



# Teacher learning in Lesson Study: What interaction-level discourse analysis revealed about how teachers utilised imagination, tacit knowledge of teaching and fresh evidence of pupils learning, to develop practice knowledge and so enhance their pupils' learning

Peter Dudley\*

School of Education, University of Leicester, 162-166 Upper New Walk, Leicester LE1 7QA, UK

## HIGHLIGHTS

- LS focus on pupil learning (not teachers) fuels teacher disposition to learn.
- LS group talk in role taps tacit knowledge reserves to improve micro-teaching.
- Case pupils sharpen teacher understanding of proximal development needs.
- LS helps teachers overcome classroom complexity and see pupils afresh.
- Interaction-level discourse analysis of teacher talk makes teacher learning visible.

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received 17 October 2012

Received in revised form

7 March 2013

Accepted 5 April 2013

### Keywords:

Lesson Study  
Reflective practice  
Tacit knowledge  
Teacher learning  
Teacher discourse

## ABSTRACT

This research examines what discourse interactions reveal about teacher learning in Lesson Study (LS) contexts as teachers plan and discuss research lessons.

LS group members combined social and cultural capital resources and vivid data from research lessons. This created motivating conditions enabling collective access to imagined practice and joint development of micro practices. Improvements in subsequent teaching, and pupils' learning are reported.

Iterative, collaborative LS processes enabled teachers to access tacit knowledge resources and remove filters (developed to cope with classroom complexity), unmasking hidden characteristics of pupils. This both challenged and informed teacher beliefs, motivating joint development of enhanced practices.

© 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this research was to investigate how and what teachers learn in contexts of Lesson Study (LS). LS is a teacher learning process practised since the 1870s across Japan (Sato, 2008), the 1950s in China (Chen, 2011) and which since the 1990s has migrated across the Asia Pacific region (Lee, 2011), the US and Canada. It is now used in Europe, Africa and the Middle East (Dudley, 2012; Shimizu & Takuya, 2012).

LS has been reported extensively during the past 16 years in English language journals (C. Fernandez, 2002; C. Fernandez,

Cannon, & Chokshi, 2003; M.L. Fernandez, 2004; Lewis, 1998; Lewis, Perry, & Hurd, 2004; Lewis, Perry, & Murata, 2006; Takahashi, 2005; Watanabe, 2002; Yoshida, 2002). It can be a formal demonstration-based practice transfer approach, but also exists as classroom action enquiry developing new practice knowledge (Chichibu & Kihara, 2013; Lo & Marton, 2012; Matoba, 2011; Tamura, Nakadome, Kuramoto, & Soga, 2011). This study focuses on the latter. This growing literature remains immature. While LS is associated with high performance (McKinsey, 2007; Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber, 2010; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999; Perry, Lewis, Friedkin, & Baker, under review) and is currently enjoying global growth, its precise impact, while promising, remains unproven.

The international context for my research lies in outcomes of a national pilot project in England (2003–5) conducted by the author, which drew on evidence principally from Japan and the US,

\* Tel.: +44 7795827404.

E-mail address: [pjd26@le.ac.uk](mailto:pjd26@le.ac.uk).

exploring the use of LS in the UK (Dudley, 2004, 2011) and which prompted the research reported here. Elements of LS developed through this work are now informing international practice. These include two features reported here: ‘case pupils’, (Lee, 2011) and the use of teacher discourse as a window on teacher learning (Akita, 2012).

This research is the first to use interaction-level discourse analysis of teacher talk in LS to explore the patterns and modes of teacher learning that are revealed.

### 1.1. What is Lesson Study?

Lesson Study involves a group of teachers who want to improve aspects of the learning of their pupils, from underperforming groups to curriculum aspects that teachers feel could be taught more effectively. Having established this focus, the group researches what has worked elsewhere. (In Japan there is a wealth of teacher research arising from lesson studies upon which teachers draw). They then plan *in detail* a ‘research lesson’ (RL), which one of the group teaches while the others closely observe pupils’ learning and annotate their copies of their RL plan. After the RL they compare what they have observed of pupils’ learning with their predictions, refining their ideas and planning a further RL. After a cycle of three or so RLs the group clarifies what was learned that can inform their own practice and that of others. They share this with colleagues through short papers, presentations or by inviting them to observe the new approach in an ‘open house’ lesson.

Fig. 1 below sets out the LS process followed in this study developed by trialling and adapting models from international literature during my earlier pilot.

Teachers in my LS pilot reported experiencing profound, new learning experiences – commenting particularly on: (i) the safe context LS provides for teachers to experiment with teaching while also being highly accountable to improving pupils’ learning; (ii) the value and benefits teachers derived from learning collaboratively; and (iii) on how LS processes enabled them to see their pupils in new ways based on detailed insights developed through focused classroom observation. These themes recurred constantly.

I was interested to find out why this might be and the study I report here examined how and what teachers learn in Lesson Study

contexts and whether teaching practices were changed for the better through LS in meaningful and lasting ways that benefited pupil learning after their lesson studies were over.

## 2. Reviewed literature

In LS teachers seek to learn in collaborative groups from their classrooms. Classrooms have been found to provide powerful, practice-based contexts in which teachers learn to improve the ways they support enhanced pupil learning (Cordingley, Bell, Rundell, Evans, & Curtis, 2004; Elmore, 2004; Guskey, 2002; Kazemi & Hubbard, 2008; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). In developing this research, I found sociocultural learning theory offered me a helpful lens with which to examine the collaborative, classroom-based teacher learning that is promoted through participating in LS procedures.

Learning is increasingly acknowledged to be both social and situated (Sfard, 1998). Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1986) construes a learner as oriented to an object of learning, something which strongly motivates the learner, while learning is understood as a collaborative, social process in which new knowledge is socially constructed in shared contexts prior to any process of internalisation (Kleine Staarman & Mercer, 2010; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wells, 1999). Socioculturalists have thus focused on the role of *talk* in the learning process – learning’s tool of tools – deeming thought and language as inseparable, claiming that it is through social interaction, and especially social interaction *through talk*, that we are enabled to develop new knowledge. This reinforced my decision to study teachers’ talk.

Cultural historical activity theory attributes importance to the knowledge-sets brought to any social group of learners through the participants’ respective individual cultural historical experiences which help them to visualise the *object of their learning* (Edwards, 2004; Engestrom, 2011; Wood, 2013). For teachers engaged in LS the object of their learning is new knowledge about how to improve the learning of their pupils in specific classroom contexts. I therefore determined to study not only the nature of the collaborative discourse of teachers engaged in LS, but also the knowledge and cultural histories they drew upon in doing so. Teacher talk in LS contexts promised to reveal something about teacher learning and about how teachers utilise and develop knowledge.

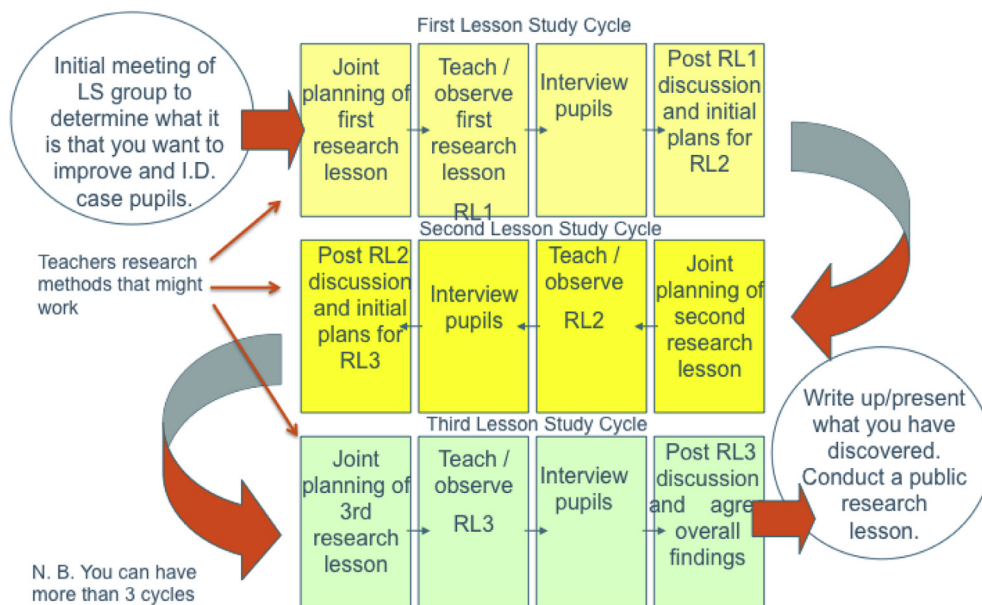


Fig. 1. The Lesson Study process.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/374097>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/374097>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)