1. Introduction

1.1. Overview, aims and purpose of the study

Top-down educational change programmes launched by governmental policy-makers often face resistance from teachers (Fullan, 2007; Markee, 1997). In particular, several studies have shown that communicative language teaching (CLT) implementation has faced problems in various Asian contexts, including, Indonesia (Lamb, 1995), Thailand (Tayjasanant & Barnard, 2010), the Philippines (Waters & Vilches, 2008), Vietnam (Barnard & Nguyen, 2010; Canh & Barnard, 2009), China (X. Cheng, 2010; Leng, 1997), Hong Kong (Carless, 1999; L. Cheng, 2002), Taiwan (C. Wang, 2002) and South Korea (Han, 2010; Li, 1998). In Japan, although the Ministry of Education (MEXT) has tried to implement CLT in secondary schools, it has been widely reported that many Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) continue to use the traditional *yakudoku* (grammar-translation) approach (Gorsuch, 1998; O'Donnell, 2005; Sakui, 2004; K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Taguchi, 2005; Watanabe, 2004). Two factors blamed for this phenomenon are the grammatically oriented university entrance tests (Amano & Poole, 2005; Gorsuch, 2001; Nishino, 2008; Watanabe, 2004) and MEXT-mandated textbooks (Browne & Wada, 1998; Gorsuch, 1999; LoCastro, 1997; McGroarty & Taguchi, 2005; Pacek, 1996; Rosenkjar, 2009). However, the educational institution where I worked and conducted this research was free from pressure from university entrance tests, for reasons that are explained in Subsection 1.2.1, and a decision was made by the management to change from MEXT-mandated to CLT-oriented textbooks from April 2007. Therefore, this study arose from the desire to explore the extent and nature of the new textbook adoption, with the participation of four colleagues in this unique context.

Fullan states that "changes in actual practice along the three dimensions - in materials, teaching approaches, and beliefs, in what people do and think - are essential if the intended [educational change] outcome is to be achieved" (Fullan, 2007, p. 37). Following Fullan's assertion, this study therefore focused on (1) comparing the old and new textbooks, (2) the JTEs' attitudes, and (3) their classroom instruction. In order to understand the participants' attitudes and actions without disrupting the natural flow of the lessons, this research worked within a qualitative case study design, employing multiple methods of inquiry such as textbook analysis, interviews and observations.

The aims of this study were threefold. Firstly, the comparison of the MEXT-mandated and new CLT-oriented textbooks aimed to understand the requirements

expected of the teachers and students. Secondly, the interviews sought to explore the teachers' attitudes to the textbooks, and their perceptions regarding their own teaching approaches and the factors that influenced their instruction. Thirdly, the classroom observations explored the teachers' actual use of both textbooks and the level of student participation. Therefore, combination of these three components could indicate the degree of textbook adoption within the perceived local constraints.

This chapter introduces the study from three perspectives: origin and focus (1.2), research structure (1.3), and organisation of the thesis (1.4).

1.2. Origin and focus

This section describes the context and the changes that took place, which motivated this study.

1.2.1. The *Kosen* context

The site for this study was a rural technical college (the "*Kosen*") located on the Kii Peninsular on Japan's main *Honshu* Island. Although students in regular Japanese high schools study for three years (aged 16-18) and may take a university entrance exam, *Kosen* students study for an additional two years. Upon graduation from the five-year course, *Kosen* students have three options: they can seek employment, study for an in-house degree, or transfer into the third year of a university course without sitting an English entrance exam (Figure 1.1).
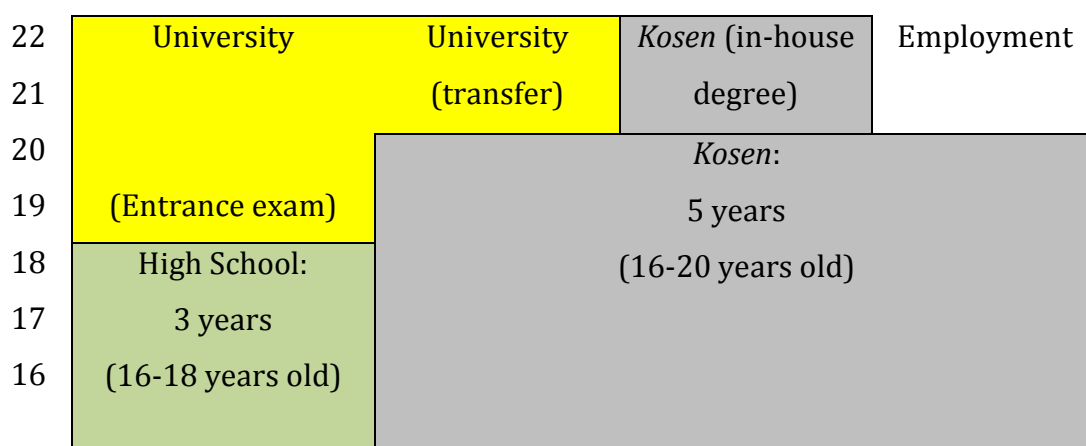
22	University	University	*Kosen* (in-house	Employment
21		(transfer)	degree)	
20		*Kosen*:		
19	(Entrance exam)	5 years		
18	High School:	(16-20 years old)		
17	3 years			
16	(16-18 years old)			

Figure 1.1 *Kosen* graduation routes

Although English is taught in the *Kosen*, vocational engineering subjects take precedence, which is reflected in the hours devoted to English in the curriculum. Although the first year (Grade 10) students take six 45-minute periods of English per

week, the frequency decreases for senior students and the subject becomes an optional two periods in the final year (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Periods of English per week

Grade	Periods per week
1 (equivalent to US Grade 10)	6 (including one oral communication class)
2 (equivalent to US Grade 11)	5
3 (equivalent to US Grade 12)	5
4 (equivalent to university freshman year)	3
5 (equivalent to university sophomore year)	(2) (optional)

The *Kosen,* which was the site for this study, faced serious problems. Partly due to the rural location, it struggled to attract students (three local junior high schools closed in the last 10 years). The head office appointed a new Principal to explore the possibility of closing the college in 1999. Instead, the Principal reduced staffing costs through redundancies and salary reductions, and took measures to increase the student intake. In 2000, he rebranded the college by changing the name and the uniform. Moreover, he took steps to increase the student intake through increased marketing, reduced tuition fees and an unlimited number of free scholarships. In particular, many sports scholarship students joined the college and their results were publicised in the Principal's speeches, college brochures and the website. Moreover, the *Kosen*'s entrance test was adapted to allow an unlimited number of *suisen* (recommendation) students who could enter based on recommendation letters from their junior high teachers or sports coaches. In effect, despite the title "entrance test", very few students were rejected and the interviewers were instructed to explain the *Kosen*'s merits to the interviewees.

These measures led to a temporary increase in students (Figure 1.2). From 2001 to 2004, the student intake exceeded the enrolment target of 160 students (reaching a peak intake of 170 students in 2004). However, from 2005 to the year of the study in 2008, the *Kosen* failed to attract the required number. In April 2008, only 134 students entered the *Kosen*. Moreover, between 2005 and 2008, only 30-45 percent of the students came from the local area, which led the Principal to begin negotiations to relocate the *Kosen*.
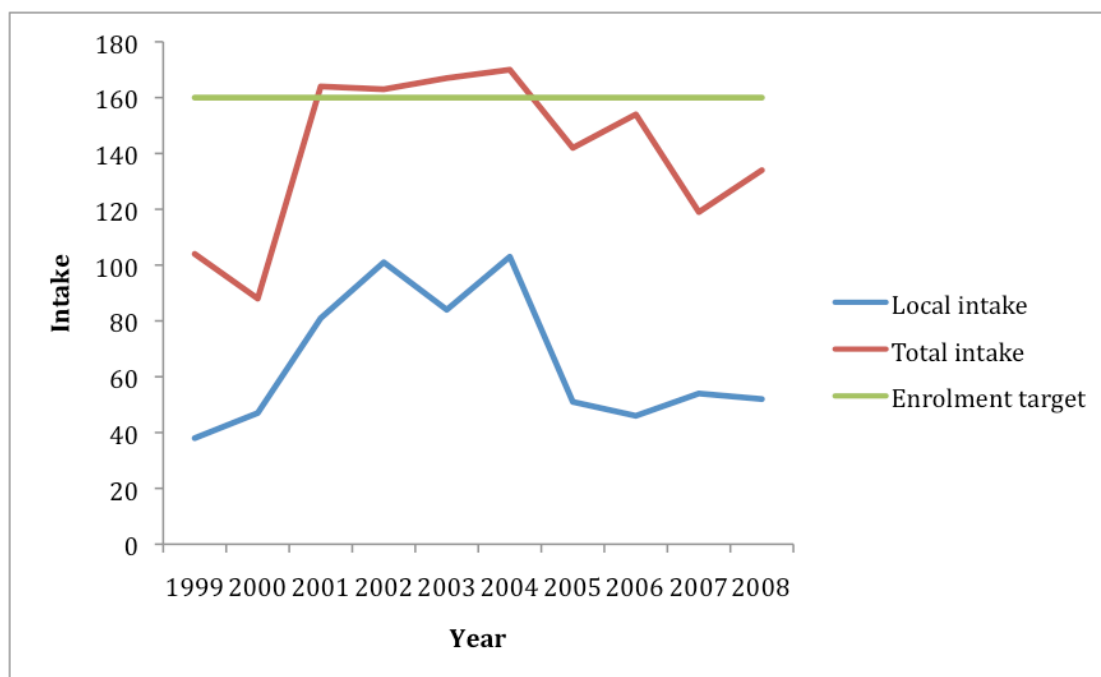
Figure 1.2 *Kosen* **student intake 1999-2008**

These conditions caused a background of uncertainty for my colleagues in this study, and contributed to the curricular changes described in the next section (1.2.2).

1.2.2. The changes at the *Kosen*

This section describes the changes to the English curriculum, which motivated this study.

From 2007, the *Kosen* joined the Japan Accreditation Board for Engineering Education (JABEE), which sets accreditation criteria for bachelor's degrees in engineering (JABEE, 2008). Although JABEE sets the standards for the tertiary-level engineering courses, the college adopted five modified goals for the secondary education level syllabi (Appendix B), and displayed them in all the classrooms:

1. Develop competence in basic technology.
2. Develop competence in applied design.
3. Develop a sense of engineering ethics and values.
4. Develop into an adult possessing a wide range of knowledge who is prepared to become a working member of society.
5. Develop communicative competence.

Regarding communication, JABEE (2008) focuses on practical skills in Japanese: "Japanese-language communication skills including methodical writing, verbal presentation and debate abilities" (p. 2), but it also adds the vague objective "basic skills

4

for international communication" (p. 2). The JABEE guidelines also contain an objective that is compatible with CLT learner-centred values (see Chapter 2, Subsection 2.2.1): "An ability to carry on learning on an independent and sustainable basis" (JABEE, 2008, p. 2).

In line with the JABEE recommendations, the principal ordered a change to a communicative English curriculum and the dean of the Liberal Arts Faculty proposed the introduction of new forms of testing and textbooks. The head of the English department felt that a total change could cause too much disruption; therefore, the change only affected grades 2-4. Grade 1 continued to use the original texbooks and assessment.

Following the guidance of the dean, the department pilot-tested the TOEIC and TOEIC Bridge Tests (TOEIC, n.d.) and evaluated suitable textbooks. The pilot test results indicated that students scored too low on the TOEIC Test for it to produce a reliable range of results. Moreover, it seemed to have a demotivating effect on the students, who complained that they struggled to answer any questions. Alternatively, TOEIC Bridge scores spread across a wider range. Therefore, teachers agreed to introduce TOEIC Bridge as a standard test and offer TOEIC on a voluntary basis.

Regarding textbook selection, the dean ordered the selection of textbooks that could help students prepare for TOEIC Bridge, but which did not explicitly focus on test drilling. During an initial meeting between the full time English teachers and the dean, it was decided that the new textbooks should contain: (1) communicative functions and situations, (2) listening practice, and (3) sections of extended reading. Based on these preferences, I ordered some samples from international publishers and we had two further meetings. Firstly, we had a meeting of the full time English teachers to select the textbooks. Secondly, the part time English teachers met to view and approve the choice, before final approval from the dean.

Regarding the administration of the tests, the TOEIC Bridge Institutional Program Test (TOEIC, n.d.) was implemented for grades 2-4 and administered by the English teachers once a year during the first mid-semester common test period. During the three remaining common test periods (first semester's final exam, and second semester's mid- and final exams), the teachers continued to use the same 20-25-question multiple-choice test format as in the pre-2007 version (Appendix C). The common tests contained gap-filling questions based on Section 1 (vocabulary, phrases and grammar) of the *Eiken* Test (Eiken, n.d.).

Despite the implementation of the TOEIC Bridge Test as an annual procedure, the English department decided to reduce the value of this test and the other common tests from 50 percent to 30 percent, for three reasons. Firstly, the new JABEE standards raised the minimum pass score from 50 percent to 60 percent. Secondly, teachers believed that students would struggle to score points in the TOEIC Bridge listening section. Thirdly, probably due to the fall in the proficiency level of students entering the *Kosen*, the teachers noted that average common test scores had declined; therefore, many students had to take re-tests each semester. In contrast, by increasing the classroom-based assessment from 50 percent to 70 percent, the teachers agreed that they could customise their tests to the students' ability. In other words, the teachers could help their students to pass (see Chapter 5, Section 5.4.3.3).

This study focuses on the effects of the change in textbooks. Although the first graders continued to use a MEXT-mandated textbook called *Vivid English Course (New Edition) I* (Minamimura et al., 2006a), Grades 2-3 used new CLT-based textbooks *On the Go* (Gershon, Mares, & Walker, 2004a) and *On the Move* (Gershon, Mares, & Walker, 2004b).

The old and new textbooks contain substantial differences, described in Chapter 4 and outlined in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 Textbook comparison

Vivid	*On the Go* and *On the Move*
Teacher-centred	Learner-centred
Emphasis on reading comprehension	Emphasis on listening and speaking
Overt grammatical usage instruction	Focus on communicative situations
Japanese publisher, aimed at Japanese high schools	British publisher, aimed at a variety of institutions in East Asia
Instructions and explanations in Japanese	Only glossary and "phrase book" contain Japanese
Low output, highly structured exercises	Meaning-focused exercises. Encourage students to creatively share information and opinions

This context and these changes presented a unique opportunity to study the potential for CLT in a context of transition. As outlined in 1.1, studies of JTEs in regular high schools indicated that they tended to defy MEXT's communicative policies in favour of grammar-translation (Gorsuch, 1998; O'Donnell, 2005; Sakui, 2004; K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Taguchi, 2005; Watanabe, 2004). The *Kosen* teachers lacked the commonly reported constraints such as non-communicative textbooks (Browne &

Wada, 1998; Gorsuch, 1999; LoCastro, 1997; McGroarty & Taguchi, 2005; Pacek, 1996; Rosenkjar, 2009), pressure to prepare for grammatical university entrance exams (Amano & Poole, 2005; Gorsuch, 2001; Nishino, 2008; Watanabe, 2004) and pressure to progress at the same pace through the textbook (O'Donnell, 2005; Sakui, 2004; K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). Chapter 2 describes studies of JTEs' teaching practices (see 2.4.2) and the constraints facing the implementation of CLT in Japan (see 2.5). Moreover, to date, there has been a lack of research comparing teachers' approaches to different styles of textbooks, but this research was possible in the *Kosen*, because the first graders continued to study from the traditional textbooks. The next subsection (1.2.3) describes the focus of the study, including the research questions, which arose from this context of change.

1.2.3. Focus of the study

Given the unique context described in Subsections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 and the results from studies that implied that JTEs tended to follow the textbook (Browne & Wada, 1998; K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Wada, 2002) rather than create their own materials (Gorsuch, 1999), a key issue for the research was whether the *Kosen* teachers would change their teaching practices and accept the different styles inherent in the new textbooks. The results of a study investigating this issue could have implications for other schools in Japan, because it is becoming easier to enter lower-ranked universities, which are lowering their admissions standards and changing their assessment procedures in response to the falling student population (Amano & Poole, 2005; Kameya, 2009; McVeigh, 2001; Mulvey, 2001, 2009; Sasaki, 2008).

As outlined in Section 1.1, the adoption of educational change depends on three key elements: the materials (textbooks), the teachers' beliefs and their practices (Fullan, 2007). Therefore, the research questions follow the same themes:

1. How do the previous MEXT-mandated and new CLT-oriented textbooks differ?
2. How do the teachers perceive the textbooks, their teaching approaches and the constraints that they face?
3. How do the teachers use the textbooks in the classroom?

Based on the questions above, the next section (1.3) outlines the structure of the research, which was designed as a sequence of three interrelated components.

1.3. Research design

The previous section (1.2) outlined that the unique context of change in the *Kosen* created the opportunity to explore teachers' reactions to two different types of textbooks. In order to understand the complexity of the teachers' attitudes and actions within the natural flow of their lessons, this study located itself within the constructivist paradigm of qualitative research (see Chapter 3, Subsection 3.2.4). Qualitative research calls for interpretive analysis and multiple methods of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). I collected information from documents, interviews, classroom observations and textbooks, and used the constant comparison approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to find connections in the data and new avenues of inquiry.

Although the components interrelated with each other and the literature through constant comparison, the findings are presented from three perspectives (textbook analysis, interviews and observations), corresponding to the research questions in 1.2.3.

The analysis of *Vivid* and *On the Move*, using a framework suggested by Littlejohn (1998) helped to develop an understanding of the textbook contents, user requirements and pedagogical implications that I could use as a basis of comparison to the teachers' attitudes and practices. The interviews and observations had a symbiotic relationship during the data collection, because the two methods provided insights and further avenues of inquiry for each other (Garton, 2009). Four male JTEs who taught *Vivid* and *On the Go* volunteered to participate in the study. The interviews were semi-structured to gain an understanding of the teachers' backgrounds, pedagogical beliefs, attitudes to the textbooks, and potential teaching constraints from local or external factors. However, many interview topics arose based on how they taught in the observed classes. The observations had three non-specific foci. Firstly, they focused on the teaching patterns that emerged in the textbook coverage. Secondly, they explored how the teachers used the textbooks. Thirdly, the level and type of student participation was analysed. However, new lines of inquiry developed based on the interviews and observations, such as the students' resistance towards some teachers.

The next section (1.4) previews Chapters 2-8.

1.4. Organisation of the thesis

This section outlines the content of the remaining chapters (Chapters 2-8). Chapter 2 reviews the literature relevant to the challenges of implementing CLT changes. The chapter begins by defining CLT and suggests that, despite the wide acceptance of this approach in language schools in English-speaking countries, it can be difficult to

implement in regular schools in countries where English is a foreign language and transmission-style cultures may dominate. The chapter then reviews studies from countries in East Asia that share Japan's Confucian heritage, before describing change attempts in the Japanese context. Studies that included observations of classroom practice revealed that MEXT's communicative policies were not widely implemented; therefore, the remainder of Chapter 2 describes the factors that appeared to hinder JTEs' capacity to adapt to CLT.

Chapter 3 focuses on how the study was undertaken and the reasons that underlay those methodological choices. The chapter begins by defining the field of qualitative research and the ideological orientations that underpin this study. Following these ideological discussions, the focus narrows to describe the research questions and the case study approach that guided the choices of sampling and quality. The final sections then detail the methods of data collection and analysis; in particular, they describe the issues and procedures underlying the observations, interviews, textbook analysis and constant comparison.

Chapters 4-7 present the findings. In order to foreground the nature of the changes faced by the participants, Chapter 4 compares the content of *Vivid* and *OTM* from three perspectives: (1) the textbook contents, (2) the required participation of the teachers and students, and (3) the underlying methodological implications.

Chapter 5 describes the interview findings from four main perspectives: (1) pedagogical background, (2) opinions about the textbook, (3) local factors, and (4) external factors. These four perspectives allow for an understanding of the issues that influenced the participants' attitudes about textbook use. Moreover, the findings (1) enable a comparison between the participants' preferences and the textbooks' goals analysed in Chapter 4, and (2) help to explain the classroom practices described in Chapters 6 and 7.

Chapters 6 and 7 describe the classroom practices for two of the participants, Akira and Chikara, respectively. The two observation chapters divide into categories formed from constant comparison of the teachers' practices, but they include descriptions of the textbook sections, and students' participation and reactions. Therefore, it is possible to (1) compare the textbooks' underlying principles (described in Chapter 4) and the actual delivery, and (2) gain insight into the level of the learners' participation in – or resistance to – the teachers' approaches.

Chapter 8 has five central aims. Firstly, it responds to the research questions by drawing together the data from the literature (Chapter 2), textbooks (Chapter 4), interviews (Chapter 5) and observations (Chapters 6 and 7). Secondly, the chapter proposes two theoretical models that aim to compare and explain the constraints to CLT implementation in regular Japanese high schools and the *Kosen*. Thirdly, the discussion moves to the implications of the study and suggests action to develop the capacity for change at governmental, school and teacher levels. Fourthly, the chapter describes the study's limitations and suggests further avenues of inquiry. Finally, the conclusion summarises the thesis, and its contribution to the field of applied linguistics.

1.5. Summary

This chapter introduced the thesis from four perspectives. Firstly, it previewed the aims of the study. Secondly, it described the *Kosen*'s unique context and curricular changes that inspired the three research questions. Thirdly, it outlined the qualitative exploratory design of the three interrelated studies of the textbooks, interviews and observations. Fourthly, the chapter-by-chapter description presented the overall structure of the thesis.

Before describing this study in further depth (Chapter 3) and outlining the findings (Chapters 4-7), the next chapter discusses the background relating to CLT, educational change and the issues connected to CLT implementation in Japan.

2. Literature review

2.1. Introduction

As explained in the previous chapter, this study began by following the implementation of new English textbooks in a Japanese engineering college (*kosen*). Before describing the methodology for this study (Chapter 3) and the findings from the textbook analysis (Chapter 4), interviews (Chapter 5) and observations (Chapters 6 and 7), this chapter details the literature that grounded the research design.

This chapter outlines factors that could influence the *Kosen* English teachers' attitudes and teaching practice following the change to communication-oriented textbooks. Section 2.2 describes the nature of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) upon which the new textbooks were based and the challenges of implementing it in various contexts, particularly East Asia. The subsequent sections consider the Japanese context from three perspectives. Firstly, Section 2.3 describes the government's change attempts; the factors that influenced those policies; and the consequences. Secondly, Section 2.4 contains the results from studies of teachers' practices in Japanese high schools. In general, studies showed that the government policies failed to change teaching pedagogy. Therefore, Section 2.5 examines issues that limited the adoption of CLT in Japan.

2.2. The nature of CLT and the challenges of implementation

After defining CLT (2.2.1), this section outlines some of the issues in exporting this approach to EFL contexts (2.2.2) and "tertiary, secondary, and primary English language education" (TESEP) institutions in "periphery" countries (Holliday, 1994b) (2.2.3). Finally, Subsection 2.2.4 describes studies of the introduction of CLT in the East Asian region.

2.2.1. Defining CLT

Misconceptions regarding CLT are widespread (Holliday, 1994b; Thompson, 1996). Many teachers define it based on their personal ideas and experiences (K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999). Moreover, "there is no single text or authority on it, nor any single model that is universally accepted as authoritative" (J. Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 155). Therefore, this section briefly outlines the main facets of CLT as adopted by the Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT) policies (see 2.3.3).

Richards and Rodgers (2001) explain that CLT emerged when many parts of the world were ready for a paradigm shift. Based on the work of British functional linguists (e.g., Firth, 1957; Halliday, 1973, 1975), American work in sociolinguistics (e.g., Gumperz, 1974; Hymes, 1974; Labov, 1973) and work in philosophy (e.g., Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) scholars such as Breen and Candlin (1980) and Widdowson (1972, 1978) advocated a change from the simple mastery of structures (e.g. Situational Language Teaching and Audiolingualism) in favour of communicative proficiency. In the 1970s, the Council of Europe promoted communicative language research to facilitate the integration of the European Common Market (e.g., Munby, 1978; Trim, 1978; Wilkins, 1976). CLT "quickly assumed the status of orthodoxy in British language teaching circles, receiving the sanction and support of leading applied linguists, language specialists, and publishers, as well as institutions such as the British Council" (J. Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 172).

It is better to regard CLT as an approach rather than a method, because "it refers to a diverse set of principles that reflect a communicative view of language and language learning and that can be used to support a wide variety of classroom procedures" (J. Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 172).

These principles include:

- Learners learn a language through using it to communicate.
- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities.
- Fluency is an important dimension of communication.
- Communication involves the integration of different language skills.
- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error. (J. Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 172)

The main focus of CLT is on the development of learners' communicative competence, which comprises grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural/sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Savignon, 2002).

- Grammatical competence is the ability to use a grammatical rule "in the interpretation, expression, or negotiation of meaning" (Savignon, 2002, p. 9).

- Discourse competence refers to "the interconnectedness of a series of utterances or written words or phrases to form a text, a meaningful whole" (Savignon, 2002, p. 9).
- "Sociocultural competence requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used" (Savignon, 2002, p. 9).
- Strategic competence refers to "the coping strategies that we use in unfamiliar contexts" (Savignon, 2002, p. 10).

Rather than learn linguistic items from a structural syllabus, students use the language in tasks, "which have meaning as their primary focus" (Skehan, 1996, p. 20). Moreover, there should be a change from the traditional roles existing in teacher-centred classrooms. Rather than passively receiving information from the teacher or textbook, learners become active participants in the construction of knowledge (Kern & Warschauer, 2000; J. Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The adoption of CLT can be problematic, depending on the contextual constraints (Markee, 1997). The following sections (2.2.2-2.2.4) describe some of the debates regarding the suitability of CLT in a range of contexts, which could also influence the participants in the research context in this study.

2.2.2. ESL and EFL

One important factor in the application of CLT is the differences between the instructional contexts for English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL). ESL involves English instruction in the target language country, where English is the main language spoken in the community (for example North America or Australia), whereas EFL takes place in the students' home country where access to authentic materials and English speakers is limited (Maple, 1987). Despite the initial growth of CLT in foreign language teaching in Europe (see 2.2.1), many commentators now claim that this approach tends to best suit the teaching of English in ESL rather than EFL contexts (Chowdhury, 2003; Ellis, 1996; Li, 2001; Liu, 2005; Sakui, 2007). CLT is more likely to thrive in the ESL context, because, outside the classroom, students (1) need to use the language, (2) can immediately practice what they have learned, and (3) can naturally acquire the language (Ellis, 1996). Therefore, the teacher can act as a facilitator, helping the students with the everyday issues they face in their host country. However, in the EFL context, the teacher usually becomes the sole provider of input and "without the reinforcement of an English-speaking environment, motivation becomes

more a product of the teacher's initiative on the one hand, and the student's will to succeed – or fear of failure – on the other" (Ellis, 1996, p. 215). Moreover, unlike EFL classrooms where students share the same L1 and may find it unnatural to speak English together, ESL classes are typically composed of learners from various nationalities who need to use English to communicate both inside and outside the classroom (Maple, 1987). Finally, unlike the integrative goals of ESL, EFL courses are usually part of a curriculum, which may assess the students on non-communicative aspects of the language: "the EFL teacher could be doing the student a disservice by focusing on oral skills when, for example, the examination is testing for translation skills" (Ellis, 1996, p. 215).

In addition to discussing the problems associated with the adoption of CLT in EFL contexts, the next subsection (2.2.3) outlines that the underlying values of CLT cause problems when this approach is exported without adaptation to local contexts.

2.2.3. Diffusion from the BANA Centre to the TESEP Periphery

ELT methods are not value-free; textbook writers, and curriculum planners design them on the basis of their social practices and interests (Pennycook, 1994). Thus some authors have argued that the methods of CLT that originated in Western contexts "are ideological in embodying partisan assumptions about social relations and cultural values" (Canagarajah, 1999, p. 104). Canagarajah (1999) asserts that colonial institutions introduced form-focused approaches to countries such as Sri Lanka that CLT initiatives are trying to replace. Other authors argue that The colonial spread of English has been superseded, by the diffusion of "technology" from the "centre" consisting of Britain, Australasia and North America (BANA) to the "periphery" of tertiary, secondary and primary (TESEP) education sectors in the rest of the world (Holliday, 1994b). BANA institutions are often private providers of language education, which can supply students with the education that they want to pay for. The technology that Holliday refers to is "the whole range of methodologies, techniques, and procedures which make up classroom practice, plus their realization in textbooks and classroom material" (Holliday, 1994b, p. 4). In contrast to the BANA institutions, TESEP schools teach English: "as part of a wider curriculum and [they are] therefore influenced and constrained by wider educational, institutional, and community forces quite different from those in the BANA sector" (Holliday, 1994b, p. 4). Therefore, stakeholders influence teachers to focus on *learning* rather than the *learner*. The curricular

constraints and stakeholder influences formed an important line of inquiry during the interviews of the participants in this thesis.

In addition to the stakeholder and curricular constraints faced by the TESEP institutions, Wedell (2003), points to the cultural mismatch that can occur when CLT is exported from "interpretation-based" BANA countries to "transmission-based" regions: language teachers "will need to make considerable adjustments to their existing professional beliefs and behaviours" (Wedell, 2003, p. 112). Table 2.1 highlights the "extreme positions" at each end of the continuum.

Table 2.1 Transmission-based vs. interpretation-based cultures (Wedell, 2003, p. 444)

Transmission-based	Interpretation-based
- Language proficiency involves knowledge of a stable, finite, body of mostly factual content	- Language proficiency represents a learner's ability to appropriately organize their thoughts and their existing language knowledge, to express and understand meanings for their own purposes
- All learners need the same knowledge.	- What people need to learn depends on their purposes for learning.
- The teacher's role is to be the expert and to transmit knowledge to the learners and test whether they have learned it	- The teacher's role is to devise and manage opportunities for learners to refine and develop their language knowledge and ability to use it through interaction with others
- The learner's role is to learn the knowledge transmitted by the teacher and demonstrate such learning when tested.	- The learner's role is to participate in, and contribute to decisions about, the opportunities to develop language knowledge and skill that the teacher makes available
- Knowledge is clearly defined and there is one right answer to almost any question	- Knowledge has to be constructed and is arrived at through discussion
- The purpose of education is to learn how to do things	- The purpose of education is to learn how to learn
- Learners are members of a group and speak only when spoken to	- Learners are a collection of individuals who are expected to express themselves
- Teachers are the initiators of all classroom activity and should know all the answers	- Teachers are facilitators of learners' participation in the learning process and can admit ignorance.

Wedell (2003) warns that these descriptions "represent tendencies rather than absolutes, and few, if any, educational cultures are unambiguously and consistently situated at a single point" (p. 443). However, these categories "nonetheless represent a

useful summary of some of the cultural tensions that continue to typify many TESOL curriculum reform projects today" (Wedell, 2003, p. 443).These transmission-based and interpretation-based cultures, discussed by Wedell (2003), help to conceptualise the potential paradigm shift required by the *Kosen* teachers in order to adapt to the CLT-oriented textbooks in the research context of this study.

Internationally, studies have indicated the problems of imposing new CLT-based language teaching approaches in numerous countries; including, Albania (Dushku, 1998), Egypt (Holliday, 1994a), Greece (Karavas-Doukas, 1998), Indonesia (Lamb, 1995), Libya (Orafi & Borg, 2009), Thailand (Tayjasanant & Barnard, 2010), the Philippines (Waters & Vilches, 2008), Vietnam (Barnard & Nguyen, 2010; Canh & Barnard, 2009) and teachers of Japanese in Australia (K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999).

This subsection (2.2.3) outlined some of the sociocultural problems that may be faced when teaching approaches are exported. The next subsection (2.2.4) outlines some of the CLT change attempts and problems faced in Japan's East Asian region.

2.2.4. East Asian change attempts

Ministries of education in various contexts have tended to impose curriculum changes "reinforced by persuasive rationalisations from decontextualised, theoretical perspectives, rather than careful consideration of how similar innovations have fared in other relevant contexts, such as neighbouring educational systems" (Canh & Barnard, 2009, p. 30). Therefore, before describing the situation in Japan, this subsection outlines the results of studies in neighbouring East Asian countries: Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and South Korea. Although each of these countries contain diverse societies and individuals, and their cultures are continually evolving, they all share the Confucian heritage culture (CHC) with Japan (Carless, 1999). Traditionally, in CHCs, teachers and elders are regarded as sources of wisdom; therefore, the role of the students and the younger generation is to quietly listen and show respect (Carless, 1999). CHCs therefore mirror the transmission-based cultures outlined in the previous subsection (2.2.3).

China has the largest population of EFL teachers and students in the world (Liao, 2001). According to Leng (1997), CLT began in China from the 1970s; however, the government's major reforms began during the 1990s. The State Education Development Commission (SEDC) implemented a new syllabus in 1993, which focused on students' communicative competence (Liao, 2001). The SEDC's reforms included the launch of new textbooks, increased in-service training and changes to the prestigious Matriculation English Test (MET). The MET changes included the introduction of a

16

"language use" section, removal of translation exercises, reduction in the weighting of formal language usage (vocabulary and grammar), and increase in the value of listening comprehension, reading comprehension and written composition sections (Liao, 2001). Moreover, in 2001, task-based textbooks were introduced (Liao, 2004).

However, Cheng (2010) claims that these reforms have been insufficient and have not resulted in effective learning. He compares the CLT implementation to a stage performance, asserting that the major players perform in what he calls a "language planning theatre" in the SEDC and a "compliance theatre" among teachers. Cheng identifies four factors that create this situation, Firstly, despite curricular criteria that emphasise both knowledge and skills, the tests used to assess students at critical stages focus only on knowledge. Secondly, many Chinese do not go on to use English after graduation; therefore, tests provide the main motivation to study. Thirdly, there has been a lack of discussion between curriculum planners, who rushed to implement the proposals at the behest of the government. Fourthly, a lack of qualified and/or trained teachers has led to unprincipled and uninformed teaching methods.

Similarly, Leng (1997) describes four external and one internal factors, which constrain teachers' abilities to implement CLT. The external factors are:

1. *Economic.* Teachers receive low salaries, forcing them to work in two or three jobs, reducing their time for professional development or lesson preparation.
2. *Administrative.* Although CLT advocates learner-centred classrooms, evaluations focus on the teacher, while ignoring students and their learning processes. Therefore, teachers become more active than the students.
3. *Cultural.* China's Confucian influence encourages students to learn passively from the teacher.
4. *Population.* Due to the huge population and budgetary constraints, the classrooms contain 60-70 students, making it impossible to focus on individuals. Instead, the teachers move at the pace of the quickest students.

Beyond the external factors described above, Leng (1997) considers the "internal" factor to be the most critical: the low academic abilities of the teachers. In particular, in her research studies of classrooms she observed many examples where teachers lacked sociolinguistic awareness. Her findings confirm those of Burnaby and Sun (1989).

Burnaby and Sun (1989) surveyed and interviewed 24 Chinese teachers from the University of International Business and Economics (UIBE) in Beijing, who had experienced teaching with Canadians or had attended training in Canada through a cultural exchange programme. The teachers indicated that they worried about answering students' sociolinguistic and cultural questions. In addition, the overwhelming belief was that, although CLT suited Chinese students in the exchange programme who wanted to study and live in Canada, regular students learning in the Chinese context would find traditional teaching practices more suitable.

Liao (2003) distributed a questionnaire to 350 secondary schools and received responses from 182 English teachers. He discovered that, despite favourable attitudes, most teachers misunderstood CLT. Following the questionnaire, he observed and interviewed four teachers who had conveyed favourable attitudes to CLT. Despite their enthusiasm, only one participant ("Huang") conducted CLT-oriented classes, but Liao described it as a weak form of CLT. In this weak form of CLT, Huang described communicative functions to the students and gave them drills before they attempted creative language production. All four teachers had situational constraints to overcome (mainly caused by the education system; for example, large classes and grammar-based examinations). These conditions prevented three of the teachers from implementing CLT; moreover, two of these participants also misunderstood the approach.

Hong Kong launched the Target Oriented Curriculum (TOC) in September 1995, covering all subjects. Major components of the TOC included criterion referenced assessment, task-based study, and a focus on the learner: "pupils should be actively involved in their own learning and in the construction and development of knowledge and ideas" (Carless, 2001, p. 265). From the outset, this innovation faced difficulties for two reasons. Firstly, it represented a radical change from traditional teacher-centred practices (Carless, 2001). Secondly, four expatriate curriculum developers designed the framework, which led to the perception that it was an attempt to redefine the Chinese approach to EFL and "perpetuate the colonial influence beyond 1997" (Morris, Chan, & Lo, 1998, p. 209).

Carless (1999), who was involved in a large-scale project to report on the effectiveness of the TOC adoption in primary schools, outlined three major problems. Firstly, the changes to assessment lagged behind the curriculum, and increased teachers' record-keeping paperwork "without there being any purposeful use made of the data" (Carless, 1999, p. 242). Secondly, it was difficult to account for individual learner

18

differences due to "large class sizes, heavy workloads, generally poorly resourced working conditions and lack of awareness amongst teachers of varied strategies for individualised learning" (Carless, 1999, p. 242). Thirdly, teachers were "generally unclear about the nature of tasks and the theory and practice of task-based learning" (Carless, 1999, p. 242).

In the secondary school context, Cheng (2002) examined the influence of a change in the Hong Kong Certificate in English Education (HKCEE). The HKCEE is a test administered across the island for 16-year-old students, which resembles the GCSE system in the UK. From 1993, the HKCEE began to integrate the assessment of all four language skills into the same test items and included tasks simulating real life. Moreover, the weighting for the oral component increased and it changed from reading aloud to include role-plays and group discussions. Cheng (2002) surveyed 550 teachers from 60 schools and 1700 students from 35 schools in 1994 and 1995. Moreover, she observed nine teachers from separate schools in 1994 and selected three of them as case studies in 1995. Cheng discovered that, although the case study teachers approved of the HKCEE changes, they still maintained their traditional teaching practices: they did not change "from teacher-dominated talk to the more interactive and task-based teaching intended by [the policy-makers]" (L. Cheng, 2002, p. 108). Cheng called for better training to increase the teachers' awareness of CLT-based approaches.

In Taiwan, Wang (2002) described changes in the curriculum such as the launch of communicative textbooks and the introduction of a written component in the universities' joint entrance test. Wang (2002) interviewed six prominent teacher trainers and four of them also completed a supplementary survey. The respondents indicated that no pedagogical changes had taken place: "the current trend is teaching the old way with new textbooks" (C. Wang, 2002, p. 137). She asserted that teachers would "omit the communicative activities suggested in the textbooks and use the time saved for teaching supplementary materials in a more 'efficient' that is, grammar-translation, fashion" (C. Wang, 2002, p. 137). A key phenomenon in Taiwan seems to be the preoccupation with *famous teachers*, whose students scored the highest on tests. These teachers are often assigned the *best students*. Other schools and teachers aspire to use the same textbooks and techniques as the successful *famous teachers*, which can lead to frustration, because the techniques are adapted "without consideration of underlying theory" (C. Wang, 2002, p. 150). In addition to the *famous teachers*, Wang adds that senior teachers hold a strong influence on school practices, but they are unlikely to

change their teaching approaches or attend in-service training: "the presence of senior teachers [for in-service training] is simply not expected" (C. Wang, 2002, p. 143). Despite these strong forces for the status quo, the situation may gradually change, because younger generations of teachers are well trained. The latter study for four years at normal universities on courses that emphasise language skills, teaching methodology and knowledge of English, followed by a year-long teaching practicum in the fifth year.

South Korea introduced a new curriculum from 1992, which also focused on communicative competence and encouraged learner-centred classes. Moreover, new textbooks were published that contained more speaking and listening activities than in previous years (Li, 1998). Despite these governmental changes and a strong budget focus on English education, parents have turned to the private sector to offset perceived inadequacies in state schools such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of exposure to native speakers and grammar-intensive education (Cho, 2004). According to Han (2010) this movement towards the private sector has led to an imbalance in the quality of education between the cities and rural areas. Seventy percent of families use private English education in Seoul, but only 40% use this option in other areas (Han, 2010). Moreover, the belief that children cannot learn to communicate adequately in English in South Korea has led to a spread of the "Goose Father" phenomenon: fathers stay at home alone to earn money, while their wives take their offspring to study in English-speaking countries (Han, 2010).

In a well-cited study on the attitudes of South Korean teachers, Li (1998) surveyed 18 teachers and interviewed 10 in further depth, while they attended a summer training programme in Canada. All of the respondents stated that they mainly used traditional teaching methods such as grammar-translation; moreover, 12 teachers answered that, although they had attempted CLT, they had faced problems. Li (1998) categorised the CLT constraints cited by these teachers into four main factors:

1. Difficulties caused by teachers: (a) deficiency in spoken English, (b) deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence in English, (c) lack of training in CLT, (d) few opportunities for retraining in CLT, (e) misconceptions about CLT, and (f) little time and expertise for developing communicative materials.
2. Difficulties caused by students: (a) low English proficiency, (b) lack of motivation for increasing communicative competence, and (c) resistance to participating in class.

20

3. Difficulties caused by the educational system: (a) large classes, (b) grammar-based examinations, (c) insufficient funding, and (d) lack of support.

4. Difficulties caused by CLT itself: (a) CLT's inadequate account of EFL teaching and (b) the lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments in CLT.

Li (1998) concluded that EFL countries such as South Korea should "adapt rather than adopt CLT … [they] should carefully study their TEFL situations and decide how CLT can best serve their needs and interests" (p. 696).

In summary, it can be seen from these studies that CLT has faced adoption problems in various EFL contexts internationally, including Japan's CHC neighbours in East Asia. Tendencies that emerged from these studies were also explored as potential influences on the capacity of the *Kosen* teachers in this study to adopt CLT. These influences included: (1) lack of planning for implementation by policy-makers, (2) lack of adequate student assessment for CLT, (3) Confucian transmission-based educational traditions, (4) inadequate working and classroom conditions, (5) lack of administrative support, and (6) perceived teacher inadequacies such as the lack of sociolinguistic knowledge and lack of understanding of CLT methodology.

The next section (2.3) considers policy changes in Japan.

2.3. Japan's educational policies

Three distinct periods of educational change can be identified in the literature and policies from earlier eras still influence modern teaching practice in Japan. Firstly, from the late 19th Century, the government encouraged English study by the elites to import knowledge from overseas (2.3.1). Secondly, after the end of the Second World War, English education increased in order to train the workforce for economic expansion (2.3.2). Thirdly, in response to the challenges of globalisation, new policies aimed to improve students' communication skills (2.3.3). The following subsections describe the government policies in each of these periods, and their causes and consequences.

2.3.1. Importing knowledge for the elite

English instruction began officially in 1860, at the *Bansho-Shirabesho*, which was an institution set up in the capital in 1856 by the Tokugawa government to translate Western texts (Hommes, 2004; Sasaki, 2008). Moreover, from 1872 to 1890, the government set up a national school system "in response to the nation's urgent need to create the human resources required for modernisation" (Shimahara, 2005, p. 60).

Butler & Iino (2005) explain that modernisation meant Westernisation: "virtually everything Western was thought to be advanced while traditional Japanese systems … were seen in a negative light" (p. 27). Therefore, learning oral English from native speakers was considered *seisoku* (the regular way) and learning reading through translation by Japanese teachers was *hensoku* (the irregular way) (Butler & Iino, 2005). During this period, English was taught to the Japanese aristocratic *samurai* class (Sasaki, 2008).

A rise in nationalism during the late 1870s caused a reaction against instruction in foreign languages due to the perception that this equalled the humiliation of a "colonised state" (Imura, cited and translated in Sasaki, 2008, p. 66). Therefore, the government banned instruction in English at the national university from 1882 (Koike & Tanaka, 1995; Sasaki, 2008); moreover, in schools during the early 1900s, foreign teachers and textbooks were replaced by instruction in Japanese (Butler & Iino, 2005; Koike & Tanaka, 1995).

Later sections of this chapter show that two factors that arose during this period continue to influence modern-day English study. Firstly, many Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) began to use *yakudoku* (grammar-translation), because (1) they had few opportunities to travel abroad to use English communicatively; (2) this approach had been used successfully for studying written Chinese since the eighth century; and (3) people believed this approach helped to cultivate the minds of learners (Hino, 1988; Sasaki, 2008). Secondly, English became an academic subject for selecting the elite (Kitao & Kitao, 1995). Learners began to study *juken eigo* (English for entrance examinations), which focused on the memorisation of grammar and vocabulary for translating from English to Japanese (Butler & Iino, 2005) and favoured linguistic knowledge over performance (Law, 1995). During this period, in order to cultivate minds and select the elite, *juken eigo* texts contained "syntactically/semantically complicated sentences … taken from British and/or American literary works with moral lessons" (Sasaki, 2008).

The next subsection describes the policies, following the Second World War, which aimed to spread English study to the wider population.

2.3.2. English expansion

In 1947, the Occupation authorities supervised the implementation of an education system based on schools in the US, which has remained relatively unchanged until the present time (Shimahara, 2005). The first nine years of education (six years primary and

three years middle school) became compulsory. English became an elective subject in middle school, but, in reality, students needed to study the language to pass senior high school entrance tests (Sasaki, 2008). Economic expansion during the 1950s and 1960s led to increases in average family incomes, and consequently, more families could afford post-compulsory education: in 1948, 40% of the student population advanced to high school, which rose to over 90% in 1974 (Sasaki, 2008).Therefore, although the government intended English to be a means for practical communication, increasing numbers of students entering high school led to an increase in test-related study (Butler & Iino, 2005).

The government launched the English Language Exploratory Committee (ELEC) in 1956 to implement audiolingual methods based on the ideas of Palmer (1921) and Fries (1945). However, the rapid expansion of children studying English had led to a shortage of teachers; therefore, "there were not many teachers proficient enough in speaking English to effectively carry out the methods" (Sasaki, 2008, p. 68). Consequently, the use of these methods had failed by the 1970s (Henrichsen, 1989).

Sasaki (2008) describes two problems faced by students at this time, which were caused by the enlarged numbers entering high school and the increased competition to enter university. Firstly, many students struggled to follow the curriculum, which led the Ministry to simplify the content. Secondly, the competition to enter universities was so severe and the content of the examinations was so difficult that every year some applicants committed suicide. In an attempt to take control of the content studied and reduce the examination pressure, the government implemented the Common Test in 1979. However, "in contrast to ... public university applicants, private university applicants (more than 75% of all applicants) did not take this Common Test, and so the test solved only part of the entrance examination problem" (Sasaki, 2008, p. 71).

Although there was a limited number of policy changes during the first 120 years of formal English education the last three decades have witnessed a more substantial variety of attempts to increase the communicative competence of Japanese students. These policies are outlined in the following section (2.3.3).

2.3.3. English for communication

In order to respond to the challenges of globalisation, employers and politicians began to demand an education system that could develop the communicative competencies of students (Butler & Iino, 2005). Kubota (2001) claims that the educational developments during this period contained a nationalistic dimension: "manifested in the emphasis on

national identity and in the construction of essentialized images of Japanese language and culture contrasted with English and Anglophone culture" (p. 27). Three main policies marked this period: (1) the launch of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme in 1987, (2) the 1989 "Course of Study", and (3) the 2003 "Action Plan".

During the initial year of the JET Programme, the government hired 848 native English speakers as Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) to work in secondary schools (Sasaki, 2008). The number has now expanded to over 10,000, including ALTs hired directly by local education authorities (Wada, 2002). Three advantages claimed for the JET Programme include (1) motivating students to communicate, (2) enhancing the ability and confidence of Japanese teachers of English, and (3) introducing new pedagogical techniques (Wada, 2002). However, critics have noted that ALTs lack teaching qualifications and experience (Crooks, 2001; Fanselow, 1994; Gillis-Furutaka, 1994), and the programme's high costs have led the government to consider closing it down (Hosaka, 2010; Johnston & Nakamura, 2010).

The Ministry of Education (MEXT) directs the curricula of primary and secondary schools through the publication of guidelines called the "Course of Study". These guidelines establish standards, regulate content, and stipulate the hours to be taught per subject (Wada, 2002). The Course of Study, introduced in 1989, marked a turning point, because, for first time, the development of students' communicative competence became the primary objective of English education (Kikuchi, 2010). This Course of Study expected teachers to implement three types of Oral Communication (OC) courses from 1994: these courses focused on developing students' conversation skills (Course A), listening skills (Course B) and public speaking skills (Course C). However, the guidelines focused on content while ignoring instruction (Gorsuch, 2000). Therefore, in reality, as described in Section 2.4, many teachers used these OC periods to teach language structures (Taguchi, 2005).

Due to MEXT's dissatisfaction with the impact of the Course of Study on classroom practice (Kikuchi & Browne, 2009), it published a more concrete set of goals known as the "Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities" (MEXT, 2003b).

Key areas of the Action Plan included:

- The development of students' communicative competencies through activities promoting the use of English
- Criterion-based assessment for students and teachers
- English classes in primary schools (compulsory from 2009)

24

- A listening component for the national "Centre Test" from 2006 (previously known as the "Common Test")
- 10,000 high school students to study abroad every year
- Creation of 100 "Super English Language High Schools" (SELHi) to provide instruction in English and research innovative new approaches
- Funding provided for a five-year in-service teacher-training programme

This section (2.3) has outlined the Japanese government's policies since official English education began in 1860. It has been argued that in introducing new policies the government used a top-down approach to implementation with little or no consultation with teachers (Gorsuch, 2000). In a similar vein to the CLT projects described in 2.2.3 and 2.2.4, Japan has also faced adoption problems in classrooms.

The next section (2.4) describes the results of studies into teaching practice in Japanese high schools.

2.4. Japanese teaching practice

Despite the government's communicative aims described in 2.3.3, many Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) continued to use the *yakudoku* grammar-translation approach (Gorsuch, 1998; Hino, 1988; Law, 1995), which had become widespread since the beginning of the 19th Century (see 2.3.1). The following subsections describe students' attitudes towards English classes and their teachers (2.4.1), and teaching practice based on classroom observations (2.4.2).

2.4.1. The students' perspective

Surveys of Japanese students have indicated that they find English demotivating and they tend to blame the JTEs (Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Kikuchi, 2009; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Shimizu, 1995).

Shimizu (1995) surveyed 1,088 students from eight universities to discover if their attitudes differed regarding JTEs and non-Japanese teachers of English. Although the ages of the students were not clear from the data and the author did not specify if the survey covered university or high school English teachers, two trends seemed to emerge. Firstly, she reported negative reactions to the JTEs' classes. Respondents criticised the formal nature and said that they often felt sleepy. In contrast, they felt that the English classes taught by non-Japanese were cheerful and fun. Secondly, the study highlighted differences in the students' expectations regarding the qualities that

teachers should possess. Although, they believed it was important for JTEs to have scholarly attributes such as intelligence and knowledge of the subject, students valued the personal characteristics of non-Japanese teachers such as friendliness.

Falout and Maruyama (2004) surveyed 164 first-year students from a private science college. The survey contained 49 positively worded statements and applied a six-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree; 6 = strongly disagree). The authors divided the samples into high proficiency (HP) and low proficiency, (LP), the HP students having average TOEIC scores of 347 and LP students averaging 300. However, both of these averages fall below the minimum standard score (450) considered acceptable for hiring practices (Gilfert, 1996). The three strongest factors that demotivated the students were (1) disappointment in performance, (2) course contents and pace, and (3) the teachers. Open responses indicated that students struggled to understand the grammar and memorise the vocabulary. In particular, students asserted that, if they asked questions: "teachers responded with ridicule and blame, remarking only upon the ignorance of the questioner" (Falout & Maruyama, 2004, Discussion section, para 9).

Two recent survey studies conducted by Kikuchi focused explicitly on demotivating factors. Kikuchi (2009) surveyed 47 students at a public university and interviewed five additional students from universities where he taught. Both the questionnaire and the interviews contained eight open questions based on demotivating factors listed by Dörnyei (2001). The responses generated five demotivating factors: (1) individual teacher behavior in classroom, (2) the grammar–translation method used in instruction, (3) tests and university entrance examinations, (4) memorization required for vocabulary learning and related issues, and (5) textbook/reference book-related issues.

In a larger survey, Kikuchi and Sakai (2009) gathered data from 112 students from three private universities. In a similar vein to Kikuchi (2009), the survey explicitly searched for demotivating factors. It used a 35-item questionnaire that contained negative statements such as "teachers ridiculed students' mistakes". Respondents indicated their level of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale. The end of the questionnaire contained two open questions for students to describe occasions when their motivation increased or decreased. Factor analysis revealed five clusters: (1) coursebooks, (2) inadequate school facilities, (3) test scores, (4) non-communicative methods, and (5) teachers' competence and teaching styles. However, with all five factors close to the mean of 2.5, none of these groupings appeared to be strong

demotivators. Comments in the open-response section revealed that the most demotivating factors appeared to be test scores (13 comments), non-communicative methods (9 comments), and teachers' competence and teaching styles (8 comments). The authors did not comment on any motivating factors suggested by students.

This subsection outlined students' opinions. A bleak picture emerges where the students surveyed seemed to feel demotivated due to the teachers' practices and the traditional style of study in preparation for university entrance tests. These student attitudes indicate that the attempts to change away from traditional practices to CLT-oriented approaches in the *Kosen* could reduce these demotivating factors. Although this study focuses on JTEs in the *Kosen*, the teachers' understandings of students' attitudes form an important element of the research.

Section 2.5 will describe the JTE perspective; in particular, the challenges that they need to contend with (including student problems). However, a few studies have included observations of actual teaching practice, and these studies are described first in the following subsection (2.4.2).

2.4.2. Observations of Japanese teaching practice

The earliest study to include observations, which described *yakudoku* in detail, was conducted by Gorsuch (1998). This was a small-scale exploratory study, based on the observations and interviews of two teachers at a prestigious high school. She observed only three periods of classes. However, later studies (described below) containing observations, tended to support her findings (O'Donnell, 2005; Sakui, 2004; K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Taguchi, 2005; Watanabe, 2004). Gorsuch (1998) identified eight features of the *yakudoku* classroom:

1. The teachers based their classroom instruction on the translation of English text into Japanese. Translation was "at the heart of the teachers' classroom instruction" (p. 18). However, the focus on translation into Japanese meant that the lessons appeared to concentrate on improving students' abilities in the L1: "to think about and create meaningful Japanese rather than meaningful English" (p. 20).
2. The teachers used textbooks that were probably too difficult for the students linguistically and in terms of content, which led the teachers to spend "a lot of time and effort ensuring the students understood the text" (p. 21).

3. The classes resembled intensive reading classes. They analysed the sentences "literally word for word" (p. 21).

4. The language of instruction was Japanese. The teachers only used English for students to repeat the pronunciation.

5. The teachers did not ask the students to produce English. Homework assignments required translation from English into Japanese. (One exception occurred when the students wrote the English translations that they had memorised.)

6. The teachers demanded conformity in the students' translations and answers to quizzes. After students translated into Japanese, the teachers supplied the "correct" sentences without discussing any alternatives.

7. The classes were teacher-centred. "The teachers determined the pace and focus of the lessons" (p. 22)

8. The students were assessed often, which appeared "to function as a form of teacher control" (p. 22).

Taguchi (2005) visited two high schools and observed two Oral Communication (OC) classes at each of them. She coded the observations using categories from the "Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching" (COLT) framework (Fröhlich, Spada, & Allen, 1985; Spada & Lister, 1997). Her results indicated that the teachers controlled the classes and provided the input directly to the learners. Rather than meaning focused language use, between 50% and 90% of class time was allocated to language form. The teachers did not integrate the four skills. Most of each class period focused on listening skills. Students listened to the dialogues and completed the missing words. The instructional emphasis "treated [listening texts like written materials] as a set of isolated linguistic units and understanding individual words and phrases, along with the grammatical points associated with them" (Taguchi, 2005, p. 9). Speaking activities, which used less than 15% of class time, were devoted to the choral repetition of dialogues and key expressions. The classes did not contain pair or group work activities that could promote interaction and negotiation of meaning. Time devoted to reading and writing skills consisted of grammar quizzes.

On a larger scale, Sato studied the teaching culture of a private high school in a metropolitan area. He observed 13 JTEs and four native-speaker teachers in both regular and OC classes (K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). Most of the teachers

were observed once in each of the three semesters, forming 88 observations (K. Sato, 2002). Sato also collected data from staffroom interactions, interviews, surveys and school documents (teaching materials, examination papers, curricula and so on). The study revealed that "although in their first interviews they expressed their individual ideas about communication-oriented English, a majority of them conformed to an established pattern of teaching with heavy emphasis on grammar explanation and translation" (K. Sato, 2002, p. 58). Sato also reported that the teachers lacked satisfaction in their own approaches. Two reasons for their dissatisfaction seemed to stem from following the textbooks without question and, apart from two participants, a failure to identify any successful activities.

Another extended study was conducted by Sakui (2004). For one year, she visited three teachers, observed two or three of their classes every week, and conducted one-day observations of four additional teachers who worked in different contexts. Sakui noted that, when the JTEs taught alone, they focused on the traditional highly structured grammar-translation style. Instruction was in Japanese and they attended to sentence-level exercises: "in the observed class periods … if any time at all was spent on CLT it was a maximum of five minutes out of 50" (Sakui, 2004, p. 157). However, the style of instruction changed during team-teaching with native speakers: the main language of instruction became English and they employed communicative activities such as information gap tasks, games and role-plays. The JTE could become a "guest teacher" who did not need to consider the continuity between classes (p. 158) and the presence of two teachers, one a native speaker, made CLT more "salient for both teachers and learners" (p. 161). However, Sakui described the activities as a weak version of CLT that resembled audiolingualism. In most of the activities, the teachers initially presented the target structures and, rather than interacting for meaning, "the goal was the correct production of sentences" (Sakui, 2004, p. 162).

Watanabe (2004) observed and interviewed six JTEs, who taught specific examination preparation classes, in academic high schools that had succeeded in sending large numbers of graduates to prestigious universities. The results from this study mirrored the findings from studies described above; the classes tended to be teacher-led, highly structured and focused on form with passive participation from the students. However, the researcher claimed that the teachers "were in the process of engineering washback, whether negative or positive" (Watanabe, 2004, p. 139). The teachers focused heavily on their preferred aspects of the tests even if these sections did

not feature prominently in the target entrance examinations. Watanabe identified three factors for this phenomenon: (1) they focused on improving the students' perceived weak areas; (2) they misconstrued the actual contents of the tests, and (3) they were not familiar with alternative teaching approaches.

Despite the predominance of teacher-led highly structured classes observed in the studies described above. Two studies discovered that changes could occur under the right conditions (O'Donnell, 2005; K. Sato & Takahashi, 2008).

O'Donnell (2005) observed and interviewed five JTEs from different secondary schools during a six-month period. For various reasons, four of the participants felt restricted to following the *yakudoku* norm. However, one teacher, "Mr. Yamamoto" (pseudonym) introduced some communicative techniques and had some limited success in persuading colleagues to change. Although Mr. Yamamoto had felt constrained to teach the traditional way in the first school of his career, which was an academically high level school, three factors had facilitated the change in his present workplace. Firstly, fewer than 30% of the students progressed to university, which empowered him to oppose teaching *juken eigo*. Secondly, because he worked in a small school, he could negotiate changes with his colleagues. Thirdly, he felt increased confidence in his ability to apply CLT.

Sato and Takahashi (2008) describe a unique situation, where the authors overcame resistance to two CLT changes. New textbooks and speaking tests were implemented, but initially, most teachers preferred to avoid new teaching approaches and attending meetings. However, sustained guidance from a university professor (Sato) and the perseverance of the teacher who co-ordinated the innovations (Takahashi) gradually influenced the norms of the school. Takahashi managed to overcome the scepticism of some colleagues through leading by example. They observed her successful implementation of the new approaches. Eventually, regular discussions among the teachers led to incremental change: "the teachers transformed their workplace into a site for inquiry as they struggled, went through conflict, agreed and disagreed with one another, and tried new practices little by little" (K. Sato & Takahashi, 2008, p. 232).

All of the studies in this section contained evidence of the teacher-centred *yakudoku* approach in Japanese secondary schools. However, despite this observed phenomenon, surveys and interviews of the opinions of the JTEs in these studies indicated some desire for change. Therefore, it appears that teachers' positive attitudes

toward CLT are mediated by wider constraints. The need to understand the constraints that the teachers are likely to face in the *Kosen* led to the combination of interviews and observations in this study. In order to develop a deeper understanding of potential constraints, the next section (2.5) explores issues that arose in the wider Japanese context.

2.5. Japanese teachers – constraints against implementing CLT

Despite the prevalence of traditional teaching practices described in 2.4, a survey of 228 high school teachers in Chiba indicated that the majority had read and approved of the MEXT guidelines and cited the importance of the development of students' communicative ability above other choices (Browne & Wada, 1998). The following subsections show that, although many teachers state their desire to teach communicatively, many factors constrain their ability to change: university entrance test preparation (2.5.1), a lack of confidence (2.5.2), limited time (2.5.3), conformity to the norm (2.5.4), the students (2.5.5), the training (2.5.6) and the MEXT-mandated textbooks (2.5.7).

2.5.1. University entrance examination preparation

Based on the results of her survey of 876 high school teachers, Gorsuch (2001) concluded that there was no escape from the influence of entrance examinations on teachers, students and textbooks. The following subsections describe the traditional importance of the entrance examinations (2.5.1.1) and the actual contents (2.5.1.2).

2.5.1.1. Traditional importance

> No single event, with the possible exception of marriage, determines the course of a young man's life as much as the entrance examination, and nothing, including marriage, requires as many years of planning and hard work … These arduous preparations constitute a kind of *rite de passage* whereby a young man proves that he has the qualities of ability and endurance for becoming a salaried man. (Vogel, cited in Shimahara, 2005, p. 65)

Vogel wrote this at a time (1963) when only 10% of high school graduates went to university, but the figure has increased in recent times to over 43% (Shimahara, 2005). (However, Shimahara failed to mention the increasing numbers of female students, discounted by Vogel, competing for places.) University entrance examinations are embedded in Japanese culture (Amano, 1990) and it is accepted that students need to endure months and years of study as a part of the *shiken jigoku* (examination hell) (J. D. Brown & Yamashita, 1995b).

There are three central reasons for the pre-eminence of the examinations. Firstly, there is a lack of alternatives, because "there is no high school leaving exam and high school records are not given much weight" (Watanabe, 2004, p. 131). Secondly, school and university brands (*gakkoreki*) are more important than students' academic credentials (*gakureki*) (Amano & Poole, 2005, p. 694). Therefore, competition to enter these prestigious universities is fierce (Browne & Wada, 1998). Thirdly, with the exception of the nationally implemented "Centre Test" (previously called the "Common Test") (see 2.3.2 & 2.5.1.2), they are not constrained by high school curricula or government policies (Butler & Iino, 2005; Gorsuch, 2000).

The factors described above have created demand from parents and students for examination intensive education (Gorsuch, 2000; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). The pre-tertiary education system contains institutions that are ranked by their ability to get students into prestigious universities (Gorsuch, 2000; Rohlen, 1983): approximately 75% of students attend academic high schools and many study privately at cram schools (*juku*) (Shimahara, 2005). Although the students may study as many as five subjects for these entrance examinations, the English score often receives the highest weighting, because it is correlated with students' analytical and logical thinking skills (Butler & Iino, 2005). Therefore, as outlined in 2.4.2, this pressure has led JTEs to defy government guidelines by preparing students grammatically for the examinations rather than using communicative activities during the government-mandated OC classes (Taguchi, 2002, 2005; Yoshida, 2003). Moreover, at least 249 high schools admitted to replacing some compulsory subjects with supplementary entrance examination classes (Hongo & Kamiya, 2006).

In summary, the traditional importance of the entrance examinations has created strong pressure for students, parents and teachers. The next subsection describes studies of the actual test contents and explains some of the changes taking place, which reduce the need to teach English in the traditional *yakudoku* style.

2.5.1.2. Contents of the examinations

As described in previous sections, many teachers felt that they had to follow the traditional *yakudoku* approach to satisfy demands from parents and students to prepare them for university entrance examinations and the media has strengthened this perception (Watanabe, 2004). However, some academics claim that these accusations are misplaced when the actual contents of the examinations are considered (Guest,

2000; Mulvey, 2001; Watanabe, 2004). This subsection outlines studies of entrance examinations that support and refute the evidence for washback.

Describing her analysis of two private and two public university entrance examinations (undertaken for her doctoral dissertation), Gorsuch (2000) found that they emphasised "knowledge of grammar points, vocabulary and English usage" (p. 682). She added that, with the exception of a listening section in one public university's examination, none emphasised listening or speaking. Moreover, "none of the tests asked students to produce written English in any form" (Gorsuch, 2000, p. 682). Instead, they focused on reading skills and all four tests required translation, mostly from English to Japanese.

Two studies a decade apart (in 1994 and 2004) examined 21 high stakes entrance examinations from 10 national universities, 10 prestigious private universities and the universal Centre Test (J. D. Brown & Yamashita, 1995a, 1995b; Kikuchi, 2006). Despite the increased pressure from the government and the public for practical communicative English during this period (see 2.3.3), very little change occurred to the examinations investigated in these studies. Both studies found that the examinations assessed "test wiseness" rather "than the student's actual proficiency in English" (J. D. Brown & Yamashita, 1995a, p. 97). The majority of the test items for the 20 universities depended on reading passages (64% in 1994; 81% in 2004). The researchers discovered that the reading passages were generally over 12 on the Fog Readability Index. This score indicates that the passages are at the level expected of American university students and therefore too difficult for most native speakers to read (Taylor, 2008). Such difficult texts compromise the examinations' reliability because, rather than testing the students' comprehension, they force guesswork (Kimura & Visgatis, 1996). Multiple-choice, receptive items formed the majority of questions in the private university entrance examinations and in 100% of the Centre Test (J. D. Brown & Yamashita, 1995a, 1995b; Kikuchi, 2006). Public universities used fewer multiple-choice questions, and instead they contained translation exercises (mostly English – Japanese) and some required short compositions/essays. However, it was not clear from the studies whether any compositions needed to be written in English. Based on Gorsuch (2000), they probably only included language production in Japanese. In 2004, only three private and four public universities assessed listening ability; however, the Centre Test introduced a listening component in 2006 in accordance with the MEXT "Action Plan" (MEXT, 2003b), described in Subsection 2.3.3. Kikuchi (2006) admitted to two limitations caused by the

samples used in these studies. Firstly, they had focused on examinations from English departments, which may want to test translation skills more than other departments. Secondly, both studies had used data from prestigious universities, which may feel insured from changing their entrance examinations in response to the demographic problems affecting other universities, described below.

An oversupply of university places in relation to falling numbers of students has led many universities to change their entrance examination procedures (Kameya, 2009; McVeigh, 2001; Mulvey, 2001, 2009; Sasaki, 2008).

During the late 1980s, the number of two- and four year colleges increased by 31% following expansion, encouraged by the government (Mulvey, 2009). This expansion continued through the 1990s and early 2000s: the number of universities grew from 552 in 1994 to 702 in 2003 (Kikuchi, 2006). In contrast, the student population has fallen: since peaking in 1992 at 2.1 million, the number of 18-year-olds has decreased by over 720,000 (McNeill & Matsumoto, 2009). In 1999, 80% of the students who applied to enter university succeeded (Mulvey, 2001). Moreover, according to some estimates, the application to space ratio reached 1:1 in 2009 or earlier (Mulvey, 2001). As a result, 46% of the private universities missed their enrolment targets and over 40% of them are in debt (McNeill & Matsumoto, 2009).

This undersupply of students in relation to the demand from the universities has led to two changes. Firstly, universities began accepting students with lower test scores, which meant that many first year students lacked minimal skills in all the core subjects (Mulvey, 2001). Secondly, the methods of assessment have changed. The number of universities that accept students using the *suisen nyugaku* (recommendation system) has increased to over 85% (Mulvey, 2001). Rather than take the standard paper-based examination, the *suisen nyugaku* students, recommended by their high school teachers or sports coaches, can enter universities using different criteria such as school grades, and essays and interviews in Japanese (Amano & Poole, 2005; McVeigh, 2001; Mulvey, 2001; Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999). Moreover, Amano and Poole (2005) state that "the number of universities that test for numerous subjects has declined and the number of private universities that set only one or two subjects on the entrance examination has grown considerably" (p. 694). However, national universities still seem to test five subjects and it is not clear if English assessment has been reduced for non-English majors.

In addition to the new assessment caused by the fall in student numbers, Guest (2000) argued that *yakudoku* is a narrow form of grammar tuition that does not prepare students adequately for standard entrance examinations. *Yakudoku*, focusing on the rules of syntax, contains three elements: it is decontextualised, limited to the sentence level, and prescriptive. Guest (2000) analysed the Centre Test and the entrance examination for a prestigious national university (Kyushu University). Many candidates take the Centre Test before taking specific university entrance examinations (Kameya, 2009) and national universities tend to conform to similar norms (J. D. Brown & Yamashita, 1995b); therefore, these two examinations could represent a fair standard. The syntactical grammar taught in high schools composed less than 10% of the Centre Test. Rather than assess candidates' retention of the rules of syntax, Kyushu University examined advanced lexical skills. Guest (2000) concluded that success in the examinations depended more on understanding the lexical and semantic properties of salient vocabulary in the text. He added that as the passages became more extended and discursive, they would tend to vary from the prescribed grammatical rules found in the government-approved high school textbooks.

In summary, it appears that the fall in standards, the introduction of new forms of assessment and the testing of more comprehensive skills than just sentence-level syntax ought to facilitate changes in classroom practices. However, the beliefs of the teachers and the students may be stronger than the actual content of the examinations (Gorsuch, 2000; Nishino, 2008). Lack of knowledge of a variety of teaching methods can be a debilitating factor in mediating examination washback (Watanabe, 2004). Without learning new techniques, many teachers seem to use *yakudoku* for the entrance examinations based on their experience as students and their past practice (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). Moreover, unlike in the testing of vocabulary and grammar, many teachers lack clear ideas of how to assess communicative activities (Taguchi, 2002). Most importantly, despite the changes in the majority of the examinations, the prestigious universities have changed very little (Kikuchi, 2006). "No matter how much the selection process of university applicants is reformed, students will continue to strive to enter a small number of 'top-tier' or 'brand-name' universities, and the severe entrance examination war will not disappear" (Amano & Poole, 2005, p. 694).

2.5.2. Lack of confidence

JTEs seem to lack confidence to introduce CLT reforms for two reasons. Firstly, they seem to lack confidence in their own ability (K. Sato, 2002; Wada, 2002). Section 2.5.6

will discuss teachers' lack of training, which could undermine their confidence to introduce new methods such as CLT. Moreover, a MEXT survey indicated that fewer than half the secondary school teachers had attained the national proficiency targets (a TOEFL score of 550 or the equivalent on other tests) (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). Rather than state that their proficiency level was too low, many teachers indicated that they lacked the confidence to speak English (K. Sato, 2002). JTEs might also fear making mistakes in front of their students, because this could tarnish their authority (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). Secondly, JTEs seem to lack confidence in the students. Subsection 2.5.5 will discuss some of the classroom conditions, including large classes and students' behavioural tendencies, which could limit the potential to introduce changes. JTEs could feel reluctant to use too much English, because they fear that the students would not understand (Sakui, 2004; R. Sato, 2009) and also that they could lose control of the class (Sakui, 2004, 2007).

2.5.3. Limited time

In Japan, teachers' working conditions seem to lead to "a widespread incidence of stress and burnout and deterioration in teaching" (Shimahara, 1998, pp. 459-460). Some teachers fear *karoshi* (death from overwork) and a survey showed that 58% had considered quitting the profession due to overwork and overwork-related health problems (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999).

Regarding the hours worked, high school teachers teach an average of 16.8 hours per week, and union data showed that teachers spent 55 hours a week at school, which is 11 hours more than the required 44 working hours (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999). Moreover, many teachers spend one or two hours per day on test evaluation and lesson preparation at home (M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000).

However, the problems do not seem to arise from the numbers of class contact hours or time spent on marking and preparation, because "more than half the working time is spent on trivial jobs outside the classroom" (M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000, p. 126). In one study, a JTE estimated that teaching is only 30% of the job (O'Donnell, 2005). Instead, duties include supervising sports clubs daily after school and during holidays and weekends; giving supplementary entrance examination classes; eating lunch with homeroom students; attending various staff meetings; counting money for school lunches; participating in school ceremonies and rituals; and various other administrative tasks (Cook, 2009; O'Donnell, 2005; Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999; Sakui,

2004; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000). The extra duties "could neither be refused nor avoided" (O'Donnell, 2005, p. 310).

Whereas teachers in American high schools focus on the cognitive development of children, Japanese teachers feel pressure to develop the "whole person", which includes the emotional, social, physical and mental aspects (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999). This type of whole person development has become more difficult in recent years, because there has been "a growing diversification of student values and social backgrounds" (Shimahara, 1998, p. 459). Teachers not only need to deal with changing values, they also need to shoulder the burden of public service: public expectations are "extensive and almost infinite" (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999, p. 172). Therefore, their responsibilities for the students stretch outside the classroom and outside the school premises: "many hours are … spent on managing student affairs, such as dealing with deviant student behaviour, community patrols of criminal actions by students, and home visits to liaise with parents" (M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000, p. 126).

Pressure also comes from colleagues. The next section (2.5.4) will outline the pressures to conform to certain teaching practices. Teachers tend to follow a culture of *kizuna*, where they routinely and constantly consult each other in shared offices (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999). This culture also spreads into managerial decision-making, which tends to be inclusive and cooperative (Shimahara, 1998). The strength of this cooperation is the development of camaraderie and mutual support; however, the search for consensus can also slow down decision-making and lead to long meetings. The co-dependence can pressurise teachers to work harder on administrative tasks from the fear of causing inconvenience for their colleagues. This reason was cited by many teachers for taking an average of only seven days paid holiday per year (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999).

The conditions described above mean that, despite teachers' desire, they have less time to devote to core practices of the teaching profession such as lesson preparation and curriculum development (M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000). In particular, they may feel that they have no time for CLT-related tasks. A survey by Taguchi (2002) indicated that 70% of respondents found CLT too time-consuming. CLT activities can require more planning and classroom management skills than regular *yakudoku* instruction (Sakui, 2004, 2007). Moreover, the JTEs often place a high priority on keeping pace with their colleagues, advancing through the textbook at the same rate and covering all the necessary target structures in a limited amount of class time (Sakui,

2004; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; R. Sato, 2009). This desire to keep pace with colleagues relates to the pressure to conform to school norms. The next subsection (2.5.4) describes this phenomenon in more detail.

2.5.4. Conforming to the norm

When describing the survival of *yakudoku* from a sociocultural perspective, Hino (1988) explains that "once a practice is accepted as a tradition, it becomes a norm" (p. 52). He added "the longer the tradition has, the stronger the norm is" (Hino, 1988, p. 52). Although researchers, the media and the government have suggested alternative methods, they are sometimes dismissed as "flavour of the month teaching systems" (R. Sato, 2009, p. 14), but the traditions or norms endure. As described in Subsection 2.3.1, *yakudoku* began over a thousand years earlier for studying Chinese. This subsection outlines how modern-day Japanese schools form and reinforce these norms.

Shimahara (1998) says that Japanese teachers have a shared ethos of *teaching as craft*. He explains that professional development is impeded, because "the wisdom of accumulated reflective practice is little codified and formulated into a body of knowledge that can be tested and refined through research" (Shimahara, 1998, p. 459). Therefore, the teaching practices are intrinsic to the school cultures.

Sato's study, described in 2.4.2, discovered that school norms were reinforced by the relationships between teachers (K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). Junior teachers conformed to the teaching approaches of their seniors. This finding is supported by a survey of 422 novice teachers, which showed that the majority (61%) named elder teachers as their main sources of advice (M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000). Following peer-peer observations, teachers tended to avoid critiquing their colleagues, which could hinder change; however, younger teachers received critical feedback, which would encourage them to follow the established practices of the school (K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). The previous subsection (2.5.3) described the culture of *kizuna*, where the teachers constantly interact informally (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999). Teachers were socialised into the teaching culture of the school: "younger teachers adapted their teaching to routine practices, whereas experienced teachers further reinforced existing beliefs and practices" (K. Sato, 2002, p. 77).

The dark side of this socialisation is the problems faced by teachers who fail to follow the norms. They are regarded as "deviants" (Hino, 1988; O'Donnell, 2005; Pacek, 1996). Okano and Tsuchiya (1999) describe some of the bullying that can occur to teachers who do not conform. For example, after one teacher encouraged his students to

participate in active class discussions, "some teachers criticised his teaching and harassed him by lobbying to deprive him of a homeroom class" (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999, p. 182). Eventually, the teacher described in this case requested to transfer to a different school.

This pressure to conform may cause teachers to hide their true beliefs: "individual (personal) beliefs, practices and interactions take a backseat to the community's (technical) culture" (K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004, p. 813). In other words, teachers teach what is necessary rather than what they think is right (O'Donnell, 2005). Sato discovered that none of the individual teachers in his study favoured teaching examination-oriented English, but "as a group in the department and school they could not ignore it" (K. Sato, 2002, p. 57). Therefore, teachers felt no practical need to attend workshops, because "new or innovative ideas seemed not to be a necessity" (K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004, p. 812).

Teachers who had studied new approaches overseas also found it difficult to break down the existing cultural norms (Cook, 2009; McKay, 2000; Pacek, 1996). The expertise that they gained from their overseas programmes "may not be valued and perhaps may even be viewed by some as a threat" (McKay, 2000, pp. 66-67). Moreover, there can be "strong social pressure on the teacher to atone for the problems he has caused his colleagues through his absence by keeping his head down and his mouth shut" (Pacek, 1996, p. 336). Cook (2009) found that her participants feared ostracism by senior colleagues; therefore, they preferred to wait until they had achieved more seniority before they implemented new approaches. However, she explained that, in four cases, returnee teachers claimed to successfully implement what they had learned in Canada. One teacher did not work with colleagues and a second teacher received powerful support from the head teacher who had also experienced an overseas training programme. Two other returnee JTEs received permission to supplement the standard textbook (Subsection 2.5.7 outlines problems with the MEXT-mandated textbooks).

Teachers' meetings tend to reinforce norms (O'Donnell, 2005; K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). They often cover routine practices such as class management and keeping pace with each other in the textbook progression (K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004) or deciding which areas to cover for the examinations (O'Donnell, 2005). However, curricular goals, classroom problems and methodology are often omitted (K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). One participant in Sato's study explained that he did not want to "bother other teachers" ("Hori" (pseudonym) as cited

in K. Sato, 2002, p. 53). The lack of curricular goals and lack of discussion of classroom practice meant that grammatical examination preparation filled the gap for teachers in the studies by O'Donnell and Sato. In effect, test preparation was the taken-for-granted norm or the "hidden goal" (K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004).

As described in 2.5.1, students and parents tend to expect the teachers to prepare the students grammatically for entrance examinations and the next subsection (2.5.5) outlines how traditional teaching approaches help to minimise student problems in large classes. In addition, a norm can exist in the interaction between the teacher and students (Sakui, 2007). In most subjects, "teacher talk" tends to take about two-thirds of classroom time (Wertsch, 1998). If a teacher tries to implement a learner-centred CLT approach, the new role expectations require the establishment of a new set of classroom norms, which can lead to disruption for both teachers and students (Sakui, 2007).

Despite the difficulties outlined above, the study by Sato and Takahashi (2008) (outlined in 2.4.2) demonstrated that the development of new norms can be possible. Initially, the authors faced difficulties, because the JTEs resisted the top-down government initiatives. However, they eventually began weekly meetings where "talking about teaching and teaching issues became the norm among these teachers" (K. Sato & Takahashi, 2008, p. 220).

In summary, the teachers' interactions and interdependence socialise new teachers into the existing norms and reinforce cultural traditions. It takes patience, effort and some seniority to break down these norms. Students also face strong peer-pressure to conform. The next section (2.5.5) describes the students' influence on teaching practice.

2.5.5. The students

"My first lesson, I did all in English. The students were stunned into silence. They complained. I was so shocked. I stopped doing it. I took the ordinary way" ("Ms Sakai" (pseudonym) as cited by O'Donnell, 2005, p. 300). Ms Sakai is not the only teacher to discover student opposition to her attempts to use English; many studies have reported problems (Cook, 2009; Kusano-Hubbell, 2002; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Sakui, 2007; K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Taguchi, 2002). Although, CLT is a learner-centred approach (see 2.2.1), this subsection discusses whether traditional approaches might be more suitable for Japanese students. It outlines some of the main problems and the probable causes of those problems.

40

The most common problem seems to be silent or passive students (R. A. Brown, 2004; Burden, 2002; Cook, 2009; Henrichsen, 1989; King, 2005; Pacek, 1996; Taguchi, 2002). Students' silence can cause teachers to use more Japanese, because they fear that their learners do not understand (Cook, 2009). Moreover, Sakui (2007), citing a survey study (Wakazono, 2001) of 366 primary and secondary school teachers from various subjects, noted that a quarter of the respondents had experienced disciplinary problems. The most common problems included students: walking in and out of the classroom (74%); talking constantly (62.2%); ignoring instructions or advice (59%); suddenly screaming or throwing things (55.7%); and not sitting down when the class begins (28.7%). Although half the respondents blamed a decline in the quality of teachers and children's psychological problems or stress, most of them blamed the students' worsening home conditions. They criticised the lack of discipline from parents (77%) and the decline in quality of education at home (71.9%). However, it also appears that the traditional values of respect for teachers are disappearing, and is led by contempt from parents who believe "they are *only* schoolteachers" (italics in original, Sakui, 2007, p. 50).

Three factors seem to lead to the students' reluctance to speak: peer-pressure, study perceptions and low motivation. These three factors are described in the following subsections.

2.5.5.1.   Peer-pressure

The previous subsection (2.5.4) described the pressure on teachers to conform to their colleagues' expectations. Students also face peer group pressure. Many students stay silent, because they fear making mistakes in front of the teacher or their friends (Taguchi, 2002). McVeigh (2001) calls this "excessive self-monitoring". Moreover, Burden (2002) claims that they have developed *learned helplessness*: he calls this the "I'm poor at English" syndrome. R. A. Brown (2004) adds that the students face a "double bind". He points to two famous Japanese proverbs. Firstly, "the protruding nail will be hammered down"; and secondly, "a wise hawk hides his talons". Brown explains that the first proverb refers to the ridicule that the students will face if they speak out in class and make a mistake. However, the second proverb indicates that, if a student volunteers a correct answer, he or she may face social rejection for appearing to show off. Moreover, the choice to remain silent can be traced back to the Confucian collectivist culture (see 2.2.4). In addition to the awareness of the potential humiliation for speaking

out of turn from the group, the Confucian culture encourages silence as a mark of deference to the teacher (King, 2005).

2.5.5.2. Study perceptions

Based on questionnaire feedback from 43 JTEs who had attended a training course in the UK, Pacek (1996) discovered that some respondents struggled to implement communicative approaches, because they could not change the perceptions of the students. Their learners felt that it was unnatural to speak English to their peers and the JTE. Moreover, students felt reluctant to speak, because they were accustomed to teacher-fronted classes and they preferred to memorise for their future entrance examinations. In other words, the implementation of learner-centred active classes would break a norm that exists in most subjects (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Sakui, 2007; Taguchi, 2002). Although students considered communicative activities fun, especially when a native English teacher participates, they did not take it seriously, because it was not "real study" for entrance examinations (Sakui, 2007; K. Sato, 2002; Shimizu, 1995). Therefore, there appears to be a conflict between the students' perceived need to suffer for examinations and their belief that communicative practice lacks credibility (Burden, 2005). Burden's (2005) survey of 198 non-English majors indicated that, although students enjoyed communicative activities, they placed a higher value on traditional structured exercises like memorising vocabulary and practising grammar. Students' belief in the effectiveness of traditional forms of study was also reflected in a survey of 301 undergraduates, which showed their preferences for translation, error correction and receptive lecture-style study (Matsuura, Chiba, & Hilderbrandt, 2001). Moreover, like many EFL students, they lack the opportunities to engage in face-face communication outside the classroom, which reduces the perceived relevance of conversation practice (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; R. Sato, 2009).

2.5.5.3. Low motivation

Many studies have reported the low motivation of Japanese students to study English (Burden, 2002; Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Kikuchi, 2009; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009; Miyazato, 2001; Sakui, 2007; K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Taguchi, 2002). Although the previous subsection (2.5.5.2), indicated the students' belief in the usefulness of examination-oriented mechanical study, it has caused many students to begin disliking English from as early as junior high school (O'Donnell, 2005). Despite this aversion to English classes, the examinations provide an incentive to study

something. However, the increasing prevalence of the *suisen nyushi* (admission by recommendation) system (see 2.5.1.2), which replaces written English examinations, has caused students to become "lazy compared with those in the past: they lack discipline and do not study enough" ("Mr. Nakanishi" (pseudonym) as cited by O'Donnell, 2005, p. 307). Moreover, for the most disruptive students, Japanese schools do not have any administrative support for providing discipline such as detentions; therefore, the individual teachers need to find ways of controlling them in the class (Sakui, 2007).

2.5.5.4. Teachers' desired solutions

Many teachers preferred to avoid any change-related conflict with students, relying instead on traditional examination-preparation practices (K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). In fact, in preference to the abolition of entrance examinations, many teachers desire smaller class sizes (from the present numbers of 30-40) to help them manage their students (Nishino, 2008; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Sakui, 2007; Taguchi, 2002). Other suggestions include an increase in the number of native English speaking assistant language teachers (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008) and in the number of English class-hours to allow a balance between examination preparation and communicative activities (Nishino, 2008).

This subsection (2.5.5) described some of the issues teachers faced from the students. The next subsection (2.5.6) describes some of the limitations in the training system, leaving teachers with some pedagogical uncertainty.

2.5.6. Training

Several studies have indicated that many JTEs feel uncertain about how to follow the government-mandated communicative goals (Sakui, 2004; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004); therefore, they tend to "fall back on how they themselves were taught in school as a student … their 'apprenticeship of teaching'" (Kikuchi & Browne, 2009). Hino (1988) agrees that JTEs are poorly trained; therefore they turn to *yakudoku* methods, because (1) they studied that way at school, (2) it requires no training to use, and (3) they lack knowledge of alternative methods. Moreover, the lack of awareness of how to adopt communicative goals can cause teachers to draw their own conclusions, leading them to focus instead on preparing students for entrance examinations (Taguchi, 2002). The following subsections describe the pre- and in-service teacher training programmes

(2.5.6.1 and 2.5.6.2), and the resultant perpetuation of the transmission paradigm (2.5.6.3).

2.5.6.1. Pre-service training

Based on survey results from 228 high school teachers in Chiba Prefecture, Browne and Wada (1998) discovered a lack of teacher training in ELT theory and methodology. The majority of teachers in general high schools majored in English literature (63%), followed by education (13%) and linguistics (12%) at university. Only 3% of these respondents reported majoring in TESOL. Moreover, although the TESOL majors felt well trained (85%), only eight-percent of English literature, 20% of linguistics, and 40% of education majors felt adequately prepared.

The university training programmes tend to focus on theory without integrating it into reflective practice (Kizuka, 2006) and cultures prevailing in the universities could have caused this reluctance to integrate pedagogical reflection. Shimahara (1998) contends that university academics tend to show little interest in classroom-based research. Moreover, Sato and Asanuma (2000) assert that "their conception of professional knowledge is very specific and academic, while their conception of teaching is essentially anti-intellectual" (p. 121).

The divide between academia and practice seems to be reflected in the nationality of the professors. Nagasawa (2004) explains that, on the whole, the academic courses for trainee teachers are taught in Japanese by Japanese professors, while most of the non-academic courses are taught in English by native speakers. Moreover, the classes taught by Japanese are usually the required course credits (Kusano-Hubbell, 2002).

To receive the English teaching certificate, trainees need to obtain 24 credits, including at least one credit in linguistics, English literature or English communication, and two or more credits in crosscultural understanding and ELT methodology (Nagasawa, 2004). In addition, they must complete a teaching practicum that lasts approximately two weeks (Nagasawa, 2004; M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000). This practicum "resembles a crash course … trainees do not have sufficient time to reflect on their own teaching together with [their] mentors" (Kizuka, 2006, p. 57). Government attempts during the 1980s to lengthen the practicum faced opposition from "university professors who opposed the shortening of the time available for liberal arts courses and school principals who refused to make special arrangements for 'paper chasers'" (M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000, p. 115). "Paper chasers" refers to the phenomenon that 90% of

students obtain the teaching licence as a form of future insurance without entering the profession (Kizuka, 2006; M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000).

Kizuka (2006) also questions the credibility of teachers' initial qualifications. Firstly, although the teaching licence is valid throughout the country, it is not a national qualification. Each university sets its own standards. Secondly, the licence does not guarantee practical English ability. It only shows that the candidate completed the training. To counteract this problem, the Local Education Authorities consider TOEIC and TOEFL scores during the hiring process. However, these tests assess English proficiency for business and studying abroad respectively, rather than the language skills useful for teaching "for example, the ability to use easier/simpler expressions … or the ability to paraphrase/reword difficult expressions" (Kizuka, 2006, p. 59).

This subsection (2.5.6.1) described the issues related to pre-service training. The next subsection outlines in-service training.

2.5.6.2. In-service training

Regarding in-service training, some studies indicate that a lack of funds has created a shortage of opportunities. One estimate said "it would take approximately 10 years to give every high school English teacher in the Tokyo area a two-day seminar on a given topic" (Browne & Wada, 1998, p. 104). Moreover, although the 2003 Action Plan provided funds for in-service training (see 2.3.3), after the five-year period mentioned in the Plan ended, the funds dried up (Kikuchi & Browne, 2009).

Alternatively, many conferences and seminars organised by MEXT were not well-attended (Lamie, 2004). Teachers' busy work schedules could have partially caused this phenomenon (see 2.5.3). Moreover, it could be due to the perceived lack of need. Browne and Wada (1998) discovered a difference in the attendance rates at seminars between teachers in general (*ippan*) and vocational (*jitsugyo*) high schools. More *jitsugyo* teachers attended seminars than their *ippan* counterparts. Brown and Wada noted that the most popular seminars related to communicative methods; therefore, they asserted that the degree of influence from the entrance examinations affected their motivation to attend. Firstly, the *ippan* teachers, who focused on preparing students for entrance examinations, felt no need to train for *yakudoku* "since it is a teacher-fronted method, which does not require a communicative ability in English on the part of the teacher" (Browne & Wada, 1998, p. 103). Secondly, the *jitugyo* teachers who were "unfettered by entrance exam pressures [were] more likely to experiment with communicative techniques" (Browne & Wada, 1998, p. 103).

This subsection described the lack of attendance for in-service training. The next subsection describes how the "transmissional paradigm" used in teacher-training can help perpetuate the status quo.

2.5.6.3.   *Transmissional paradigm*

A paradigm is a basic set of beliefs or assumptions that guide us (Chapter 3 explores the paradigms that underlie qualitative research). Nagasawa (2004) distinguishes between two training paradigms: interactional and transmissional. Interactional training approaches focus on the problems faced by trainee teachers in their classrooms: "interaction takes place between the trainees and the trainers and, sometimes between the trainees and their students in attempts to find a solution" (Nagasawa, 2004, p. 280). In other words, the trainees change from consumers of theories into active investigators. In contrast, in transmissional training, the trainers transmit the knowledge to the trainees, who are then expected to apply the theories in their classrooms. Nagasawa adds that the majority of the in-service teacher training programmes in Japan in 2000 were transmissional: "they preach Western ("centre") theories but do not seem to address local problems" (Nagasawa, 2004, p. 284).

This transmissional paradigm is reflected in the content of the teacher-training curricula. Sato and Asanuma (2000) call this content *cafeteria-knowledge*, which is "composed of technical knowledge and routine skills" (p. 113). They assert that this education omits teachers' professional autonomy. Instead, it trains them to be "public servants in a bureaucratic school system" (M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000, p. 113). The teachers learn to teach efficiently, including "skills of controlling students, delivering instructions to them, and transmitting scholastic knowledge" (M. Sato & Asanuma, 2000, p. 113).

In summary, in addition to the lack of training, described above, which limits teachers' awareness of alternative methods, the transmissional paradigm encourages teacher-led *yakudoku* classes, because trainees are not subjected to alternative learning styles. The MEXT-mandated textbooks, described in the next subsection (2.5.7), also encourage teacher-led instruction.

2.5.7.   MEXT-Mandated Textbooks

All public secondary school teachers must use textbooks authorised by MEXT (Ishikada, 2005; R. Sato, 2010). Teachers have indicated that the textbooks are the main influence on their teaching practice (Browne & Wada, 1998; Wada, 2002) and they tend to follow

the textbook rather than create their own materials (Gorsuch, 1999). Many studies have criticised the textbooks, described below.

In a small-scale study of 47 students, who were asked open-ended questions about factors that demotivated them at high-school, over half the respondents cited the textbooks (Kikuchi, 2009). In particular, the students complained about the content (uninteresting, outdated or difficult to understand) and the extended length of the texts.

Other studies have described the textbooks' unsuitability for examinations. Guest (2000) asserted that the syntactical grammar exercises in the supplementary textbooks accounted for less than 10% of the Centre Test (see 2.5.1.2). Moreover, Kimura and Visgatis (1996) used readability indices to compare the difficulty of texts between junior college entrance examinations and high school textbooks. Although they discovered wide variation in the difficulty of the reading passages for both the examinations and the textbooks, the average Flesch-Kinkaid score for the textbooks measured at 5.985. They noted that this score was two US grade levels lower than the average entrance examination reading difficulty from the junior colleges in their study (8.252). Moreover, when compared to the readability scores described for the passages in entrance examinations at the prestigious universities, the gap becomes more severe: the Flesch-Kinkaid readability indices averaged 9.29 (1994) and 9.79 (2004) in studies by Brown and Yamashita (1995a, 1995b) and Kikuchi (2006) respectively.

Although the authors of these studies may have raised some valid criticisms, the textbooks do not claim to prepare students for entrance examinations. Reasonable criteria should be those espoused in the Course of Study, because MEXT has claimed to check their compliance to these guidelines since 1955 (Nishino, 2008).

Since 1989, the Course of Study has claimed to focus on improving the communicative competence of students (see 2.3.3). However, studies have shown that the textbooks do not follow these guidelines. The teachers' manuals contain detailed lesson plans "emphasising translation and drill-focused teaching techniques" (Browne & Wada, 1998, p. 105). A study by LoCastro (1997) found a lack of contextual details and "forms or patterns are presented without any attention to their communicative function" (p. 254). Moreover, the passages contain unnatural sentences (Pacek, 1996). Based on an analysis of a textbook unit that contained a passage about an American cartoon, Rosenkjar (2009) found that the exercises were "almost exclusively form-focused" (p. 66). Therefore, he summarised that "the unit gives the strong impression that the real purpose of the reading is to provide examples of the target grammatical

material rather than communicate something interesting about [the cartoon's creator] Charles Shultz and [his cartoon] *Peanuts*" (Rosenkjar, 2009, p. 67).

Gorsuch (1999) analysed the six best-selling MEXT-approved textbooks. She noted that: (1) any speaking and writing is "highly scripted", (2) students are "not called upon to express their own ideas", and (3) "language is viewed as a system of grammatical forms, vocabulary items, and phonetic sounds, best studied through a perusal of discrete words and sentences" (Gorsuch, 1999, p. 9). Gorsuch (1999) concluded, "the textbooks are a hindrance to teachers who want to teach students how to communicate in English" (p. 9).

In contrast to the studies above, which described the general integrated textbooks, McGroarty and Taguchi (2005) analysed five of the best-selling "Oral Communication A" textbooks approved by MEXT. They noted that most exercises focused on mechanical operations that required highly structured responses: "only three speaking activities out of 218 were manipulative functions practiced more creatively, such as role-playing" (McGroarty & Taguchi, 2005, p. 218). Moreover, communicative settings were limited to the school and classroom, and most of the dialogues contained direct, casual interactions between friends and/or family. The researchers summarised that "the textbooks' limited range of situations and exercise types constrains the possible development of students' abilities to communicate outside the classroom" (McGroarty & Taguchi, 2005, p. 222).

In summary, although the textbooks may have the hidden goal to prepare students for entrance examinations and the stated goal of following the MEXT guidelines to improve learners' communicative competence, in reality, they seem to be insufficient for both.

2.6. Theoretical model: Constraints limiting communicative change in Japan

The research results described in 2.4 indicated that, despite the Japanese government's attempts to introduce CLT, it had not been implemented in the classrooms, where teachers tended to continue to follow the *yakudoku* tradition. Section 2.5 described the constraints against implementing communicative approaches in Japanese classrooms. Based on these constraints, Figure 2.1 conceptualises the factors influencing classroom dynamics in Japanese high schools.
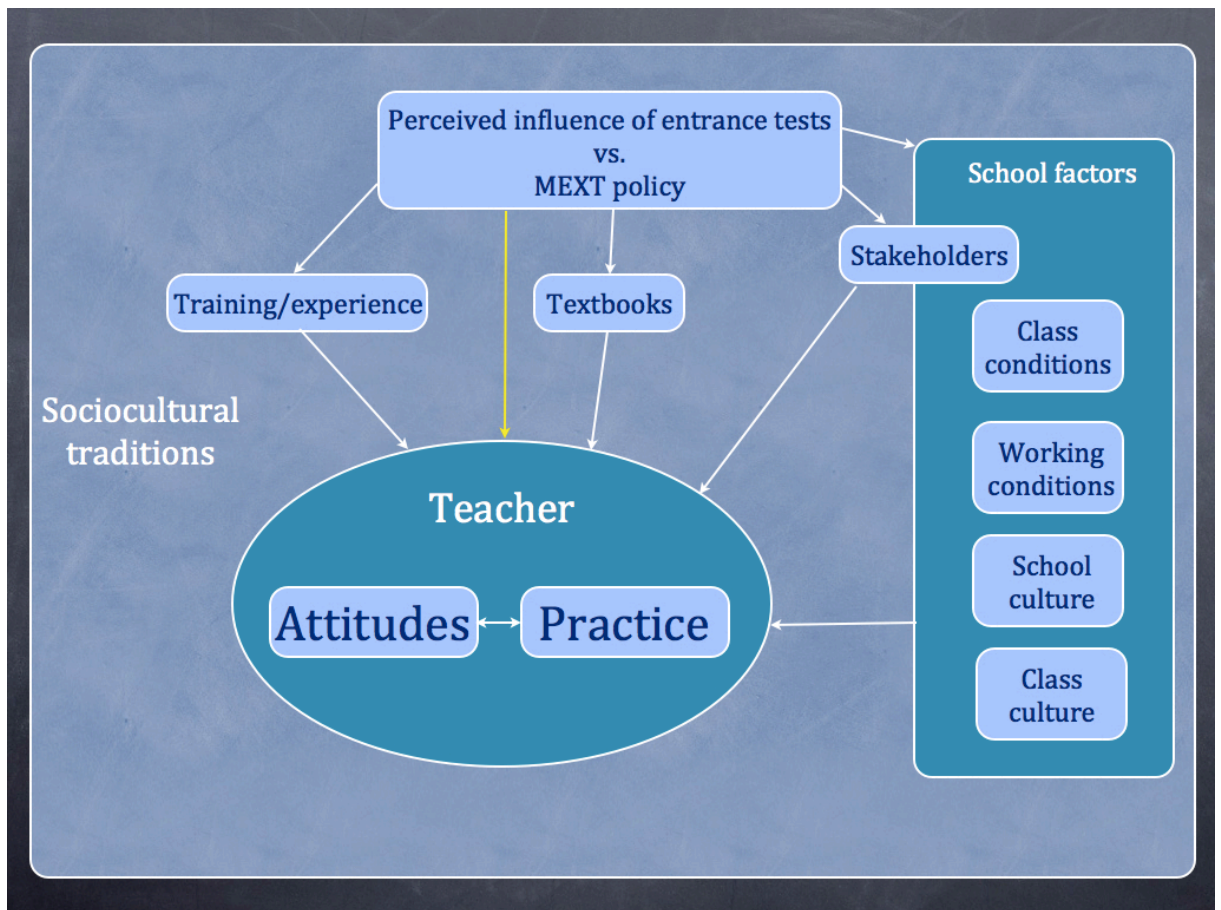
Figure 2.1 Factors influencing classroom dynamics in Japanese high schools

Figure 2.1 indicates that, although sociocultural conditions (2.2.3 & 2.2.4) may infiltrate the different components of the model indirectly, the tension between MEXT policies (2.3) and the perceived influence of the entrance tests (2.5.1) has a stronger impact on teachers' attitudes and practices. The consequences of this tension occur both directly (yellow arrow) and indirectly via stakeholders (inside and outside the school), the nature of the mandatory textbooks (2.5.7), teachers' training and experience (2.5.6), and schools' internal factors such as their working conditions (2.5.3), classroom factors (classroom conditions and cultures) (2.5.5) and school cultures (2.5.4). These issues combined to undermine the teachers' confidence in their capacities to attempt new approaches such as CLT (2.5.2). The factors in this theoretical model provide a framework for comparison with the factors influencing the *kosen* classrooms in this study. This model will be re-addressed and compared with a *kosen* model in Chapter 8.

2.7. Summary

This chapter described issues connected to the implementation of CLT in Japan, East Asia and the wider international context. Through the analytical process of constant comparison (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) used in this study (see Chapter 3, Subsection 3.6.2), the factors described in this chapter help to guide the interview topics (see Chapter 5) and explain the teaching processes (see Chapters 6 and 7). Moreover, the constraints outlined in Section 2.5 and conceptualised in 2.6 provide the foundation for the theoretical model presented in Chapter 8 (Section 8.5).

Despite government attempts to implement CLT in various countries, including Japan, results have been mixed. Studies indicate some positive attitudes to CLT from teachers, but a lack of knowledge regarding the approach and how to apply it, combined with local constraints, have led to uncertainty. Many of the problems stem from the sociocultural assumptions inherent in the ESL BANA institutions, which may not suit EFL teachers who face wider curricular and stakeholder constraints in their school systems and fewer opportunities to use the language authentically. Moreover, the Confucian heritage in East Asian countries tends to correspond with transmission-style teaching rather than CLT's learner-centred interpretive values.

In Japan, despite various policies espousing change, MEXT has failed to change some factors limiting the adoption, such as university entrance examinations, teachers' working conditions, training schemes and the textbooks. Therefore, despite the stated desire of some teachers and students to learn to communicate, the *yakudoku* teaching practice has remained dominant.

The research context in this study (see Chapter 1; Section 1.2) has fewer constraints in relation to CLT than regular Japanese high schools:

1. No entrance examination pressure, because graduates can transfer into the third year of a university course without sitting an English examination.
2. CLT-oriented textbooks chosen by the teachers.
3. Smaller than average classrooms (18-29 students).
4. Teacher freedom to progress through the materials at different speeds and develop their own tests.

Moreover, the teachers could potentially feel more secure in their teaching practices and/or language proficiency, because three of them held Master's degrees and one

participant had lived in the UK for an extended period (Chapter 3, Subsection 3.5.2.2 outlines the participants' duties; Chapter 5 outlines their backgrounds).

Therefore, these unique factors held out the possibility of facilitating a change towards a more CLT oriented approach. The fact that the teaching approaches used in this research site were in this state of potential transition motivated this study and its aim to explore three central areas:

1. How do the previous MEXT-mandated and new CLT-oriented textbooks differ?
2. How do the teachers perceive the textbooks, their teaching approaches and the constraints that they face?
3. How do the teachers use the textbooks in the classroom?

The next chapter (Chapter 3) describes the methodology used to study these three areas.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Overview

This study began by following the implementation of new English textbooks in a Japanese engineering college (*Kosen*). The new textbooks had been introduced to complement the communicative goals of the *Kosen*'s external accreditation board (JABEE) and the college management. However, well-meaning policy change does not automatically equal shared ownership and adoption by practitioners (Fullan, 2007). Over the last few years, the Japanese government has introduced policies to try to encourage communicative learning in Japanese schools (MEXT, 2002, 2003b). However, various studies have shown that English teachers have tended to continue the traditional *yakudoku* (grammar-translation) style of education (Kikuchi & Browne, 2009; O'Donnell, 2005; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Wada, 2002). The pressure to prepare students for the grammatically oriented university entrance tests has often been cited as the cause for this phenomenon (Gorsuch, 2001; Sakui, 2004; Watanabe, 2004).

The *Kosen* differs from ordinary high schools, because, in addition to the new textbooks, the students can study in-house for an additional two tertiary-level years before transferring into the third year of a university course without an English entrance test. This lack of an external test burden, combined with the introduction of a different style of textbooks, could increase the opportunities for different teaching approaches. This "unique" case (Miles & Huberman, 1994) prompted me to study the effects of the change for the individuals responsible for implementing it: the teachers.

The previous two chapters described the context and the issues in the literature respectively. As outlined in Chapter 1, subsequent chapters will describe the findings from an analysis of the old and new textbooks (Chapter 4), interviews with the teachers (Chapter 5), and observations of classes instructed by two of the teachers, Akira (Chapter 6) and Chikara (Chapter 7). Chapter 8 then compares the findings and discusses the implications.

This chapter focuses on how the study was undertaken and the reasons that underlay those methodological choices. Section 3.2 discusses the main characteristics and bases of qualitative research, and situates this study and my underlying beliefs as a researcher conducting research within a qualitative orientation and constructivist paradigm. Section 3.3 outlines the overarching research question and delineates the

three subquestions that guided the exploration of the textbooks, and the participants' attitudes and practices. The case study approach (3.4) incorporated the choices of sampling (3.4.2) and quality (3.4.3). Following from these macro-level decisions, the following two sections describe the methods of data collection (3.5) and analysis (3.6). In particular, these sections focus on the observations (3.5.3), interviews (3.5.4), textbook analysis (3.6.1) and the process of constant comparison (3.6.2).

3.2. The field of qualitative research

The field of qualitative research is wide and complex: "it crosscuts disciplines, fields and subject matter. A complex interconnected family of terms, concepts and assumptions surround the term *qualitative research*" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 1, original emphasis). Moreover, the field has experienced various paradigm shifts during the past hundred years (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Although a full review of the history of the field is beyond the scope of this thesis, this section outlines qualitative research from three perspectives: (1) common definitions and characteristics (3.2.1), (2) the philosophical bases (3.2.2) and (3) the ideological viewpoints (3.2.3). Following these descriptions, Subsection (3.2.4) explains (1) the goals and limitations of the study that locate it in the qualitative field (3.2.4.1) and (2) my background and beliefs that influenced the decision (3.2.4.2).

3.2.1. Qualitative research definitions and characteristics

This subsection will discuss qualitative research, beginning with brief definitions, followed by detailed descriptions and an outline of the principal characteristics.

Many definitions of qualitative research highlight the differences to the quantitative alternative. The most concise descriptions indicate the lack of numerical data; for example, "narrowly, any research that uses procedures that make use of non-numerical data" (J. Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 435). Other brief definitions indicate the interpretative nature of the analysis: "in very broad terms … qualitative research entails collecting primarily textual data and examining it using interpretative analysis" (Croker, 2009, p. 5).

Creswell (1998) describes (1) the social or human nature of the inquiry; (2) the development of a complex holistic picture and (3) the natural setting:

> Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological patterns of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed

views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (Creswell, 1998, p. 15)

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) provide one of the richest definitions of qualitative research. Similarly to Creswell (1998), their definition indicates the variety of methods and approaches to the field, while focusing on the interpretive, naturalistic style.

Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of unconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 2)

Richards (2003) describes some of the main characteristics of qualitative research, based on what it will and will not include, as outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of qualitative inquiry

It will:	It will not:
- study human actors in natural settings, in the context of their ordinary, everyday world	- set up artificial situations for the purposes of study or try to control the conditions under which participants act
- seek to understand the meanings and significance of these actions from the perspective of those involved	- attempt to describe human behaviour in terms of a limited set of predetermined categories
- usually focus on a small number of (possibly just one) individuals, groups or settings	- attempt to study a large population identified on the basis of particular characteristics
- employ a range of methods in order to establish different perspectives on the relevant issues	- base its findings on a single perspective or feature
- base its analysis on a wide range of features	- base its analysis on a single feature
- use only quantification where this is appropriate for specific purposes and as part of a wider approach	- represent its findings in primarily quantitative terms

(Source: K. Richards, 2003, p. 10)

This subsection introduced the key characteristics of qualitative research. It began with narrow definitions, followed by an indication of the variety of the field and then some of the main characteristics. The next subsection describes the philosophical bases underlying the qualitative paradigms.

3.2.2. The philosophical bases of the qualitative field

As outlined in the introduction to Section 3.2, the qualitative approach is composed of various competing paradigms. Creswell (1998) explains that paradigms contain "a basic set of beliefs or assumptions that guide their inquiries" (p. 74). He describes five philosophical perspectives that underlie these beliefs: ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical and methodological. Unlike the first three beliefs, which form the bases for the ideological orientations, the latter two areas, rhetoric and methodology, are practical outcomes. Researchers make rhetorical and methodological choices based on ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions. Therefore, the following subsections (3.2.2.1-3.2.2.3) outline these three philosophical bases.

3.2.2.1. Ontology

The ontological perspective considers "what is reality?" (Croker, 2009, p. 5). It concerns the construction of reality by individuals in the research situation (Creswell, 1998). Richards (2003), warns against overgeneralisation, but describes two extremes: *realism* and *relativism*. Realists tend to believe "that the world 'out there' is a very real one that can be studied and understood in order to identify the laws and rules that govern behaviour" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 34). Alternatively, relativists deny "that there is any single reality independent of our ways of understanding it … [they prefer] to think in terms of various realities created by different individuals and groups at different times in different circumstances" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 34).

3.2.2.2. Epistemology

The epistemological viewpoint asks: "what is knowledge?" (Croker, 2009, p. 5). This area incorporates the assumptions concerning the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Creswell, 1998). As above, Richards (2003) warns that there are two extremes, between which most people are positioned: *objectivist* and *subjectivist.* From the objectivist perspective: "it is possible to establish general truths and laws that are accessible to all and can inform action" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 36). Alternatively, subjectivists believe that exploratory studies enable us "to understand the ways in which the world is interpreted and common understandings are constructed" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 36).

3.2.2.3. Axiology

The axiological perspective considers the role of values in a study (Creswell, 1998). The two alternatives consider that the truths contained in a study are "value-free" or "value-

laden" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 36). If an investigator accepts the value-laden nature of qualitative research, he or she "reports his or her values and biases as well as the value-laden nature of information gathered from the field" (Creswell, 1998, p. 76).

The three assumptions described above tend, to varying degrees, to underlie the ideological viewpoints taken by researchers. The next section (3.2.3), describes some of the main ideologies that have created tensions in qualitative research.

3.2.3. The ideological viewpoints

Edge and Richards (1998) explain that the ideological viewpoints create divisions in the field that cannot be resolved: "metaphorically speaking, paradigms may engage one another in debate, but the differences between them are ultimately irresolvable except in terms of the survival and extinction of the paradigms themselves" (p. 341). Ideologies competing within the qualitative field include Marxist, cultural studies, ethnic and queer theory paradigms (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, 2003), but it is beyond the scope of this chapter to describe them. Instead, the subsections below focus on three of the main ideological differences: (1) (post) positivism, (2) constructivism, and (3) postmodernism, critical theory and feminist research.

3.2.3.1. (Post) positivism

Positivism encompasses the realist ontology, objectivist epistemology and value-free axiology bases (K. Richards, 2003). The positivist approach to scientific inquiry had traditionally dominated due to its explanations of physical laws, but this approach could not generalise the complexities of human behaviour: "it regards human behaviour as passive, essentially determined and controlled, thereby ignoring attention, individualism and freedom" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 19).

Postpositivists differ from positivists concerning the ability to comprehend reality. "In the positivist version it is contended that there is a reality out there to be studied, captured and understood, whereas the postpositivists argue that reality can never be fully apprehended, only approximated" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 14).

3.2.3.2. Constructivism

In contrast to positivism, the relativist ontology, subjectivist epistemology and value-laden axiology form the core philosophical bases of constructivism: "reality is socially constructed, so the focus of research should be on an understanding of this construction and the multiple perspectives it implies" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 38). Whereas qualitative researchers within the positivist paradigm "attempted to do good positivist research

with less vigorous methods and procedures" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 14), the constructivist paradigm suits the multimethod, naturalistic and interpretive form of qualitative research defined in Subsection 3.2.1 and characterised in Table 3.1 (p. 54).

The subjectivity and values of the researcher also form central elements of the constructivist paradigm, "they take their intellectual baggage and life experiences with them … This may color their perceptions of the research setting and also the constructions of reality that they develop with the participants" (Croker, 2009, p. 11).

This study works within the constructivist paradigm employing a case study approach. Subsection 3.4.3.2 indicates the processes that qualitative case study researchers, working within the constructivist paradigm, can employ to improve the quality of the study, such as triangulation and thick description.

3.2.3.3. *Postmodernism, critical theory and feminist research*

According to Richards (2003), the postmodernists regard meanings, facts and theories as constructs reflecting an ongoing power struggle to define reality: "and the representations of researchers are not neutral windows on the social world". However, he also counters that "for the most part, these debates are part of the nature of constructivism itself" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 39).

Postmodernists have been called "'armchair radicals' … who focus their critiques on changing ways of thinking rather than calling for action based on these changes" (Thomas, as cited in Creswell, 1998, p. 79). In contrast, feminist researchers reject constructivism due to its acceptance of the status quo. Moreover, although they accept the social-inequality themes of postmodern thinking, they differ due to their "action-oriented research and their support for meta-narratives or theories" (Creswell, 1998, p. 80). They explicitly want to empower marginalised groups (Croker, 2009), but their ideological stance means that their discourses can be selective and dogmatic (K. Richards, 2003).

The previous three sections defined qualitative research (3.2.1); described some of the underlying philosophical bases (3.2.2) and outlined some of the different ideological paradigms (3.2.3). The next section (3.2.4) explains my rationale for choosing a qualitative approach and the complexity of my ideological stance.

3.2.4. Why choose qualitative research for this study?

This section explains two reasons for selecting qualitative research: (1) the goals and limitations of the study and (2) my background and beliefs.

3.2.4.1. The goals and limitations of the study

This study aims to explore the influence of a change in textbooks on four Japanese teachers of English (JTE) in a rural technical college. From a (post) positivist perspective, the sample is too small, non-random and too contextualised to represent the JTE population. However, this study accords with the constructivist paradigm, because it focuses on understanding the complex attitudes and actions of real people in a certain place and time. Reciprocally, this paradigm requires a qualitative approach that inductively explores the participants' attitudes and actions, using multiple methods of inquiry, while attempting to avoid disrupting the natural flow of the lessons.

3.2.4.2. My background and beliefs

After describing qualitative research, the philosophical bases and paradigms in relation to the study, I should explain my own position. From my perspective, applied linguistics research should attempt to improve language classes, but the improvements cannot take place without understanding the participants and the context. This viewpoint indicates an ideological mix between the constructivist preference for descriptive interpretation and the critical theory approach to evaluative change. However, I do not consider them mutually exclusive.

My background has been in action research (AR), which contains evaluative, reflective and collaborative approaches to solving problems in a specific situation (Burns, 1999). This approach to research formed an integral part of Aston University's Master's degree in TESOL that I studied between 2003 and 2005. As a result, I undertook several cycles of AR with groups of students, which led to incremental improvements in a movie discussion course (Humphries, 2008). Although this process involved a critical theory dimension for implementing change, it focused primarily on understanding the students' problems. The evaluative side focused on how *I* could improve the course.

Regarding this Ph.D. study, my beliefs have developed based on what I have learned during the course of the investigation. Initially, I began the research to measure the degree of *success* of the implementation. This approach assumed that the *correct* use of the new textbooks would lead to an improvement in the students' education, based on my own belief in the value of student-centred meaning-oriented learning. Nevertheless, the study aimed to interpret rather than evaluate. I wanted to learn how the teachers responded to the change. As I understood their problems in greater depth, a complex situation emerged that cannot be reduced to a study of the degree of implementation of

a textbook. Therefore, it became important to understand the nature of the environment and the views of the participants who were implicated in the curriculum changes.

In summary, Section 3.2 delineated the field of qualitative research: the philosophical bases for inquiry and the competing ideological paradigms. The exploratory nature of this study, which aims to understand the influence of a change in textbooks for individuals in a specific context, fits within the constructivist paradigm of qualitative research.

3.3. The research questions

As explained in Chapter 1, the college had replaced traditional textbooks with new communicative materials for the second to fourth graders (equivalent to US high school grades 11 and 12 and the first year of tertiary education). The research questions arose from both intrinsic and instrumental interests (see 3.4.1). From an intrinsic interest perspective, I wanted to study how my colleagues would adapt to the new textbooks. However, this interest did not arise in a vacuum. Instrumental influences for this study came from the literature described in Chapter 2, which indicated the central role of practitioners in mediating educational change, and Japanese high school teachers' non-adoption of their government's CLT-oriented policies. Moreover, Chapter 2 indicated that the perceived washback effect from university entrance tests encouraged the *yakudoku* grammar-translation status quo in regular high schools, whereas Chapter 1 outlined that *Kosen* students did not need to study for English entrance tests. Therefore, in this unique context, that lacked entrance test pressure, to what extent would my colleagues adopt the new textbooks?

> How did the introduction of new EFL textbooks influence teachers' attitudes and practices at a technical college in Japan?

This question contains three central perspectives: (1) the textbooks, (2) the attitudes and (3) the teaching practices. Each of these perspectives contains further subquestions, described below.

Before exploring the teachers' attitudes and practices, it was important to analyse the contents of the textbooks to avoid overgeneralisation. I compared the traditional and the new textbooks using an analytical framework created by Littlejohn (1998). He suggests three stages, which "move from a consideration of the more easily identifiable aspects to the more abstract and complex" (Littlejohn, 1998, p. 195).

1. What is there? (What are the statements of description? What are the physical aspects of the materials? What are the main steps in the instructional sections?)
2. What is required of users? (What is the learner expected to do? With whom? With what content? Who determines these things?)
3. What is implied? (What aims, principles of selection and sequence are implied? What are the roles for the teacher and learners? What are the demands placed upon the learners?)

Section 3.6.1 describes Littlejohn's analytical framework and Chapter 4 contains the findings to this preliminary study.

The second perspective covers the teachers' attitudes. Although the specific questions arose based on observations and constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) between the participants' answers, four thematic questions guided the interviews.

1. What were the teachers' pedagogical backgrounds? (For example: how did their educational backgrounds influence their current thinking? How did they prefer to teach?
2. What were their opinions of the textbooks? (For example: what problems did they perceive when they used the textbooks?)
3. What local influences did they perceive? (For example: what challenges did they feel that they faced in the classroom?)
4. What external influences did they perceive? (For example: did the guidelines from the ministry of education (MEXT) influence the participants' attitudes to teaching?)

The third perspective is the teaching practices, which divided into three guiding questions:

1. What patterns emerged in the textbook coverage? (Were some areas frequently used and other areas frequently omitted? Was there a pattern in the types of activities included or omitted?)
2. How did the teachers use the textbooks? (Did they alter any activities?)
3. How did the students participate? (How did they interact with the teacher? How did they behave?)

The central research question described above and the three perspectives employed to explore it formed the basis of a case study approach to inquiry. The next section (3.4) describes case studies and the main issues of quality before situating this study within the approach.

3.4. The research approach: Case study

This section outlines the case study research approach from three perspectives: (1) the variety of case study definitions, (2) sampling issues, (3) quality issues and then the fourth subsection applies these issues to the choices made in this case study.

3.4.1. Case study definitions

Although case study is recognised as an approach within qualitative research (Creswell, 1998; Hood, 2009; K. Richards, 2003) many alternative definitions exist. Wolcott (2001) states that he struggled to categorise case studies: "My problem was not that it did not fit *anywhere*, but that it seemed to fit *everywhere*. I came to realize that case study is better regarded as a form of reporting than as a strategy for conducting research" (p. 91, original emphasis). However, Pearson Casanave (2010) states that, in addition to the final report, case studies refer to the process of doing such a study. The diversity of definitions probably arises from its application in a range of fields such as education, management, psychology, sociology and political science, and the confusion with case method, case work and case history (Duff, 2008). Hood (2009) explains that "case study is often looked at as a research *method*, rather than a research *focus*" (p. 68, original emphasis). The focus in a case study is *the case*, often described as a "bounded system" (Creswell, 1998; Duff, 2008; Merriam, 1988; Stake, 2003). "This bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is a case being studied – a program, an event, an activity, or individuals" (Creswell, 1998, p. 61).

Defining the boundaries of the case is an important aspect. Yin (2003) defines a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon

within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries and contexts are not really evident" (p. 13). However, "if the phenomenon you are interested in studying is not intrinsically bounded, it is not a case" (Merriam, 1988, p. 27). It is therefore the researcher who needs to decide the case boundary (Hood, 2009). The investigators "often fudge here and there, and draw artificial lines around a case" (Pearson Casanave, 2010, p. 67). However, van Lier (2005) warns that a rigidly drawn boundary "may oversimplify and isolate the case" (p. 196). Miles and Huberman (1994) explain "there is the focus, or 'heart', of the study, and a somewhat indeterminate boundary defines the edge of the case: what will not be studied" (p. 25). Their graphical representation of this concept is reproduced in Figure 3.1.
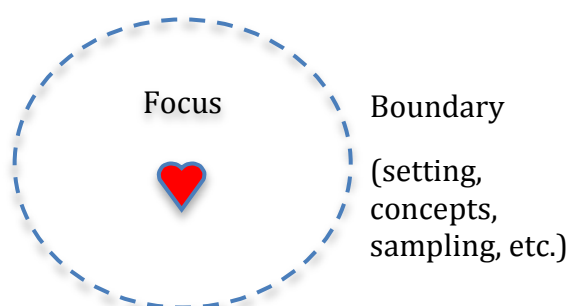

Figure 3.1 The case as a unit of analysis
(Source: Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 25)

In addition to the complexity of defining case studies and the boundaries of the cases, there exist different types of case studies. Stake (2003) defines two main types of case studies: *intrinsic* and *instrumental*. "I call a study an *intrinsic case study* if it is undertaken because, first and last, the researcher wants a better understanding of this particular case" (Stake, 2003, p. 136, original emphasis). Alternatively, in an instrumental case study: " a particular case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalization" (Stake, 2003, p. 137). However, he concedes that researchers tend to have both intrinsic and instrumental aims to their studies; therefore, these are poles on a continuum rather than a dichotomy.

3.4.2. Sampling

Due to the bounded nature of case studies, the selection of a few key samples is an important issue. Unlike quantitative studies, where samples are taken from large populations, sampling should be purposive rather than random (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Various sampling strategies exist that researchers can apply to suit the aims of their studies (Duff, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Duff (2008) explains that samples

62

are often selected opportunistically based on the researcher's social network or family. However, she lists many advantages that come from the familiarity:

> ... access and informed consent are easier to obtain. In addition, it may be possible to observe or interact with familiar participants or sites for a more extended or intensive period, and as a result, the researcher may obtain more useful data ... Finally, there is likely to be a greater understanding of the context based on prior knowledge. (Duff, 2008, p. 116)

This subsection outlined the importance of purposive sampling and the frequent, but potentially useful outcomes of opportunistic sampling. The next subsection (3.4.3) discusses the quality issues.

3.4.3. Quality issues

As outlined above, this study works within the constructivist paradigm to explore the teachers' attitudes and practices in their natural setting. Therefore, the strict positivist demands for validity, reliability and objectivity are unwarranted (Edge & Richards, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Instead, for interpretative case studies, the desire to *particularise* or *generalise* underlie the choice of processes for improving the quality (Stake, 2003). The following subsections describe (1) particularisation and generalisation (3.4.3.1) and (2) quality improvement processes (3.4.3.2).

3.4.3.1. *Particularisation versus generalisation*

The main criticism of case studies is the issue of generalisation, which "aims to establish the relevance, significance and external validity of findings for situations or people beyond the immediate research project" (Duff, 2008, p. 48). The central reason for this criticism is the narrow convenient nature of the sampling, a case study "is not so much a sample of one, but rather a population of one: the study is descriptive and valid only for its subject" (Dobson, Hardy, Heyes, Humphreys, & Humphreys, 1981). However, case studies aim to study the particular in its natural setting (Stake, 2003). Therefore, it is a form of naturalistic inquiry that should not be evaluated according to the positivist criterion of generalisation. "Naturalistic inquiry will not deliver a generalization which can be abstracted and 'applied', instead it seeks to produce understandings of one situation which someone with knowledge of another situation may well be able to make use of" (Edge & Richards, 1998, p. 345). In other words, there is a transfer of responsibility from the author to the reader (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The readers, based on the detailed account that they have read, "determine whether there is a congruence,

fit, or connection between one study context, in all its richness, and their own context, rather than have the original researchers make that assumption for them" (Duff, 2008, p. 51). In effect, the readers might generalise the case studies, which Stake and Trumball (1982) call *naturalistic generalization*. "When the researcher's narrative provides opportunity for vicarious experience, readers extend their memories of happenings … The reader comes to know some things told, as if he or she had experienced it" (Stake, 2003, p. 145). Because, from this constructivist perspective, the responsibility for this "extension of experience" lies with the reader, it is the responsibility of the case study researcher to focus on describing the *particular* in sufficient detail (Stake 2003). The following section (3.4.3.2) describes processes that can enrich the understanding of the particular case.

3.4.3.2. Quality improvement processes

As explained in the previous subsection (3.4.3.1), it is the responsibility of the constructivist case study researcher to understand and describe the particular case in sufficient detail to enable the reader to share the experience. This implies a dual focus on (1) the methods of inquiry and (2) the presentation of the case.

Case studies require multiple methods of inquiry, which leads to a triangulation of the data. Rather than using triangulation to confirm an objective verifiable truth in the positivist sense; it seeks to "gain the broadest and deepest possible view of the issue from different perspectives" (Hood, 2009, p. 81). Triangulating the data "may reveal both the complexity of the issue and apparent contradictory ways of viewing it" (Hood, 2009, p. 81).

Regarding the presentation of the case, the author should aim for "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). The description needs sufficient detail and clarity to allow readers to respond in terms of their own experience (K. Richards, 2003). Moreover, related to the issues of thick description and triangulation, the readers can gain deeper knowledge of the case if primary data sources are presented such as interview transcripts (Duff, 2008). The narrative can take a personal tone to reflect the researcher's role in the story and his or her depiction of the participants as real people deserving the reader's empathy (Hood, 2009). Moreover, Lincoln and Guba (2002) state that the report should contain reflections of the investigator's own personal experience of the fieldwork:

Any case study is a construction itself, a product of the interaction between respondents, site and researcher. As such, the construction is rooted in the person, character, experience, context, and philosophy of the constructor. That constructor, the inquirer, has an obligation to be self-examining, self-questioning, self-challenging, self-critical and self-correcting. Any case study should reflect these intensely personal processes on the part of the researcher. (Lincoln & Guba, 2002, p. 207)

This subsection explained that the quality of case studies improves if the researcher uses multiple methods of inquiry and thickly describes the case with the use of primary data. The next subsection (3.4.4) describes the boundaries, samples and methods of inquiry for this investigation.

3.4.4. This case study

As outlined in Section 3.3, the initial focus for the case arose intrinsically, because I wanted to study the effects of the new textbooks on my colleagues. Subsection 3.4.1 indicated that choosing the boundaries could be problematic. The sampling choices defined the initial boundaries, but they were refined as the study progressed. The sampling referred to three main sources of data: the textbooks, teachers' attitudes, and teaching practice.

I chose three textbooks for the samples: *Vivid* (Minamimura, et al., 2006a), *On the Move* (Gershon, et al., 2004b) and *New Cutting Edge* (Cunningham, Moor, & Eales, 2005). These choices were motivated by a number of considerations. Firstly, *Vivid* was the traditional textbook that the first grade classes continued to use. I analysed this textbook to understand what the teachers had used before the curricular change. Secondly, *On the Move* (third graders' textbook) was the second in a two-stage set of books. This preliminary analysis took place before the classes were decided for 2008. Although *On the Go* (the second grade textbook) became the subject of the observations, both textbooks contain the same generic structure. Therefore, there was no need to begin a new deep analysis of the first stage textbook. Thirdly, I selected *New Cutting Edge* (fourth graders' textbook), because it came from a different series. However, the English department decided to replace *New Cutting Edge* after only one year. Therefore, circumstances forced me to draw a new boundary: the *New Cutting Edge* analysis does not appear in this thesis.

Regarding the participant samples, I decided to observe and interview teachers who used both *Vivid* and a new textbook to enable a comparison. Five teachers used both *Vivid* and *On the Go*, but one teacher preferred not to participate. Therefore, I

interviewed and observed the four remaining teachers: Akira, Bonda, Chikara and Daiki (all pseudonyms).

During the course of the interviews and observations, issues arose with two of the participants: Bonda and Daiki. Bonda tended to wait for cues from me before responding and his answers tended to be very concise. More importantly, during the observations, it became apparent that he had replaced the textbooks with his own handouts. Daiki preferred to use Japanese during the interviews. Some misunderstandings arose from my limited ability to speak Japanese, but Daiki contradicted himself and seemed to search my questions for teaching ideas or indications of negative evaluation. I reflected in my research diary that he had misunderstood the interpretive aims of the study.

> Daiki seems to try to dodge some of my questions and give different answers. On the subject of giving homework to the students, he has given two different answers. Initially, he said that he gave homework and then admitted later in the interview that he didn't. Maybe he was worried that I might evaluate him as a bad teacher for not giving homework, so I had to reassure him that I'm not assessing him. (Diary entry following interview D1: 26 May, 2008)

During the observations, Daiki frequently changed his methods, even during the same classes, which, in combination with his contradictory interview responses, made it difficult to discern a principled teaching approach. Therefore, although I collected and analysed the data for Bonda and Daiki, the findings from their observations are not represented in this thesis and their attitudes are discussed in less depth than Akira and Chikara. Bonda and Daiki can each form the bases of two separate intrinsically bounded case studies, but they lie outside the boundary for understanding patterns in the application of the textbook.

Regarding the application of multiple methods of inquiry to understand the case from various perspectives, Sections 3.5 and 3.6 describe the range of methods of data collection and analysis respectively. The data included the textbooks, research diary fieldnotes, video footage, photographs, sample tests, and translated transcripts of interviews and observations. Analytical methods included a framework designed by Littlejohn (1998) for the textbooks, and constant comparison of the interview and observation data both during and after the collection period. Moreover, I collected further contextual data about the college (see Chapter 1) and issues of curricular change, particularly in Japan (see Chapter 2).

3.5. Data collection methods

This section describes the process of data collection as it happened in chronological order. Section 3.6 then details the analysis. This is an artificial separation, because, during the observation and interview period, I analysed the data through the process of constant comparison (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Constant comparison partially guided what to look for during the observations and what questions to ask during the interviews. Table 3.2 outlines a basic timeline of the data collection and analysis.

Table 3.2 Timeline of data collection and analysis

Date	Event
8 November 2007	Gatekeeper approval
Nov. 2007 – Jan. 2008	Textbook analysis
22 February 2008	Ethical clearance
April 2008	Beginning of the Japanese academic year, selection of participants and restructuring of the study
12 May – 30 June, 2008	Observations and interviews (+ initial data analysis)
14 July 2008	Began analysis of interview transcripts
3 May 2009	Began analysis of class transcripts and video data

The subsections below describe the entry into the field and the stages of data collection.

3.5.1. The textbooks

Subsection 3.4.4 outlined that I chose three textbooks for analysis: *Vivid*, *On the Move* and *New Cutting Edge*. Subsection 3.6.1 describes the analytical framework. In brief, the framework helped me to develop an understanding of the contents, user requirements and pedagogical implications of the textbooks that I could use as a basis of comparison to the teachers' attitudes and practices. It was a preliminary study before the interviews and observations began in the following academic year. The next subsection (3.5.2) describes the entry into the field.

3.5.2. Entry into the field

This section describes the local context and the groundwork undertaken before the observations and interviews began. The following subsections describe (1) the Kosen context (3.5.2.1), (2) the gatekeepers and the role of the researcher (3.5.2.2), (3) the selection of participants (3.5.2.3), and (4) the ethics (3.5.2.4).

3.5.2.1. The Kosen context

In 2008, the *Kosen* contained 49 full time teachers, which consisted of 30 engineering specialists and 19 members of the liberal arts faculty. Documents published both internally and externally listed the names of 19 part time teachers, but this list was limited to instructors who held postgraduate qualifications, or who performed additional pastoral duties such as coaching clubs, counselling and so on. The head of English estimated that there were 60 to 80 part time teachers in total. The English department contained three full time and four part time teachers. This study focuses on teachers who taught the first and second grades. Five teachers taught each of these grades and the four teachers in this study taught both grades, which facilitated comparison. The first grade contained 134 students; the second grade consisted of 114.

Students were tested four times during the year: two mid-semester and two semester-end tests. The English department tended to meet after the first three tests to decide which students should change between the proficiency classes. The class sizes tended to stay the same, so the teachers would "trade" students. There were no meetings at the beginning or the end of the year to discuss goals or review the year. Full time teachers met on an ad hoc basis when the needs arose such as making entrance tests. Rather than meetings, teachers shared information when needed through the *Kosen* intranet and message board system. The head of English wrote the syllabi for Grades 1-4, but members of the department did not review its contents.

3.5.2.2. The gatekeepers and the role of the researcher

As a teacher at the college since 2001, I knew the decision-making structure and I had developed a good working relationship with the gatekeepers who could grant or veto my access to the classrooms. Although, in theory, the study could proceed with just the principal's seal of approval (which was literally received, 8 November 2007, see Appendix D), it was important to discuss the project with all the necessary parties in the "hierarchy of consent" to avoid potential undermining (Dingwall, 1980; K. Richards, 2003). Before approaching the principal, I received permission and advice from the head of the English department, the director of the human sciences division, the director of academic affairs and the vice principal. My proposal (translated into English in Appendix D) aimed to persuade the gatekeepers of the value of the study in two ways. Firstly, it indicated the innovative nature of the curricular changes in the college, and secondly, stated that I could give feedback to the participants upon completion of the research. However, I did not offer to publish the results in the in-house journal, in order to avoid

the potential conflicts of interest that might arise if the management construed the findings for evaluative purposes (Barnard, 1998).

3.5.2.3. *The participants and the researcher*

Following the publication of the teaching schedule at the beginning of the academic year (April 2008), I emailed and received the consent from four male teachers, (see 3.5.2.4 for the ethical protocols followed). Subsection 3.4.4, described the case study sampling criteria that formed the basis of their selection. Fundamentally, they all taught the first and second grades, which used the traditional and the new textbooks respectively.

Chapter 5 describes background influences discussed in the interviews, which helped to form the participants' pedagogical attitudes. Table 3.3 outlines the ages, contractual conditions, number of years taught and the class proficiency levels. The classes are given labels: C, B, A and D, which correspond to the initial letters of the teachers' pseudonyms (Chikara, Bonda, Akira and Daiki). My details are also included in Table 3.3, because, in qualitative case studies, the researcher's role is integral to the construction of the data (Croker, 2009). My connection to the participants is described at the end of this section.

Table 3.3 Summary of participant and researcher characteristics

	Chikara	Bonda	Akira	Daiki	Researcher
Age	55	43	55	41	33
FT/PT (rank)	Full-time (Professor)	Full-time (Assoc. Prof)	Part-time (lecturer)	Part-time (lecturer)	Full-time (lecturer)
Years taught at Kosen	6	16	1	5	7
Class (proficiency)	C (highest)	B (lowest)	A (lower-middle)	D (lower-middle)	(Grade 1 = all; Grade 2 = upper-middle)

As described in Chapter 1, non-teaching commitments are integral to the full-time teachers' professional lives at the *Kosen* and these activities can be highly regarded by their colleagues in Japan (K. Sato, 2002). However, the burden from this extra work can have a negative impact on teachers' abilities to prepare for their classes and to change from their routines (Fullan, 2007). Therefore, a brief outline of their additional duties follows below.

Bonda probably had the most extensive range of non-teaching duties. His role as Deputy Director of Student Affairs placed him in charge of organising all the students'

social events such as the annual college festival and sports day. Moreover, he dealt with administrative duties related to the students' club activities and disciplinary problems. In addition to the duties of the Student Affairs Department, Bonda coached the table tennis team every day (including weekends). This range of duties meant that he regularly came home at 10pm, which extended to after midnight during the school events.

Although Chikara was the head of the English department, his role as a homeroom teacher probably created a heavier workload. One colleague once joked to me that a homeroom teacher is both the students' "secretary and mother rolled into one". All the administrative work for the students goes through the homeroom teachers and they are the first point of contact for pastoral care.

As part-time staff, Akira and Daiki had no additional duties, but they had different careers outside the *Kosen*. Akira was a pastor and Daiki taught private students in his home.

From a constructivist perspective, the role of the researcher is crucial in developing an understanding with the participants (Croker, 2009). Therefore, to increase the quality of a case study, the researcher should describe his or her background, beliefs and relations with the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 2002). I detailed my research background and philosophical beliefs in 3.2.4.2. As a foreign lecturer, I taught different "oral communication" courses to my colleagues. As a result, although I had analysed the textbooks, I had never *used* them. This fact, in combination with my foreign nationality, aided the inquiries. Rather than approach the research with teaching suggestions based on my own practice, the participants could see that I was genuinely learning how they used and perceived the textbooks as Japanese practitioners. Alternatively, as their colleague, I knew them reasonably well outside the classroom. We attended work *enkai* (dinner parties) at least twice a year, which helped to break social barriers. Subsection 3.5.4.4 describes how I balanced the roles of colleague and researcher during the interviews.

Having described the participants and the researcher, the next subsection (3.5.2.4) outlines the human ethics aspects.

3.5.2.4. Ethics

"Fundamentally, ethics is about treating other people with the respect that one would wish for oneself" (Barnard, 1998, p. 55). This study received approval from the Macquarie University Human Ethics Committee before the observations and interviews

began (Ethics Approval Code: HE22FEB2008-D05628). I explained the content of the study to the teachers individually and they signed the letters of consent (see Appendix E). The letters of consent contained the title of the project, purpose, research procedures, confidentiality guarantee, and the offer for feedback and copies of publications after the completion of the study. It also gave the proviso that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

3.5.3. Observations

Methods of data collection should match what the researcher wants to discover (Burns, 2010). This study aimed to find the influence of the textbooks on the teachers' attitudes and practice. Interviews can lead to insights into attitudes and into how teachers *believe* they teach. However, "it is not unusual for persons to say they are doing one thing but in reality they are doing something else" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 29). Moreover, "ultimately … we are interested in understanding teachers' professional actions, not what or how they think in isolation of what they do" (Borg, 2003, p. 105). Therefore, in combination with interviews, this study employed observations.

Subsection 3.5.4 describes the data collection for the interviews and 3.6.2 outlines the constant comparison analytical framework. In reality, this is an artificial separation, because, as described in the following sections, the observations combined with the interviews to facilitate (1) a comparison to what the teachers said they did in the interviews and (2) the identification of classroom episodes for further discussion (Garton, 2009). Moreover, while observing the classes, I used analytical strategies that helped to develop the codes (see 3.5.3.3 and 3.6.2.1). Nevertheless, for clarity of presentation, this subsection focuses on the non-analytical procedures of the observations from three perspectives: (1) the scope (3.5.3.1), (2) participation, awareness and disclosure (3.5.3.2), and (3) recording the data (3.5.3.3).

3.5.3.1. *Scope*

The scope refers to the specificity of the focus, and the number of participants and observations (Borg, 2006).

Initially, the observations had three nonspecific foci, but they became more focused as patterns emerged. Firstly, at the broadest level, what patterns emerged in the textbook coverage? For example, which sections of the textbook did the teachers use extensively and which sections did they omit? Secondly, how did the teachers use the textbooks? For example, did their methods converge with or diverge from the

underlying principles of the textbooks? Thirdly, how did the students participate? For example, what speaking and writing did they do? However, new lines of inquiry developed based on the interviews and the observations. In particular, the students' resistance to some teachers became evident during the classes and this issue arose frequently in the interviews. The comparative methods of inquiry are described in later subsections (see 3.5.3.3 and 3.6.2.1).

As described in 3.4.4 and 3.5.2.3, the four participants were chosen, because they taught both the original and the new textbooks. A fifth teacher declined to participate. Selecting many participants can increase the comparability of the study, but space limitations can reduce the capacity to describe them in adequate detail (Stake, 2003). I observed and analysed all four participants, but selected to present two of them (Akira and Chikara) in depth in this thesis (Chapters 6 and 7). Subsection 3.4.4 outlined the reasons for omitting Bonda and Daiki.

Borg (2006) states that there is no "correct" figure for the number of observations, but "studies which base their conclusions about what teachers do on a substantial volume of observational data carry greater evidentiary warrant" (Borg, 2006, p. 246). In total, I observed 32 periods of 45 minutes; in other words, four periods for each teacher per grade (see Table 3.4). As described in 3.3 and 3.4.4, only the first graders (US high school equivalent Grade 10) used the traditional textbooks; therefore, the teachers' practices in that grade's classes formed the basis for comparison.

Table 3.4 Number of observations

	Akira	Bonda	Chikara	Daiki	Total
Grade 1	4	4	4	4	16
Grade 2	4	4	4	4	16
Total	8	8	8	8	32

(*Note*: each unit represents one 45-minute class period)

I focused on each teacher in turn (with some overlap), observing both his first and second grade classes during the same time frame. This intensive observation strategy, in combination with the interviews, helped me to empathise with the selected teacher and understand his particular circumstances in depth. Therefore, regarding the comparisons available in this study, the emphasis was the patterns of use *between textbooks* for each teacher. The comparisons *between teachers*, while not neglected, were secondary to avoid forcing generalisations (Stake, 2003). Moreover, where possible, I observed

subsequent periods for each grade, which allowed me to see the continuity between the classes and, therefore, the progression through the textbooks for the teacher focused upon. Table 3.5 outlines the sequence of the observations. (Only observation days are represented.) Appendix F details the full schedule, including the times, dates and interviews.

Table 3.5 Overview of the sequence of observations

Day	Akira		Bonda		Chikara		Daiki	
	1A	2A	1B	2B	1C	2C	1D	2D
1.	(x2)							
2.			■					
3.	■	(x2)						
4.	■		■					
5.			■	■				
6.		■						
7.		■						
8.							■	
9.			■					■
10.				(x2)				
11.								■
12.							■	
13.					■			(x2)
14.						■		
15.							■	
16.					■	■		
17.						■		
18.					■		■	
19.					(x2)			

(*Notes.* 1A, 2A, 1B, 2B, 1C, 2C, 1D and 2D refer to the names of the classes (number = grade; letter = teacher's initial). The notation (x2) indicates the observation of two consecutive classes.)

This subsection described the scope: the specificity of the focus, and the number of participants and periods observed. The next subsection (3.5.3.2) describes the relational issues: how much information should be shared with the participants?

3.5.3.2. *Participation and awareness*

Three areas delineate the relations between the observer and the participants: the level of participation, awareness and disclosure.

Regarding the level of participation, there are two aspects to consider: (1) the relationships with the participants outside the classroom and (2) the level of involvement during the observations (Borg, 2006).

Firstly, originating from sociological fieldwork, four roles can exist between the observer and the participants: (1) complete participant, (2) participant as observer, (3) observer as participant and (4) complete observer (Gold, 1957/1958). Gold (1957/1958) intended these categories to describe the levels of participation for people entering the field for a period of time (probably under the assumption of leaving upon completion of the fieldwork). As the participants' colleague, my situation differed, but some of the benefits and caveats of the "participant as observer" still applied. The study involved formal observations and interviews, but we also worked together outside the research context, in staff meetings, constructing tests and so on both before and during the research period. This role therefore required sensitivity to the trust that had developed between my colleagues and me. This trust meant that they were more likely to share information truthfully. Alternatively, I was aware of the risk that Gold (1957/1958) calls "going native" (p. 221). I needed to retain some of the elements of "stranger" to stay focused on the research problems. For example, I avoided divulging my opinions about how to use the textbooks, because this type of information could (1) influence their behaviour during the observations and interviews, and (2) disrupt the trust that we had developed.

Secondly, the observer has a choice regarding his or her level of participation, in the classroom (Borg, 2006). I chose to be a non-participant, in order to minimise my influence on the teaching practice. However, the issue can arise where the non-participant researcher is invited to contribute by the teacher or students (K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999). As a guest native English speaker, who could give linguistic or cultural advice, I would be rude to ignore any requests. When asked questions, I tried to keep my answers as brief as possible to allow the teacher to return to the focus of the lesson. On one occasion, a question directed at me provided a moment of enlightenment, which added a new perspective to the analysis (see Chapter 6, Subsection 6.5.3).

The degree of awareness that the participants have in relation to the study can influence the authenticity of the behaviour observed. "The observer's paradox assumes that the act of observation will change the perceived person's behavior" (Cowie, 2009, p. 177). The overt or covert nature of the observations and the level of information

disclosure can both have an impact on the actions of the teacher and students (Borg, 2006; Cowie, 2009).

In theory, covert observation could develop the most natural results; participants would not alter their behaviour if they did not perceive the presence of an observer, but in this study it was neither practical nor ethical. The unexpected presence of a six-foot Englishman with a video camera would be difficult to conceal.

Full disclosure of the researcher's purposes can cause the participant to concentrate on certain areas in an unnatural way (Cowie, 2009); however, concealing information can lead to suspicion (Borg, 2006). Due to its interpretative, naturalistic aims, this study had nothing to conceal: It was not testing a hypothesis on the participants. I explained to the teachers that the observations were (1) for my Ph.D. research, (2) aimed at understanding how they used the textbooks, and most importantly, (3) not for evaluation purposes. Before the study commenced, the teachers passed this information on to the students to lessen the potential suspicion, confusion or disruption.

This subsection described how the levels of participation and awareness can influence the relations with, and therefore the behaviour of, the participants. In addition to these issues described above, the methods of recording the data can influence the classroom dynamics. The next subsection (3.5.3.3) describes issues concerning recording the data.

3.5.3.3. Recording the data

In order to record the observational data, this study used two instruments: a research diary and video camera. The information was stored as (1) fieldnotes handwritten during and immediately subsequent to observations, (2) movie data, (3) still picture shots, and (4) translated transcripts. Three main issues arise from the selection of recording instruments: (1) the potential disruption in the classroom, (2) the effectiveness for capturing and sharing data and (3) methods of use. These issues are discussed below.

As described in the previous subsection (3.5.3.2), the presence of the observer can influence the behaviour of the participants. The use of recording devices can also be problematic. Borg (2006) states that video recording is "the most intrusive of recording devices and one therefore that may generate most reactivity amongst the individuals under observation " (p. 239). Moreover, tape and video recorders "have become so associated with public scandals and/or media intrusion that people are perhaps even

more suspicious of them than they used to be" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 177). However, as Barnard (1998) warns, any form of recording can be unintentionally threatening, "although perhaps not as menacing as the observer who sits with arms folded and a fixed smile on his or her face" (p. 52). I followed ethical guidelines suggested by Richards (2003), which can help to reduce the suspicion caused by recording equipment.

1. The overall purposes of the study were disclosed.
2. The participants were assured that the recordings would be confidential, stored securely and not made public without their permission.
3. The teachers could see the transcripts if they wished.
4. Insights from the observations would be shared at the end of the study.
5. If the participant felt that a class had gone particularly badly, he could ask me to delete it.

(Based on Richards, 2003, pp. 177-178)

None of the participants requested transcripts or the deletion of data, but Bonda requested, and received, DVD recordings of his own classes.

Burns (2010) advises that recording several sessions helps participants to get used to the recording equipment. As described in 3.5.3.1, I recorded many classes intensively during blocks of time for each participant. All the participants told me that they soon grew accustomed to my presence and the video camera.

Despite some of the drawbacks outlined above concerning the use of a video camera, it is the most effective way of capturing data. "It's pretty well impossible to record verbal exchanges accurately through notes alone" (Burns, 2010, p. 70). I knew that the participants would speak in Japanese; therefore, as a non-fluent listener, I could potentially misunderstand or not perceive important interactions. A bilingual Japanese person, who did not work at the *Kosen*, transcribed and translated the video camera's audio data. I could then re-experience the classes a few months later, equipped with my own set of subtitles, which enabled new layers of understanding. Subsection 3.4.3 outlined that good quality interpretive case studies should contain adequate descriptions that allow the reader to share the experience (Stake, 2003). The video camera helped me to recreate this experience in the presentation of the findings in Chapters 6 and 7. Firstly, in a similar vein to audio-only recordings, interaction excerpts are included. However, the real benefit from using a *digital* video camera is the ability to

capture still-shots from the video file on the computer for insertion into the text to provide a visual element for the reader. This method had two advantages over using an ordinary camera. Firstly, suddenly taking photographs could disrupt the flow of the lesson due to the sudden movement of the photographer and camera. Secondly, the video material allows the researcher to act retrospectively: he or she can review the footage and select the exact moment to portray.

Despite the advantages outlined above, the video camera, focused on the teacher "only shows one side of the interaction" (Duff, 2008, p. 139). I used my research diary to note down observations that the video camera could not catch, such as the students' responses and behaviour. The diary was also integral to the constant comparison analytical process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I used it to capture emerging concepts and areas that required further study, such as questions for investigating in the interviews.

This subsection (3.5.3) described observation issues relating to the scope (3.5.3.1), participation and awareness (3.5.3.2), and recording the data (3.5.3.3). The next subsection (3.5.4) describes the interview method.

3.5.4. Interviews

This study employed interviews to add an extra dimension of understanding. Interviews are a tool for understanding what lies below the surface of classroom actions and they are therefore often combined with observation methods to give a "more rounded picture" of the focus of the investigation (Burns, 2010, p. 74). Richards (2009) adds that interviews do not "reveal intricacies of behavior that are exposed by observation or video recordings, but they do hold out the possibility of *understanding* the lived world from the perspective of the participants involved" (p. 187, italics in original).

As described in 3.5.3, the interviews and observations had a symbiotic relationship during the data collection: the two methods provided insights and further avenues of inquiry for each other. The following subsections focus on the interview methods used in this study from the perspectives of (1) the selection of the structure (3.5.4.1), (2) the discussion topics (3.5.4.2), (3) organising (3.5.4.3) and (4) interviewer reflexivity (3.5.4.4).

3.5.4.1. The selection of the structure

The types of interviews can be categorised by their purposes, such as *standardised* or *exploratory* (Oppenheim, 1992), or their structure and control by the interviewer, such as *structured*, *semi-structured* and *open* (Burns, 2010; K. Richards, 2009). However, Borg

(2006) stated "I am not aware of any unstructured interviews in the study of language teacher cognition" (p. 190). Moreover, Borg (2006) reasons, "an interview must always have a structure of some kind" (pp. 189-190). Therefore, rather than discrete categories, these are points on a continuum from more structured to less structured (Borg, 2006).

This study used the semi-structured type: "usually you have a set of topics in your mind that you want to explore and you may have developed some specific questions, but you will allow some flexibility according to how the interviewee responds" (Burns, 2010, p. 75). Semi-structured interviews draw on the advantages of standardised/structured and exploratory/open types. In a similar way to standardised interviews, comparison between the participants is possible due to the common topics. Alternatively, semi-structured interviews contain the flexibility of open interviews. They allow the interviewee's perspective to partially guide the research agenda, which "allows for the emergence of themes and topics which may not have been anticipated" (Burns, 1999, p. 120). Moreover, the semi-structured interviewer can "probe some aspects in depth" (K. Richards, 2009, p. 186). Semi-structured interviews therefore suited the aims of my interpretive case study: I had some issues to explore and compare, but the focus was to understand the perspectives of the participants.

3.5.4.2. Discussion topics

Based on issues that arose from the literature (see Chapter 2) regarding the challenges to attempted educational change (e.g. Fullan, 2007) and problems faced by Japanese teachers (e.g. K. Sato, 2002; K. Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004), I developed four main topic areas and some guiding questions (see Figure 3.2). However, in a similar vein to studies by Borg (1998) and Lam (2000), these questions were not as structured as they appear. Instead, they guided the range of issues to be explored; the wording and order differed in the actual interviews; and additional questions were asked based on our unfolding discussions (Borg, 1998; Lam, 2000). In particular, many of the discussions flowed from looking at pages of the textbooks and recalling the classes. Technical research-related words such as "professional development" were rephrased. Moreover, the ongoing analytical process of constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) led to the development of new areas of inquiry.

1. **Pedagogical background**

   - How does teaching here compare to your experience in other jobs?

   - What can you remember about your high school teachers?

   - How did you study English in the past?

   - What kinds of professional development do you engage in?

   - What do you remember from your teacher training?

2. **Textbook opinion**

   - What do you think about the textbook guidance?

   - If we change the textbook, what would you include/omit from the new textbook?

   - Which pages/activities do you do/omit?

   - What do you think of this page/activity (show textbook)?

   - What are the good points and bad points of the textbooks?

   - What do the students think of the textbooks?

3. **Local factors**

   - Do you experience any pressure to teach in a certain way from the Principal, management, parents, colleagues or students?

   - How do the students behave?

4. **External factors**

   - What do you know about JABEE?

   - What do you know about MEXT?

   - What influence do these organisations have on your teaching?

Figure 3.2 Semi-structured interview schedule

The interviews with Daiki formed an exception to this set of flexible questions. As outlined in 3.4.4, Daiki preferred to speak Japanese. Therefore, in order to reduce the chance of his misunderstanding me, I typed a list of pre-set questions, which a bilingual Japanese person, who was unconnected to the *Kosen*, translated for me to read verbatim (see Appendix G). However, in a similar vein to my interactions with the other participants, the questions were designed to be open with the intention of letting Daiki lead as much as possible; therefore, the questions were not covered in the order that they appeared on the sheet and some questions were adapted or omitted during the interactions.

3.5.4.3. Organising

When organising the interviews, the following questions can be addressed: "Who? When? Where? How long? and Under what conditions?" (Burns, 2010; K. Richards, 2003, 2009).

Regarding the selection of the participants, subsection 3.4.4 outlined that they used both the original and new textbooks. Duff (2008) warns that the interviewer may need to "deal with case study participants who are reticent, uncooperative, inarticulate, verbose, or easily side-tracked" (p. 134). She adds the effect of the "chemistry between the interviewer and interviewee … may have something to do with why some respondents provide better data" (Duff, 2008). However, Duff also warns against only choosing the most articulate candidates, because it can lead to "some skewing of the data, because they may not be very representative of others in their category" (Duff, 2008, pp. 134-135). As described in 3.4.4, I interviewed all four teachers who fitted the sample criteria, but later decided to focus the study on Akira and Chikara. However, the participants' characteristics influenced the order of interviews. Culturally and linguistically, Akira had the closest connection to my British background, because he had lived in the United Kingdom for an extended period and married a Scottish woman. He was therefore the easiest to select for conducting exploratory interviews, because he could pick up cues to continue without the need for carefully articulated questions. As a result, Akira was the first to be interviewed. Bonda came second, because I wanted to save Daiki and Chikara for the end. Daiki would be the most problematic due to the linguistic barrier. Interviewing him after Akira and Bonda gave me time to hone my interview skills (K. Richards, 2003) and prepare some questions in Japanese. Chikara came last, because he was potentially a "deviant sample" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28). Unlike the other participants, before the study began, he talked frequently about his classroom-based research, which could indicate a different level of awareness toward communicative teaching. Moreover, he taught the highest proficiency students; therefore, he could potentially face different opportunities and challenges to his colleagues who taught the lower-middle and lowest proficiency students. As Chapter 1 explained, the highest proficiency students formed a minority, because sixty percent joined the college on sports scholarships. Success in their sporting activities seemed to take precedence over academic achievement. (The teacher who declined to participate (Nana) taught the upper-middle proficiency students.)

Regarding when to interview, Richards (2003) advises, "given the fallibility of the human memory, the general rule for data collection is 'the fresher the better'" (p. 66). Therefore, the interviews took place as soon as possible after the observations on the same day. Appendix F shows the interview and observation schedule. Moreover, Duff (2008) recommends conducting more than one interview: "the researcher can follow up on issues or clarify uncertainties emerging from an earlier interview … to seek clarity and perhaps consistency in accounts as well as an elaboration on significant topics" (Duff, 2008, p. 133).

Where to interview was a potential problem in terms of privacy, because the teachers worked in shared open-plan offices that the students frequently visited. Disused classrooms on the periphery of the building turned out to be the best locations to avoid interruptions, because the "human traffic" walking past was low or zero and there were no telephones.

The interviews did not have fixed durations. Instead, I stayed aware of the willingness of the respondent to keep talking. Akira, on average, had the longest interviews (33 minutes), but also the fewest (three) (see Table 3.6). His observations were condensed into a shorter time-period than his colleagues, which meant that we had more to cover per interview but, more importantly, he discussed many topics fluently. The interviews did not dry up. Alternatively, Bonda gave short replies. He had the same total duration of interviews as Akira (100 minutes), but spread across seven short interviews. Daiki had the most interviews (eight), because many areas needed clarifying. In total, Chikara's interviews spread over the longest duration for three reasons. Firstly, he was the final interviewee; therefore, I had gathered many topics from the other participants that I could raise for comparison. Secondly, he employed a wider range of teaching methods than his colleagues, which generated new areas of discussion. Thirdly, he was the most enthusiastic to share his experiences ranging from his research to his foreign travels.

Table 3.6 Frequency and duration of interviews

	(1) Akira	(2) Bonda	(3) Daiki	(4) Chikara
Number of interviews	3	7	8	7
Total duration (min.)	100	100	154	171
Average duration (min.)	33	14	19	24

Any form of recording can create stressful conditions for the respondent. Audio recording "can seem intimidating and make the interviewee nervous" (Burns, 2010, p. 77); however, note-taking adds "unnecessary formality to the proceedings, which might inhibit the informant and distract the interviewer" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 67). Oppenheim (1992) emphasises the need for using audio recording equipment, because "they can be analysed in detail afterwards, for there is much that will have escaped the busy interviewer in the stress of the actual interview" (Oppenheim, 1992, p. 67). I used the combination of my research diary and a portable digital recorder. Rather than take notes in the diary, I used it to prompt me on the main topics of the study. More importantly, it contained questions that had arisen from the observations. The digital voice recorder freed me to concentrate on the respondent's answers without taking notes. Moreover, it was very small (about the size of a cigarette lighter), which had two advantages. Firstly, it was unobtrusive: we could easily talk without the potential barrier of a tape-recorder. Secondly, it was portable: I could listen to the interviews anywhere and orally record my own ideas in separate files. Therefore, I could analyse the recordings between interviews and observations to develop new categories and new lines of inquiry.

3.5.4.4. Interviewer reflexivity

Having described the interview preparation in the previous subsections (3.5.4.1-3.5.4.3), this subsection outlines the interviewer conduct during the interview, from two perspectives: (1) the interactional goals and (2) self-awareness.

Patton (2002) recommends that interviewers should aim for: open-ended questions, neutrality and rapport. Open-ended questions "offer the persons being interviewed the opportunity to respond in their own words and to express their own personal perspectives" (Patton, 2002, p. 348). Regarding neutrality and rapport: "I want to convey to them that their knowledge, experiences, attitudes and feelings are important. Yet, I will not judge them for the content of what they say to me" (Patton, 2002, pp. 365-366). However, from a constructivist perspective, appeals for interviewer neutrality can be misleading due to "the interactional co-construction of the interview's content" (Gubrium & Holstein as cited in Rapley, 2007, p. 20). Moreover, neutrality becomes more problematic in "acquaintance interviews": semi-structured interviews, where the researcher is an insider and has a prior relationship with the respondent (Garton & Copland, 2010).

Empathetic comments abound and the question and answer sequence is often abandoned in favour of a more conversational style of interaction … [and] the joint and on-going construction of shared knowledge and experiences, rather than each participant recounting their individual narratives. (Garton & Copland, 2010, p. 15)

Garton and Copland advise that the researcher should be aware of and make explicit prior relationships. My relations with my colleagues were outlined in 3.5.2.3, we knew each other socially and through teachers' meetings, but I taught different courses.

During the interviews, I remained conscious of balancing twin roles. Firstly, there was a need to maintain a sociable role to help my colleagues feel relaxed and avoid disrupting our relations as friends and colleagues. Alternatively, it was important to adopt the researcher role: keeping track of the issues, asking open questions and trying to remain as neutral as possible. In other words, I aimed to create the atmosphere where my colleagues could talk at length without discomfort.

This section (3.5) described the data collection methods: the textbooks (3.5.1), entry into the field (3.5.2), observations (3.5.3) and interviews (3.5.4). The next section (3.6) details the methods of data analysis.

3.6. Data analysis methods

This study used two main methods of data analysis. Firstly, the preliminary textbook analysis used a framework created by Littlejohn (1998) (3.6.1). Secondly, the process of constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) overarched the analysis of the interview and observation data (3.6.2).

3.6.1. The textbooks: Inside the Trojan Horse

As outlined in 3.5.1, the analysis of the textbooks helped to develop an understanding of the contents, user requirements and pedagogical implications that I could use as a basis of comparison to the teachers' attitudes and practices.

Published textbook reviews have often been criticised for failing to follow, or make explicit, their assessment criteria (Angell, DuBravac, & Gonglewski, 2008; Sheldon, 1988; Tomlinson, 2003) In response, several frameworks have arisen to aid the selection of textbooks. Tomlinson (1998, 2003) suggests an approach based on explicit SLA principles. Although Tomlinson's approach contains concrete and explicit advice that can aid the choice and evaluation of textbooks, there is a danger that evaluators using his framework may become ignorant to aspects arising from the text. Other frameworks (Breen & Candlin, 1987; McGrath, 2002; Rubdy, 2003; Sheldon, 1988)

evaluate textbooks in relation to the teaching context, such as the learners' needs, goals and pedagogical requirements. These context-sensitive frameworks provide systematic guidance for the selection and purchase; however, in this context, the textbooks had already been chosen and used for at least a year. This study required a framework for analysing the contents that could be used as a basis for comparison between textbooks, and between the textbooks' intentions and the teachers' attitudes and practices. In other words, I needed a framework that could reveal the underlying implications of the change in textbooks for the teachers and students.

I used the analytical framework designed by Littlejohn (1998), because it facilitates an in-depth investigation into what the textbooks actually contain rather than what they ought to contain:

> What is required … is a framework which separates assumptions about what is desirable, from an analysis of the materials. We need, in other words, a general framework which allows the materials to "speak for themselves" and which helps teacher-analysts to look closely into materials before coming to their *own* conclusions about the desirability or otherwise of the materials. (Littlejohn, 1998, p. 192, original emphasis)

The framework follows three levels of analysis, which "move from a consideration of the more easily identifiable aspects to the more abstract and complex" (Littlejohn, 1998, p. 195). Figure 3.3 outlines the three levels, which answer the questions: What is there? What is required of users? What is implied?

1. What is there?
   - statements of description
   - physical aspects of the materials
   - main steps in instructional sections
2. What is required of users?
   - subdivision into constituent tasks
   - an analysis of tasks: What is the learner expected to do? With whom? With what content? Who determines these things?
3. What is implied?
   - deducing aims, principles of selection and sequence
   - deducing teacher and learner roles
   - deducing demands on learner's process competence (knowledge, affects, skills and abilities)

Figure 3.3 Levels of analysis of language teaching materials (Littlejohn, 1998, p. 195)

Therefore, as the title of the framework suggests, this type of systematic analysis helps the user to avoid general impressionistic judgements of the textbooks; instead, we look at what is hidden inside the *Trojan Horse* (Littlejohn, 1998).

The following subsection (3.6.2) describes the constant comparison methods used in the main part of the data analysis.

3.6.2. Constant comparison

This study employed constant comparison to analyse the data from the interviews and observations.

> The constant comparison method of grounded theory means (a) comparing different people (such as their views, situations, actions, accounts and experiences), (b) comparing data from the same individuals with themselves at different points in time, (c) comparing incident with incident, (d) comparing data with category, and (e) comparing a category with other categories. (Charmaz, 2003, pp. 259-260)

Constant comparison takes place during the data collection and utilises *theoretical sampling*: questions or gaps that arise during the constant comparison guide further exploration (Charmaz, 2003; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Constant comparison formed part of the *grounded theory* approach espoused by Glaser and Strauss (1967). However, there have been disagreements about the philosophical bases. The original grounded theory approach has been described as positivistic and led to calls for an alternative constructivist approach (Charmaz, 2003). Glaser (2002b) has countered that constructivist qualitative researchers are too preoccupied with descriptions. He argues that real grounded theory is "an abstraction from time place and people that frees the researcher from the tyranny of normal distortion by humans trying to get an accurate description to solve the worrisome accuracy problem" (Glaser, 2002b, para 3). Glaser also opposed the context-related work of his former co-author Strauss. In response to Strauss and Corbin's (1998) call for sensitivity to the context, Glaser (2002a) countered that this approach would "force descriptions, irrespective of emergence, on the theory to locate its conditions, to contextualize it and to make it "appear" accurately pinned down, thereby losing its true abstraction and, hence, generalizability" (p. 7).

As outlined in 3.2.4, this study is located within the constructivist paradigm. Primarily, I aim to understand and describe the influence of the change in textbooks in my college from the perspective of my colleagues. Therefore, although this study raises issues and draws comparisons with other studies, rather than abstraction for context-free generalisation, interpretations are made to understand the particular case (Stake, 2003).

Despite this paradigmatic difference to Glaser's grounded theory approach, this study employs constant comparison to tentatively build a *middle-range theory*: "where a set of concepts is used to define, describe and suggest possible explanations for some phenomenon or activities" (Walford, 2001, p. 148). However, the theory is interwoven in the study to aid explanations, it "is not something that stands apart from the data or the process of analysis, it represents a level of explanation that allows us to make important connections among elements in the data and between our findings and others in the field" (K. Richards, 2003, p. 291). Constant comparison facilitates these connections.

Corbin and Strauss (2008) provide an extensive list of the advantages of constant comparison for qualitative researchers:

- Helps analysts obtain a grasp on the meaning of events that might otherwise seem obscure
- Helps sensitize researchers to possible properties and dimensions that are in the data, but remain obscure due to a lack of sensitivity on the part of the researcher

- Suggests further interview questions or observations based on evolving theoretical analysis
- Helps analysts move more quickly from the level of description to one of abstraction
- Counters the tendency to focus on a single case by immediately bringing analysis up to a more abstract level
- Forces researchers to examine their own basic assumptions, their biases, perspectives and those of participants
- Forces examination of findings, sometimes resulting in the qualification or altering of initial interpretations
- Makes it more likely that analysts will discover variation as well as general patterns
- Ensures the likelihood of a more fluid and creative stance toward data analysis
- Facilitates the linking and densification of categories.

(Corbin & Strauss, 2008, pp. 77-78)

This subsection outlined the constant comparison method and delineated the constructivist theory building perspective, used in this study, from Glaser's pure grounded theory approach. Finally, it outlined the advantages of constant comparison for sensitising the researcher to the connections in the data, and connections to other work in the field, which facilitated the explanation of the phenomena. The following subsections (3.6.2.1-3.6.2.4) detail the application of constant comparison techniques in this study.

3.6.2.1. *Analysis during data collection*

As explained above, the analysis took place during the data collection. Concepts and questions generated during the observations and interviews led to further analysis and comparison.

Figure 3.4 Class observation fieldnotes (extracts from 1C(1) & 2C(1))

During the observations, I took notes in my research diary on pages divided into two columns (see Figure 3.4). The left column contained notes taken during the observations; the right column was saved for later reflections and highlighting comparisons following subsequent data collection. In the diary extract in Figure 3.4, there are three memos in the right column. Firstly, "get screen shot" was written as a reminder to include this blackboard evidence in the observation memos. Secondly, "Daiki also used [the] dictionary in 2D(1)" is a cross-participant comparison. Thirdly, "links to Top Down Processing Interview" formed a link between the observational and interview data.

In the left column of my research diary, I took notes using a tricolour pen. Black ink was used for factual data. For example, each set of notes began with the contextual information (date, day, class observation code, teacher name, time and the number of students). Other information included the times of new teaching processes and descriptions, for example: "13:28, [textbook] p. 38 – reads the passage in English; 13:29 – explains in J (Japanese) about Matsui in the news recently" (Figure 3.4). The notes were very brief and often written in shorthand, but tried to capture what the teacher and students did. Blue ink indicated *reflective remarks* (Miles & Huberman, 1994). When jotting down the reflective remarks during the field study, the "technique improves the usefulness of field notes considerably. You are simultaneously aware of events in the site, and of your own feelings, reactions, insights, and interpretations" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 66). For example: "These are the unit goals – maybe [he is the] only T (teacher) to cover this section". This blue memo highlighted a new avenue of inquiry that needed comparison. Red ink represented questions for the follow-up interviews. Some were general open questions. For example, because this page is extracted from Chikara's first observation, the first question asked: "what did you do in the previous class?" to locate the observation within his series of classes. The third question directly followed the observation "13:33 – checking stds (students) awake". It asked: "what do you think about 1nen (first grade) stds (students) attitude?" Although, my question was "led" by Chikara's treatment of sleeping students, it could be posed indirectly in the interview to explore his feelings on this issue and verify that he had not employed this approach due to the presence of an observer. In a similar vein, "was today [your] 1st time to use [a] topic sentence? + examples" explored the commonality of this technique. Moreover, the same "topic sentence" incident stimulated: "do you often find you can apply your research to teaching?" which generated a potentially new avenue of exploration linking Chikara's research to his classroom practice.

The participants were interviewed as soon as possible following the classroom observations (Appendix F) to enable discussion while the class was still fresh in our minds (Richards, 2003).

One criticism of the constant comparison method is the time-consuming element of transcription and analysis that takes place during the fieldwork.

Hammersley (1984) … has suggested that when field-work entails tape recording of conversations, interviews, lessons and the like, the time needed to transcribe such materials may render the grounded theory framework, of a constant

interweaving of categories and data, almost impossible to accomplish. (Bryman, 1988, p. 85)

It was impossible to transcribe and translate all the spoken data delicately during the data collection period. This detailed level of transcription and analysis came at a later stage (see 3.6.2.2). During the observations, the fieldwork diary was used for collecting some raw data and developing initial comparative analyses. However, during the interviews, this type of note-taking is impractical: "I want to interact with the interviewee and I don't want to spend a lot of time head-down and writing" (Rapley, 2007, p. 18). Therefore, I developed a method that I called "rough transcription" (Figure 3.5).

As outlined in 3.5.4.3, the interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder and transferred to my laptop. The same day of the interview, I transcribed the data. Although I transcribed most of the interaction, I applied my own shorthand, paraphrased some sections, and omitted repeated utterances and some of the off-topic talk. For example, at the beginning of interview A2, my description of the recording device was reduced in the rough transcripts to: "me waffling about voice recorder" (see Figure 3.5). After printing the rough transcripts, I underlined areas and wrote memos in the margins. In Figure 3.5, the memos referred to tentative emerging codes ("grammar 1st"), causes of codes ("laissez-faire mgt [management] creates <u>uncertainty</u>"), explanatory codes ("uncertainty about std [student] learning") and areas requiring further inquiry or reflection ("usage of *Learners* is strange – overlaps 1st + 2nd grade. Teachers used @ different pace. B-class – not at all"). Moreover, in Figure 3.5, the rough transcript revealed that, during the interview, I missed the opportunity to probe Akira's comment about the *Learners* textbook: "I don't think it's helpful for the students here". The corresponding memo contains a piece of self-reflection and self-guidance: "missed cue – check later".

Does it help? I've not seen b4.
I'm more organised now. Last yr I didn't use it. Only got the book the day b4 the class started – how can I prepare. But I know what material comes up now. I don't know the effect of it yet. At least the pronunciation bit. It translates other E words.
Do you often use the wkbk in the Q&A style? Or individ
Last year at home, this year in the class Q&A. But don't do them all.
Is there anything that you felt you would change or went well?
It's a 90 min class. The 2nd class needed a change. I wasn't so well prepared. But there was a change from the textbook.
Just familiarise the stds with English … grammar … structure is important. I think they have a better understanding of English if you explain the grammar. Break it down to sentences.
It was like a J class for me – like Filipino class
Yes I guess that was coming out.

Interview 2 (14:39, 16 May, 43mins 20secs)
Me waffling about voice recorder
Looking at textbooks
Readers and Vivid tend to overlap – at the moment Lesson 2 – infinitive doing in the 1st yer and 2nd year
Normally supposed to finish learners in the first year. I'm just repeating what they should have learned.
Different teachers have reached different levels – half have reached infinitive half haven't
I just asked them what they have learnt. Some were demoted from the top class
▇▇▇ came in
Do you use both textbooks for the same grammar points?
I try to mix. When use vivid and there is something appropriate in this grammar book. Like SVOC – explain to class using vivid – then practical application changing sentence structure to see if they really know what they're doing
Only have Readers – not the partner book
If you're doing the entrance exam then its helpful, but I don't think its helpful for the students here
(me) – I don't know actually – I think its quite useful
Do they use Learners – deskwork?
Explaining using bb (not stds in books)
Tango test E-J or J-E or both?
Previous teachers picked 15 words from the word list and there are ten in the test. But I changed in the second year to base the word test on the unit – so that they have a better understanding of what they're doing – they don't just memorise and forget it. I'm trying to base my exam on the unit itself so that its more relevant – but that means I have to create my own tests.
▇▇▇ sensei was very helpful last year.
This translation was provided too – of the travel guide – not of the second grade but the third grade
But I don't know how much is going through to the stds – it is way beyond their ability – the travel guide is. I don't know how good it is.
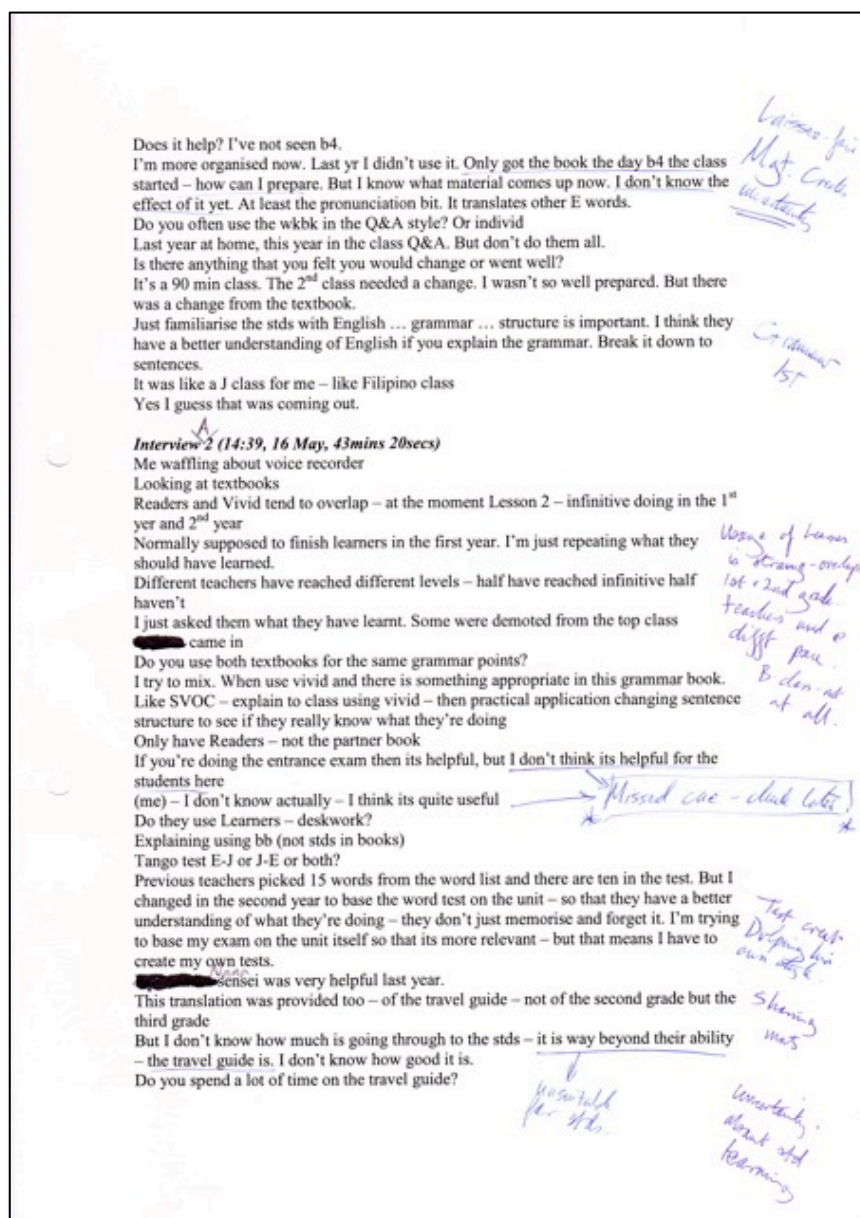Do you spend a lot of time on the travel guide?

Figure 3.5 Rough transcription (extracts from interviews A1 & A2)

In summary, during the data collection period, I used condensed note-taking strategies to compare emerging concepts between interviews, observations and participants. The next subsection describes the deeper analysis that began after the completion of the data collection.

3.6.2.2. Comparison after data collection

Following the interview and observation period (12 May – 30 June, 2008), the deeper analysis of the full interview transcripts began 14 July 2008 and analysis of the class (translated) transcripts and video data started 3 May 2009 (see time line in Table 3.2, p. 67).

The transcripts followed the conventions outlined in Table 3.7, which are partially based on Richards (2003, pp. 173-4). Richards (2003) provides a wider selection of notation, but advises, "The aim in any transcription is to describe the talk as fully but as simply as possible" (p. 182). I simplified some conventions; for example, rather than indicating the length of pauses, only extended pauses are included. Alternatively, some conventions needed to be added for this study. For example, Japanese utterances are in italics and their English translations appear in curved single brackets. Moreover, there was a great deal of ellipsis in the interactions, which needed to be inserted to facilitate the reader's understanding. There were two main reasons for the ellipsis. Firstly, the interlocutors had shared knowledge, so some words became superfluous. Secondly, Japanese speakers tend to omit the subject from clauses when they use their L1. Based on the systemic functional grammar notation system (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), double-square brackets indicated the ellipsis.

Table 3.7 Transcription conventions

Convention	Description
Three full stops ...	Extended pause (about 3-5 seconds)
Comma,	Contour of intonation (indicating speaker will continue)
Full stop.	Falling intonation
(single brackets)	Translations and words added to facilitate understanding
((double brackets))	Non verbal descriptions
[[double square brackets]]	Ellipsis: words missing from the original speech, but added for contextualisation
underline	Spoken with greater emphasis
[square brackets]	Simultaneous speaking
curved hyphen ~	Extended sound (eg aaaar = a~)
italics	Japanese speech and textbook names
xxx	Inaudible utterance

During and following the transcription periods, I created memos that differed to the fieldnotes in Figure 3.4 and Figure 3.5. "Though analysts can write on the actual interview or field notes, this is not practical, except perhaps in the earliest phases of open coding" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 119). Word processing the memos rather than writing in the margins during the later stages of analysis allow the researcher to (1) develop ideas more extensively; (2) revise original concepts; and (3) retrieve, combine and sort the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

I worked through the interview transcripts line-by-line and constructed memos. Each memo contained the date, memo number and a heading to make the contents accessible (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The memos were organised into separate files for each participant, containing a contents page for the easy retrieval and comparison of data. The memos varied in length and purpose. Figure 3.6 shows a short comparative memo based on a section of interview C1 with Chikara. Different fonts are used in the memo. The italic font contained my conceptualisations, descriptions and comparisons. Beneath the italic writing, appeared the corresponding extract from the interview, copied and pasted without editing.

2008-11-25: Memo 4: experience b4 manual
C's own background experience guides his teaching rather than the manual – although he admits that it was useful when he was younger. This is similar to A who used to use the manual frequently, but not now. It is different to D who needs the manual.
No I have my own long experience as a teacher so usually I rely on my past experience and these days it is quite rare or I never use the teachers' manual ((laughing))
Actually as I started asking the question, I remembered you lending me the materials and I opened it ((laughing))
When I was young I sometimes I read the teachers' manual but these days

Figure 3.6 Interview transcript memo

Unlike the interview memos, which were collected into files for each participant, the observation memos were divided into discrete files. Each observation memo analysed the class from numerous perspectives. Appendix H shows the memo file for Chikara's observation 2C(4). All the memos followed the same structure, which moved through three stages: (1) factual overview; (2) deep description and analysis; and (3) comparison:

1. list of question reminders
2. observation label, date and time
3. section names and page numbers from the textbook
4. timeline overview (divided into teacher and student processes)
5. reflective observations from the fieldnote diary
6. reflective observations from the transcript-translation
7. reflective observations from the video
8. links to other 2C observations
9. links to 1C observations

10. links to observations of other teachers

11. links to Study 1 (textbook analysis)

12. links to Study 2 (interviews)

Sections 1-3 provided the orientation for the memo. The fourth section overviewed the main processes and their times (based on the descriptions written in black ink in the field diary (see Figure 3.4, p. 88)). These processes divided into two columns to show, at a glance, the different activities of the teacher and the students. Section 5 contained the reflective observations from the diary (written in blue ink in the diary: Figure 3.4, p. 88). The new, deeper analysis from the video transcripts and images appeared in Sections 6 and 7. These sections combined thick description (Geertz, 1973) and emerging concepts. Sections 8-12 then provided space for forging links with other observations, the textbook analysis and the interview data. I did not force comparisons, because I focused on the particular observation (Stake, 2003); therefore, for example, in Appendix H, Sections 10-12 remained blank.

Subsections 3.6.2.1 and 3.6.2.2 described the analytical processes during and after the data collection respectively. The following subsections provide samples of the interview- (3.6.2.3) and observation categories (3.6.2.4) based on Akira.

3.6.2.3. Interview categories

The full interview categories and descriptions appear with the findings in Chapter 5. The sample below introduces Akira's categories (Table 3.8). As outlined in 3.5.4.2, the interviews were structured around four common topics: pedagogical background, textbook opinions, local factors and external factors. Based on the constant comparison of Akira's responses, subcategories were then formed, which are outlined in Table 3.8 and described in Section 5.4.

Table 3.8 Akira's interview categories

Category	Subcategory	Data sample
Pedagogical background	- Attitudes formed from experience	- "I've lived in Britain so long I've got some grasp of it"
	- The way of the pastor	- "the pastor's job is preaching … and preaching is communicating"
	- Focus on structure	- "the grammar side of it and then, break it down to the actual sentences"
Textbook opinions	- Lack of relevance	- "I didn't do that, it's because probably it's not relevant"
	- Beyond students' ability	- "it is way beyond their ability"
Local factors	- Student problems	- "do the English just to pass, not so much to study"
	- Laissez-faire management	- "You are thrown into the deep end"
	- Easy to pass	- "as long as they submit it they're given a point"
External factors	- JABEE & MEXT	- "I'm not in that set up so I tend to ignore"

The comparative analysis between the participants led to comparative subcategories. For example, the "pedagogical background" combined into two comparative subcategories: "evolution of attitudes" and "teaching fundamentals" (Table 3.9).

Table 3.9 Comparison of pedagogical attitudes

Comparative Subcategory	Original Subcategory example	Data sample
Evolution of attitudes	1. Attitude formed from experience (Akira)	"I've lived in Britain so long I've got some grasp of it" (Akira)
	2. Attitude formed from individual & difficult study (Chikara)	"if students are afraid of being laughed at by their peers, they cannot study English" (Chikara)
	3. Lack of developmental influence from educational sources (Bonda)	"the only thing I can remember is always translation" (Bonda)
	4. Pedagogical uncertainty (Daiki)	"My own way. No theory" (Daiki)
Teaching fundamentals	1. Focus on structure (Akira)	"the grammar side of it and then, break it down to the actual sentences" (Akira)
	2. Three skills: listening is fundamental (Chikara)	"without listening, we cannot teach speaking, reading and writing" (Chikara)
	3. Reduce input – focused English production (Bonda)	"writing English sentences is the best thing I think" (Bonda)
	4. Pedagogical uncertainty (Daiki)	"Please teach me how to teach English" (Daiki)

The full set of comparative subcategories and their descriptions are in Section 5.8.

3.6.2.4. Observation categories

The complete observation categories and their descriptions appear with the findings in Chapters 6 and 7, which deal with Akira and Chikara respectively. This subsection outlines the categories that emerged for Akira.

In the first grade classes, four categories emerged: text-level grammar-translation, student language recitation, sentence-level analysis and teacher-led exercises. These categories and their subcategories are outlined in Table 3.10 and described in Section 6.4.

Table 3.10 Akira's first grade processes

Teaching processes	Data examples
1. Text-level grammar-translation	
- Words and phrases	- Word test vocabulary
- Text translation	- Translated whole text
- Sentence structures	- The infinitive
2. Student language recitation	
- Choral Repetition	- Repeated key words and phrases
- Individual recitation	- Recited one sentence each
- Choral recitation	- Synchronised reading
3. Sentence-level analysis	- Nominated students translated key words into Japanese
4. Teacher-led exercises	- "Who plays soccer in the RoboCup?"
- Comprehension questions	- Selected "T" (true) or "F" (false)
- Communication	- Selected matching phonetic sound
- Pronunciation	- "What is the goal of the RoboCup?"
- Keys to Reading	- Gap-filling: "He (　) (　) hope and strength."
- Exercises	

In the second grade classes, five categories formed from the data: text-level explanation, student language recitation, sentence-level analysis, teacher-led exercises and cultural attitudes. These categories and their subcategories are outlined in Table 3.11 and described in Chapter 6 (Section 6.5).

Table 3.11 Akira's second grade teaching processes

Teaching processes	Data examples
1. Text-level explanation	
- Test explanation	- Wrote 12 words and one phrase to test
- Conversation explanation	- Explained background in Japanese
2. Student language recitation	
- Choral repetition	- Students repeated Conversation text
- Individual recitation	- Students recited one sentence each
3. Sentence-level analysis	- Prepositions of location
4. Teacher-led exercises	
- Comprehension questions	- "Where is the student lounge?"
- Role Play	- Students uttered one sentence each
- From authentic to fiction	- Changed student answer to fit pattern
5. Cultural attitudes	- "Double culture shock"

In summary, subsections 3.6.2.3 and 3.6.2.4 outlined samples of the interview and observation categories respectively to allow the reader to preview some outcomes of the analysis techniques described in 3.6.2.1 and 3.6.2.2. The full findings appear in Chapters 5-7.

3.7. Summary

Situated within the constructivist paradigm of qualitative research, this investigation employed a case study approach to understand the influence of a change in textbooks for English teachers in a technical college in Japan. Three main perspectives guided the lines of inquiry: (1) the textbook designs; (2) the attitudes of and (3) the practices of the teachers. The methods of data collection and analysis included: textbook analysis, observations, interviews and constant comparison.

Having established in this chapter the methodological framework employed in this thesis, the following chapters will present the findings from the textbook analysis (Chapter 4), interviews (Chapter 5), and classroom observations of Akira (Chapter 6) and Chikara (Chapter 7). Finally, Chapter 8 compares the findings and discusses the implications in relation to the context described in Chapter 1 and the issues raised in Chapter 2.