Methodological lessons learned from conducting reflexive linguistic ethnography

James M Hall

Iwate University

Abstract

I conducted an 18-month study on three novice junior high school English teachers in Japan. The purposes of this study were to understand 1) the "pedagogical puzzles," or teaching quandaries, experienced by the teachers; 2) the nature of mentorship that could help teachers resolve these puzzles; 3) the reasons teachers incorporated certain teaching practices. Data were collected through "ethnographic interviews" and "participant observation" of the classes. In the interviews, I attempted to resolve the pedagogical puzzles together with the teachers. This constituted the reflexive nature of this study. After 18 months, I had collected 36 interview transcripts and field notes for 50 classes, of which 39 were either video or audio recorded. I used NVivo to code interview transcripts for the three themes above and Transana, a video analysis program, to select and transcribe classroom and interview scenes representative of the three themes. Microanalysis of interview talk and classroom interaction was also used to reveal an insider perspective of the context. The purpose of this paper is to present my method for analyzing mass quantities of qualitative data and elucidate possible potentials and pitfalls of conducting reflective linguistic ethnography.

1. Introduction

Throughout my 18 months of conducting a linguistic ethnography on three novice English teachers, I had been consistent in transcribing interviews within a few weeks of their taking place as well as completing field notes of classes I observed. Most of my time was spent observing and archiving but not analyzing the data I had collected. Therefore, at the end of the study, I found myself in the following predicament: What do I do with this massive quantity of data I have collected? The purpose of this paper is to share how I attempted to make sense of this data. I will do so by describing my research tradition, what and whom I was attempting to investigate, my tools for analysis and how I used them, and lastly, the results of this process.

2. Linguistic Ethnography on the Novice English Teacher Experience in Japan

The basic ontology of Linguistic Ethnography (LE) is that people's social realities are created by "sense making practices" (Hammersley, 2007, p. 691). LE examines how these sense making practices are carried out in situated language use. LE is broadly defined as an area that "combines ethnographic and linguistic methodologies to study language use in a range of settings" (Maybin & Trusting, 2011, p. 515). According to Rampton (2007), LE "puts

linguistics and ethnography together to find the social processes that we are involved in" (p.599). A concrete example of LE in the field of English language teaching is Copland's (2008, 2011, 2012) research on teacher feedback conferences. She has shown how discourse practices in the feedback event enable participants' voices to be heard or silenced and how face-threatening acts stay within or go beyond socially acceptable norms. According to Perez-Milans (2015), LE sees human beings as "engaged agentively in daily activities while at the same time reproducing the conditions that make these conditions possible"(p.3). In simpler terms, this means that people create any given social situation through their interaction. This interaction both shapes and is shaped by larger societal norms.

On a micro level, the social context of this study constituted three Japanese Junior High Schools (JHSs). It included the teachers and their backgrounds, myself (the researcher) and the social conditions of their schools (school traditions and rules, colleagues, students, etc.). The macro-context could be considered the social milieu associated with JHS English language education in Japan, which consisted of such elements as the traditional role of the teacher in JHS, JHS English education policy, and societal attitudes towards English.

In the title of this paper, the term "Reflexive Linguistic Ethnography" is used. During the study, I sometimes gave advice to the teachers during the interviews or assisted them in classes. The notion of reflexivity is prevalent in ethnography and also incorporated into LE (Rampton, Maybin, & Roberts, 2015). Reflexivity can be considered the impact the researcher has on the subject and vice-versa (Edge, 2011). According to Rampton, Maybin, and Roberts (2015, p. 17), the researcher's presence in the field "defies standardization and introduces a range of contingencies and partialities that really need to be addressed and reported." By calling this study a reflexive ethnography, I am acknowledging that the results of this study are derived from my interaction with the participants in the field.

As a part of this setting myself, I aimed to answer the following research questions:

① What kind of pedagogical puzzles do the teachers face over the course of this study?
② How do the teachers address these puzzles?
③ What is the role of the researcher as a Teacher of Teachers (TOT) in helping the teacher to address these puzzles? What are the implications for mentoring novice teachers?
④ How do the teachers develop their practice over the span of 18 months? What kind of environmental factors impact their development?

In the following section, I will discuss the methodology I used to choose, arrange, and analyze instances of language use which would accurately represent the intricacies of the major issues the teachers and I experienced, and, help answer the research questions.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants and setting

The study took place in Ishimoto City (Pseudonyms are used for all places and people.), a city in Japan with a population of 290,000. The three participants were Risa, female, who was a recent college graduate, Maiko, female, who became a full-time junior high school teacher mid-career, and Yuta, male, who had recently obtained a Master's degree in English education at a Japanese university. Lastly, I was a university teacher-educator living in Ishimoto with 10 years of experience. Because of my background, I labeled myself as a TOT in this study.

3.2 Data Collection

3.21 Ethnographic interviews

The ethnographic interview best encapsulates my methodology for talking to the participants. The purpose of such an interview is to "explore the meanings that people ascribe to actions and events in their cultural worlds" (Roulston, 2010, p. 19). In this case, I was exploring teachers' interpretations of English teaching and learning in their social contexts. The interview style was what Copland and Creese (2015) describe as an "informal interview," because I rarely had specific questions planned beforehand. However, I made an effort to use the following strategies and techniques throughout the study so that teachers would feel at ease to speak with me: building rapport (Spradley, 1979), encouraging reflective discussion on classes (Mann, 2016), and being a good listener (Denzin, 1989).

Interviews were conducted between October, 2013 and March, 2015 and took place once a month. Table 1 shows the number of interviews per participant, the number of transcripts produced with audio, the total number of words transcribed, and total interview time. Interviews were transcribed using Transana (Woods, 2016), a program specializing in the qualitative analysis of video and audio data. Using the time code feature in Transana, I divided the interview into topical scenes. This idea was adapted from Erickson (2006) who recommends writing a rough transcription of video data and dividing it into scenes. Those scenes chosen for further analysis were transcribed in detail later. A similar method was also undertaken by Copland (2015) in her study of feedback in class conferences.

3.22 Participant observation of classes

Table 1. Interview data collection

Participant	Dates (First to Last)	Interviews	Audio and Transcripts	Words transcribed	Interview time (hrs.)
Risa	Oct 28 2013 – Mar 6 2015	16	16	80180	12:01
Maiko	Oct 22 2013 – Mar 16 2015	14	14	39347	8:02
Yuta	Oct 21 2013 – Mar 28 2014	8	5	28504	3:49

According to Davies (2008), an ethnographer's role constantly shifts along a continuum between observer and participant. Over the course of the study I assumed roles all along the continuum depending on whether or not the teachers solicited my participation.

Table 2 shows the summary of class data collection. At the beginning of the study I observed classes using solely field notes as my means of data collection. After the teachers and students became accustomed to my presence, I began to audio or video record the class and take notes. I would then synchronize the notes with the video in Transana. These are called *Transana notes* in Table 2. As with the interview transcripts, using the Transana time code feature, I divided the classes into topical scenes. The strength of Transana was that I could put different scenes from different classes into "collections." This was invaluable for me to archive and

Table 2. Summary of class data collection

Subject	Dates (First to Last)	Classes	Field Notes	Audio	Video	Transana Notes
Risa	10/18/2013 - 3/6/2015	22	2	5	15	20
Maiko	10/9/2013 - 3/3/2015	20	5	3	12	15
Yuta	10/21/2013 - 2/21/2014	8	4	4	0	4

retrieve classroom events for further analysis.

3.3 Data Analysis

Figure 1 shows the process of data analysis, which was conducted in two phases. The first phase consisted of creating a holistic portrait of my experience with each teacher in this study. These portraits were designed to give an emic perspective on how pedagogical puzzles were
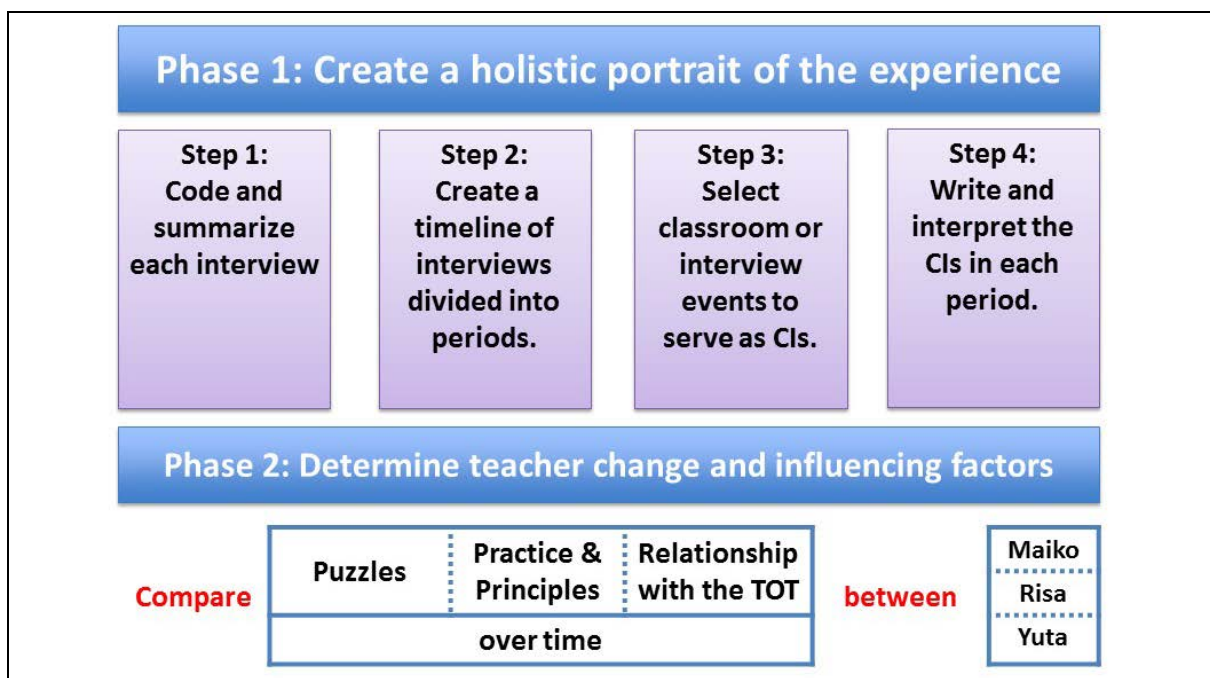

Figure 1. Process of data analysis

experienced, why certain teaching practices were carried out, and the nature of the teacher/ TOT relationship. Phase 2 was designed to determine how the teachers' pedagogical puzzles, practices, and TOT relationship changed and the factors influencing these changes. In this paper, I will focus on the steps in Phase 1 and how I attempted to choose classroom or interview events that would encapsulate the issues experienced by each teacher.

3.3.1 Phase 1 - Step 1: Code and summarize each interview

Coding consists of assigning names to parts of data that represent what it is about. It is a way of reducing and indexing data as well as making comparisons (Charmaz, 2006). My method for coding interviews was informed by Guest, MacQueen, and Namey's (2012) applied thematic analysis. The primary goal of applied thematic analysis is to "understand how people feel, think, and behave, within a particular context relative to a particular research question" (Guest et al., 2012, p. 13). Because I was coding to answer research questions about teachers' puzzles and teaching practices, this was an appropriate framework. Applied thematic analysis takes a phenomenological approach; although it can be used to answer specific research questions, there are no preconceived categories the researcher applies to the data. It consists of the following procedures: segmenting text, writing codes for the segments, grouping these codes into categories, and, lastly, expanding on these categories and codes through the development of themes, concepts or theories.

As explained earlier, interviews were initially broken down into segments in the transcription process. Using NVivo (QSR International, 2016), a CAQDAS (Computer-assisted qualitative analysis software), I first assigned codes to segments of the interviews employing "descriptive coding" (Saldaña, 2013). This entailed assigning a keyword or phrase to a segment of data to describe what was going on. These descriptive codes were then grouped into categories. These categories were eventually grouped into themes. Inspired by the constant comparative method in Charmaz (2006), I continuously recoded previous interviews, changing categories as new interviews changed my understanding of the relationship between codes and categories. Constant revision and comparison as well as memo writing enabled me to establish a rationale for labeling the data as well as create overarching themes that would fit the interview data for all three participants.

Figure 2, on the next page, shows an NVivo coded segment of text from an interview with Risa on June 30, 2014. The descriptive code, or the last code in the hierarchy, was as specific as possible. The descriptive code here, *Challenging Question,* fell under the category *Indirect Support*, which belonged to the theme *Education Talk*. In this situation, I was asking Risa a challenging question about the efficacy of the way she conducts vocabulary practice in hopes of getting her to rethink her methodology. The purpose of this question, therefore, was to prompt her to reflect on and improve her practice. Thus, it was a type of indirect support. *Indirect Support* was classified under *Education Talk*, which marked any interaction geared toward helping the teachers improve their practice. Later, this theme would be used to answer the
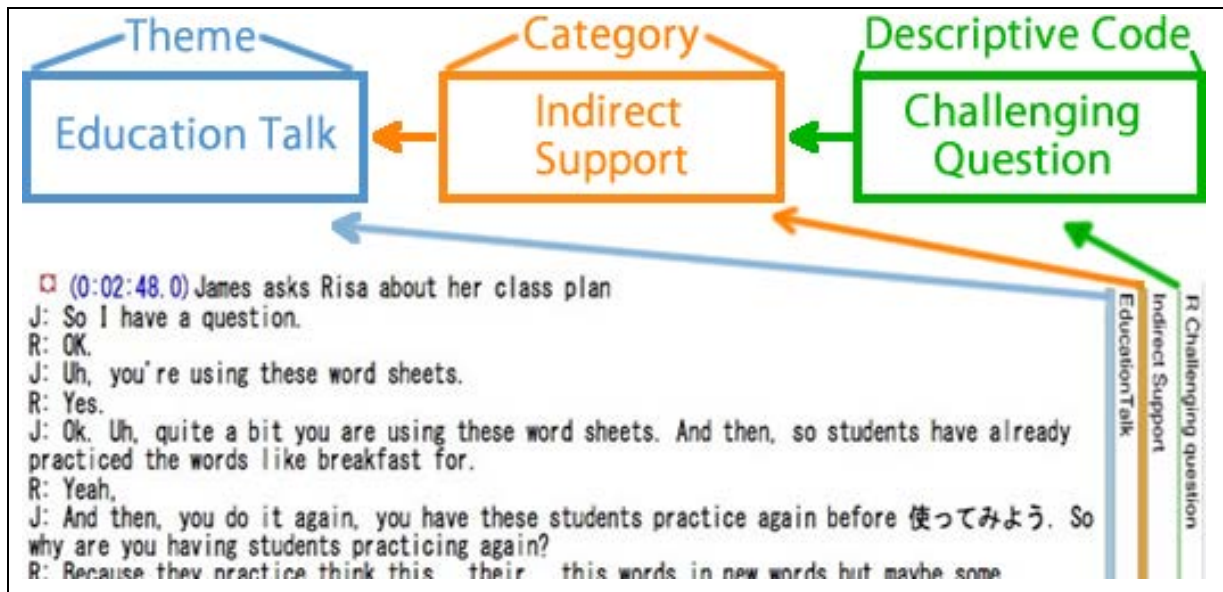
Figure 2. Coded interview segment and demonstration of coding hierarchy

research question about the nature of the TOT and teacher relationship.

Figure 3 shows each theme and its primary categories. *Teaching Style and Cognition* was the broadest theme, which aimed to describe teachers' current teaching practices and the
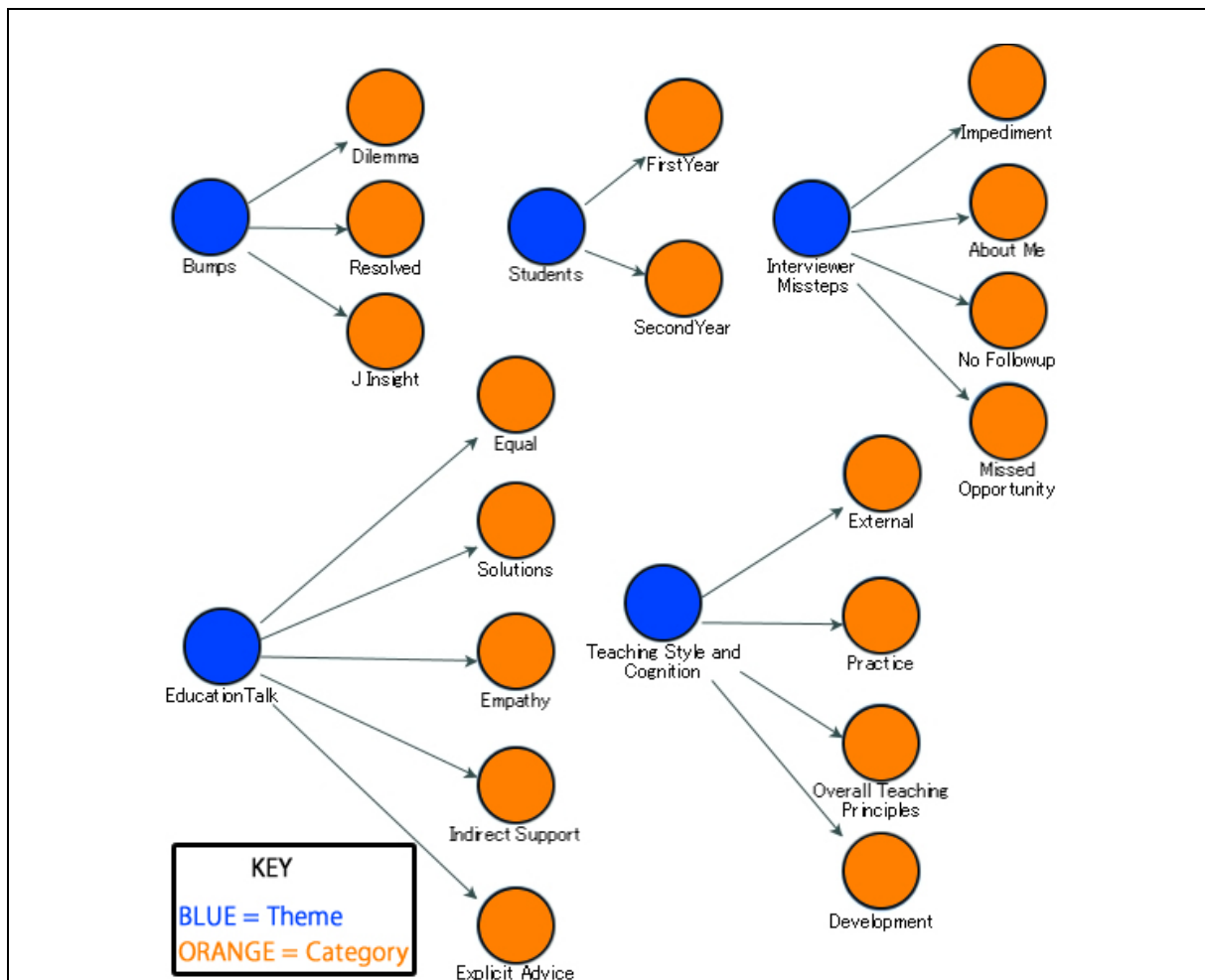

Figure 3. Themes and categories

personal history, training, and social contexts which influenced these practices. The next theme, *Bumps*, was used to describe any unexpected or surprising event that either caused the teachers to reflect on their practice or caused me to reflect on my own observations. *Education Talk,* as explained earlier, was used to describe support given to the teacher. The next main theme, *Interviewer Missteps*, marked incidents in which I, the researcher, likely committed a "mustn't" in the rules of the research interview. The last theme, *Student,* was information about the characteristics of students in the first and second year of the study.

In many cases the primary categories were divided into second level or third level categories which were designed to "detail or enrich the entry" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 77). The descriptive coding under the lowest level category was usually done using the words of the teacher. The labeling of the categories, on the other hand, was usually done from the perspective of the researcher. Figure 4 shows the second-level and third-level categories and the descriptive codes under one of the primary categories of the theme *Bumps* and sub-category *Dilemma*. The entire network of categories, sub-categories, and descriptive codes is too extensive to show in its entirety.
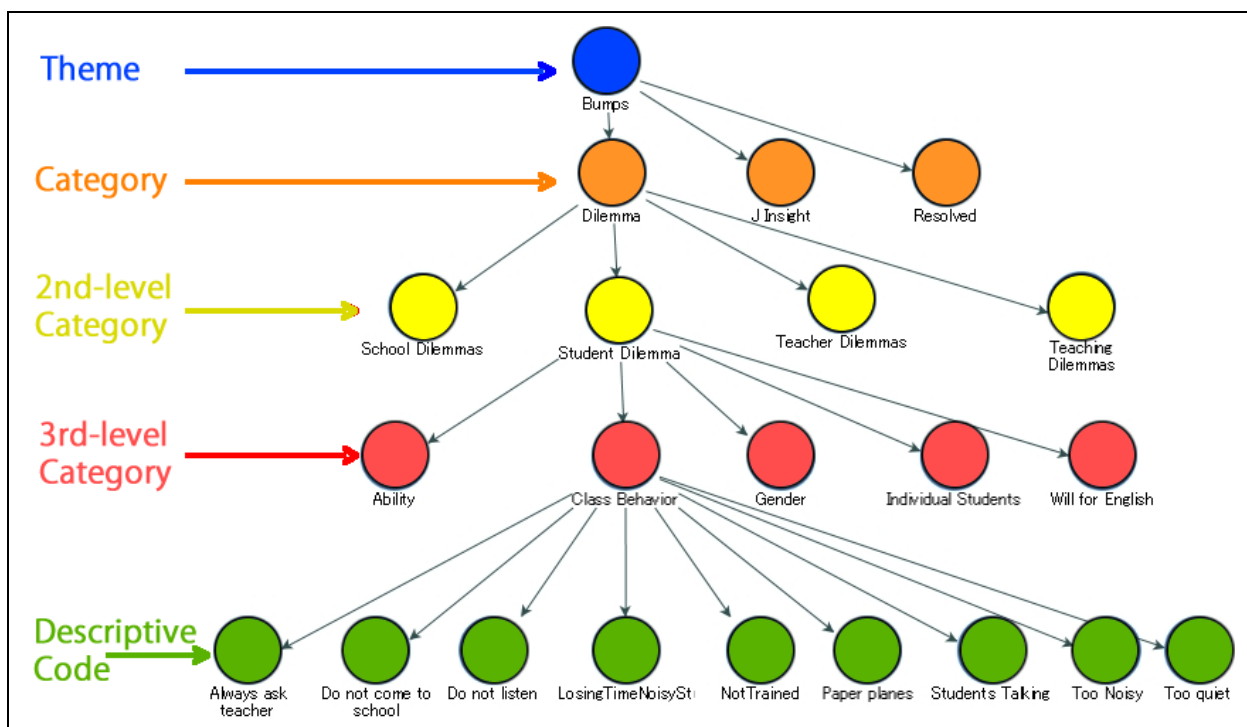

Figure 4. Second-level categories, third-level categories, and descriptive codes under the primary category, *Dilemma*

Lastly, Table 3 shows how the coding themes were matched with the research questions. The codes served as a means for me to immediately access information about a particular research question as well as to condense and index the interview data. As I was interested in how the nature of teacher's pedagogical puzzles and practice changed over time, the next step was for me to divide the interviews into time periods.

Table 3. Research questions and their related coding

Research Questions	Related coding
1. What kind of pedagogical puzzles do the teachers face over the course of this study?	Bumps
2. How do the teachers address these puzzles?	Bumps, Education Talk
3. What is the role of the researcher as a Teacher of Teachers (TOT) in helping the teacher to address these puzzles? What are the implications for mentoring novice teachers?	Interviewer Missteps, Education Talk
4. How do the teachers develop their practice over the span of 18 months? What kind of environmental factors impact their development?	Teaching Style and Cognition, Students

3.3.2 Phase 1 - Step 2: Create a timeline of interviews divided into periods

After generating the codes, the next step was to use them to create a timeline of events (e.g. the kind of *dilemmas* recorded for teachers at the beginning, middle, and end of the study) to determine the nature of change in teachers' practice and issues faced as well as the nature of the TOT and teacher relationship. To do this, using NVivo, I generated a list of codes for each interview, and based on those codes wrote a short summary concerning the circumstances surrounding the interview. Figure 5 shows a partial screen shot of this.

Figure 5. Sample of summary of codes and summary of Risa's interview on June 30, 2014

Based on the summary and codes I created a spread sheet which gave an overview of the coding of each interview and classes I observed for each teacher. Using the spread sheet, I divided my time with each teacher into time periods. Figure 6, on the next page, is an attempt to show how I did this. At the top of the figure is a screen shot of the entire spread sheet. Below that are two zoomed-in shots of the data that represent Period 1 for Risa. In this period, Risa and I were getting to know each other and I was trying to define my own role as a TOT. The data in the red square shows that this period consisted of two interviews and gives the dates for

the interviews. Next to that is a list of the descriptive codes for the interviews, and, to the right, a list of the classes I observed. The blue box shows two episodes that can serve as critical incidents, the first being my initial visit to Risa, the second being a classroom scene that occurred on November 18. To the right are descriptive statistics of the coding for the interviews. They show the number of transcribed words coded as well as the total words coded for each theme. The purpose of this was to give a general idea of the primary type of content discussed.

Figure 6. Partial view of spread sheet

In the first interview, Risa and I mainly discussed her teaching experience and education; thus 55% of words were coded under *Teaching Style and Cognition*. Risa also discussed some dilemmas she was confronting and therefore *Bumps* was a frequently occurring theme. Lastly, I gave Risa some gratuitous advice, and that fell under *Education Talk*. In the second interview, I frequently attempted to give Risa advice; thus, *Education Talk* occupied forty percent of words

coded. It is important to note that the descriptive statistics (words per coded theme) were used to give me a quick understanding of what was discussed from interview to interview or in a particular period and to enable me to identify certain topics raised in our discussions for further investigation.

After making the spread sheets for each teacher, I was able to create three overarching time periods that would collectively represent my time with all three of them. Table 4 shows the overarching time periods on top and the descriptions of the teachers' time periods below. The teachers' time periods also show the observational circumstances because the circumstances in which I observed the participants affected the nature of these observations.

Table 4. Time of study divided into three time periods

Overarching Time Periods	October, 2013 – March, 2014 Period 1 "We are all Novices"	April – August, 2014 Period 2 "A Fresh Start"	September, 2014 – March, 2015 Period 3 "Partnering up"
Risa Time Period (Title followed by observational circumstances.)	**Understanding Risa's Practice** 1. Getting to know Risa (Oct – Nov) 2. Assisting Risa (Dec – Feb)	**Risa becomes a novice teacher again** 3. Eliciting CIs to help Risa's development (Apr – Jul)	**The Ups and Downs** 4. Talking about teaching and students (Sep – Feb) 5. Wrapping up (Mar)
Maiko Time Period	**Learning from Maiko** 1. No dilemmas! (Oct – Dec) 2. Learning from Maiko (Jan – Mar)	**Maiko in Control** 3. Collaboratively finding CIs. (Jun – Jul)	**The Open School Conference** 4. The open class: before and after (Oct – Dec) 5. Learning more from Maiko (Jan – Mar)
Yuta Time Period	**Empathizing with Yuta** 1. Sensing something is wrong (Oct - Nov) 2. Yuta in his element(Dec) 3. To the brink (Jan – Mar)		

The first overarching period was called "We are all Novices." In this period, the teachers and I were trying to establish a comfortable working relationship. Below Period 1, the table highlights what was occurring with each teacher during that time. Period 2, "A Fresh Start," marked the beginning of the academic year. In this period, I had developed a research strategy of eliciting and discussing critical incidents with Risa and Maiko, which, at the beginning, seemed to give a renewed vigor for the project. By this time, however, Yuta had left the study. In Period 3, "Partnering up," the relationship I had with teachers changed from that of researcher and participant to more of a peer relationship. In Risa's case, we spent many of our

interviews discussing problems she was experiencing with students. In Maiko's case, I helped her prepare for an open class conference for which teachers throughout the prefecture were invited.

3.3.3 Phase 1- Step 3: Select events to serve as critical incidents

The next step was to choose interview interactions and classroom events that could serve as critical incidents that represent the typical puzzle, way of teaching, or manifestation of the TOT and teacher relationship in each period. In this study, a critical incident (CI) can be considered a particular event that encapsulated the intricacies of one of the research themes. According to Tripp, "critical incidents are not simply observed, they are created"(Tripp, 1993, p. 27). Therefore, in this step I was not selecting CIs but rather selecting events which could possibly serve as CIs.

A CI, according to Tripp (1993) should be seen as an example of a category in a wider context. The following process, also recommended by Tripp (1993), was followed. First, notable events related to the research questions were written into the spread sheet for each time period under "Possible CIs" (See the blue box in Figure 6). These events were labeled as *Puzzles, Practice,* or *TOT*. Next, I selected a series of different events for writing up that I thought could, collectively, give a portrait of the evolution of the puzzles, preferred practices, and nature of TOT relationship for each teacher over the course of the study.

CIs can be identified in two ways. The first is to have the teachers write the CIs themselves and the researcher to categorize them and discuss their implications (Farrell, 2017; Griffin, 2003; Hall & Townsend, 2017). The second way is for the researchers themselves to label specific incidents recorded in their data as critical as it relates to a specific area of investigation (Angelides, 2001; Halquist & Musanti, 2010). For an event to be critical, it "has to be shown to have a more general meaning and to indicate something of importance in a broader context" (Halquist & Musanti, 2010, p. 450). I chose to employ the second methodology with some transparent criteria of selection. This reduced the burden the study placed on the teachers, because it did not require them to write journals. The CI selection criteria were: 1) the incident was representative of a particular period spent with a teacher; 2) it was related to one of the three themes of the study; 3) it could be related to a broader context.

3.3.4 Phase 1- Step 4: Write and interpret the CIs in each period

The final step was writing up and analyzing the CIs for each period. Table 5, on the next page, shows a list of the CIs I ultimately constructed for Risa and which of the study's themes the CIs were related to: Risa's practice, her pedagogical puzzles, or the nature of her relationship with the TOT. The CIs were constructed using classroom field notes and transcripts, interview transcripts, and excerpts of collected artifacts such as textbooks and worksheets. CIs written in the field of education have two essential components: a description of the event and its interpretation (Farrell, 2013; Tripp, 1993). In this study, the event was the incident selected in

the previous step. The purpose of the interpretation was to relate the event to one of the primary themes of the study and a broader context.

Table 5. CIs constructed for Risa

Teacher time period	Observational Circumstances	Representative CIs	CI Type		
			Practice	Puzzles	TOT
Understanding Risa's Practice	Getting to know Risa (Oct – Nov, 2013)	CI 1R: Warm-up	◯	◯	
		CI 2R Reading aloud	◯		
		CI 3R James' advice to Risa			◯
	Assisting Risa (Dec, 2013 – Feb, 2014)	CI 4R Reflecting on writing		◯	◯
		CI 5R Teaching writing together	◯	◯	
Risa is a novice again	Eliciting CIs from Risa (Apr – Jul, 2014)	CI 6R: Risa's grammar lesson	◯	◯	
		CI 7R: Student management		◯	
The Ups and Downs (Sep, 2014 – March, 2015)	Talking about teaching and students	CI 8R: Is PPP a waste of time?	◯	◯	◯
		CI 9R: The boys of 1C		◯	
		CI10R: 1C gives a speech	◯		◯
		CI 11R: Saying good-bye	◯		

When interpreting an incident, a microanalysis of classroom or interview talk was employed to examine how elements of the social context were impacting the participants' actions. Furthermore, my own ethnographic research was used to consider micro and macro factors influencing participants in the talk. Lastly, relevant literature related to the larger categories of teacher development informed the interpretation and enabled me to relate the CI to a broader context. In the next section, I will provide the write-up of one CI, CI 2R in Table 5, to give a demonstration of how the interpretation was conducted.

4. CI 2R and its Interpretation

This CI occurred in an interview given on October 28, 2013 during Period 1 with Risa. It involved my trying to give Risa some explicit advice about reading aloud techniques. Table 5 reveals that in the period in which this CI occurred, I was trying to get to know Risa. It also shows that this CI was given the TOT tag. Previously, I had observed a reading class Risa taught on October 18 in which she had the students do a lot of reading aloud (called *ondoku*) of the textbook. In the class, the purpose of the reading aloud was not clear and Risa did not seem to know *ondoku* techniques which might engage the students more. *Ondoku* is a popular method in English teaching at Japanese junior high schools and is used for reading comprehension, learning vocabulary and grammar, and pronunciation practice (Yasugi, 2010). In my own experience teaching, I had found *ondoku* techniques to be very effective for students to process

the meaning of the text and understand its grammar and vocabulary. I thought that I could impart some of my know-how to Risa. For the interview, I prepared to demonstrate some *ondoku* techniques I had used in my own classes. Below is an extract of the interaction which became a CI.

Extract 1 James' first explicit advice to Risa (October 28, 2013)**

** Transcription conventions

(( ))	-	Author's comment	R	-	Risa
Nihon	-	Italics indicates Japanese	J	-	James
[= Japan]	-	Author's translation			

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1    J:   Now, zenzenm mushi shitemo ok desu. [=It is completely ok to
2         ignore me.] This is something I have done with students. My idea
3         came from this book.
          ((JAMES shows RISA a worksheet with English text on the left half
          and corresponding Japanese text on the right. He then shows her
          five ways to use this worksheet to give students practice in
          reading aloud and understanding the meaning of the text. The
          explanation takes approximately five minutes.))
4    J:   Zenzen tsukawanakutemo ii desu. [=You do not have to use this.]
5    R:   No, it's very good.
6    J:   ((JAMES hands RISA photocopied pages of the book.))  I don't use
7         this exactly. Konomama tsukatte inai kedo, kore wo yonde, nanika,
8         kore ni motoduite jibun no aideia, iroiro shikou sakugo wo shite,
9         jibun no sutairu ga dekita. [Risa] mo onaji desu [=I do not use
10        this exactly, but I have read this and based on it come up with my
11        own idea, and through some trial and error, make my own style. You
12        can do the same.]
13   R:   Oh, that you so much. That is useful.
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4.1 Interpretation

In the interaction, I hedged my advice by telling her it was fine to ignore what I was about to tell her (line 1). Furthermore, after my long explanation, I told her she did not have to use the idea (line 4). In line 5, she assured me that my idea was very good. After that, I suggested that she could adapt the idea to her teaching as I had, and she expresses gratitude. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) "face-saving" theory of politeness, the greater the social distance of the speaker and hearer and the greater the relative power of the speaker over the hearer, the more politeness is used in conversation. The level of politeness on my part was evidently high, and Risa also responded very graciously to my advice. Although this interaction shows that our

relationship was not tense, it also shows that I was still learning the art of mentorship.

According to Copland (2011), often teachers expect and accept feedback from supervisors. Chick (2015) describes the culture of the feedback event as one in which the trainer is expected to give advice to trainees which will enhance their practice. Research on mentorship, however, indicates that guidance is effective when the supervisor and teacher jointly identify issues (Bailey, 2006), and their dialogue is "collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful in order to co-construct knowledge" (Copland & Mann, 2010, p. 176). Sometimes, however, both the supervisor and the teacher must learn how to build a collaborative relationship (Copland & Mann, 2010).

The extract shows that I had not been able to build a collaborative relationship with Risa. First, Risa had not indicated in the interview that *ondoku* was an issue for her. In fact, in the ensuing interview on November 25, Risa would tell me that *ondoku* was one of the unique features of her class. Therefore, we never came to a consensus that there might be any issues to discuss regarding the way she carried out *ondoku*, from Risa's perspective, I was most likely giving her unnecessary advice.

5. Lessons Learned

In the end, I made an effort to conduct "trustworthy" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) LE. To that end, the criteria for the collecting, condensing, selecting, and analyzing data were transparent. The potential of this methodology was its replicability. However, this methodology was not without its flaws. I will end this paper by discussing the lessons learned in the hope that it might be of benefit to other qualitative researchers.

The first lesson was to code my interviews closer in time to the interviews themselves. Throughout the 18 months of fieldwork, I was consistent in transcribing interviews and writing up field notes of classes every month. This work, however, was so labor intensive that I usually finished just before my next round of interviews and observations. As a result, I did not begin to code the interviews in earnest until all fieldwork had finished. When coding, I realized a number of issues in the interviews I could have explored more. Analysis in ethnography should happen during the process of fieldwork and inform it (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1996). Coding interviews during this research would have improved the quality of subsequent interviews.

The second lesson was that the interpretation of a CI is not final until it is written. Initially, I selected events which I believed to be representative of one of the research themes to serve as CIs. Often, after a microanalysis of the interview or classroom talk in the CI, the meaning which I had originally placed in the event changed. I learned that one must keep an open mind when doing the interpretation and conclude what is shown from a thorough analysis of the data.

The third lesson was to resist the temptation of transcribing all interesting classroom interaction data. I spent a large amount of time producing *Transana notes*, or synchronized classroom fieldnotes with video. Sometimes, I would spend more than a day transcribing classroom interactions or extended teacher talk which I thought to be illuminating. Ultimately,

though, I only used a small fraction of these data in the final CIs. In hindsight, I should have stayed with my original strategy of segmenting and roughly describing classroom scenes in Transana, and then transcribing only those interactions identified later as being relevant to a CI. Doing so likely would have afforded me the time for coding interviews during the study.

Acknowledgement

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