated and knowledgeable service, which we appreciate as we aim to publish manuscripts that uphold academic and professional standards. Authors of both accepted and rejected papers frequently comment on the helpfulness of the feedback they receive from reviewers, which reflects many hours of volunteer service. We express deepest thanks to:

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Frank Tuzi
Paul Wicking
Mary Shepard Wong
The Reception in Jamaica of Non-native Speakers of Jamaican Creole

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Abstract
This study examines how non-native speakers of Jamaican Creole, including Christian and other foreign English teachers, are received by the Jamaican speech community. One way for foreign Christian English teachers to establish mutuality and interdependence, or *accompaniment* (Padilla, 2008, p. 87), that can counteract the historical instruction that resulted in a superior/inferior relationship between the expatriate teacher and the English learner is to have a working knowledge of Jamaican Creole, a source of identity and culture for Jamaicans. However, a survey of upwardly mobile Jamaicans suggested that some 30% of respondents believed that the Jamaican language should not be shared with speakers outside of the Jamaican/African diaspora. A focus group of long-term professional expatriates in Jamaica indicated that most had not become fully bilingual in Jamaican Creole and English. A second focus group of Jamaican students and professionals implied that Christian English teachers who want to achieve *accompaniment* need to respect the historical memory of colonialism and exploitation that is embedded in Jamaican Creole. They need to be aware of possible negative interpretations that their use of Jamaican Creole might incur. Yet if Christian and other foreign English teachers employ Jamaican Creole only at the initiative of their students, resistance to learning English will be lowered and the goal of *accompaniment* more nearly achieved.

Key words: accompaniment, colonialism, identity, imperialism, Jamaican Creole

Introduction
Teachers who travel from North America and Great Britain to teach English in countries that were formerly or are presently colonized by English speakers face the consequences of colonialization, oppression, and cultural hegemony. Pennycook (1998) claims that English is a product of colonialism in the sense that teaching it was essential to the colonial enterprise (p. 9). Further, Pennycook (1998) states:

Colonialism and postcolonial struggles . . . are also the ground on which European/Western images of the Self and Other have been constructed, the place where constructions of Superiority and Inferiority were produced. Within this context, ELT needs to be seen not only as a tool in service of Empire but also as a product of Empire. (p. 19)
deKlerk (1996, p. 114) claims that Phillipson (1992) sees the spread of English “as evidence of (not so) subtle linguistic imperialism, occurring at the expense of the local languages, stabilizing hierarchical structures and reinforcing existing status differentials.” Thus, English teaching is tainted with negative aspects of the colonialism that brought the language to places under its control.

Christian English teachers who come to the Caribbean, where the economic system of the colonizers was supported by slavery, find circumstances even more complicated. Early missionaries to the Caribbean were concerned only for the souls of the slaves. They accepted the colonial plantation system as a political given and owned slaves themselves (Turner, 1982; Dunn, 2014; Furley, 1965). Yet Dunn (2014) claims that many of the slaves were deeply affected by their conversion to Christianity (p. 227). Although at first “the Moravian doctrine of heavenly salvation [was] combined with passive obedience to earthly masters” (Dunn, 2014, p. 31), eventually it “opened the way for the slaves to question. . .why Christian values were not practiced in the society they knew” (Turner, 1982, p. 94) and drew them into a campaign for emancipation (p. 95). This is the history foreign Christian English teachers confront when they arrive in the Caribbean. Teaching English in the Caribbean in general, and in Jamaica in particular, is therefore from the outset fraught with political and religious undertones, especially for foreign Christian teachers.

**Accompaniment**

As a partner in mission in Jamaica, sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), I taught English language and communications at the United Theological College of the West Indies and at the Vocational Training Development Institute, the tertiary arm of HEART, Jamaica’s training organization that educates skilled workers, i.e., upwardly-mobile Jamaicans. The theological college serves undergraduate and graduate students, mostly from the Caribbean mainline denominations. The majority of the theological students are Jamaican.

The ELCA, well aware of the history of missionary efforts in formerly colonized countries, has developed a policy called *accompaniment* for its missionaries, under the guidance of Director of Global Mission, Rafael Malpica Padilla. Padilla (2008) argues that missionary activity in the past often became an “instrument of colonial and cultural expansionism” (p. 89). *Accompaniment* attempts to defuse the stereotype of the missionary that connects mission work
to colonial activity and the self-denigrating effects it had on the colonized.

Accompaniment is walking together in solidarity which is characterized by mutuality and interdependence. The basis for this accompaniment, what the New Testament calls *koinonia*, is found in the God-human relationship in which God accompanies us in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Accompaniment pushes mission into a relational mode. (Padilla, 2008, p. 88)

*Accompaniment* thus emphasizes *relationship* as its goal, not leadership. It is a horizontal connection between persons that does not allow for superiority of one person over another. Just as Christ became human, taking the form of a servant, so do those Christians who live and work outside their own culture try to share the sufferings and joys of others, helping when possible, and receiving help when necessary. Walking together, or “*acompañar* implies proximity to the walking companion; it implies accepting the invitation to accompany the other” (p. 88). It asks us “to cross our own borders. . . a *border* implies an exchange, a going back and forth, a permeable membrane that fosters movement and facilitates communication” (Padilla, 2008, p. 89). In other words, it involves receiving as much as giving.

*Accompaniment* is not the same as cultural intelligence (CQ), which Earley and Ang (2003) define as “a person’s capability to adapt effectively to *new cultural contexts*” (p. 58). It can, however, benefit from Livermore’s (2009) perspective on CQ as a “journey toward viewing and relating to the Other in ways that are respectful and loving” (p. 242). *Accompaniment* enhances CQ by emphasizing the long-term walk together, suffering and rejoicing with partners in mission, sharing equally with each other, and working together with the help of and for the sake of Jesus Christ. Both *accompaniment* and CQ “must be seamlessly connected to how we follow Jesus and represent him to others” (Livermore, 2009, p. 244).

In the foreign academic situation, *accompaniment* implies that the Christian English teacher learns from the students at the same time as the students learn from the teacher. Cultural material included in lessons must relate to the environment and culture of the students who are learning English, so as not to alienate them from their own culture while learning the language. The teacher must deeply know and validate the culture of the students to avoid the pitfall of unconscious superiority that seems to cling to English.

The best and perhaps the only way to understand fully the environment and culture of the people we teach is to know their own language. McWhorter (2002) claims that the “job of school is to *add a new layer* to a child’s speech repertoire, *not to undo* the one they already have” (p.
“In some senses [the language] is the factor that supercedes race, culture and sometimes class” (Bryan, 2004, p. 650). According to Ramirez (1985), teachers’ proficiency in the home language of their students significantly correlated with the students’ improved performance in English (p. 149). Brown (2009) proposes that “In human communication, the sender’s use of the receiver’s heart language is a sign of love and respect, and it is an essential (and humbling) element of incarnational ministry” (p. 85). He goes further to say, “Use of a people’s heart language affirms their personal worth and opens hearts and minds to hear the message” (p. 85). It seems clear that effective Christian teachers who strive for mutuality (accompaniment) with their students need to learn the students’ first language. However, mastering and using the home language of English learners in Jamaica is more complex than it appears; it is hindered by threats which can make full accompaniment a frustrating process.

The question of how speakers of Jamaican Creole today respond to foreigners who attempt to speak the language arose from informal observations of Jamaican speakers when strangers to the country spoke the language in the public arena. When a foreign speaker used a Jamaican phrase or two appropriately in a speech, there was general laughter and approval, but when in a bank a stranger grumbled in Jamaican Creole about the long wait, the response ranged from amusement to ridicule or even hostility, although the Jamaican speakers themselves had used those same words. The fact that there were no language schools in Jamaica fully dedicated to teaching Jamaican Creole to foreigners also reflected this ambivalence. Although the language was taught abroad, expatriate Jamaicans who wanted to solidify their identity were the target population (Murphy, n.d.). In general, the only way for foreigners to learn Jamaican Creole was by immersion in Jamaica. These observations led to the following study that explores the question: how does the Jamaican speech community respond to foreigners, including Christian English language teachers, who attempt to speak the Jamaican language?

**Literature Review**

**Jamaican Creole**

Although English is the official language of Jamaica and is still claimed by most as the home language, in reality many Jamaicans speak Jamaican Creole as their home language (Devonish, 2012; Bryan, 2004; Christie, 2003). A creole is a language that usually stems from a pidgin, a “makeshift speech variety encoding only those concepts fundamental to basic
communication” (McWhorter, 2005, p. 11), which is used to communicate among people who do not share a common language. The language that develops is native to neither group; there are no native speakers of a pidgin (Nero, 2006, p. 5). The creoles that arise from pidgins are spoken as a native language by the next generation (Nero, 2006).

Creoles come into existence at a time that can be determined more or less accurately by historic events surrounding it (Muysken & Smith, 1995). The language spoken by the ruling group, in Jamaica’s case, the English of Great Britain, usually provides the lexicon for the creole, but the grammar and syntax are derived from or influenced by the ethnic languages (Nero, 2006, p. 5). Nero supports Mufwene’s (1994) contention that indigenized Englishes and creoles “emerged from language contact situations. . . that they all arose from exploitive situations and are primarily spoken by non-Europeans” (Nero, 2006, p. 5).

The creole spoken in Jamaica (and in other Caribbean countries) developed under extreme oppression when slaves originating in different regions of Africa needed to communicate with each other and the European masters (Christie, 2003; Cassidy & LePage, 2003; Turner, 1982; Bryan, 2004; Frank, 2007). Like other creoles, Jamaican Creole, popularly called Patois or Patwa, has suffered from low status. Not only the colonizers, who considered it “malformed speech of the slaves, which was attributed to Africans’ alleged lack of intelligence,” but Jamaicans themselves denigrated it as ‘broken English’ (Christie, 2003, p. 2). Speaking Jamaican Creole was associated with crude behaviour, poor moral standards, and lack of proper upbringing. Jamaican Creole was not recognized as a language at all by some, reflecting the “context of domination,” in which the colonists considered Jamaican Creole “a jargon of a language,” used by the poor and marginalized (Bryan, 2004, p. 646). Christie (2003) quotes a columnist in a prominent Jamaican newspaper: “Jamaicans have no language because they stubbornly refuse to master Standard English” (p. 4). Today, there is still no standardized system for writing Jamaican Creole, although in 2001 a recommendation was made to the Jamaican Parliament to establish one (Christie, 2003).

The Jamaican Creole situation today stymies adherents to DeCamp’s (1971) theory of a language continuum that begins with Jamaican Creole as the basilect, moving to a mesolect that eventually arrives at the acrolect, Standard English, effectively decreolizing the basilect (Bryan, 2004, pp. 647-648). Jamaican Creole has not shown signs of dying out; instead, it has “become a stronger and more vibrant language, used in many more domains” (Bryan 2004, p. 648). This is...
not to say that there are not still forms of Jamaican Creole that are considered basilectal or mesolectal. Bryan (2004, p. 649) relies on Pollard (1983, 1994) in reference to the development of Dread Talk [DT], which, although it began as the basilectal Rastafarian language of the poor, has moved into mesolectal Jamaican Creole. There is constant movement back and forth among the levels in Jamaican Creole.

For decades Jamaican Creole has been rising in status (Wassink, 1999; Christie, 1998, 2001, 2003; Bryan, 2004). Mair (2002) describes it thus: “From being considered a despised corruption of the colonial language its (Patois’) status changed into something more ambivalent – a symbol of powerlessness and degeneracy on the one hand, and a symbol of solidarity, truth and connection to the Afro-creole folk tradition, on the other” (p. 31). One of the early catalysts to the rise in status was Jamaica’s political independence from Britain in 1962. Winer (2006) states,

Along with formal independence arose nationalism identified by and through culture and language. Vernacular language forms that were earlier scorned, even by the speakers themselves now became a badge of pride and identity. Caribbean linguists pushed for recognition of the creoles as legitimate languages. (p. 106)

To name Jamaican Creole as a language is, according to Sebba (1995), a political, not a linguistic question, for “‘language’ always has connotations of statehood or nationhood” (p. 2). Just as English was used in service of the colonial enterprise, naming Jamaican Creole the language of the people of Jamaica could add political power to its speakers. Devonish (2012) furthers this view by declaring that Jamaican Creole has already become the Jamaican language, even if not officially.

Among the highly educated, who generally speak only English in formal situations, there is a great deal of code-switching, that is, shifting briefly into Jamaican Creole, in order to establish a sense of solidarity with the audience, to clarify a concept that otherwise might be unfamiliar to the audience, or to create humor (Christie, 2003; Bryan, 2004).

Nevertheless, Mair (2002) and Christie (2003) agree that even though not “a typical English-speaking society, Jamaica will continue to be an English-using one” (Mair, 2002, p. 31), and that the relationship between Patois (Jamaican Creole) and English will remain to some extent an antagonistic one. Speakers of Jamaican Creole with limited knowledge of English “are debarred from full participation not only in events and activities outside Jamaica but in the life of their own country as well” (Christie, 2003, p. 8). Thus, Jamaican Creole speakers need to acquire
enough English to manage their lives in Jamaica.

Jamaican Creole Identity

Norton (1997) defines identity as “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand the possibilities for the future” (p. 410). Indeed, “language and social identity are extremely complex, inevitably involving emotive value-judgements as well as practical concerns” (deKlerk, 1996, p. 126). Thiong’O (2004) views language as a culture-carrier that reflects “the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world” (pp. 406-407). He claims that as a community of human beings with “a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world” (p. 407), language is an integral part of who we are. With the support of Norton (2000), Bryan (2004) asserts that speakers construct their identity through their use of language:

The ‘becoming of the language’ relates not only to the structure of the language but also to the way the speakers see, use and construct themselves through the vernacular voice. So questions of attitudes and identity are, inevitably, foregrounded as central to this discussion about language. (p. 642)

Joseph (2004, p. 13) goes so far as to say that language and identity are inseparable, writing, “I am asserting that the entire phenomenon of identity can be understood as a linguistic one.” Pao, Wong, and Teuben-Rowe (1997) indicate that identity is contested, and that a “shift in language results in a shift in one’s identity” (p. 623). According to Ogulnick (2000), there is a “dialectic between language learning and identity that is inextricably linked to our historical experiences and the socio-political contexts in which we find ourselves. . . language learning entails a process of fitting into one’s place in society, or rather, one’s imposed place” (p. 170). Relying on Winford (1994), Morgan (1994) suggests that although English reflects educational achievement and high social status, creole languages embody culture and reflect personal relationships. For this reason, “creole languages will continue to be preserved because of their importance in the identity of the Anglophone Caribbean” (p. 3).

In Jamaica, language and identity are complicated by the fact that to a certain degree, Jamaicans claim both languages, English and Jamaican Creole, as their own. According to Christie (2003, p. 4), “Jamaicans . . . resent any suggestion that the language we speak is not always English or that our spoken English differs in some respects from what would be heard in
other parts of the Anglophone world.” Nero (1997) reinforces this with, “Although the majority of Anglophone Caribbean people actually speak some variety of English-based Creole, they continue to label their language as English, at least in public domains” (p. 587). Two basic issues on which Christie (2003) claims general agreement in Jamaica are:

1. English is an important language in Jamaica and we should keep it so.
2. The Creole vernacular is used by the vast majority of persons in Jamaica at some time or other and by a large number of them as their sole or principal means of communication. (p. 37)

Cliff (1988) explains: “In my current work-in-progress, a novel, I alternate the King’s English with patois, not only to show the class background of characters, but to show how Jamaicans operate within a split consciousness. It would be as dishonest to write the novel entirely in patois as to write entirely in the King’s English” (pp. 59-60). The Jamaican identity, then, may shift as a choice of language is made. In formal, English-speaking situations, the identity may be aligned with Western expectations that accompany the use of English in school. In informal circles of friends and family, Jamaican Creole will likely be used, and the identity will rest on the history of slavery and exploitation.

Attitudes Toward Jamaican Creole

It is not easy to define attitude, because of the “latent nature of attitudes” (Garrett, 2006, p. 2). Yet Garrett argues that “a person’s behavioural consistency or society’s stability depends on admitting them” (p. 3). Attitudes to language varieties and those who speak them help us to map the social world, whether or not they are positive or biased. Garrett (2006) also argues the controversial position that attitudes tend to endure because they are acquired at an early age.

Understanding attitudes is complicated, though, because as Rickford (1983) maintains, “language attitudes frequently have a multi-dimensional character,” and “standard language varieties tend to be favourably evaluated along the status or power dimension, and non-standard varieties along the solidarity or friendship dimension” (p. 8). Preston and Robinson (2005) suggest that language attitudes are tied to beliefs about certain groups of people. If some groups of people are believed to be “decent, hard-working, and intelligent,” their language or variety is considered to be of the same quality. In reverse, if groups are believed to be “lazy, insolent, and procrastinating,” then their language or variety seems to reflect those characteristics (p. 1).

Alleyne (1994) claims that creoles have been the “most stigmatized of the world’s
languages,” and that this stigma has not allowed the languages to enjoy a rise in their status by being standardized (p. 8). Winford (1994) argues that even though creoles are valid linguistic systems, the public derogation of them prevents them from being used officially. “Members of Caribbean communities continue to see creole vernaculars as barriers rather than potential avenues to educational achievement and social opportunity/advancement” (p. 55). Winford describes a tension between Standard English, the publicly affirmed language of education and government, and creole, which is spoken privately with pride even though it is still often regarded as a corrupt form of English (p. 55). Muyskin and Smith (1994) point out that a dualism in language attitudes often occurs during the process of decolonization. Societies that were eager to replace the colonial language soften their attitudes and are slow to prefer the local language to the extent of enacting new language laws. This seems to have happened in Jamaica since independence. The efforts of Devonish (1986, 2012) to recognize the regional creoles, especially Jamaican Creole, as official languages have had little effect (Winford, 1994).

Bryan (2004) makes clear, however, that political changes, the decreasing number of native speakers of English, and the increasing use of Jamaican Creole in schools as well as homes, has begun to lift the status of Jamaican Creole. Winford (1994) concedes that “Some softening of the older hard line [refusing to legitimize creole as a language] is slowly emerging in communities such as Jamaica” (p. 56). As Jamaica moves forward with a distinct cultural identity to present to the larger world, Jamaican Creole speakers, especially young ones, are eager to use the language in a variety of formerly frowned-upon circumstances (Wassink, 1999), for example, in the classroom with Jamaican or other Caribbean teachers, with other educated Jamaicans, in advertisements, and in poetry and novels (Christie, 2003).

This rise in status can be seen in Jamaica’s response to a Volkswagen ad aired in the United States during the 2013 Super Bowl football game, in which Caucasian and Asian men used Jamaican Creole to imply the good-natured, fun-loving, laid-back qualities of a new Volkswagen car. In the United States, there was public outcry implying that the ad derogated the Jamaican language and thus the Jamaican people (Horowitz, 2013). However, in Jamaica this ad was generally well received, as an editorial later noted:

Our issue here is the flap being caused by one of the television ads to be expensively aired during the Super Bowl – the one for the carmaker Volkswagen in which white males and an Asian mimic an exaggerated Jamaican accent and talk Patois . . . Critics say it is racist, caricaturing black people as happy-go-lucky and lazy. We say to the
oversensitive, lighten up. We see it as the power of Jamaica’s national brand and time on
TV for which we couldn’t pay. (Irie, Mon, 2013, p. A8)

According to Cooper (2009), “Pauline Christie’s version [sic] of ‘a language is a dialect with an
army and a navy’ has become ‘a language is a dialect spoken by Bob Marley and Usain Bolt’”
(p. A9). Jamaica’s power lies not in its political might, but in the culture that it offers to the
world, a culture expressed in the Jamaican language. Thus while “English, which can be ‘shed
like a skin’ is ‘a special coat’ that provides ‘access to education, access to knowledge. . . access
to the money market’” (Bryan, 2004, p. 652), “Jamaican Creole, instead of withering away with
greater prosperity and education of the people, has instead strengthened and broadened its scope”
(Bryan, 2004, p. 648). The “social and linguistic inequalities” found in creole communities
(Morgan, 1994, p. 5) and the “asymmetrical power relationship (that) is the essence of
imperialism” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 3) between English and Jamaican Creole are beginning to
become less distinct as Jamaican Creole gains status.

It is clear that Jamaican Creole is approaching the point where its speakers claim it is not
just a language, but their language. However, are non-native speakers welcome to speak it? This
background and question led to the current study.

Research Questions

The present investigation of how non-native speakers of Jamaican Creole, including
Christian English teachers, are received in the Jamaican speech community is guided by the
following research questions:

1. How do Jamaicans themselves characterize their reception of speakers of Jamaican
Creole?
2. Do long-term expatriate professionals in Jamaica experience resistance when they
attempt to use the Jamaican language?
3. What are the underlying assumptions and reasons for Jamaicans’ preferences for
including/not including non-native speakers of Jamaican Creole in the Jamaican
speech community?
4. What practices can Christian English teachers implement to move toward
accompaniment in their English teaching, in light of Jamaicans’ reception of non-
native speakers of Jamaican Creole?

Methodology

The investigation of the above questions involved three phases: a survey determined adult
students’ attitudes towards Jamaican Creole and their preferences regarding who should speak it,
with some of the results compared to a larger Language Attitude Survey of Jamaica (LAS) of 1000 Jamaicans done by the Jamaican Language Unit of the Department of Language, Linguistics, and Philosophy at the University of the West Indies (2005). A focus group then investigated how expatriate professionals, including Christian teachers, perceived the reception of their use of Jamaican Creole. Finally, a second focus group clarified how Jamaican graduate and undergraduate students perceived foreigners’ use of Jamaican Creole. This was a small exploratory, qualitative study that was intended as a preliminary investigation in this area.

Survey

Dörnyei (2003) was most helpful in structuring the questionnaire (reproduced in Appendix A). Creswell (2014) and Maxwell (1996) were also consulted during the research.

Without a budget for the study, it was necessary to find an accessible cross-section of the Jamaican population that corresponded to the academic and social population that most non-native, Christian English teachers would meet. The Vocational Training Development Institute at that time was training adults across the country to become assessors in occupations such as nursing, teaching, tourism management, auto mechanics, housekeeping, beauty services, and the Jamaican military. Classes were held in Kingston and at satellite sites across the island. Although not a random sample, these students seemed to represent a fair cross-section of adults having or acquiring tertiary education. Also, since they were established enough in their professions to become assessors, they varied in age and professional responsibility. Their educational backgrounds ranged from high school to graduate level, and they resided in almost every area of Jamaica. Although most of the respondents considered themselves to be in the professional class of workers, their high schools indicated that few of them had attended the most prestigious schools in Jamaica. In other words, many had grown up in less privileged circumstances and risen in social status as they acquired more education; thus, Jamaican Creole was likely their first language.

The sample size was relatively small (161 respondents); for validity, the results of some questions on the survey were compared to results of similar questions on the above-mentioned LAS. The present survey asked whether the respondents valued Jamaican Creole as a language, whether they considered it as valuable as English, and which non-native speakers, if any, were welcome to speak it. After being piloted at the United Theological College, wording and format
were adjusted. The complete survey was distributed over a six-month period by Jamaican lecturers in their classes at the Vocational Training Development Institute in Kingston and the satellite sites. The first section of the survey established demographics. The second section provided the respondents’ attitudes toward Jamaican Creole and explored their responses to strangers’ attempts to use it. Responses were entered into the SPSS for tabulation and analysis.

**Survey Results**

Figure 1 below highlights the range of occupations of the survey respondents. It shows that most respondents belonged to the professional category, with very few respondents identifying themselves as students, even though they were participating in assessor training. Those in the ‘other’ category were the second highest number, many of them belonging to the Jamaican military force. The third highest category was skilled workers, with business people following close behind.

![Figure 1. Survey Respondents’ Occupations](image)

The professional category included such occupations as physician, attorney, clergy, public servant, teacher, lecturer, musician. Business was identified as a career in tourism, management, banking, sales, and promotion. Skilled occupations included secretary, cosmetologist, electrician, plumber, mason, mechanic, seamstress, scuba diver. The LAS survey categorized the occupations differently, so it was not possible to compare those results to the present survey.
Table 1 indicates that most of the respondents were educated beyond high school; this was important because the starting point of the study was the investigation of possible reluctance of some people in academic situations to admit strangers to the Jamaican speech community. There was no corresponding question on the LAS survey.

Table 1. Respondents’ Levels of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>high school</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University degree</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>76.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postgraduate</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 indicates the respondents’ demographics in the present study compared to the LAS one. The present study’s male-female and age ratios were not as balanced as the LAS survey; the geographic spread, however, was comparable. A slight majority of the participants in the present study lived outside urban areas; in the LAS study, a bare majority lived within the urban areas. This geographic spread helped to indicate that the preferences of the respondents were not limited to urban residents with more contact with strangers to the island.

Table 2. Respondents’ Demographics: Present Study vs. the LAS Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Present Study %</th>
<th>LAS Study %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>50.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>49.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51+</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tables 3 and 4 indicate that the respondents of the present study affirmed that Jamaican Creole is a language, and that it should be an official language alongside English. These results corresponded positively to the results of similar questions in the LAS survey and confirmed the rise in status of Jamaican Creole.

Table 3. Language Attitudes – Creole: Present Study vs. the LAS Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present Study %</th>
<th>LAS Study %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is Jamaican Creole a language?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaican Creole should be both a written and a spoken language:</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that Patwa is a language?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Language Attitudes – Official Language: Present Study vs. the LAS Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present Study %</th>
<th>LAS Study %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jamaican Creole as an official language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>English should be the ONLY official language of Jamaica</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should Parliament make Patwa an official language of Jamaica alongside English?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The LAS did not ask who the respondents perceived to be preferred speakers of Jamaican Creole. In the present study, the majority of respondents claimed to want the whole world to be able to speak it. Nevertheless, there was a contingent of approximately 30% who wanted the Jamaican language to be restricted to certain speakers.

Table 5. Language Attitudes – I prefer that Jamaican Creole be spoken . . .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column2</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only by Jamaicans</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only by speakers of Caribbean/African origin</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anyone</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most respondents (68%) believed anyone should be able to speak Jamaican Creole, but a significant minority (32%) indicated a preference that only Jamaicans or others of Caribbean or African descent speak the language. A t-test performed with the help of the SPSS software determined that this difference was statistically significant ($X^2=89.63$, $p<.000$).

**Discussion Part 1: Survey Results**

The survey results reinforced the contention that Jamaicans consider Jamaican Creole to be a language, and that it should be recognized as an official language of Jamaica. It also indicated that most Jamaicans in this group wanted to share their language with strangers to the country. The approximately 30% who did not want outsiders to speak Jamaican Creole was statistically significant. However, more important is the implication that in any given class of twenty-one students, six or seven may prefer not to include the non-native teacher in the Jamaican speech community. This has significance for the Christian teacher who is hoping to develop mutuality in the classroom in accordance with the *accompaniment* model. If one-third of the students in a classroom resists the efforts of their English teacher to use their first language, how will the teacher be as effective as desired, both academically and relationally?

**Focus Group 1**

To address Research Question #2, a focus group methodology was employed. According to Pao, et al. (1997), the focus group is suited for qualitative research because it is planned and structured, yet provides a relaxed setting that encourages dynamic interaction among participants (p. 624). In this environment it is possible to probe issues more deeply than with a written survey. The focus group is a familiar methodology in Jamaica; an outline for its conduct is given in Boxill, Chambers, and Wint (1997, pp. 60-83).

Seven long-term expatriates who had lived more than ten years in Jamaica were invited to participate in the focus group. This was a convenience sample of professionals, all of whom had some contact with United Theological College. Four of the seven participants had come from the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, countries that are considered Western and have been in one way or another a part of the colonizing enterprise. The other three were from Nigeria, Guyana, and Haiti, non-Western, or developing countries that have a history of colonization. These three were chosen to see if their language experiences in Jamaica differed significantly from those originating in Western countries. The first focus group participants’ occupations were
physician, businesswoman, pastor, and teachers of adults on various levels. The teachers were selected because their academic experience would correspond with the purpose of the research. Those from other professions were chosen to balance the experience of teachers. There were three males and four females; four were or had been married to Jamaicans, so they were fully immersed in the Jamaican community.

The interlocutor was a Jamaican teacher and graduate student familiar with focus group methodology. Using English, the expected academic language, she moved through a series of predetermined questions (included in Appendix B). Rather than inhibit the group by videotaping the conversations, two recorders, a graduate student and the researcher, took notes. To prevent bias, we compared notes following the conversations and confirmed that our records of the responses agreed.

Results of Focus Group 1

There was consensus that Jamaican Creole was dynamic, colorful, and poetic. The Nigerian respondent mentioned similarities to languages spoken in Ghana and Nigeria. Participants believed that the Bible in Jamaican Creole was a positive development. They agreed that during the previous decade the Jamaican language seemed to have changed to a more urban, counter-cultural way of speaking, and it was more difficult to understand. In response to how well respondents understood the language in general, only one person claimed to understand everything. Most participants reported understanding about 80% of what was communicated to them in Jamaican Creole. All agreed, however, that if the Jamaican speakers did not want them to understand, they would not be able to. One respondent related an experience in which the speakers suspected he was a CIA agent. He knew the topic of the conversation, but could not understand anything at all. The Guyanese participant said he did not think the speakers deliberately tried to confuse the foreigners, but said his Caribbean identity might have influenced his answer. Only this comment indicated that any non-Western group members’ language perceptions differed from those of the Western countries. Most respondents said they did not understand jokes in Creole, but found the body language of the jokes entertaining.

Regarding their own use of Jamaican Creole, respondents claimed to use it when exasperated, when there was no equivalent English word, or when they wanted to make the listener laugh. No one could carry on a full conversation in Jamaican Creole. One attributed their
lack of fluency to the whole group’s membership in the middle class, which would naturally speak English, not Jamaican Creole. One respondent claimed it was not ‘natural’ for non-Jamaicans to speak Jamaican Creole. Some claimed never to use Jamaican Creole because it seemed phony – different from using Spanish or French – or because they teach and are expected to speak English at all times. One insisted that everyone uses Jamaican Creole sometimes, even if unconsciously. Two participants did not feel the need to be able to speak Jamaican Creole at all, and one wanted to understand it but not speak it. The others wished they controlled it better: “I would love to [speak it] because I love it.” “There are some places you cannot be effective if you can’t speak the language.” “I wish I could speak better because for some people this is the only way to touch their hearts as a pastor.”

Participants attributed their lack of fluency in Jamaican Creole to their age (“it is hard for an adult to acquire a language”), a lack of close Jamaican friends, their social class, or the lack of a place to study the language formally. Although all claimed to be comfortable in a group where everyone was speaking Jamaican Creole, the participants insisted that when they tried to speak the language themselves, the Jamaican response was almost always laughter. Some said they stopped trying to speak it immediately when listeners laughed at their accent. Most did not see the laughter as anything more than fun, although some admitted that it could occasionally be mockery or an attempt to squelch their use of the language. A teacher said, “They enjoy the fact that they know something I don’t know.” It was agreed that in some circumstances it might seem patronizing or condescending to use Jamaican Creole when English was an obvious possibility. All insisted on English in the home and allowed Jamaican Creole outside the home.

**Discussion Part 2: Focus Group 1 Results**

The conversation in Focus Group 1 revealed that respondents did not speak Jamaican Creole fluently but used it sporadically for particular effect. Their perception that the language had changed in the last decade may be related to the Dread Talk influence that developed in the basilect and has risen to the mesolect, which they as professionals would hear more often. They felt there was a social barrier that prevented them from speaking the language: it was not ‘natural’ for non-Jamaicans to speak Jamaican Creole; it seemed phony to speak it; they had no need to speak it. Their social status seemed to make it unnecessary to speak it. These results are in line with the expectation that professionals, Jamaican and foreign alike, will speak English in
formal situations. Participants also recognized that their use of Jamaican Creole might presume that the Jamaican conversational partner was not fluent in English, the higher status language, and that they needed to ‘talk down’ to the Jamaican Creole speaker.

Some respondents were hindered from speaking Jamaican Creole by laughter. They may have been responding unconsciously to a societal effect of laughter as a “separation, excluding, and conflict device” (Hertzler, 1970, p. 85). Or they may have felt excluded by an effect of laughter that enhances cohesion and a sense of identity – we speak the language, but you don’t (Martin 2007, p. 122). In any case, the laughter seemed to shut down the respondents’ attempts to speak Jamaican Creole.

The statement “They enjoy the fact that they know something I don’t know” indicated the power relationships inherent in language choice: when speaking English, strangers or more educated Jamaicans hold the power; when speaking Jamaican Creole, creole speakers hold the power, especially if the English speaker cannot fully understand it.

Most respondents wished they could speak the Jamaican language, but after many years, they still could not. The reasons, they said, included a lack of close Jamaican friends, the only ones who could pass the language on to them, since the language is rarely taught formally. However, even those married to Jamaicans were not fluent, although they understood the language most of the time. They did not seem to use Jamaican Creole habitually with their spouses. Perhaps this was because all of them insisted on English in the home to assure their children would be English speakers.

Most participants recognized the benefits of being able to speak Jamaican Creole, such as being more effective if they could speak the language, or being able to touch people’s hearts through it, as Brown (2009) suggested with regards to communicating in one’s heart language. It was clear that most of these expatriates, even those from other parts of the Caribbean and Africa, experienced frustrations in their attempts to acquire Jamaican Creole, barriers to the mutuality and interrelatedness they hoped to achieve in their relationships.

Focus Group 2

A focus group was again assembled to investigate Research Question #3. A convenience sample was invited to participate, this time selected from students at the Vocational Training Development Institute and the United Theological College. The group comprised eight adult
Jamaicans ranging in age from 19 to 60+. Two members were enrolled in graduate education while working in other professions, one of them as the principal of a school. The other four were full-time students on various levels of undergraduate and graduate education. There were equal numbers of males and females. The same methodology was used as for Focus Group 1, with the same interlocutor, though the questions were different (see Appendix C).

Results of Focus Group 2

The purpose of Focus Group 2 was to determine the Jamaicans’ attitude toward Jamaican Creole and to investigate how they responded to non-Jamaicans who speak it. All participants responded positively toward Jamaican Creole, saying that it represented their culture and identity. Although most respondents said they could not read and write it (creoles are generally unwritten), they still took pride in it as their home language. They agreed that when a stranger to Jamaica spoke it, they would laugh in amusement. Most denied, however, that the laughter was instigated by a conscious desire to hinder the foreigner’s participation in the Jamaican Creole language community.

When shown the Volkswagen ad where American and Asian actors used the Jamaican language, the reactions varied, but one speaker said, “Some people say the Jamaican language is just for us; no one else should use it. This shows it is for everyone.” However, another comment: “The man is piggy backing on our language” [meaning that he was gaining fame and fortune by using Jamaican Creole] implied the ad was a negative cultural appropriation.

In response to a stranger who code-switched between English and Jamaican Creole, most respondents said they didn’t mind, as long as the code-switching wasn’t too persistent; one respondent said she would be proud to hear it. Another participant reinforced this with, “I think it is rubbish to hug up [keep for ourselves] the language.” Still another participant responded: “I would feel vulnerable. I don’t want to share it.”

Respondents were upset by Jamaican words in British or American music: “Foreigners want to study us. They will learn our language and know its nuances better than we do. They will use it to their economic advantage. They want to learn the language to exploit us.” “I get angry when people use our words and don’t give acknowledgment to Jamaica. If you take an international song as yours, you will be sued. Is it ok to use JC [Jamaican Creole] in songs
without giving credit?” “I find that foreigners want to understand us and they go into the language and then use it as an economic advantage.”

The response to being overheard and understood by a stranger in a foreign airport ranged from being proud that others understood the language, to indifferent, to “I would feel like it was an intrusion,” or “I would feel violated. When we speak it abroad it’s so they don’t understand.” Most participants felt comfortable in a group of non-Jamaicans speaking fluent Jamaican Creole, but one respondent said: “I would not be comfortable. I would fear they would be mocking me. They would have no other reason to be speaking it.”

Most responses to teaching Jamaican Creole in special language schools were negative. One said, “I hope we don’t allow foreigners to use the language.” Another: “I think they are trying to rob us. I don’t want everyone to speak Jamaican.” Yet a third person said, “There is a threat that the more educated can come in and know the language better than we do. They can use the language to outsmart us and control us.”

**Discussion Part 3: Focus Group 2 Results**

The members of Focus Group 2 reflected the rise in status of Jamaican Creole by emphasizing the pride they took in it, and by claiming that it was a source of their culture and their identity. Most admitted they could not read and write the language. This is unsurprising because there is not yet a standard orthography. The various names for the language (Patwa, Patois, Jamaican Creole, Jamaican) are indicative of the situation. In fact, however, in a variety of orthographic representations Jamaican Creole is used in advertisements and at dramatic points in literature, which this group would read without difficulty.

Jamaicans’ laughter at a stranger’s attempt to speak the language, they said, was not intended to exclude the speaker from the speech community, even though some speakers in Focus Group 1 had indicated that was the effect. Was the exclusion unconscious, or were the foreigners being too sensitive?

At first responses to whether the language should be shared with strangers were mixed; several really did want to share it. But as the conversation continued, more negative comments arose. Mistrust of those who wanted to speak the language was an underlying theme. Respondents feared being mocked by speakers who did not respect the culture, and thus the people the language represented. They felt vulnerable and even violated when an stranger
understood them in a conversation outside the country. An unspoken, invisible barrier had been crossed – some speakers use Jamaican Creole when they want to be understood only by Jamaicans. This was also reflected in Focus Group 1: when Jamaican Creole speakers did not want to be understood, they could modify the language to bring about that result. There was a fear that foreigners would learn the language and exploit it to Jamaicans’ economic disadvantage in songs and other venues. Finally, they feared that those who learned the language would be able to outsmart and control them. Language issues are closely related to power. The use of English in colonial and post-colonial societies to control the distribution of social benefits such as jobs and political position was well known to these respondents. They wanted to ensure that outsiders did not use Jamaican Creole for similar exploitation.

Many speakers of Jamaican Creole saw their language as a key to a new cultural and economic power in the world – the Jamaican culture expressed in music, advertisements, and tourism. That power would be threatened if the speech community were opened to strangers. These fears necessarily pose threats to the use of Jamaican Creole by foreign Christian English teachers in the classroom.

Conclusions

The historical memory of slavery and colonialism is never far from those who have been dominated. Many of the themes regarding non-native speakers’ use of the Jamaican language in Focus Group 2 reflect the consequences of these earlier circumstances: humiliation, vulnerability, violation, exploitation, suspicion, and lack of power and control. These issues permeate the language as well as the culture, and consciously or unconsciously affect the acceptance of strangers into the speech community. Thus, to establish mutuality with students by using the language of family and intimacy seems a distant goal. This does not mean that acceptance is not possible. It does mean, however, that those who aspire to belong to the Jamaican speech community must gain the full trust of the speakers.

Inclusion in the speech community means inclusion in the intimate lives of the people who speak the language. If a Christian English teacher is to accompany students in the language effort by learning their language while they learn English, the teacher needs to live and struggle along with the speakers, identifying with their past as well as their present as it is expressed in the Jamaican language. The historical barriers erected by past enslavement, colonial oppression,
and present economic and cultural hegemony hinder attempts by Western strangers at full participation in the language and culture of Jamaican Creole. The association of English with the Jamaican middle economic class, to which educated Jamaicans as well as Christian and other foreign English teachers are automatically assigned, presents a further threat to their inclusion in the Jamaican Creole speech community. Thus full *accompaniment* with Jamaican Creole speakers may not be possible, as was implied by members of both focus groups.

This is not an argument that foreign Christian and other English teachers do not need to *know* Jamaican Creole. It remains true that their teaching will be more effective if they understand how Jamaican Creole interacts with and differs from English (Kuck, 2009). Also, for communication purposes they need to understand as well as possible the Jamaican Creole spoken by their students. The argument here is that foreign Christian and other English teachers need to be careful how they *use* Jamaican Creole themselves, so that they do not cross over into the intimate, friends-and-family-only Jamaican Creole without the permission of its native speakers.

Foreign Christian and other English teachers can follow the practice of educated, middle class Jamaicans. They can code switch with Jamaican Creole vocabulary and phrases when they fear they might be misunderstood, or when they want to establish community with their audience. They must, however, be aware that their use of the language in certain circumstances may be interpreted as patronizing, mocking, or exploitive. Thus, the foreign teacher must weigh carefully the possible consequences of using Jamaican Creole in the classroom, allow the students to share their knowledge of the language at their own initiative, and then use what they all learn about the language to enhance their English lessons. In this manner, the teacher’s use of Jamaican Creole can be sensitive to the occasion and useful for understanding English, but it will not overstep the boundaries created by historical oppression, colonialism, and cultural and economic hegemony.

**Acknowledgements**

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**Appendix A**

**Survey**

**Jamaican Creole Spoken by Non-Jamaicans**

This questionnaire will collect data for research regarding Jamaicans’ attitudes toward the use of Jamaican Creole by non-Jamaicans. Your responses will remain anonymous, and you will be given the opportunity to see the results of the research if you so request in writing. Submitting your completed questionnaire indicates that you give the researcher permission to use it for this study.

1. **Personal Information**

   1. Where are you originally from?
      - Kingston corporate area
      - Montego Bay, Mandeville, Ocho Rios
      - Other (in Jamaica)

   2. Present residence
      - Kingston corporate area
      - Montego Bay, Mandeville, Ocho Rios
3. Gender
   - Male
   - Female

4. Age group
   - 12-18
   - 18-30
   - 31-40
   - 41-50
   - 51-60
   - 61+

5. Highest level of education
   - Grade 6
   - High school
   - Tertiary (certificate or diploma)
   - University degree
   - Post-graduate degree

6. Name of high school attended _____________________________________________

7. Occupation
   - Student
   - Professional: physician, attorney, clergy, public servant, teacher, lecturer, musician, etc.
   - Business: tourism, management, banking, sales, promotion, etc.
   - Skilled work: secretary, cosmetologist, electrician, plumber, mason, mechanic, seamstress, scuba diver, etc.
   - Other (Please name)_____________________________________________________

II. Language Questions

8. Jamaican Creole (Patois) and English are two separate languages.
   - Yes
   - No

9. Jamaican Creole (Patois) should be the ONLY official language of Jamaica.
   - Yes
   - No

10. Jamaican Creole should be ONE of TWO official languages of Jamaica.
11. English should be the ONLY official language of Jamaica.
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

12. Jamaican Creole (Patois) should be both a written and a spoken language.
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

13. Jamaican Creole (Patois) should be taught in schools just as we teach French and Spanish
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

14. Tick the answer(s) most often true for you (you may choose more than one):
    When I hear strangers from outside Jamaica speak Jamaican Creole (Patois), I
   ○ Get angry
   ○ laugh
   ○ feel irritated
   ○ feel proud
   ○ wish they would stop
   ○ feel embarrassed for them
   ○ It depends on the person speaking it. Please explain:

   _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

15. Tick the answer(s) that most often apply (you may choose more than one):
    When I speak Jamaican Creole to another Jamaican and a stranger understands, I am
   ○ Surprised
   ○ Glad
   ○ Slightly uncomfortable
   ○ Unhappy
   ○ It depends on which stranger understands it. (Please explain)

   _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

16. I would prefer that (choose only one)
   ○ Jamaican Creole be spoken and understood only by Jamaicans.
   ○ Jamaican Creole be spoken and understood only by people of Caribbean or African origin.
   ○ All people in the world have a chance to speak and understand Jamaican Creole.
Appendix B

Questions for Focus Group 1

1. What do you think of Jamaican Creole?
2. How has your opinion or attitude toward the language changed over the years you have been in Jamaica?
3. How well do you understand Jamaican Creole?
4. When someone tells a joke in Jamaican, do you understand it well enough to laugh? Why?
5. When do you use Jamaican Creole?
6. If you do not use Jamaican at all, why don’t you?
7. Do you wish you could speak Jamaican better than you do?
8. Why do you think you have not become fluent in the language, if you are not?
9. How do Jamaicans respond when you use Jamaican?
10. Why do you think you get this response?
11. Some experts on humour believe that laughter is a form of social control. It helps to keep people in their expected place in the social order. Do you think this is at play here? Why?
12. How do you feel when you are in a group where all are speaking Jamaican? Why?
13. If you have children, do they speak Jamaican? How do they respond when you use the Jamaican language? Is it the same response that Jamaicans exhibit? Why?
14. How do you think you could learn to be more fluent in Jamaican?

Appendix C

Questions for Focus Group 2

Question #1 is a warm-up question only. Do not let the conversation go more than a few minutes on this – otherwise it might take up the whole hour. The questions in bold must be answered in depth. They encapsulate the purpose of the focus group. If we can get to some of the others, however, I will be very happy.

1. What are your thoughts and feelings about the Jamaican language? Do you like to speak it? Do you like to hear it? Do you like to read it? Why?

2. You are standing in line at the bank. Several persons ahead of you is a man who is clearly a stranger in Jamaica. His blue eyes, light hair and informal clothing suggest that he is American. When the line has not moved for about fifteen minutes, he turns to the man behind him and says in a loud voice, “Nuttin naah gwan!” What is your response?
If you said you would laugh, why would you laugh?

Do you think you would have responded differently if this had been a woman, not a man? Why?

Would you have responded differently if the man/woman had been African American? Why?

What if the man/woman had been Japanese? British? Haitian?

How might your response be coloured by history?

3. Some scholars suggest that laughter is a form of social control. It keeps people from crossing socially drawn lines; for example, we laugh when a child says something inappropriate to shame the child so it doesn’t happen again. Do you think that this comes into play when you laugh when you hear strangers speak Jamaican? How or why?

4. Show Volkswagen commercial. What do you think about this foreigner speaking Jamaican? Why? Is it different from the foreigner standing in line at the bank? Why? Would the commercial have been more effective if a Jamaican had been speaking? Why?

5. You are attending a speech by a foreigner who has been invited to your institution to speak. The speaker spices up his/her speech now and then with a Jamaican phrase. How does this affect the way you receive the message?

6. You are listening to American/British music and notice that many of the words come from Jamaican Creole. How does that make you feel?

7. You are in an airport in Chicago talking on the phone in Jamaican to one of your friends. The person, obviously not Jamaican, indicates that she understood what you were saying. How does that make you feel? Why?

8. Have you ever used Jamaican to avoid being understood by others around you? When and why? What was the outcome?

9. How do you respond when tourists speak Jamaican at the beach or in hotels? Is this different from your response in work/personal situations? Why?

10. Would you be comfortable in a group of foreigners who were all speaking Jamaican fluently? Why?

11. Do you prefer that only Jamaicans speak Jamaican? Why? What about other Caribbean nationals? People of African descent?

12. Why do you think there are no schools in Jamaica that have regular classes to teach Jamaican to foreigners?

13. Do you think that attitudes among Jamaicans toward strangers speaking Jamaican are changing? How and why?
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Empowering English Language Teachers Through History

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Abstract
TESOL training programs typically offer courses in methods and pedagogy, along with other classes to equip future English language teaching (ELT) professionals with essential teaching skills and knowledge. Not as frequently offered or required, however, is a course focusing on critically examining political and philosophical aspects of ELT. This article discusses why I believe it is important for TESOL curriculums to include topics on the diachronic development and synchronic variations of the English language and to engage students in topics that would allow them to critically examine embedded power relations in ELT. By reflecting on my own classroom experience as a TESOL program director, I demonstrate how such knowledge can foster a critical perspective in ELT as well as empower students, thereby aligning ourselves with the Christian principles of bringing justice to our society and empowering God’s people.

Key words: critical pedagogy, global Englishes, history of English, teacher training

Introduction
Currently ‘empowerment’ is one of the most frequently adopted overarching goals in English language teaching (Lessard-Clouston, 2015). Although both secular and Christian teachers seek to empower their students to reach their full potential by developing essential linguistic skills, spiritually minded teachers would find their ultimate rewards in spiritually nurturing those who struggle along the way with Christ-like compassion and encouragement. As caring Christian teachers, they would try their best to be sensitive about the needs of the students they serve. Although they may not always openly promote Christian beliefs in the classroom, basic Christian principles such as justice, equality, and compassion will undergird each decision that dedicated Christian English teachers make in their teaching. Also, they are keenly attuned to the ethical dimensions of their profession.

However, not as frequently addressed are intrinsic needs that some of the teachers themselves may have as they grow into seasoned professionals in the field – particularly the need to develop a critical perspective on the global and local positions of English. The global spread of English has prompted much debate concerning the ethical ramifications of English language teaching (e.g., Phillipson, 1992). Various scholars have reflected on the embedded power
relations in ELT and pointed out the need for democratizing our instruction and recognizing the pluricentricity of English from a philosophical and ideological point of view (e.g., Jenkins, 2015; Kachru, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 2007). Such scholars have also challenged native speaker ideology and the notion of fixed standards. Citing Giroux’s critical pedagogy, Pennycook (1994) stated that teachers should take ethics into account in their teaching career. He argued that “issues we face as teachers and students are not just questions of knowledge and truth but also of good and bad, of the need to struggle against inequality and injustice” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 298). In order for such a critical pedagogy to materialize, I believe it is vital for teachers to recognize that teaching English, now associated with enormous economic and political power, has a potential of condoning, if not promoting, linguicism and of rendering ELT a global commodity, making even the most scrupulous teachers susceptible to becoming accomplices to perpetuating such practices. In this sense it would be essential for future ELT professionals to be engaged in discussions concerning philosophical issues surrounding ELT.

These themes may be covered in varying degrees in sociolinguistics and are usually addressed in greater depth in courses such as world Englishes or English as an international language. However, core requirements of TESOL training programs typically center on methods and pedagogy, along with courses such as the structure of English, assessment, language and culture, second language acquisition, and research methods, while subject matter dealing with political and philosophical aspects of ELT is usually not included in the curriculum. In this article, I reflect on my own classroom experience as a teacher trainer, demonstrating how knowledge of the diachronic development and synchronic variations of the English language can foster a critical perspective of our teaching as well as empower future teachers, thereby aligning ourselves with the Christian principles of bringing justice to our society and empowering God’s people. Data for this study come from students’ responses to a general email that was sent out to TESOL graduate students who were introduced to these themes in one of their classes. The email invited students to share a brief paragraph on how the knowledge gained through the course has prepared them for their career in teaching English to speakers of other languages.

1 Non-TESOL graduate students (e.g., students with writing or literature emphasis or from another discipline) who took the course were not included in the study, except for one student whose research centers on the issues concerning multilingual writers. Four of the participants (S1, S2, S3, S4) are U.S. born L1 English speakers, and five (S5, S6, S7, S8, S9) are L2 English speakers of foreign nationalities. Since some of the L2 speakers are expert users of English with near-native proficiency, I avoided grouping these students using the native/non-native binary. The terms NEST and NNEST, however, are used in the discussion because this binary is frequently invoked in literature on teaching English as a global language.
Students were informed that participation was strictly voluntary. All but one student returned their responses, which varied in form; some responded in the form of long letters whereas others included one or two paragraphs. One student responded in the form of a list. Data analysis involved a reiterative process of coding, categorizing, and recoding data. The initial coding process identified ten categories, based on specific outcomes mentioned by students. They were re-categorized into five final categories outlined in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Significant Course Outcomes</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Changed perception about native language and dialect</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Increased ownership of English as a NNEST</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Becoming more accommodating through changes in perception about standards and correctness</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Critical approach to diversity-oriented materials selection</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Ability to explain irregularities of the English language</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A total of nine students participated in the study. The reason the total frequencies exceed nine is because some students included more than one outcome in their responses.

Course Themes and Structure

The course, one of the recent offerings in the program, focused on the development of the English language, but the aim of the course was not so much to teach extensive knowledge on the rules of language development. Rather, it focused on familiarizing students with the social and political history along with pertinent linguistic examples to enhance the lessons. The course also provided an overview of various forms of nativized Englishes, as well as an introduction to the newly emerging paradigms in ELT, such as English an international language (EIL) and English as a lingua franca (ELF). Each year changes were made in terms of topics and materials, but the core components have always included a brief survey of the development of the English language along with social and political backgrounds, which was taught in the first half of the course. The second half of the course was devoted to discussions on the global spread of English, the emergence of World Englishes, and the changing landscape of English users around the globe (see the Appendix for a partial list of course topics and materials). Students have frequently reported experiencing mind-boggling changes to their existing views and attitudes.
For example, one student commented that he had never had his views challenged to that extent. Other students reported having serious conversations with others related to the course topics outside the class. It was intriguing to hear some students talk about who was and who was not yet converted as the semester progressed, equating their experiences to that of religious conversion, as they described their emotional and intellectual journey. In the remainder of the article, I report what my students have graciously shared, outlining three different ways in which the knowledge gained in the course has impacted them.

Outcomes

1. Learning about history encourages students to resist a prescriptive view of language and encourages them to be accommodating of varieties of English.

   The most frequently mentioned outcome (n=6, 67%) was a shift of attitude towards correctness and standards and becoming more accommodating of variations. One student wrote, 

   Prior to taking this course, I firmly supported the idea that Standard English was/should be the only form of English learned. I appreciated learning that English can be learned with the retention of diverse accents… My world view on English was changed and for the better. I learned that learning English wasn’t about losing one’s accent but rather about intelligibility. My goal is no longer accent reduction, nor the correction of overly stressed syllables. However, I focus on teaching comprehensible communication and intelligible output while taking part in academic or casual discourse. (S1)

   Another student, who commented that the course was “the last nail in the coffin for prescriptivist thinking,” stated that

   Learning about the history of English helped me emotionally separate myself from believing that the way I say things is the correct way to say things. I have shifted from saying that there is a right way to use English to saying that there is a (geographically and culturally situated) typical way of using it. I no longer think in terms of purity either… Another possibly interesting observation is that I am letting my own idiolect drift more often. When I interact with ELLs or people with other dialects, I am more likely to adapt to them than before. I am not concerned about providing them with subpar input or creating “bad habits” for them. In other words, in light of English’s history, there is no reason for me to think that it is sacred as an institution. (S2)

   Yet another student commented that various themes covered in the class helped her to “develop a more informed understanding of the synchronic and diachronic developmental changes of the English language, thus excluding the notion of pure, hermetically sealed version of a language” (S5). She further noted that gaining a historical perspective helped her “address the unfounded
prejudice about one national variety of English being superior over another either aesthetically or intrinsically” (S5).

Using sociolinguistic perspectives as a broad framework, the course also incorporated various voices of postcolonial writers such as Chinua Achebe (1965) and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o (1986). Although some of these authors represent opposing views about the position of English as an official means of communication, reflecting on conflicting ideologies has allowed students to peruse ethical responsibilities as language teachers. The entire group seriously considered and wrestled with the issues of moral imperatives of having a global language and strived to seek practical strategies that could effectively address such ramifications. Those students who were teaching college writing at that time naturally arrived at the notion of translanguaging, recognizing the fact that multilingual students process input, gain understanding, form knowledge, and communicate thoughts and experiences utilizing their multilingual repertoire (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011). These students led the discussion on what it means to incorporate a translanguaging approach into their own teaching contexts, be it L1 composition or conversational English. A graduate TA, who stated that she “had never stopped to think about the English language before this course,” reflected:

I want my students to feel welcome and accepted no matter what variety of English they use. Composition is hard for everyone and they will be learning the new dialect of academic writing together, so understanding and patience is key for everyone. I don’t want to perpetuate linguistic discrimination or the idea that one variety of English is superior in my classroom and this can be done by educating students about where English has come from and how it has evolved into world Englishes. (S4)

As the students above have demonstrated, these various outcomes closely align with Christian principles of acceptance and accommodation as students experienced substantial changes to the ways in which they engage with language learners.

2. Learning about the history of English restores multilingual students’ confidence in their L1.

Currently English is considered an essential tool for academic and career advancement around the world, and the dominant position it now holds tends to place local languages on the sideline. Although the ultimate goal of the teacher training program is to provide a curriculum to equip future ELT professionals with practical knowledge and skills, it is equally important to alert would-be teachers to linguistic prejudice and to emphasize equipotentiality of all languages
as a means to serve unique needs of specific language communities.

The importance of taking an additive approach, as opposed to a subtractive one, to the teaching of the English language has been highlighted by both practitioners and critics in various circles of scholarly communities. In the case of non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs), this would be possible only when teachers themselves possess a positive outlook on their own native languages. Learning about colonial histories and an emergence of various local dialects offered multilingual students an opportunity to address their own prejudice against their own language. It also allowed the participants to recognize that languages which are commonly considered inferior and inadequate, such as creoles, are worth not only studying and but also codifying, which turned out to be a liberating and empowering experience for some students. Linguistic prejudices toward local dialects are often exhibited in the strongest form by speakers of the dialects themselves. For example, when I asked a student from Jamaica if she could pray in her mother tongue in the beginning of the class, she refused, saying that it would be blasphemous to do so; she stated that her creole is a broken language and therefore should not be used when talking to God. Considering that one of our goals as Christian educators is to empower English language learners to reach out to their own people, such a disparaging attitude toward their mother tongue, be it a language or a dialect, should be brought to the surface. The class provided an open forum for students to confront this type of linguicism. A student from French Guyana reflected,

Local dialects/creoles have traditionally been very stigmatized, with the speakers themselves referring to them as ‘broken’ English or French etc. The class has provided me with information where I can at least try to change these views wherever I can. People from former colonies often do not recognize the dialects that they speak as ‘real’ languages, and I think I would be able to help address some of these misconceptions. (S6)

A Russian student shared a similar sentiment as she stated that critically examining the global status of English led her to realize the importance of maintaining a “language of heritage and pass it on to the next generation to diminish the trend of language extinction” (S5).

Critical language teaching entails helping learners develop agency as well as gaining a broader vision of various contexts in which the English language serves various purposes. It should also actively resist unsound, oppressive language policies and make public implicit assumptions upon which some policies are established. As the Russian student pointed out, first language maintenance would be an important element in such a pedagogy. Learning about the
history served as a facilitative force which enabled students to come to a proper appraisal of the value of their first language.

3. **Understanding the changing landscape of English provides NNESTs with a sense of ownership.**

   With multilingualism, rather than monolingualism, being a new norm, and as those who speak English as a second or additional language far outnumber those who speak it as a native language, conversational contexts in an ELF setting often involve mostly nonnative speakers, and many English learners may never need to communicate with native English speakers (Jenkins, 2015; Kirkpatrick, 2007). The class ruminated on the elusive notion of ‘standards’ and what attitudinal adjustments should be made when teaching and using English as a lingua franca. The class also discussed the importance of supporting local teachers (i.e., NNESTs who teach in their own countries) as well as utilizing the unique assets that the local teachers bring to ELT in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts as they meet the increasing demand for English teachers worldwide. Many NNESTs are somewhat aware of their less-than-ideal positions compared to native English speaking teachers (NESTs) in the job market (Reis, 2011). NNESTs’ sense of inadequacy can be heightened when students (in some cases, parents) indicate their preference for white, native English speaking teachers. These factors could easily undermine the confidence of NNESTs and lead even the most conscientious and best qualified NNESTs to become the severest critics of themselves (see Lee & Sze, 2015). Several scholars (e.g., Faez, 2011; Rudolph, Selvi, & Yazan, 2015) have criticized using categories such as NS and NNS stating that such a dichotomy fails to recognize the complexity involved in understanding learner/teacher identities. And yet it is an undeniable fact that native speaker supremacy is still subconsciously present among various stakeholders.

   A Korean student, in particular, expressed having been empowered and liberated when she recognized that in the newer paradigms (e.g., ELF, EIL), NNESTs can serve as more realistic learner models as well as effective teachers, as she reported that the knowledge was truly life-changing:

   I was shy. I was quiet. Furthermore, I was a non-native English speaker. These were all my weaknesses to be a good ESL or EFL teacher, I thought. But I was wrong… I realized that even all these things could be used for making me even a better teacher… it changed my life forever. (S7)
A Brazilian student also shared how she has gained a sense of ownership of English as an English teacher:

I have grown so much with the class. I appreciate that you included that class in our curriculum. I felt as a non-native speaker and English teacher more in ownership of the English language because the English language is not frozen symbols used to communicate, but people that use it resignify in creative ways the English language expressions. Since the English language is spreading and various people use the English language everyone who makes use of it creates their own nuances and makes the English language their own medium of communication. Thus, as an English teacher I must be attuned that as English enables various ways of expressing, this diversity must be communicated to students. (S8)

The insights gained from historical perspectives freed these NNESTs from fear and feelings of inadequacy and allowed them to recognize their potential as effective English teachers, as well as learn to appreciate the creative power of the English language. To me, this is just as important and empowering, if not more, as learning methods and pedagogy.

There were also a couple of other comments shared by students, which I think are worth mentioning. A student who now teaches at a local academy said that knowledge of history helped her to be able to explain to her ESL students why not everything in the English language follows a set of rules. She said, “It is freeing to have an explanation for why my language is so wacky!” (S3). Another student commented that learning the history has motivated her to “develop a more critical approach to the choice of materials for language teaching aiming for a diversity-oriented approach rather over a single-culture oriented one” (S5).

**Conclusion**

I have outlined three major outcomes of teaching the development and global spread of English, which my former students have voluntarily shared. Although these themes are currently presented in a single course in my institution, I believe that it would be even better if they were woven into an overall program outcome and covered in multiple courses. That may indeed be the case in some programs, and I would like to encourage instructors and directors of such programs to share their practices through publication so that others can benefit from their wisdom.

Reflecting on my experience as an English teacher and teacher trainer, I can say with confidence that empowering students through history has also empowered me as an instructor. As I see multilingual students learning to value their own L1s and themselves as ELT professionals, as well as empowering their own students through the knowledge gained in the
course, I feel invigorated, knowing that my vocation aligns with the Christian mission of empowerment. It has also helped me extend the meaning of the message, “The truth will set you free,” to what I do as a teacher, in a practical and personally meaningful way, as I witness students recognize their prejudices, overcome fear, and develop a genuine desire to become more accommodating.

The following excerpt from a Peruvian student, who now teaches at a U.S. college, describes how she is empowering her own ESL students to reach their potential with insights gained from the class:

Now as an ESL instructor and teaching Middle East students, the knowledge of the history of the English language has helped me to see their language learning in a holistic approach. Most of them share with me about their accents and how this hinders their communication with American people. I love to encourage them that the most important aspect of communication is to be able to be understood by the listeners and also other important aspects of communication... Once they hear that, they start thinking positively about themselves and feel confident to be able to communicate with American people. (S9)

It is on that note that I would like to conclude this article, hoping that it will prompt others to consider incorporating these themes into their curriculum.

References


### Appendix

#### Partial List of Course Topics and Materials

The following list is provided to serve as a resource for those who wish to institute this subject in their teacher training program and yet have no prior experience. I have used selected chapters from books to serve the needs of my students and incorporated other articles to supplement course themes.

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Language Partners: The Church, Multiple Languages and ESL

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Abstract
The lack of the diversity of languages in most churches, combined with the growing number of U.S. residents with a language other than English, points to a potential dilemma for local congregations about how to acknowledge and embrace the linguistic diversity already within the congregation. How should churches respond to speakers of other languages, especially those within their congregation? What should be the role and attitude of the church when dealing with this dilemma? This article examines the biblical and professional rationale for starting a language partnership ESL ministry as a solution. In addition, a discussion of the experience of one church provides suggestions of four principles necessary for successfully building a language partnership through ESL: have a vision, pedagogy is important, value the culture, and build relationships. It is hoped that the information discussed in this article will present an opportunity for further dialog in churches about a response to the growing linguistic diversity within their congregations.

Key words: ESL, language, multicultural church, multilingual church, partnership

Introduction
Historically, churches in the United States have been homogenous within ethnic boundaries and often greatly outnumber the number of multicultural churches (Garces-Foley, 2007). In 2010, a research partnership from Hartford Seminary conducted a survey of 25 different types of faith groups. The results from the randomly sampled survey showed the lack of connection with speakers of other languages in congregations across the United States (Cooperative Congregations Studies Partnership, 2011). Of the 11077 congregations surveyed, 91% did not have a service in a language other than English or a bilingual service (Cooperative Congregations Studies Partnership, 2011). In addition, 90% of the congregations reported no programs of any type for minorities or immigrants. A specific examination of the survey results from 3789 Evangelical Protestant congregations showed 92% did not have services in a language other than English or a bilingual service (Cooperative Congregations Studies Partnership, 2011). Although the results do not quantify how many of the congregations were in areas that had a language group other than English, the results from the 2010 study indicate an overall lack of language inclusiveness in congregations throughout the United States.
The lack of available ministries for languages other than English in churches today is taking place at the same time the numbers of speakers of other languages is increasing throughout communities in the United States. A report from the Center for Immigration Studies based on data from the 2014 American Community Survey estimated 63.2 million residents of the United States used a language other than English in the home (Zeigler & Camarota, 2015). Furthermore, 41% of those who speak another language in the home said that they speak English less than very well (Zeigler & Camarota, 2015). The Migration Policy Institute reports that 9% of the population of the United States is limited English proficient (LEP) (Zong & Batalova, 2015). This number grows much larger in states such as California where 19% of the population is LEP (Zong & Batalova, 2015). The number of immigrants to the United States has increased 11% between the year 2013 and 2014 (Zong & Batalova, 2016). The rise in immigration could have the potential implication of a sustained and significant increase in the number of LEP as well.

The lack of diversity in languages in most churches, combined with the growing number of U.S. residents with a language other than English, points to a potential problem for all churches. How should churches respond to the rapid increase in speakers of other languages, especially those within their congregation? Classes in English have been a common outreach to those in the neighborhood and local communities. Yet the question of how to acknowledge and embrace the linguistic diversity found already inside our church congregations has yet to be addressed. What should be the role of the church to deal with language diversity in ministries and how should it be achieved?

**Biblical Background**

An ESL ministry to the surrounding community has often been used as an outreach tool. According to recent research, an ESL ministry provided through churches has many benefits for the individual, the family and the community. Results from a study of church ESL programs show the benefits include a better appreciation for native language, better family literacy time, and more participation in community issues (Chao & Mantero, 2014). Additionally, the church ESL class becomes a place for gaining local knowledge and providing the support and valuing of the native language often lacking in non-church based programs (Chao & Mantero, 2014). The access to the larger community provided through an ESL class in a church benefits the entire
family with the multiple layers of support for immigrant adults and families provided through the class (Chao and Mantero, 2014). Furthermore, ESL classes at a church were shown to have a more nurturing environment, provide better opportunities to develop and practice higher language skills, and promote a valuing of prior knowledge and culture than the classes provided at a school (Ek, 2008). In contrast, Vafai (2014) found the training of students in an adult ESL school format was based on a business model where funding is the primary reason in every decision and instruction was centered on occupational readiness. This type of ESL instruction did not use lessons that resulted in a connection to learners or to the community and is ultimately likely to fail (Vafai, 2014).

It is clear there are worldly benefits of an ESL ministry in a church setting. However, churches must also consider if there is a biblical rationale as well. Although the Bible does not state “Thou shalt teach English,” there are numerous instructions about the need to consider others and promote unity among believers. In addition, the description of heaven presented in Revelation provides an example of what we should strive for in our churches.

Scripture provides evidence that we are to have unity among believers as one in Christ. An explanation of unity in Christ is found in Ephesians 2:19: “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.” Commentary by Henry (1991) further explains that no one should feel like a stranger because Christ bought us through his sacrifice on the cross. Additionally, Christ builds together his holy temple through the diversity of believers (Henry, 1991, p. 2310). However there is more to the declaration that we should recognize others as part of the unity of Christ. There are admonitions to consider, encourage and meet together, such as found in Hebrews 10:24-25: “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Although the passage does not explicitly state, “Teach English,” it does instruct us to consider one another. Piper describes the attitude of considering one another:

When you get up in the morning, “Consider – think about, ponder, deliberate, meditate, mull over – other people, with this conscious goal: what can I do today so that they will be stirred up to love and to good deeds? Now there is a reason to live and a focus for every day that will never be boring. Every day is new and different. People change. Their circumstances change. You change. But the call remains the same: consider, consider, consider these people you will be around today. (Piper, 1997, Consider What section, para 4)
As our communities become more diverse, the conscious goal to consider those around us should include being intentionally language inclusive in our churches. The instruction to encourage each other is an inclusionary one with no distinction of language mentioned. An intentionally language inclusive church puts in action the biblical instructions to encourage and consider each other to help build the unity of the body of Christ in our diversity.

Finally, the fact that our churches are homogenous does not accurately represent what is to come in heaven. Revelation 7:9 clearly describes a multicultural, multilingual heaven all giving worship to God at the same time: “After this I looked and behold, a great multitude that no once could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” This scripture gives us a picture of the multilingual, multicultural worship to come. It is the model of what we should strive for in our own churches.

Congregations are currently faced with a dilemma. If we are to have the attitude of considering others and value unity within the church, how do we embrace speakers of other languages within our congregation? One answer could be an ESL ministry to those within our congregations that promotes a language partnership rather than a separate but equal attitude. A language partnership provides greater glory of God through our working towards multicultural, multilingual unity and love. As Piper (2005) declares,

The ultimate goal of God in all of history is to uphold and display his glory for the enjoyment of the redeemed from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. The beauty of praise that will come to the Lord from the diversity of the nations is greater than the beauty that would come to him if the chorus of the redeemed were culturally uniform or limited. (p. 234)

Multilingual and Multicultural Churches

The terms multilingual and multicultural have incorrectly become synonymous and are often misapplied. For reasons of clarity this article will define multicultural churches as those with two or more distinct culture groups within the congregation. The term multilingual in the context of the discussion is defined as a church that has two or more languages spoken by its members. This is not meant to say members of the congregation are bilingual (a person who speaks two languages). Instead, in this context the term multilingual is the number of languages spoken within the church congregation as a whole. A church that is multicultural, with two or
more culture groups, may not necessarily be multilingual. For instance, a church congregation in the United States composed of African American and Caucasian members is multicultural yet both culture groups speak English (for the sake of this example); therefore that congregation would not be considered multilingual.

The dilemma of the role of churches in accommodating diversity in languages other than English does not have one solution that applies to every church. The purposeful development of multicultural churches that promote all languages is a solution that has been successful in some situations. The key to success in promoting the accommodation of multiple languages in ministry settings is the intentionality in building the church into one multicultural body. Garces-Foley (2007) defines the multicultural church as one that blends multiple cultures together into a whole new social institution, instead of being two cultures coexisting inside one building. “What is most noteworthy about the multicultural church is not the mere presence of diversity within its walls, but the interaction between those inside” (Garces-Foley, 2007, p. 212). Unfortunately the interaction within the members is not an assured result even with a church that intentionally builds a multicultural congregation. However, there are examples of churches that have been successful at accommodating the multicultural and multilingual needs found within.

There are 6.8 million Canadians, approximately 20.6% of the population of Canada, speaking a heritage language other than English or French (Statistics Canada, 2012). A case study examination of a Canadian congregation provides an interesting example of multiculturalism and multilingualism within a church setting in a country with a large population of speakers of languages other than English. The church, located in Toronto, Canada, started as a church plant for Mandarin immigrants from China and later added an English speaking service as an evangelistic outreach for local Canadians and refugees from other areas that knew English (Han, 2011). It is interesting to note that this church started with the primary language of Chinese and added English, not the other way around. The church has language policies in place to encourage speakers in both languages, two separate services in Mandarin and English, discipleship classes in both languages, and it shares administrative activities (Han, 2011). An example of the language policies is the practice of designating one language to be spoken at the time of an event while at the same time encouraging communication in every language for individuals (Han, 2011). The feeling of social inclusion is encouraged through the promotion of all languages and is evidenced by the willingness of leaders to learn vocabulary and phrases in
other predominant languages (Han, 2011). The intentional promotion of all languages in this church is considered an extension of the evangelistic goal to reach all people, and is not intended to promote diversity for the sake of being a diverse church.

The goal of building a multilingual church, as Han (2011) described, is not an easy process. There are many churches that begin with an ESL program as an outreach program for those in the community. However, the starting point for congregations that are already multilingual could be the development of an ESL ministry as a language partnership for those within the church congregation. A language partnership ESL ministry is one that encourages relationships as well as giving language instruction.

Starting a Church ESL Ministry

There are two considerations that should be examined when developing any ESL ministry for those within the church. First, the resistance within the church body to becoming a multicultural and multilingual church can be one of the most serious challenges (Garces-Foley, 2007). The resistance to change, the lack of desire to change in order to become one church, and the unwillingness and discomfort of members in the process of becoming a multicultural church are serious challenges that must be overcome (Garces-Foley, 2007). Additional challenges include the language policies and social inclusion in a church setting (Han, 2011).

Secondly, an ESL program within the church has many issues to consider. The quality of teachers, varying literacy levels of students, and funding are the most common challenges mentioned in literature (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2008; Eyring, 2014). It should be noted that the lack of funds and lack of willing volunteers are common issues in starting any new church ministry.

The challenge of finding high quality teachers directly applies to adult ESL classes offered in a church setting. The ESL classes in a church setting are usually considered a ministry and therefore the teachers are predominately volunteers. The challenge is when volunteers have the heart but not the skill for teaching ESL. While it is important to have a heart for this type of ministry, it is equally as important to have the knowledge of pedagogy and best practices. Indeed, a wide discrepancy exists in the opinion of what is required of volunteers for effective teaching of English. The North American Mission Board (2014) suggests that churches interested in starting a literacy ministry require volunteers to attend a short one-day workshop to
cover the basics of instruction, outreach, and administration of literacy classes. In contrast, Dormer (2011) considers a lengthier list of skills that are necessary for effective teaching of language and should include communicative competence, linguistic knowledge, theoretical knowledge and methodological competence.

There are a plethora of available resources with advice for starting ESL outreach classes in a church setting. The North American Missions Board (2014) lists several basic tasks and methods to begin a church based ESL ministry. Heineke, Coleman, Ferrell, and Kersemeier (2012) discuss the steps necessary for a school to become more responsive to languages. Dormer (2011) makes recommendations on how to start a teaching ministry in a missions setting. However, finding suggestions on how to use an ESL class to encourage language partnership within the congregation is more difficult.

**Language Partnerships**

The experience of one church in California can provide an example of practices used to develop a language partnership through the use of an ESL ministry for those within their congregation. The example is meant to be a reflection of the practices of a particular situation and not a detailed case study. It is hoped that this reflection can be an opportunity to prompt a discussion in the local church on starting their own ESL ministry for those within their own congregation.

CBC is a church in a medium size coastal California community with members from many different nationalities and languages. It is an established church that has historically been interested in serving the multiculturalism within the church body and the local neighborhood. CBC has developed and maintained a ministry for Spanish speakers as a separate congregation using the CBC church facilities for 17 years. Recently, CBC has begun moving away from being two congregations in one building to an inclusive multicultural, multilingual church body. This move towards inclusiveness has resulted in a church of one body with two languages sharing in the ministries, budgets, activities and lives of all members. On Sunday mornings there is an English service and a Spanish service with joint ministry for children and teens. There is a joint discipleship hour with classes available for adults in English and in Spanish. Once a quarter there is a joint bilingual service to include all members of the congregation.

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1 CBC is a pseudonym for a church where the author is a member.
The recent move to inclusiveness in all areas of CBC has highlighted the need for all church members to feel a part of one church. The time between service and discipleship hour clearly showed the lack of comfortable fellowship expected of members of one body. The English speakers did not feel capable of communicating in Spanish and the Spanish speakers felt uncomfortable speaking in English. In order to promote fellowship within the body an English class was proposed as the method to build relationships and partnerships. The ESL ministry is overseen by a member of the congregation and is staffed with one teacher and two assistants. The class meets once a week and is offered to the members and visitors in either service. Friends and neighbors are welcomed although they are not actively recruited since the main focus is to serve the members of the congregation. The following is a reflection on the experiences and best practices from the development of the ESL ministry at CBC.

Principles for Church Language Partnerships

The experience of CBC in developing its ESL ministry resulted in four principles discussed briefly below: have a vision, pedagogy is important, value the culture, and build relationships.

Have a Vision

It is crucial to draft and cultivate a vision and mission statement for incorporating linguistic diversity (Heineke, et al., 2012). The idea for the ESL ministry developed from discussions between a ministry leader and the Pastors of the church. The original vision of the CBC ESL class was to promote comfortable fellowship that would spread into the greater congregation. The idea was to build a bridge between the two languages with the goal to develop and encourage relationships based on being one body in Christ. The English class provided the method to begin the process of building relationships. The emphasis of the class was to encourage and help those with a desire to learn and converse in English while providing a place to begin friendships and communication with each other. Any decisions about class structure, lessons, curriculum and pedagogy were made with this primary goal in mind. The vision and focus on building relationships resulted in classes that were more informal and had an emphasis on partner lessons, games and activities.
Pedagogy is Important

A crucial component of an English ministry is having theoretical knowledge and methodological competence (Dormer, 2011). The CBC ESL class was developed using a sociocultural framework of learning. The sociocultural framework of learning a language integrates the aspects of cognitive learning and social identity and is focused on the social aspect of language and the context or language as it is used (Vygotsky & Kozulin, 2011). Learning is described as a focus on communication within social and cultural contexts and occurs when new levels of knowledge are reached through the help of those with mastery of the task (Dixon, Zhao, Shin, Wu, Su, Burgess-Brigham, Gezer, & Snow, 2012). The idea of a sociocultural framework fit within the CBC vision of creating comfortable fellowship within a multilingual church. The class does not operate as a formal ESL class with grades, tests, or semesters. Instead of focusing solely on instruction, the majority of the time is spent on individual instruction with volunteer tutors using books for reading, a vocabulary curriculum, or curriculum the students have brought from home. The framework of sociocultural learning is utilized during class by having the volunteers and students with greater English mastery help the students with limited proficiency.

Value the Culture

The dynamics of multiple cultures within one church can present many challenges. In order to overcome challenges the negotiation of each culture is important, recognizing language needs, advocating for bilingual members and not causing harm due to a lack of sensitivity to the culture (Dormer, 2011; Heineke, et al., 2012). Several cultural challenges of the CBC ESL class included the cultural view of being on time, the difference in economic status, and awareness of limited resources. The ability to use electronic resources was impacted by the economic status of the students. Although all the students had phones, it was found that the amount of data available for use was severely limited due to the cost. In addition, many of the students did not own a computer, or the one available computer was for their school age children. The solution was to design the class to be flexible, integrate curriculum that did not use technology the students did not have, and only use books that were free or very inexpensive. The focus and importance was placed on the students being able to come without disrupting their family obligations and budget.

Build Relationships

There are multiple resources that suggest building relationships can lead toward
successful language learning (Dormer, 2011; Heineke, et al., 2012; Sobel & Kugler, 2007). Relationship building at CBC was primarily established through the help of volunteers. The question of proper training and pedagogy was mediated with specific training for the volunteers. At CBC, the director of the ESL ministry is an experienced teacher and before a new volunteer begins they are given instruction on specific methods to help English language learners in conversation and reading. The volunteers are encouraged to be a part of the classroom both as a participant and as a part of the leadership team. Volunteers contribute an essential element of the personal caring and sharing in the class that is necessary for building relationships.

Conclusion

The results of the ESL ministry can be measured in the relationships and attitudes that have improved. The students feel pleased and grateful to have someone take an interest in their needs. One student said, “I thank you for you. You make us feel more better.” An Elder of the church commented on whether the ESL ministry has shown a benefit to the church saying, “It has helped. It helps bind the members of our congregation with different languages closer together as well as making them more comfortable interacting with each other. I would like to see this ministry grow so that language continues to decrease as a barrier to our congregation.” Although fellowship has increased, the greater result is the awareness of each other as a part of one church. An indirect result of having the language partnership ESL ministry is an increase in new people attending the church because of the emphasis on intentionally striving for linguistic diversity.

While the development of a language partnership at CBC has shown positive results, there is still more to be done. A multilingual church should value each of the languages spoken within the congregation. It follows to reason that a multilingual congregation should consider offering classes in the predominant languages spoken other than English. Plans are currently being made to offer a Spanish class at CBC to those within the English-speaking congregation. It is an important part of the strategy to demonstrate the value of all languages within the community.

The rise in the number of speakers of other languages and the current lack of churches that demonstrate the unity and love for those with linguistic diversity points to a dilemma for congregations. The issue of how to embrace and encourage the diversity of language within the
local church, either through an ESL class or another approach, is an important discussion for the unity of the body. The goal should ultimately be the realization that different languages provide a positive contribution and example of the unity found in Christ.

References


Dr. Marlene E. Schmidt (doctormschmidt@gmail.com) teaches English in a variety of settings with students ranging from low-income individuals to company executives. Her research interests include cross-cultural kids, ESL ministry, and teacher education. A sign in her kitchen warns, “I am silently correcting your grammar.”
Teaching English to North Korean Refugees at Banseok School in South Korea: An Interview with Amanda DeCesaro

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Abstract
This interview addresses teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to young-adult North Korean refugees at Banseok School (Pansŏk Hakkyo) in Seoul. A Christian institution supported by Sarang Church (Sarang ŭi Kyohoe), the school offers education, mentorship, and volunteer services in preparation for university admission in South Korea and for the anticipated reunification of the two Koreas. Amanda DeCesaro discusses her volunteer conversation class and methods, student learning needs and social hierarchies, emotions in the language classroom, attitudes toward English, interactions with other learners, and how educators should knowledgeably and compassionately engage North Korean refugee students. The interview was conducted electronically by Alzo David-West.

Key words: classroom interaction, EFL, hierarchies, North Korean students, South Korea

1. Background

Alzo David-West (AD): How did you come to teach English to North Korean refugees at Banseok School?

Amanda DeCesaro (ADC): Over the past few years, I have developed an awareness of North Korea and a heart to see justice for the North Korean people. Not many individuals will find themselves able to serve the people inside their country; however, there are many ways to help North Korean refugees here in South Korea. I was first introduced to Banseok School in 2012, when I volunteered for an English camp.1 Banseok School is an openly Christian school run by Sarang Church in Seoul. The motivation is not conversion but to serve refugee students by following Jesus’ model of unconditional love. After the camp, I was compelled to start

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1 Banseok School is supported by the Church of Love (Sarang ŭi Kyohoe) in Seoul. See “Pansŏk Hakkyo” [Rock School], Pukhan Sarang ŭi Sŏnyubu [Mission for North Korean Love], http://lovenk.sarang.org/sub02/sub03.asp (accessed May 14, 2016). Pansŏk refers to the apostle Peter, whom Jesus told would be the rock upon which he would build his church (Matthew 16:18).
volunteering weekly. Because I was so drawn by the vision of the school to meet the needs of North Korean young adults in their new home in South Korea, I dedicated myself to teach English and to build impactful interpersonal relationships. The Banseok School mission is to mentor these students, to help them adjust to a new environment, to train and prepare them for university, and, hopefully, to aid in the reunification of the two Koreas one day. Sarang Church also offers interested students at Banseok School opportunities for Bible study, faith leadership, and worship services.

**AD:** What objectives and expectations do you set for your language classes?

**ADC:** Students in my classes should be able to use the target language and have a strong understanding of when and why to use a particular speaking strategy. I expect the students to use English with their classmates and practice outside of class. I hold the high expectation that these students will not only have English-language abilities that will suffice academically but also allow them to excel in communication socially, so that these once-isolated people can become active participants as global citizens.

**AD:** How many classroom hours of English do your North Korean students receive?

**ADC:** Banseok School offers about five class hours of English. Each class has a different emphasis. South Korean staff teach grammar, reading, writing, and some listening. My volunteer hours are focused on speaking and communication skills. This semester [spring 2016], the students are separated into levels A to D. Each level has its own two-hour class every Tuesday and Thursday. There is a one-hour English conversation class every Wednesday, which I volunteer for, and another one-hour class every Monday. The one-hour classes are aimed at having the students practice speaking. The leveled classes are similar to the South Korean education curriculum, which primarily focuses on grammar and vocabulary building.

**AD:** Do you use content-based, grammar-based, or task-based teaching methods?²

**ADC:** With the strong tendency in South Korea toward grammar-based materials and testing, I find my lessons following the grammar-based teaching method. However, I have tried to introduce task-based teaching to help motivate my students.

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² Content-based teaching addresses the target language in the context of a school subject; grammar-based teaching focuses on analyzing and memorizing language structures; and task-based teaching develops language skills through meaningful, real-world activities.
2. Students

AD: What are the North Korean students’ language levels, needs, interests, and goals?

ADC: Just like any of the South Korean students I’ve taught over the past four years, the North Korean students vary in level and present different needs. They are unique from each other and have distinct personalities and interests. Surprisingly, they have quite different goals, especially compared to South Korean students. I teach the highest skill level at Banseok School. Last year, I had three high-intermediate level students, and we communicated with great ease. This year, although it is the highest level, I often have to remind my class of four to seven students not to revert to speaking in Korean. Another difficulty my class faces this semester is that the students are a mixed-level group: from advanced-beginner to high-intermediate. Some students need to build vocabulary; some need confidence; while others need focus and motivation. Like most South Koreans, the North Korean students are most interested in their smartphones and romantic relationships. The most noticeable difference in their goals is that while many, like South Korean students, hope to attend university and get into a prestigious company, there are students who do not desire that and simply hope to start working.

AD: What language-learning difficulties do the North Korean refugee students exhibit?

ADC: The greatest hurdle for my students is discouragement. They seem to give up very easily. Even with a lot of encouragement on my part and their understanding of the importance of learning English, they tend to do what is most comfortable. Much to my surprise, each student has a very different accent and, therefore, exhibits different pronunciation difficulties. Another noticeable difficulty is application. Give them a vocabulary quiz on a list of a hundred words they’ve memorized, and they will pass easily, but then ask them to use a given word in a conversation, and they become speechless.

AD: How motivated are the students, and how do you help them overcome their limitations?

ADC: Because my English conversation class is optional and participants are not graded or tested, my students are not very motivated. I’ve discovered that the best way to motivate them as a group is to play speaking games like “Truth or Dare.” However, the most effective way to get them to speak in English and to enjoy it is to take each student out individually for coffee or one of our favorites, bubble tea [sweet milk tea with tapioca balls]. Last year, a colleague of mine at Chongshin University volunteered at Banseok School with me, and we would often take
our students out for fun days, like going ice skating or to the amusement park. This was the turning point in our students’ language abilities. It was as if we unleashed their hidden potential, and all it took was befriending them and spending extra time to allow them to use their accumulated stock of everyday English.

**AD:** How do your North Korean students behave with you as an educator of English?

**ADC:** My students are very polite and extremely loving. I get an astounding greeting every Wednesday morning as I walk into the classroom. Every student yells, “Amanda!” with excitement, and they offer me plenty of high-fives. After each class, no matter how poorly I think it went, they always thank me and say, “Good job.” It is quite endearing actually.

### 3. Hierarchies

**AD:** What explicit social hierarchies (age, class, education, gender) exist among your North Korean students?

**ADC:** Honestly, there is very little evidence of explicit status hierarchies at Banseok School. The students do follow Korean tradition and call older students by the respective titles of *hyong* [older brother] or *ŏnni* [older sister], and they always address Korean teachers as *sŏnsaengnim* [teacher] and use formal language when speaking to them; whereas they usually call native English-speaking teachers by their first names. Other than formal titles, there is nothing I have seen that shows a hierarchy. Banseok School students show a highly egalitarian love and care for one another and do not consider anyone better than another. They equally share their work and compassionately help each other. Also, they all have fun together like close friends.

**AD:** How do the students use English based on the age distinctions among themselves?

**ADC:** Occasionally, they will tell me about “Min-jun brother” or “Ha-ŭn sister” [not the students’ real names]. It is very cute to see them use direct translation like that. That is the only hierarchical English they use. I think they see English as a way to speak even more freely with each other. One of my more unique female students often says, “Hey, boy,” when trying to get her male classmates’ attention, regardless if they are older or younger.

**AD:** What management challenges do implicit hierarchies create in the classroom?[^3]

[^3]: Implicit hierarchies are social relationships in which devices of communication mask or hide power. See Basil
ADC: I have never had to deal with implicit hierarchy management challenges in my classes. It is very freeing actually, compared to teaching South Korean students. There have been a few occasions when my South Korean university students did not want or were afraid to partner with someone who was from a different major or class year. There is none of that at Banseok School. It is a beautiful family.

AD: When do ideological and political controversies arise in classroom interactions?

ADC: No controversies have ever arisen in class. We have even discussed North Korean and South Korean government a few times. Although there was some obvious pain when talking and thinking about family who are still in the North, my students are all in agreement that they just want their friends and family to be safe, healthy, and happy.

4. Emotions

AD: What range and types of emotions do the students display in the classroom?

ADC: In general, my students are happy and excited to be together in class. They are often tired, which is common for the Korean student in general. There have been moments when the past has come up, so I have seen some students remember their former pain. It is very sad, but I am encouraged by how they comfort each other and how quickly the classroom returns to happiness. Because I have gotten really close to many of these students, I can read them fairly well. I know when they are upset or if something is bothering them. Their emotions can have an effect on the class but nothing that has been difficult to overcome. I have very rarely seen a student angry, and not once has anyone become uncontrollably upset.

AD: How do you adapt learning strategies to the students’ emotional intelligence?

ADC: Before I had a close relationship with my students, I could see that emotional intelligence was limited among an earlier group of Banseok School students. They remained closed-off and passive learners. I was extremely discouraged each week and didn’t feel like I was making much of an impact on those students. After that generation of students graduated or moved away, I was introduced to one remarkable young man. His level of English was the


highest we had experienced at Banseok School up to that point, and he enabled us to create the
bridge that made the school what it is today. His past was shadowed in agonizing mystery, and it
was he who tested my own emotional intelligence. I found myself adapting my teaching to how
he was reacting emotionally. For example, if he was acting moodily, I would not avoid his
emotions, which is something I had the habit of doing before. Instead, I would ask him about it.
Being able to talk about his emotions not only helped him find a release or build his English
ability; it also helped him learn more about himself. In my current class, we often discuss
character and emotions. What is encouraging to me is to see students affirm each other. I do not
have a specific learning strategy based on emotional intelligence, but I’ve learned that including
emotions in each class topic has great value.

**AD:** When have your emotions obviously affected the North Korean students’ emotions and vice
versa?

**ADC:** When I bring any emotion other than happiness to Banseok School, the students
perceive it as tiredness and a lack of focus. This definitely affects the way the students learn.
They will be far less engaged during class and often spend a majority of the time chitchatting to
each other in Korean. Whenever I gently remind them to speak English, the chitchat lasts for less
than thirty seconds.

**AD:** Which emotions are most conducive to your language-teaching objectives?

**ADC:** That is quite noticeable when I am as active during class as I expect my students to
be. Whenever I bring a positive attitude that the class will be successful – with a strong
outwardly apparent desire that the students will achieve the objectives of the day – they follow
through. If I am excited and show them that their improvement and participation give me
happiness, then they try to focus more. However, they are aware that my joy is not based on their
performance. They are amazing young adults, and they desire to please. They almost seem to
care more about my emotions toward them than their own success in the class, which has made
me realize how best to approach the material we are covering – with enthusiasm.

5. Attitudes Toward English

**AD:** What are the North Korean refugee students’ attitudes toward English and speakers of
English?

**ADC:** North Koreans have the same basic English-language anxiety as South Koreans
and often shy away from native speakers. However, my Banseok School students are more quickly won over to English than many of my South Korean students. In general, the North Korean refugee students have a very positive attitude toward English and are quite impressed by other Koreans who can speak English at any level of proficiency.

**AD:** Did the students learn English in North Korea, and how did they study and view the language there?

**ADC:** Many of them did not learn any English until leaving North Korea. I have had a few more educated students who were taught English as part of their general curriculum in secondary school. Reportedly, the learning materials were British texts or textbooks that focused on grammar, which is not to assume that all British materials use grammar-based approaches. I also had one student whose major was English, but most of his university days were spent farming or in the military. For those students with prior exposure to English in North Korea, they have told me their view of the language was neither positive nor negative, simply another subject to learn.

**AD:** How do the students compare their previous language-learning experiences with that at Banseok School?

**ADC:** Most of the students are relieved to be studying English in an environment with greater accessibility to learning materials. On the other hand, the students can also become overwhelmed by the wealth of information. They quickly feel the pressure South Korea puts on all students to learn English and score highly on English proficiency exams such as TOEIC. Sometimes the burden to succeed does hinder my students’ ability to learn.

**AD:** Which varieties of world English do the North Korean refugee students prefer?

**ADC:** They unanimously agree that they prefer to learn American English. After arriving in South Korea through China and Thailand and receiving a South Korean passport, some of my students lived in and traveled to Canada and the United States, and that experience may have had some influence on their preference. The South Korean curricular leaning toward American English could also play an affecting role. Two of my previous students are now living in England, though.

6. Interactions with Other Learners
AD: What sorts of interactions have your students at Banseok School had with other learners of English in South Korea?

ADC: My current students do not interact much with other English-language learners. I do have a few students attending *hagwŏn* [private cram school] courses; however, those are mostly lecture-based courses. Two of my recently graduated students, who are now enrolled at the prestigious Hongik University and Yonsei University, have told me that the most difficult aspect of life after Banseok School is adapting to South Korean culture and making friends with other students who are not North Korean. As far as English goes, they are both at the top of their class because these two young men are very hardworking, diligent students who have learned to love English. They have said English class is one of their favorites since the language is foreign to everyone in the classroom, and in that way, all the learners can connect and help each other.

AD: How have you introduced your North Korean refugee students and your South Korean EFL students?

ADC: Only a handful of my South Korean EFL students have met my Banseok School students. A couple of my English education majors have been able to join my class and volunteer their time to put what they’ve learned into practice. Since I often spend time outside class with all my students, I am sometimes able to introduce South Koreans to North Koreans. Whenever this happens, I simply say my students’ names and explain that they are my students. I never say a Banseok School student is a “North Korean refugee.” In fact, saying that is very rude and actually hurtful to the North Korean students. So I simply stick to name-and-student and allow them to introduce themselves further.

AD: Would you describe the nature of the students’ classroom interaction and the activities they did?

ADC: The students are very warmhearted and willing to participate. When the North Korean students interact with the South Korean student volunteers, the atmosphere is very respectful and relaxed. I think having this friendly and laid-back environment helps build the students’ confidence and opens them up to making plenty of meaningful learning mistakes. The nature of our classroom activities are usually fluency based. My class is conversation focused. Therefore, we often learn target-language skills and then apply them in conversation-style activities, such as mingling or pair/group sharing.
AD: What role does English play in relations between North Korean refugees and South Koreans?

ADC: Currently, English plays a minor role in relations between North Korean refugees and South Koreans. However, I hope a bond can be formed when the two groups learn English together. It would be wonderful to see English learning and communication aid in the uniting of a people who have been separated for seventy years and who have become two very different societies. I firmly believe that English ability does and will play a huge role in the success of North Korean students in South Korea. I also think the degree of language attainment can reflect positively or negatively on the image North Koreans have among South Koreans. As an optimist, I would like to see South Koreans embrace their North Korean brothers and sisters, and perhaps English can be a tool to make that happen.

7. Advice

AD: How sensitive should English educators be to the North Korean students’ refugee status?

ADC: I believe it is valuable to be aware of the history and current affairs of the two Koreas. North Korean refugees in South Korea quickly adapt to the technologies of the first-world country they now reside in and, therefore, stay informed about the North. If anyone wishes to come alongside any refugees, it is important to understand them as individuals and as a community. English educators must demonstrate a certain degree of sympathy that does not inhibit learning or allow for further hurt or fear, a sympathy that enables the teacher to teach above certain barriers. When I first began coming in contact with North Korean refugees, I encountered all sorts of stories and cautions. Since the students’ English ability as well as their learning capacity were so minimal at the time, I had no way of hearing their side of the story. Not only was I just beginning to learn Korean, but the language in the North is a purer form of Korean that has not adapted or transformed like the Korean in the South. Thus, I tiptoed around the refugees, almost like they were fragile, in order to avoid hurting anyone. Once the bridge was made between the native English-speaking teachers and the North Korean students, my viewpoint drastically changed. I used to volunteer teach at Banseok School out of a sense of obligation for commitment. Now, I can’t wait to see the students’ beautiful smiling faces. So, yes, be sensitive, but do not forfeit real and meaningful relationships purely because of sensitivity. In my experience, the North Korean people are really forgiving and desire friendships
with those whom they may be able to share their culture and love of country, as well as the hurts and horror stories that accompanied them to their new home in South Korea.

**AD:** *What are the most positively affecting teacher attitudes with this group of students?*

**ADC:** Love cannot be stressed enough. No matter what some professionals or experts may argue, in all my relational experiences nothing is greater than love. Love, of course, expresses itself in many ways. Some days, teachers need more patience, while on other days, they need more compassion. My students are quite intuitive, and there is no faking genuine care. As a mentor in various capacities for over ten years, I have noticed a correlation between my students’ growth and my own personal growth. In the course of that time, I heard many people complain about not being able to love someone they were working with. I myself have been guilty of thinking love would just come on its own. I then realized love is a choice, and the more I chose it, the more it actually came naturally. My advice to any educator, especially to anyone interested in teaching North Korean refugees, is to think about a current student who is difficult to love, and practice with her or him. There is a lot of information available on this topic. I recommend learning more about it. Ministry-run schools such as Banseok School apply the ethic of Christ-like, or agapic, love in practical ways to show those being served that they are valued and important. Presently, Banseok School volunteers are helping graduating students write their self-introductions for university entrance interviews. By attending to each student’s strengths, interests, and vision, we have been reinforcing the idea that each student is unique and precious.

Another teacher attitude that is extremely valuable for students is a state of constant humility. Think back to when you were a student, or perhaps, like me, you are currently trying to learn another language. What kinds of fears do you face as a student? Which emotions and frustrations occur out of the unavoidable discomfort of making mistakes or not achieving your goals? It can be exhausting to be constantly comparing yourself to others or to higher standards. In this kind of “in the other person’s shoes” mindset, many educators have created highly successful learning environments.

**AD:** *What topics and materials do you recommend for North Korean students of English in South Korea?*

**ADC:** Finding topics for North Korean students has been one of the most challenging tasks in my teaching them. Because of their long-term isolation from much of the world, they are
still very unaware of many cultural topics. Though they are fast learners, I often get blank stares when I introduce an unfamiliar subject. But like I mentioned earlier, however, they love talking about relationships and family. Although talking about family can mean talking about losing loved ones or missing those still in North Korea, it is a topic they can all engage in on a deeper level. I currently use the *Touchstone* series from Cambridge University Press to focus my class, especially for speaking and communication skills. I recommend meeting with the students first and asking what their interests are and what they would like to learn. If they feel in charge of their own learning, they will become more motivated. If at all possible, also take students outside the classroom and expose them to real life. In my own opinion, it is a less controlled but more compelling “classroom.”

**AD:** How can one engage the students in sustained, meaningful communication in English?

**ADC:** Get to know the North Korean refugee students as people. If you show interest in them, they will reciprocate. Sharing experiences together also creates sustainability in communication. There are great advantages in doing special activities together. I have cheerfully asked my students to talk to South Korean service employees in English.5 Some of them have ordered coffee, and others have asked about trying on clothes – all in English. The employees look a bit startled at first, but most are very gracious, especially when they see me standing next to my students. Sometimes the service people are happy to practice their English in return. Small adventures like these create a giant impression on students, something they will be talking about for days, months, and years.

**AD:** Thank you for your time.

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Reviews


Reviewed by Megan Reiley, Westminster Theological Seminary

Finding a good textbook for academic ESL at the graduate level can be difficult, and finding one that focuses on theological English almost impossible. However, with the publication of Exploring Parables in Luke: Integrated Skills for ESL/EFL Students of Theology, there is a new option for students seeking to study theology at an English-speaking seminary or college.

Having taught with this book in the summer of 2015 in a seminary-based intensive English program focused on theological English, I can truly say that it is a worthwhile addition to the field. I used it in an integrated skills class for students who had received conditional admission from the seminary, dependent on improving their English. The program is rigorous, designed for graduate students of theology, and expects students to exit having the skills necessary for high-level work in theology in English. While this review will be for a general context, some of my comments come from my experience having taught in that context.

Summary

As a textbook, it is unique that each chapter focuses on a different parable from the book of Luke, as the title suggests. In addition to the parable from Luke, there is also an introductory parable and at least one theological reading that all relate to a single theme. Each chapter follows the same format, although the chapters do not necessarily have to be done in order and are organized so the first four are easier than the last four. Part I of each chapter consists of an introductory parable, often a folk tale from another country. There are comprehension questions, a language focus section and theological discussion questions after each reading. The language focus is usually a combination of either a vocabulary or grammar area that advanced students still struggle to use correctly.

After introducing readers to the themes of the chapter, Part II moves into a theological passage. These passages are summaries of evangelical theologians’ writings on a theological topic. As a unique feature of the book, the authors have included two versions. The version on
the left is more difficult, and one can assume more authentic; the version on the right is a simplified text. Students are encouraged to choose to read the passage of their choice. The passages are followed by a language focus, comprehension questions, and questions that encourage students to make connections with other theological ideas and works. These follow-up activities are applicable regardless of which passage the students choose to read.

Part III introduces the parable from Luke and asks students to relate the themes and lesson of the parable to those of the earlier parable and theological reading. Each chapter then concludes with a writing section, guiding students to write their own parable over the course of the book.

Response

Overall this is an easy book to use in the classroom with intermediate to advanced learners, and it quickly engages theological students’ interest. The themes from the parables and theological reading in each chapter tie together nicely, challenging students to apply the theological reading and think more deeply about the meaning of the Biblical text. The activities following each text include a nice variety of language exercises, such as exercises that develop morphological awareness, ask students to paraphrase a selection, and give students focused grammar practice. The writing portion of each chapter builds on previous chapters to walk students through the process of writing a parable themselves.

In many ways, Exploring Parables in Luke serves as a bridge between standard academic or general ESL texts and authentic theological material. To benefit from the book, the student must already be at an intermediate or above proficiency, although the intended language proficiency level is not indicated in the preface. Even the simplified version is not appropriate for lower-level learners as it presupposes an intermediate vocabulary and knowledge of English grammar. Additionally, the grammar and vocabulary instruction provided is minimal and assumes that students have already received fuller instruction or that the teacher will supplement with a more detailed explanation. On the other hand, the “difficult” text is itself a summary of other theologians’ ideas and thus is often simpler than the authentic language that the theologian used in his or her original work. However, as a bridge between students coming from general ESL instruction and looking towards studying theology at a college or seminary, this book nicely helps move students closer towards their goals.
The weakest area of the book, at least in my experience of using it in an integrated skills classroom, is that it focuses almost entirely on reading and writing. The speaking and listening activities come as students listen to a text being read and then discuss the reading. While the book does encourage students to speak in pairs, small groups and as a class, there is no focused listening or speaking instruction. Particularly with listening, as it is such a crucial skill for students and so difficult to master, it would have been nice to have a section that suggests ways for teachers to incorporate academic listening into the curriculum. In the program where I taught we supplemented our discussions of each parable by reading along with audio versions of the Scripture passages from Luke and listening to sermons posted online about the parable. While understanding the publishing and logistical difficulties of including actual listening texts in the book, the authors could have at least provided some examples of ways to give the students authentic academic listening practice.

In the same way that parables themselves take difficult concepts and present them in often clearer story form, Exploring Parables in Luke is at its best when walking students through theological concepts by encouraging intermediate and high-level students to read and discuss these themes. It provides students initial exposure to authors and concepts they will more fully explore once they begin their theological studies. Exploring Parables in Luke offers students a bridge from general ESL material to authentic theological content, and does so in a high-quality, engaging manner.

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New Ways in Teaching Adults, Revised

Reviewed by Shalom Bay, Biola University

Various professionals from across the globe have coalesced to make this book, a collection of activities, possible; Marilyn Lewis and Hayo Reinders have spearheaded the movement. Both Lewis and Reinders have spent numerous years teaching overseas in multiple
countries. The dedication is for colleagues in Japan and likewise the majority of the contributions seemed to be aimed at overseas classrooms. Izatt’s “Anne of Green Gables: Developing Listening and Speaking Skills” (p. 76), for example, specifically states “Japan” in its introduction. Nonetheless, the activities can be readily applied for any teaching context, as demonstrated throughout the book.

Summary

The collection commences with the Categorization of Activities by Skill. The chart has two columns: Category and Page Number. The Categories are as follows: Speaking, Reading, Writing, Listening, Vocabulary, Grammar, Integrated, English for specific purposes (ESP), English for academic purposes (EAP), In class, Out of class, Computer-assisted language learning (CALL), Very quick, and Learning to learn. Due to the crossover of skills across categories, there are numerous page numbers listed for each category. This is followed by an introduction and dedication. Then without any further ado, the reader comes straight to the activities, which follow a straightforward format: Title of activity, Author, one sentence summary (like an abstract), Levels, Aims, Class time, Preparation Time, followed by a brief paragraph introduction.

This book is like a cookbook. The contributors are chefs who have submitted their own recipes (procedures) for different dishes (activities). Some of the activities are very simple; these can be related to pre-literate (pp. 104-106) and beginning levels. Some recipes are more advanced and require more technical skills (pp. 100-103). Some of the recipes are smaller in portion and are more like snacks or appetizers; these are the activities that would not fill a large portion of your meal (class time). In fact, if you’re looking for a heavy meal (or a full lesson plan), you might want to find a different book. This book does require some knowledge and classroom experience to replicate the recipes. Some of the recipes provide very detailed notes (found in Procedure sections) whereas some provide very minimal blurbs and expect you to fill in the blanks. Moreover, you will find the amount of time allotted per activity to be precise measurements of time such as “22 minutes” (p. 26), as well as guesstimates, such as “minimal” (p. 5).

If you were not well acquainted with the topic presented, more explanation would be required to carry out some activities. In Berridge and Muzamhindo’s “Questioning the Text:
Developing Critical Reading Skills” activity (p. 8), Step 3 of the procedure calls for the teacher to “present the students with a concise explanation of different types of questions, particularly higher/lower and open/closed (See Appendix B).” However, Appendix B (p. 10) does not provide sufficient explanation as to what these types of questions or thinking are. This might lead some teachers to hesitate from choosing this activity due to the extra legwork required.

Some recipes provide you with alternatives, found in the Caveats and Options sections. Most provide a References and Further Reading section for curious readers. Particularly helpful are the Appendix sections, when included, where sample handouts and/or worksheets are provided. The reader will be grateful for what is provided. For example, Allthorpe’s “Hang on a Minute: Developing Fluency in Speaking” activity (pp. 5-7) provides a thorough explanation of the procedures and even include caveats and options, yet omits references, any further reading and appendices.

Activities focus on decreasing anxiety and increasing confidence for practical purposes. Tomas and Dil’s “Encouraging Peer Feedback with Sticky Notes” (pp. 170-171) is one such example. The practicality of the “I Need a Job: Role-Playing Job Interviews” activity by Han (p. 64) is notable. What is similarly very useful in real life is Ho’s “Eliciting the Components: Identifying the Characteristics of a Letter and a Summary/Abstract” (p. 71). The sample letter, summary/abstract and chart in the appendices are very relevant and helpful. Schoen’s “The Boss and the Memos: Communicating Through Writing Memos in a Workplace” (pp. 154-156) also covers a very needed skill needed for adults in the workplace. Toland’s “The Speed-Dating Game: A Merry-Go-Round of Authentic Communication” (pp. 160-166) provides communicative practice in a light-hearted and low-pressure environment.

There are also activities that go beyond simple skill practice for students. Hassall’s “Using L1 to Teach L2: Encourage Students to Evaluate the Efficiency of L1 and L2” (p. 67) appears to be the basis of a very interesting research topic; the students are guided to introspect on their own use of L1 and L2. Hilder’s “The Pyramid Method: Raising Students’ Awareness for Note-Taking Strategies” (p. 69) is also more metacognitive and reflective. Menconi’s “Lovely Topics: Expressing Interests in Classroom Topics” (pp. 111-112) would greatly assist the teacher in planning a suitable program based on feedback from the students. Ogilvie’s “Investigating Intercultural Habits: Mini Research Project About the Frequency of Behaviour in Different Settings” (p. 126) helps “procedural knowledge,” or intercultural awareness.
Viana’s “Students as Researchers: Investigating Language Appropriateness Through Corpora” (pp. 174-177) is also more investigative. Kirkness’ “Using Answering Machines to Practice Telephone Conventions” (p. 81) and “Teacher as Postie: Practicing Authentic Correspondence” (p. 83) provide great personal and linguistic practice for students. These activities all have the purpose of creating connection and community with the students and the teacher.

**Commentary**

Although one might be able to infer as to which are the so-called time-tested activities, it would still have been appropriate to label the activities based on their novelty and revisions or their demonstrated consistency. Another suggestion that might be helpful is to categorize the teaching ideas by skill level (beginning – advanced). To go further, categorizing the activities by length of time required to prepare or class time would help a teacher quickly look up an idea for class.

Despite the fact that this is a revised version, however, there remain some outdated aspects. For example, Bricault’s “Melody in Class: Using Songs to Exchange Cultural Values” (pp. 18-19) is a great idea but provides very minimal resources. A sample of some sort would have been a good support. Also, it says to play music with an audiotape, which is mostly outmoded. Lonsdale’s “Academic Writing Through Oral Skills: Discovering Academic Conventions” (pp. 96-97) is great, but calls for the use of an overhead transparency (OHT) which nowadays is likewise outdated in many contexts.

Another way to use the activities in this book is that that they can be modified. Chan’s “Watch to Learn: Using Videos or DVDs for Note-Taking Practice” states that the activity “requires . . . half a dozen lecturers, professors, or other colleagues [to] agree to being video recorded as they give actual lectures” (p. 21). This may not be necessary, though, as you can find clips on YouTube or elsewhere via the Internet. Clark’s “Goal Setting: Developing Literacy Level” (p. 28) activity is great, however I would contest the level stated. Rather than Intermediate, I would say Beginning to low-intermediate because the cloze exercise provided in Appendix B has students conjugating simple verbs (such as be, want, like).

In some cases activities in the book could have been improved, such as by including sample student-written poems for Davidson’s “Learning with Rhymes and Rhythms: Using Poems for Creative Writing” (p. 40) or example skits for Dickens’ “Gee! Have Fun and Learn
With Fillers in Conversation” (pp. 45-46). However, even without certain aspects this book provides a myriad of engaging and diverse teaching ideas and proves to be a good reference.

What’s great about *New Ways in Teaching Adults* is that many of its activities can be used with materials you have at hand; you are not required to go out and search for some of the materials required. For example, Magrath’s “Using Authentic Materials in ESOL: How to Adapt Everyday Materials” (pp. 108-110) uses apartment guides which are readily available in many places. So, if you are looking for ideas for teaching adults ESL/EFL, this edited collection of activities is a great resource!

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**Virtuous Minds: Intellectual Character Development**

Reviewed by Cristy Brink, ELS Language Center

I began to read this book at the end of a week in which I had caught three of my Intensive English Program students plagiarizing. Experiencing pressure from without and desperation within, they saw the levels of our EAP program as a barrier rather than a path to their progress. They were willing to deceive and to short-circuit their own learning to get the talisman of a completion certificate.

Having dealt with academic dishonesty, I was primed to receive the message of *Virtuous Minds*, an exploration of the seven aspects of intellectual virtue and their benefits. Written in an accessible style, with engaging anecdotes and explanation, it proposes intellectual virtue as the antidote to the dismaying prevalence of deception, carelessness, bias, and cowardice in our public and private lives. This book is aimed at Christians, primarily but not exclusively educators. To aid the reader in understanding and applying the concepts, a discussion guide and sample curricular documents are included in the appendices.

**Summary**

The introduction to *Virtuous Minds* argues that moral choices have an intellectual dimension; we make most of our choices on “mental autopilot” (p. 23), so our habitual thinking
processes affect the direction of our lives, whether for good or ill. The author links intellectual virtue with the command to love God with all of our minds.

In chapters 1-7, Dow describes seven intellectual virtues: courage, carefulness, tenacity, fair-mindedness, curiosity, honesty, and humility.

• Intellectual courage is the willingness to take risks in the pursuit of truth. It is the basis of all the other virtues, enabling us to practice them when the stakes are high.

• Intellectual carefulness is a habit of paying attention to detail and resisting drawing conclusions until there is sufficient evidence. It results in confidence in one’s own work and a reputation for trustworthiness.

• Intellectual tenacity is the determination to do necessary, difficult, and tedious work in the pursuit of goodness and truth. A habit of tenacity leads to personal growth, overcoming of limitations, and real success.

• Intellectual fair-mindedness is a willingness to listen to a variety of opinions in order to arrive at the truth. It is not the same as relativistic openness, which precludes a knowledge of truth by proclaiming all opinions to be equally valid. Fair-mindedness requires the sacrifice of the ego, a willingness to be proven wrong, to gain the truth, along with a willingness to listen carefully whether we admire a speaker or not.

• Intellectual curiosity is simply the desire to know more and the willingness to follow facts where they lead. It involves observation and a habit of asking why things should be the way they are.

• Intellectual honesty is concerned less with getting information than with presenting it. It is a desire to help others arrive at the truth that makes one careful to avoid misleading an audience, distorting facts, or claiming another’s work as one’s own. It also has application to the personal realm; e.g., whether we will admit sin or change the rules to suit our conduct, or whether deception will ruin our relationships. Intellectual honesty leads to greater trust and a stronger foundation for the pursuit of knowledge.

• Intellectual humility is a willingness to see our abilities and limitations in light of an omniscient and all-intelligent God. It results in a teachable spirit that leads to greater understanding and expanded horizons. Intellectually humble people can enjoy the successes of others as well as their own, and they are willing to share their knowledge generously.
Chapters 8-11 detail the fruits of intellectual character: increased knowledge, better thinking, love for God, and love for neighbors. Increased knowledge leads to a richer experience of the world, new insights and solutions, and greater influence in the world. Better thinking skills and habits of mind make learning less painful in the long run and therefore make possible greater growth and achievement. More importantly, the expanded knowledge and stewardship of potential that accompany intellectual virtue lead to better worship (Rom. 12:1; Mk. 12: 30; Ps. 8:1-4) and apologetics (I Pet. 3:15). It makes trust possible between neighbors and fuels both practical improvements in our neighbors’ lives and a greater concern for their dignity.

In chapters 12-13, Dow considers how to develop the intellectual virtues in ourselves and in others. First, he offers ten principles for personal transformation. These include goal setting, self-evaluation, planning, accountability, and concrete action. Next, Dow makes seven suggestions to teachers and parents, addressing motivation, modeling, and teaching.

Dow concludes with a reflection on the parable of the sheep and the goats (Mt. 25:31-26) in order to highlight that both groups acted unconsciously (“But when did we…”). Their virtuous or evil deeds flowed naturally from a virtuous or evil character. The daily, small decisions of a lifetime became the habits of mind that produced fruit leading either to eternal life or eternal destruction. Thus, the consequences of the intellectual virtues extend far beyond the classroom to eternity.

**Commentary**

In the descriptions of the seven virtues, I saw everything that my plagiarizing students needed, from the courage to make mistakes and learn from them, to curiosity about language and course content, to the tenacity to persevere and achieve excellence, to the honesty to do independent work and humility to accept accurate feedback and learn from it. The diagnosis was clear. If I were a teacher or administrator in a K-12 Christian school, the appendices would provide direction for a treatment plan, with outlines of curriculum, assessment rubrics, and senior project assignments. The application to a secular, university context is less clear. However, there is plenty of guidance here that a language teacher can take and adapt.

Dow’s first suggestion to teachers is to “begin with the end in mind” (p. 126). Here, Dörnyei’s (2009) L2 motivational self system comes to my mind. To stay motivated in a
difficult task, learners need to have fully realized ideal- and ought-selves in their L2 context. Moreover, there needs to be harmony between these two future selves. For students coming from vastly different educational cultures, the ideal self is likely to need elaboration and adaptation as they are confronted with Western academic practices, and what emerges may not be in harmony with the ought-self enforced by peer norms and other community pressures. In order to increase language learners’ motivation to practice the intellectual virtues in their new context, teachers will have to hold up examples of intellectual virtue for learners to enfold into their ideal L2 selves and provide explicit instruction in Western academic norms to help them develop an ought-self that is in harmony with their ideal.

Until now, I have taken a pragmatic approach to training my students in Western academic practices. Not wishing to send the message that the ways they are used to are wrong, while mine are right, I have instead focused on teaching them what works in their new context. Curiosity and critical thinking are rewarded; plagiarism and copying are both ineffective and disapproved of; therefore, they need to comply in order to be successful, regardless of what they feel is right or wrong. However, Dow makes a convincing case that intellectual virtue is not separable from plain old moral virtue. Therefore, aping intellectual virtue as a pragmatic strategy for success is not sufficient. As a Christian English teacher, I ought to be concerned with my students as whole persons. According to Dow, “Because our minds tend to lead our actions, in a very real sense the quality of our intellectual character even trumps moral character in terms of its power to direct the course of our lives” (p. 22). While I wish he had provided better biblical support for this claim, Dow amply proves that intellectual character has a tremendous impact on the direction our lives take, whether personally, socially, or professionally. Although the application may be limited by the teaching context, and perseverance will be required to see any fruit from such a difficult task, I recommend this book to Christian English teachers who hope to have a godly impact on their students’ intellectual development.

Reference

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