

Teacher roles and learners' motivation – a preliminary investigation of Greek state-school EFL teachers' viewpoints

Areti-Maria Sougari & Nicos Sifakis

*Aristotle University of Thessaloniki & Hellenic Open University
asougari@enl.auth.gr; sifakis@eap.gr*

Abstract

It is well known from recent studies that teachers' perceptions of their professional roles have a great impact on the learning and achievement of their students. The close relationship between teachers' perceptions of their professional profile and their appreciation of their learners' motivation characteristics is the subject of this study which refers to the Greek ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) domain. By looking at teachers' perspectives regarding the impact that their teaching has on their own students' learning and achievement, we draw parallels between the teachers' views of themselves as pedagogues and professionals, the wider EFL (English as a Foreign Language) situation in Greek state schools and the status and function of the English language in Greece in the 21st century.

Keywords: teacher roles, learner motivation, Greek educational context

1. Introduction

The impact that ESOL teachers' own perceptions of their professional roles has on the learning and achievement of their students is well documented in the wider educational psychology literature (Beijaard et al. 2000). However, the link between teachers' own sense of their role and learners' motivation has not been frequently investigated. In the first place, teachers' own images of their professional roles have been known to be largely determined by their training, their own practical experiences as learners and the local educational contexts (Ben-Peretz et al. 2003). In the second place, EFL learners' engagement and motivation for participation in the foreign language classroom have been shown to be linked, among other things, to their teachers' own sense of professional responsibility (e.g. Lee 1998; Abu-Rabia 2004).

The present study attempts to overtly link EFL teachers' own sense of professional development and their own understanding of the impact that it has on their learners' motivation. Our investigation focuses on the Greek ESOL domain and, in particular, on the state-controlled school sector. We research the relationship between the beliefs of Greek state-school EFL teachers (n = 421) concerning their own role in the foreign language classroom and their understanding of their learners' motivation and participation levels. By looking at teachers' perspectives regarding the impact that their teaching has on their own students' learning and achievement, we draw parallels between:

- (a) the teachers' views of themselves as pedagogues and professionals and the extent to which these views are influenced by their education/training and their personal learning and teaching experiences;

- (b) the wider EFL situation in Greek state schools and the extent to which it is linked to the EFL teachers' professional identity; and
- (c) the status and function of the English language and, more generally, the EFL profession in Greece in the 21st century (and the extent to which teachers are aware of the function of English as an international lingua franca).

We discuss possible implications of the relationship between teaching domain, professional self-image, and classroom teaching in the Greek context and concentrate on delineating the role of the state-school EFL teacher with regard to his/her classroom situation, the wider socio-cultural community and the challenges that arise from the international spread of English.

2. Orientation of our research

2.1 Teachers' perceptions of their professional roles

It is well documented that teachers' impressions of their own roles are related to a wide variety of issues. Characteristically, teachers from different subject areas hold very similar perceptions of their professional identity (Kompf et al. 1996). Most teachers see themselves as a combination of subject matter and pedagogical experts (Beijaard et al. 2000). Moreover, there are significant differences between beginning and experienced teachers as regards their self-image (Nias 1989).

An important source of teachers' self-impressions of their professional roles is their initial teacher education and training. It is true that different teacher education curricula around the world have slightly different orientations, but most ESOL initial training can be said to follow Weber's (1968) major theoretical strands of 'specialized training' and 'cultivation', with individual curricula fluctuating between the two. In this light, it can be argued that ESOL teachers' perceptions about their professional role is informed not only by their training in the practical skills of teaching but also by the cultivation of public duty, which is construed as moral and pedagogical stewardship (Prillaman et al. 1994). Both of these characteristics are present, to some extent, in Greek teachers' initial education.

Another source is teachers' own practical previous experiences as foreign language learners and as foreign language users. It has been claimed that teachers' views of pedagogy are strongly shaped by their own teachers (Feinman-Nemser & Flodden 1986) and that their own pedagogical behaviour (e.g. regarding lesson planning) can be significantly influenced by teachers' learning experiences throughout their lives (Almarza 1996).

Teachers' own practical experience from the actual teaching practice is yet another source that informs their impressions about their professional roles. In this sense, professional self-definition is the result of dynamic interactions with others, learners, parents and principals (Lieberman & Miller 1984). What is more, the local educational contexts provide another broad source, whether in the form of existing pedagogical traditions and curricular philosophies or in the form of institutional characteristics and different target learner populations (Ben-Peretz et al. 2003). It goes without saying that each teaching context creates new tension for incoming teachers with novel professional challenges (e.g. Murray 2005 discusses the areas of tension in making the transition from teaching in the school sector to working in universities).

2.2 Learner motivation

Learner motivation is a widely researched domain. However, most of the research to-date has tended to concentrate more on analysing the motivational features that are closely related to learner- and learning- oriented properties (cf. the distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation in Gardner 2001).

Until the 1990s, emphasis in L2 motivation research had been on the more stable and generalized sources of motivation, which were related to, for example, learners' past experiences in their immediate socio-cultural environment (for reviews see Dörnyei 2000, 2001; Clément & Gardner 2001). From the 1990s onwards there was a shift in emphasis towards a more situated approach, which concentrated on analyzing learner motivation in specific classroom events and processes (see, for example, Oxford & Shearin 1994; Williams & Burden 1997). This culminated in Dörnyei's process-oriented framework (2000), which mapped out a predominantly learner-centred progression of motivational features, from initial wishes and desires to final goal accomplishment.

These analyses of learner motivation have yielded a rich amount of information concerning both the characteristics of successful language learners as well as the properties of the actual learning processes themselves. While the overall approach has not adopted a restrictive micro-perspective but has sought to research the broader socio-cultural macro-processes (Clément & Gardner 2001), it has not to date provided adequate information on the link between learner motivation and teachers' own beliefs about the teaching process. Interestingly, studies of motivation in the wake of the communicative approach to foreign language learning have focused on integrating curricular innovations (such as, for example, content-based learning – see Stoller (2004)) and pedagogical instruments (e.g. groupwork – see Larson & Christensen (1993)) with a view to enhancing learners' involvement and prompting them to take fuller responsibility for their own learning (Little 1991; Lee 1998).

2.3 Teachers' views of their professional role and of their learners' motivation: making the link

Clearly, issues of learner motivation frequently arise as a necessary part of teachers' in-class activities. Thus, certain studies focus their investigation on how language specialists construct and negotiate their roles and professional relationships through classroom discourse (cf. Creese 2000) to meet individual envisaged profiles (e.g. that of the intercultural foreign language teacher – cf. Sercu 2005). Other studies link teacher-initiated actions to combat specific problems, such as learner foreign language anxiety (Abu-Rabia 2004: 713-4) or improving learners' self-esteem (Sparks & Lipka 1992).

It is also clear that the appropriation of learning activities has a great impact on learning and achievement (Bandura 1977). The selection, creation or adaptation of such activities is largely informed not only by the profile of the learner himself/herself but also by the way in which teachers perceive themselves and their role in society. These self-images in turn influence teachers' teaching strategies and behaviour in class (Combs et al. 1974). In this sense, successful teaching depends on the teacher's:

- optimal involvement in the learning material,
- personal interest in the learner (Abu-Rabia 2004) and
- development of certain personal traits, such as relaxation, openness, originality and spontaneity (Lam 1973).

However pertinent the above characterizations are, their research grounding is lacking in two domains. The first domain has to do with the fact that there are, to our

knowledge, very few studies that explicitly link teachers' own sense of professionalism with learner motivation (e.g. see Kagan & Tippins 1991; Tamir 1991). The second domain is related to the fact that those studies of teachers' views about their professionalism that go beyond using classroom observations and analyses of teacher journals make use of metaphors as a means of delineating the various characteristics of the teaching profession. Thus, characterizations such as "gardener" or "a bird caring for its young" have been linked with teachers' sense of protection towards learners. Similarly, terms like "travelling guide", "conductor", "judge", "policeman" and "entertainer in a circus" have been linked with other features of the teacher's role in the classroom (for example, the "conductor" metaphor represents teachers' engagement with the whole class, leading the group while still paying attention to the individual performances – see Beijaard et al. (2000)).

However significant metaphors are in offering insights into teachers' thoughts and feelings regarding their profession, they "represent an emphasis of certain selected features of a whole phenomenon" and cannot convey the full content of their message, nor can they transmit only the content of their intended message (Inbar 1996: 78-79). Interestingly, when asked to use metaphors to describe their role, teachers do not overtly identify themselves as motivators of their learners. However, issues of motivation frequently arise as a necessary part of teachers' in-class activity, and this is obvious in specific studies of learner motivation and observations of the actual teaching practice (see above).

For the above reasons, in our study we have chosen to directly enquire whether EFL teachers see themselves as motivators, rather than use either metaphors or any of the other instruments mentioned above. Having said that, and while the link between teachers' views about their professional role and about their learners' motivation is of central concern to our research, we did not overtly ask respondents to make that link. Instead, our study focuses on expression of explicit beliefs, by means of asking direct questions.

The research questions that the study sought to shed some light on are the following:

- What is teachers' perception of their learners' motivation? What shapes teachers' viewpoints? Are their perceptions shaped by their teaching affiliation, their age or the years of teaching experience?
- What are teachers' beliefs about their role in the classroom context? Are teachers' viewpoints influenced by the teaching domain, their age or the years of teaching experience?

3. The study

3.1 The ELT context in Greek state schools

Within the Greek educational syllabus, the instruction of English is introduced in the third grade of the state primary school and is also taught as an obligatory course throughout the lower- and upper- secondary sector. The language instruction which is further reinforced through private tuition in private language schools since junior classes is mostly exam-oriented. The materials used are quite diverse in nature; the teachers are responsible for selecting an appropriate coursebook for grade 3 at primary level and for the secondary level by choosing from a list of commercially published courseware approved by the Ministry of Education. However, for grades 4-6 at primary level, the coursebooks implemented have been specifically designed for the instruction of English following the direct guidelines of the unified curriculum for the primary and

lower secondary level. Throughout the primary level, English instruction takes place three hours per week, whereas in the lower and upper secondary level the foreign language is taught for three hours in the first grade of both levels and two hours for the consecutive two years in both levels.

3.2 Participants

A questionnaire survey was administered in Greek state schools, addressing EFL teachers. Originally, 650 questionnaires were sent to the schools directories, which were responsible for locating those teachers who had attended an in-service teacher training seminar during the previous school year and who taught across the three teaching domains. The questionnaires were accompanied by a cover letter which outlined the focus of the study, provided explanations concerning the completion of the questionnaire, and highlighted the beneficial outcomes of this undertaking.

The response rate was 75 percent. As the homogeneity of the sample was of paramount importance, some of the responses were excluded, because the respondents failed to comply with the main requirement set at the outset. To be more specific, the exclusion concerned the respondents who taught both at the lower and upper secondary levels or those who taught either in technical vocational schools or in private primary or secondary schools. Thus the respondents who finally formed the sample of this study totaled 421 teachers. All the respondents were at least holders of a BA degree in English Language and Literature or equivalent, as required by the Greek Educational system. Only 11% of the teachers were holders of a postgraduate degree. The participants were distinctly placed in three categories based on their teaching context; thus, 41% ($n = 174$) taught at primary level, 30% ($n = 125$) taught at lower secondary level and 29% ($n = 122$) taught at upper secondary level. The descriptive data has yielded that 90% of the respondents were female and that only 5% claimed to be native speakers of English. As regards the participants' age, the following become apparent: 21-30: 12%, 31-40: 51%, 41-50: 33%, and 51+: 5%. In terms of years of teaching experience, the respondents replied as follows: 0-1: 8%, 1-5: 18%, 5-10: 26%, 10-15: 35%, and 15+: 13%.

3.3 Materials and analysis

The data collection instrument used in this study was a questionnaire, which was tested in the form of a pilot study with 45 teachers of English and was subsequently revised. The questionnaire used for the purpose of the survey is an extended version of the one exploited in the present paper (see Appendix). Those questions that are the focus of this paper challenged the respondents to rate their answers in order of importance and to tick the appropriate answer concerning their teaching domain. The questionnaire demanded some personal data to build the respondents' profile regarding their age, qualifications, years of teaching experience and current teaching situation.

Certain questions asked respondents to elaborate on their answers in order to receive their personal input into teaching-related matters. The data compiled was subsequently codified in appropriate categories. The *inter-rater reliability* was .92; in the case of disagreement, a discussion was carried and the decision was reached when there was complete agreement. The data was processed using the SPSS¹ software. The chi-square crosstabs procedure was applied to determine the relationship among the independent

¹ "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences"

variables (such as teaching affiliation in the three teaching domains, years of teaching experience, teachers' age) and the teachers' beliefs. As regards the statistical analysis, the adjusted standardized residual (ASR) was chosen to identify those categories responsible for offering significant chi-square values. To be more specific, given that the absolute value of a given ASR is greater than 1.96, this particular cell is considered to contribute to the chi-square value (Haberman 1973). The significance level was set at $p < .05$.

4. Results

4.1 Learners' level of motivation

It is evident that teachers' perceptions toward their learners' level of motivation were influenced by the particular age group they were responsible for. Thus, primary teachers professed that their learners show signs of being highly motivated to learn English in the classroom context (ASR= 2.2). However, on the whole, teachers (76%) expressed the belief that their learners were only moderately motivated. Table 1 illustrates teachers' viewpoint of learners' level of motivation across the three levels of education.

Table 1. Teachers' viewpoint of learners' level of motivation

	<i>Strong</i>		<i>Average</i>		<i>No real</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%^a</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Primary	27	15	136	78	11	6	174	42
Lower Secondary	12	10	92	74	20	16	124	30
Upper Secondary	9	7	92	76	20	12	121	29
<i>Total</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>419</i>	<i>100</i>

^a Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

$n = 419$, $\chi^2(6) = 13.079$, $p < .05$

Irrespective of years of teaching experience and teachers' age, the respondents seemed to hold similar views concerning the learners' level of motivation. The statistical analysis failed to yield any significant relationship between the aforementioned independent variables and the views they held concerning the level of motivation the learners exhibit during classroom activities.

As regards teachers' justifications about the learners' level of motivation, the teachers claimed that a number of issues contributed to the formation of a particular classroom atmosphere (Table 2).

Table 2. Relating teachers' affiliation to their justifications concerning their learners' level of motivation (n = 362)

	Primary		Lower Secondary		Upper Secondary		Total	df	χ^2	p
	N	%	N	%	N	%				
Few hours/many students	8	20	14	35	18	45	40	2	8.091	<.05
No status	40	29	48	34	52	37	140	2	12.280	<.01
Learning load	12	19	25	38	28	43	65	2	15.309	<.001
No immediate application	4	18	11	50	7	32	22	2	5.847	ns
Educational system	1	1	17	24	54	75	72	2	94.707	<.001
Not realised importance	43	62	16	23	10	15	69	2	19.150	<.001
Realised importance	8	40	9	45	3	15	20	2	3.164	ns
Motivating activities	16	39	12	29	13	32	41	2	.057	ns
Mixed ability classes	23	62	4	11	10	27	37	2	10.419	<.01
Traits of learners	16	94	-	-	1	6	17	2	22.089	<.001
No motivating activities	29	85	2	6	3	9	34	2	32.505	<.001

The data yielded significant results in the case of upper secondary teachers who were inclined to believe that the level of their learners' motivation was highly affected by the following issues: the number of teaching hours (i.e. English is mainly taught two hours per week) and the number of students allocated (ASR = 2.2); the fact that the teaching of English as a subject within the school curriculum has no obvious status (ASR = 2.3); the great learning load that learners are confronted with (ASR = 2.5); and the educational system (ASR = 9.3). As regards primary level teachers, they expressed the belief that their learners have not quite realized the importance of learning English at that particular level (ASR = 4.3), that they deal with mixed ability classes (ASR = 2.9) and that their learners show signs of enthusiasm as a result of being at the early stages of schooling (ASR = 4.7). However, teachers who instruct learners at the lower secondary level showed a tendency towards addressing the lack of immediate application for their own learners' level of motivation.

Regarding the relationship between teachers' age and the beliefs they held about what affects their learners' level of motivation, it becomes apparent that overall age does not shape teachers' viewpoints as the data rendered significant results only for the age group 41-50 which claimed that their learners had realized the importance for learning English (ASR = 2.3, n = 363, $\chi^2(2) = 10.032$, $p < .05$). In the case of years of teaching experience, the data suggests that teachers who have extensive teaching experience (i.e. 15+) attribute their learners' motivation to the following reasons: few hours of instruction (ASR = 4.0, n = 355, $\chi^2(4) = 18.990$, $p < .001$), no status in the educational system (ASR = 3.1, n = 355, $\chi^2(4) = 13.951$, $p < .05$), the learning load (ASR = 2.8, n = 355, $\chi^2(4) = 9.941$, $p < .05$), and the educational system itself (ASR = 4.7, n = 355, $\chi^2(4) = 23.498$, $p < .001$). The data has yielded some significant findings in relation to teachers with limited experience (0-1 years) as follows: learners' motivation is directly linked with their enthusiasm (ASR = 2.4, n = 355, $\chi^2(4) = 9.799$, $p < .05$) and the learners' inability to recognize the importance of learning English (ASR = 3.2, n = 355, $\chi^2(4) = 11.415$, $p < .05$). As regards those teachers who have some teaching experience (1-5 years), they believed that the root of the problem can be traced in the implementation of activities which are highly demotivating (ASR = 2.2, n = 355, $\chi^2(4) = 10.703$, $p < .05$).

4.2 Pursuit of language learning

When asked “*What is the importance of learning English in your view?*”, the teaching context appeared not to affect teachers' viewpoint (Table 3). Quite similar findings arise when contemplating the importance of years of teaching experience and the teachers' age. Thus, approximately 48 percent of the respondents believed that English is learned with a view of long term goals as their learners expect to master English as a vehicle for communicating with speakers of other nationalities, while English serving as a tool for a future career receives the second place.

Table 3. Teachers' first choice in relation to their viewpoint for the importance of learning English

	<i>Primary</i>		<i>Lower Secondary</i>		<i>Upper Secondary</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%^a</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
A tool for future career	51	35	53	36	43	29	147	36
A means of communication	90	45	51	26	57	29	198	48
No obvious reason	4	40	3	30	3	30	10	2
A means of becoming culturally informed	24	45	14	26	15	28	53	13
Other	2	50	2	50	-	-	4	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>171</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>123</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>118</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>412</i>	<i>100</i>

^a Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

$n = 412$, $\chi^2(8) = 7.579$, (ns)

Cross-tabulating the survey data revealed that teaching affiliation, years of teaching experience and teachers' age play no significant role in the shaping of their views concerning the importance of learning English. Teachers expressed the belief that the rationale behind learning English is closely connected with the development of communication skills to ensure interactive exchanges with people from various nationalities. Improving future career prospects appears to be another driving force for learning English as is manifested in teachers' responses.

4.3 Teachers' views of themselves

Teachers were also asked about how they perceive their role in the classroom as their own perception of their self-image is expected to influence their professional role and in turn affect the learners' level of motivation. Even though no significant differences arose among the three teaching contexts, some tendencies became apparent (Table 4). The majority of the respondents perceived themselves as facilitators of learning. Very few teachers saw themselves first as role models or managers of learning and then as adopting other more complimentary roles.

Table 4. Teachers' first choice in relation to the role adopted in the classroom

	<i>Primary</i>		<i>Lower Secondary</i>		<i>Upper Secondary</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%^a</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Role model	13	35	17	46	7	19	37	9
Facilitator of learning	134	43	87	28	94	30	315	77
Manager of learning	10	26	13	34	15	40	38	9
Mediator of NSs	6	46	2	15	5	38	13	3
Mediator of NNSs	1	100	-	-	-	-	1	0
Other	2	67	1	33	-	-	3	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>166</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>407</i>	<i>100</i>

^a Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

$n = 407$, $\chi^2(10) = 13.361$, ns

Cross-tabulation of the data has yielded no significant differences across the three teaching domains, reflecting that teachers have common beliefs regarding their role in everyday classroom activities. Also age and years of teaching experience did not affect teachers' belief systems regarding their intricate role in language learning.

5. Discussion

The survey data suggests that teachers believe that they have a facilitative role in the teaching and learning process. This particular role dictates certain practices that subsequently affect the recipients of knowledge and co-communicators. Teachers supported the view that learners' motivation is affected by the educational context; thus, primary learners are thought to be more positively predisposed toward learning English whereas older learners are claimed to gradually become demotivated as a result of their confrontation with the shortcomings of the educational system. As learners are at the early stages of schooling in the primary level, they are considered to be favourably inclined towards experimenting with the unknown and discovering new cultures, new ideas, and new people.

Within the Greek educational context, teachers acknowledge their facilitative role in the teaching domain while recognizing the steps taken towards instilling autonomy in their learners. At the same time, they do not view themselves as sole regulators and as managers of language learners' motivation levels.

The facilitative role that teachers admit to profess in their classrooms may be rooted in their perception of themselves as executing their duties by merely teaching the syllabus as is prescribed by the higher authority, namely the Ministry of Education. As they are not engaged in the curriculum design decision-making process, their role is limited to the instruction of English as another subject within the school curriculum. Their beliefs regarding their role in the teaching process are deeply connected with the status that the teachers hold in the teaching domain and are unrelated to the years of teaching experience, age or even professional qualifications.

The wider EFL teaching situation in Greek state schools shapes the teachers' views regarding the teaching of English. Teachers' professional identity is affected by the way this particular subject is perceived by learners, colleagues, parents and society in general. Learners' workload, limited hours of instruction, and mixed ability classes are some of the reasons that English does not receive proper attention within the school curriculum. Learners' motivation connected with the instruction of English in the initial

stages of schooling gradually diminishes and disappears. Primary level teachers value their teaching contribution and appreciate the recognition received. However, secondary level teachers do not share the feelings of their colleagues who teach younger learners; as their work does not receive the recognition they aspire to, they are subsequently led to having inferior feelings that may affect their performance. This vicious circle impinges on the instruction of English within the school curriculum and the benefits that could be drawn from the instruction of this subject in state schools where teachers show signs of flexibility and experimentation with teaching methodology due to their unrestrained teaching; after all, teachers are allowed to implement methods that fall within the widely accepted teaching methodology and their practices are not dictated by a higher authority as is the case in private language centers.

Teachers' views about the instrumental role for learning English concern the mastering of English as a means of communication in their learners' future communicative exchanges. Based on these prospective needs, while adopting their facilitative role teachers can and should exercise the control they have over exposing learners to real language use. In order to prepare learners for successful communicative events, teachers need to opt for stimulating materials that will equip learners with the knowledge and the necessary awareness for engaging in conversations with speakers of other languages, whilst employing English as a tool of communication.

6. Conclusion

Teachers' self-identity is influenced by the existing practices within the main educational framework and their beliefs about learner motivation are associated with the status of English within the school curriculum. Even though Greek teachers lack the statutory role that would have given access to a syllabus decision-making process, the image of themselves as facilitators still allows them to shape the learners' knowledge as they are granted the opportunity to make wise choices regarding the courseware adopted (i.e. in certain grades), the supplementary materials selected and the teaching methodology adopted. The belief, that learners' main reason for learning English is to communicate in English with speakers of other languages, empowers teachers to instigate the implementation of activities that emphasise authentic language use in NNS-NNS encounters.

What is needed for subsequent teaching practice to be amenable to change is teachers' involvement in in-service teacher training that would raise their awareness in adaptation and supplementation of the courseware available. Changing educational policies is a more laborious and time-consuming process. Teachers in search of more immediate results ought to concentrate on ameliorating their everyday classroom situation by creating their own self-image, while establishing themselves in the classroom context as custodians of the English language.

References

- Abu-Rabia, S. (2004). "Teachers' role, learners' gender differences, and FL anxiety among seventh-grade students studying English as a FL". *Educational Psychology* 24(5): 711-721.
- Almarza, G. G. (1996). "Student foreign language teacher's knowledge growth". In D. Freeman & J. C. Richards (eds), *Teacher learning in language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 50-78.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

- Beijaard, D., N. Verloop & J. D. Vermunt (2000). "Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective". *Teaching and Teacher Education* 16(7): 749-764.
- Ben-Peretz, M., N. Mendelsohn & F. W. Kron (2003). "How teachers in different educational contexts view their roles". *Teaching and Teacher Education* 19(2): 277-290.
- Clément, R. & R. C. Gardner (2001). "Second language mastery". In H. Giles & W. P. Robinson (eds), *The new handbook of language and social psychology*. London: Wiley, 489-504.
- Combs, A. W., R. A. Blume, A. J. Newman & H. L. Wass (1974). *The professional education of teachers: A humanistic approach to teacher preparation*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Creese, A. (2000). "The role of the language specialist in disciplinary teaching: in search of a subject?". *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 21(6): 451-470.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2000). "Motivation in action: towards a process-oriented conceptualisation of student motivation". *British Journal of Educational Psychology* 70: 519-538.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Teaching and researching motivation*. Harlow: Longman.
- Feinman-Nemser, S. & R. E. Flodden (1986). "The cultures of teaching". In M. Wittrock (ed.), *Handbook of research in teaching*. New York: Macmillan, 505-526.
- Gardner, R. C. (2001). "Integrative motivation and second language acquisition". In Z. Dörnyei & R. Schmidt (eds), *Motivation and second language acquisition*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1-19.
- Haberman, S. J. (1973). The analysis of classified tables. *Biometrics* 29: 205-220.
- Inbar, D. (1996). "The free educational prison: metaphors and images". *Educational Research* 28(1): 77-92.
- Kagan, D. M. & D. J. Tippins, (1991). "How teachers' classroom cases express their pedagogical beliefs". *Journal of Teacher Education* 42: 281-291.
- Kompf, M., W. R. Bond, D. Dworet & T. Boak (eds) (1996). *Changing research and practice: Teachers' professionalism, identities and knowledge*. London: Falmer Press.
- Lam, Z. (1973). *Contradictions of teaching rationale: introduction to pedagogy*. Merhaviva: Hapoalim Publications.
- Larson, J. R. & C. Christensen (1993). "Groups as problem-solving units: toward a new meaning of social cognition". *British Journal of Social Psychology* 32: 5-30.
- Lee, I. (1998). "Supporting greater autonomy in language learning". *ELT Journal* 52(4): 282-289.
- Lieberman, A. & L. Miller (1984). *Teachers, their world and their work*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Little, D. (1991). *Learner Autonomy 1: Definitions, Issues and Problems*. Dublin: Authentik.
- Murray, J. (2005). "Re-addressing the priorities: new teacher educators and induction into higher education". *European Journal of Teacher Education* 28(1): 67-85.
- Nias, J. (1989). "Teaching and the self". In M. Holly & C. McLoughlin (eds), *Perspectives on teachers' professional development*. London: Falmer Press, 155-172.
- Oxford, R. & J. Shearin (1994). "Language learning motivation: expanding the theoretical framework". *Modern Language Journal* 78(1): 12-28.
- Prillaman, A. R., D. J. Eaker & D. M. Kendrick (eds) (1994). *The tapestry of caring: education as nurturance*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Sercu, L. (2005). "Foreign language teachers and the implementation of intercultural education: a comparative investigation of the professional self-concepts and teaching practices of Belgian teachers of English, French and German". *European Journal of Teacher Education* 28(1): 87-105.
- Sparks, R. & R. P. Lipka (1992). "Characteristics of master teachers: personality factors, self concept, locus of control, and pupils' control ideology". *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education* 5: 303-311.
- Stoller, F. L. (2004). "Content-based instruction: perspectives on curriculum planning". *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 24: 261-283.
- Tamir, P. (1991). "Professional and personal knowledge of teachers and teacher educators". *Teaching & Teacher Education* 7: 263-268.
- Weber, M. (1968). *Economy and society*. New York: Bedminster Press.
- Williams, M. & R. Burden (1997). *Psychology for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix

We concentrated on the following questions:

Please tick ✓ your answers unless otherwise stated.

1. Age : 21-30 31-40 41-50 51+
2. Gender : Male Female
3. Years of teaching experience : 0-1 1-5 5-10 10-15 15+
4. Professional qualifications :
 - BA in English Language and Literature
 - MA in _____ Other _____
5. Current (main) teaching situation -- (your following answers will be associated with this post):
 - Primary level Lower Secondary level (Gymnasium) Upper Secondary level (Lyceum)
 - Other _____
6. Are you a native speaker of an English dialect?
 - Yes (which one? _____)
 - No (I am: _____)
7. What is the importance of learning English in your view? Rate the following in order of importance (1: most important):
 - a tool for the students' future career.
 - a means of communicating with people of other nationalities.
 - meaningless in itself – most of my students only want to receive a certificate.
 - a means of learning about and understanding other cultures.
 - other (please state): _____
8. What is the level of motivation/participation of your learners, in your view?
 - strong motivation average motivation no real motivation

Why do you think this is the case? Please state reason briefly:

9. How do you see your own role as a teacher in the classroom? Rate in order of importance (1: most important):
 - as a role model of the language.
 - as a facilitator of learning.
 - as a manager of the classroom situation.
 - as a mediator of information about the native speakers of English.
 - as a mediator of information about speakers of other languages (who also happen to speak English)
 - other (please state): _____