

**A case study of ALT identity construction through narrative inquiry:  
sociocultural and stylistic perspectives**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of the present study is to clarify the process of identity construction in two Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) working for Japanese public senior high schools through textual analysis of informal interviews with a Japanese teacher of English. In order to examine how the native English teachers traced their professional development as an ALT in Japan, we will take two different approaches, qualitative and stylistic, to the same narrative data. First, focusing on the contents of their oral narratives, a sociocultural analysis investigates the process of their identity (re)construction in the social and cultural relationships among participants in the language classroom. In particular, the analysis clarifies how they carefully constructed relationships with students in their original lessons, going back and forth between the position of a teacher with professional expertise and that of a friendly presence. Second, a stylistic analysis is conducted to check and consolidate the findings of the qualitative analysis, examining the narrator's use of particular stylistic features, including sentence length and complexity, repetition, and the use of personal pronouns. Through the analysis and discussion, we consider to what extent the mixture of sociocultural and stylistic analyses of the oral narrative contributes to a deeper understanding of the narrators, and in particular of their teaching theory and teacher development as an ALT in the professional world.

Key words: Assistant Language Teacher (ALT); narrative inquiry; identity; sociocultural theory, narrative stylistics, retrospective narratives

**1. Introduction**

In recent years, the national reform of education has been widely discussed in Japan. For foreign language teaching, the principles of this educational reform were originally formulated in 2014 by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) as the 'English Education Reform Plan Corresponding to Globalization.' Under the principles of this plan, new Japanese Courses of Studies for primary, junior high, and senior high schools have already been announced, and schools, especially primary ones, have started a transition period in

order to adjust to the introduction of the reform in two years. Specifically, in 2017 MEXT designed a plan for a smooth transition period, called the ‘Transition Measures for Smooth Implementation of the new Course of Study in Foreign Language Teaching,’ and primary schools have started following this plan. As a result, English activity is scheduled once a week in the third and fourth grades, and English lessons are scheduled twice a week in the fifth and sixth grades. To implement this reform, more Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) will be needed in every primary school. With regard to junior high schools, the reform will keep the same lesson designs, with a focus on communicative activities in English, as proposed for primary schools. The plan is to connect the English education programs of primary and senior high schools through those of junior high schools. As a consequence, more ALTs will be needed, and they will assume more important roles at every level of education. Therefore, one crucial issue seems to be how ALTs and Japanese Teachers of English (JTEs) at junior and senior high schools, and homeroom teachers in primary schools, conduct their team teaching lessons. Moreover, how they position themselves in the language classroom seems to be an important matter for schools. Against the background of this recent Japanese educational reform, the aim of the present study is to clarify the process of identity construction among Assistant Language Teachers working for Japanese public schools through textual analysis of informal interviews. By so doing, we ultimately hope to help create an educational environment where ALTs can put their talents to full use.

To achieve these aims, three approaches are taken to the same narrative data. The first approach is a sociocultural one, which focuses on the process of identity construction as an ALT in Japan. The second is the teacher-researcher’s perspective. This means applying one of the presenters’ experience as an English teacher to the interpretation of the narrative data. Finally, from a stylistician’s perspective, the data are analysed to examine how the ALTs’ experiences are represented in narrative, reaching for an accurate and deep understanding.

## **2. Background of recent Japanese education**

Due to rapid globalization, Japan has been speeding up a massive educational reform at elementary schools, junior and senior high schools, and universities. In line with the English language educational reform, the new Course of Study defined a target English proficiency that students are supposed to acquire in the classroom: to develop a basis of knowledge and skills in English and to develop thinking, decision making, and expression in English classes, in order to solve problems independently utilizing what they have learned (MEXT, 2017). This means that Japanese students will be encouraged to acquire more skilful, idiomatic English than at present, and ALTs will play a more important role in offering opportunities for students to communicate in English. For example, team teaching will become a more effective teaching style and it will be crucial to examine what kinds of team-teaching lessons can and should be implemented

(Sakamoto, 2018).

While the present Course of Study focuses on four skills [reading, listening, speaking, and writing], the new Course of Study requires students to treat five areas of skill [reading, listening, speaking [presentation], speaking [interaction], and writing], referring to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). Considering the balance between the five areas of four skills in language teaching and learning, language activities such as speeches, presentations, and debates must be more vigorous at all levels of teaching and learning. Given this background, the role of ALTs will be much more significant.

### **3. Assistant Language Teachers**

Since a reform of the curriculum in Japan in 1987, many native English speakers have been employed as Assistant Language Teachers through the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, and they have been placed in public schools. The JET Programme allows Japanese teachers of English to conduct team-taught lessons with ALTs who have been placed in their schools. MEXT specifies the duties of ALTs in language lessons in the handbook for ALTs.

[ALTs] engage in team teaching with Japanese teachers of foreign language (JTL) in foreign language classes in Japanese schools. The goal of team teaching is to create a foreign language classroom in which the students, the JTLs, and the native speaker (ALT) engage in communicative activities. Team teaching provides opportunities for active interaction in a foreign language in the classroom, enhances the students' motivation towards learning a foreign language, and deepens the students' understanding of foreign cultures. ALTs work in cooperation with the JTLs to plan lessons, team teach, and evaluate the effectiveness of the lessons. (Handbook for ALTs, CLAIR, 2018, p. 82)

In recent years, many researchers have examined language teaching with ALTs in Japanese schools. About thirty years after the beginning of the JET Programme, innovative and multifaceted studies on ALTs in Japan can be classified according to their varied approaches.

Tajino and Tajino (2000) and Tajino et al. (2016) looked at team-teaching lessons as team learning in the language classroom. They studied the relationships among participants in language classrooms, and their collegiality. Naka (2006) focused on problems with and suggestions for institutional aspects. He saw ALT issues from the perspective of institutional reform. Shirahata and Ishiguro (2011) quantitatively researched the speech of ALTs in language lessons. They conducted their research into English activities at an elementary school. Sophia University (2015) carried out a quantitative condition survey of ALTs. They sent the questionnaire to 1807 ALTs at elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. Simon-Maeda (2011) articulated her own

experiences as an ALT in her autoethnographic study. She conceptualizes herself as a native English speaker, as a learner of the Japanese language, and as a member of the community in Japan. Her study is unique, and we can see that there have been very few studies of ALTs' identities.

In these studies, ALTs have been examined from a variety of viewpoints, such as system and policy, actual conditions, influence on participants, lesson studies of classes team-taught by ALTs and Language teachers, and the relationships among participants in language classrooms. This may reflect the fact that ALTs have many aspects both as teaching staff and as a system. On the other hand, few studies have examined ALTs closely as people and investigated their inner aspects. When the research purpose is to seek to identify ALTs' duties at school or problems to be solved, questionnaires and quantitative frameworks may be regarded as most appropriate, as they are highly efficient approaches. However, those quantitative studies seem to neglect ALTs' inner aspects, which are often quite complicated. It is time to understand them at a deeper level, and for this purpose, a qualitative study collecting real voices from ALTs, like the current study, is needed.

Given this background, the following question arises: How do ALTs position themselves in the classroom and develop their identities? How do ALTs transform their identities?

#### **4. Language teacher identity**

##### **4.1 Language teacher narratives**

The 'narrative approach' is one of the keys to the current study. Johnson and Golombek (2002:7) explained the role of teachers' narratives as a way to enable 'teachers not only to make sense of their professional worlds but also to make significant and worthwhile change within themselves and in their teaching practices.' They grasped teachers' narratives as a powerful tool for professional development through their sense-making processes in their teaching lives. Sense-making processes are a key to why you are in the classroom, how you behave there, what you are doing, and who you are among the participants there. Tracing their experiences and retelling their teaching life through narratives are powerful tools for inquiring into these matters with teachers. Understanding their teaching practices as holistic human activities enables teachers to view themselves and their own teaching in relation to the participants in the classroom. Through narrating their experiences, teachers see the events and phenomena of teaching in a bird's eye view or from multiple viewpoints. In narrating their teaching, people choose events in order to help make sense of unconnected events, and shape or reconstruct them in their lives through time (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Golombek and Johnson (2004: 311) proposed that the 'mediational space' of teacher narratives allows the teacher to step back to see their own teaching, question their own practice, and listen to their own voice in their externalized understanding.

## **4.2 Teacher identity**

In this study, the concept of ‘teacher identity’ is another key in order to understand the analysis of narrative data. Analysing teacher identity from sociocultural and sociopolitical perspectives, with reference to her own work, Norton (1997) writes ‘I use the term identity to refer to how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future.’ (p. 410). She attempts to grasp teacher identity, including individual potential, and analyses it in the light of the process of construction and reconstruction of its relationships with the world. In this study, the definition of identity relies on the concepts of Norton (1997). She captured ‘identity’ in the relationships around someone, emphasizing that it is constructed across time and space, and sees in it possibilities for the future. In language classrooms at schools, participants, students, teachers, and ALTs spend their learning and teaching life within the social and cultural relationships among them every day.

## **4.3 Teacher awareness: Kizuki**

In recent years, studies using classroom-based approaches have recognized several components in teachers’ professional growth. In particular, Freeman’s teacher development model (1998) provided the basic understanding of the elements which compose teacher development, including awareness. He presented a model of teacher development called the KASA [Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, and Awareness] model. In the KASA model, he defined ‘awareness’ in the classroom as ‘a superordinate constituent, [which] play[s] a fundamental role in how the teacher makes use of the other three constituents [attitude, skills, and knowledge]’ (p.35). The concept of ‘awareness’ in the classroom generates questions about teachers’ growth in language teaching that drive the investigation of the process of ALTs working out their own professional development in the present study. ‘Awareness’ has an important role in bringing out the cues for teacher development in the language classroom.

In the current study, “ALTs’ awareness of their teaching” is a key point in understanding their identity transformations. With regard to the concept of teachers’ awareness, Sakamoto (2011) developed the concept of “teachers’ awareness” using the Japanese word ‘kizuki.’ She explained ‘kizuki’ as a notion which is unique to Japanese culture, and implies a sudden feeling of inner understanding of a phenomenon. It can be roughly translated as ‘becoming aware of’, ‘noticing’ or ‘realizing,’ and Sakamoto (2011) described the notion of awareness as below.

The term kizuki has a holistic and developmental notion in its nature. Kizuki occurs either suddenly or continuously, between students, teachers, mediating tools, and the elements constructing the classroom. We experience them in our classroom every day and every lesson.

Since we are immersed in our own classroom so much we often take classroom phenomena for granted. However, once a teacher gains *kizuki* it reorients their perspectives and helps them come to realize and draw the landscape of the classroom with deeper understandings, and eventually allows them to grow in their professional world. (Sakamoto, 2011 p.188)

She explained three layers of awareness or *kizuki*: cognitive, emotional, and collegial awareness. Cognitive awareness mainly focuses on teaching and learning in the classroom, and emotional awareness emerges from affective dimensions, such as joy, surprise, sadness, anger, disappointment, or the feeling of fulfilment in the classroom. Collegial awareness often occurs through teachers collectively coming to see the development of the students in the classroom. Teacher awarenesses become a trigger to create three loops of awareness, three different aspects of teacher development.

#### 4.4 Teacher-researcher

At this point, the standpoint of one of the authors, Sakamoto, in this research needs to be made clear. Sakamoto worked as an English teacher in public junior high schools for a long time and had team-teaching lessons with more than 25 ALTs. Although she has moved to teaching at university, the classrooms at primary and secondary schools are so familiar to her that she often fuses two different standpoints, teacher and researcher. The aspect of teacher sometimes comes more to the front than that of researcher, and sometimes it is the other way around. She understands this narrative data from a teacher-researcher's perspective as well, which is as if she is working at the hyphen between a teacher and a researcher (figure 1).

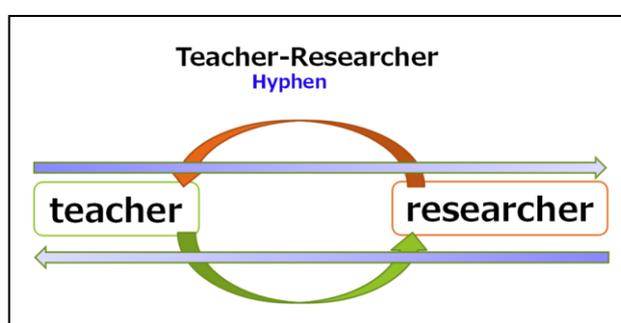


Figure 1. Teacher-researcher.

#### 5. Data analysis

This study is a part of the research project 'A Study on the narratives of Assistant Language Teachers and the transformation in their identities: Sociocultural and linguistic perspectives.' In order to complete the project, interviews with ALTs who are working at Japanese public schools

were conducted. Four ALTs were interviewed, each of whom Sakamoto interviewed again sometime after the first interview. Among the four ALTs, the current study mainly focuses on a particular ALT, Andrew, who came from New Zealand through the JET Programme. He had no previous experience of language teaching and spoke Japanese a little because he studied Japanese by himself before coming to Japan. He was teaching English in two high schools at the same time: a public technical high school and a public high school. In addition, he had lots of friends among ALTs and Japanese teachers of English. Additionally, we introduce the analysis of the interview with another ALT, May. She was a Canadian female ALT through the JET Programme and had teaching experience as a volunteer ALT in Thailand for three months before coming to Japan.

The qualitative socio-cultural analysis in this study is largely based on the Grounded Theory Approach (GTA) developed by Strauss and Corbin (1998), which was modified as appropriate to the current study. First, the interview data were transcribed into texts. The transcribed interviews were segmented into individual sentences or idea units for coding. Segments are sets of meanings or concepts in the interview. In each of the interviews, numbers were assigned to the segments in temporal order so that reference could easily be made to each segment. Then each segment was decontextualized and coded. The data coding attempts to identify what the ALTs expressed and then to organize the content into initial thematic categories. These categories were then analysed in order to find the relationships among them. Next, the coded segments were grouped into the newly constructed conceptual categories. The relationships among the categories are shown in concept mappings which visualize the ALTs' teaching theories and their own professional development. Each of the concept mappings also expresses each ALT's own teaching theories, including their ideas, thoughts, feelings, and changes in thinking about teaching. Next, the same narrative data were stylistically analysed to check and consolidate the findings of the sociocultural analysis, examining the ALTs' use of particular stylistic features. In addition to the interview data, the following data were used in the analysis when necessary: videotaped lessons, field notes, interviews with Japanese teachers of English who had team teaching lessons with an ALT, reflections written by students who participated in the ALT's lessons, students' written questionnaires, and the researchers' reflection upon the interviews.

## **6. ALTs' narratives**

### **6.1 Andrew's narratives**

Andrew came from New Zealand through the JET Programme and was working at two public high schools at the same time when Sakamoto conducted both interviews. He went to one or other of these schools depending on the day of the week, and as each school had its own distinctive teaching purpose, he designed appropriate language activities for each school and had team teaching lessons with many different Japanese teachers of English in one week.

### 6.1.1 Andrew's first interview

The concepts Andrew expressed in his first interview can be summarized and visualized in the following map (Figure 2).

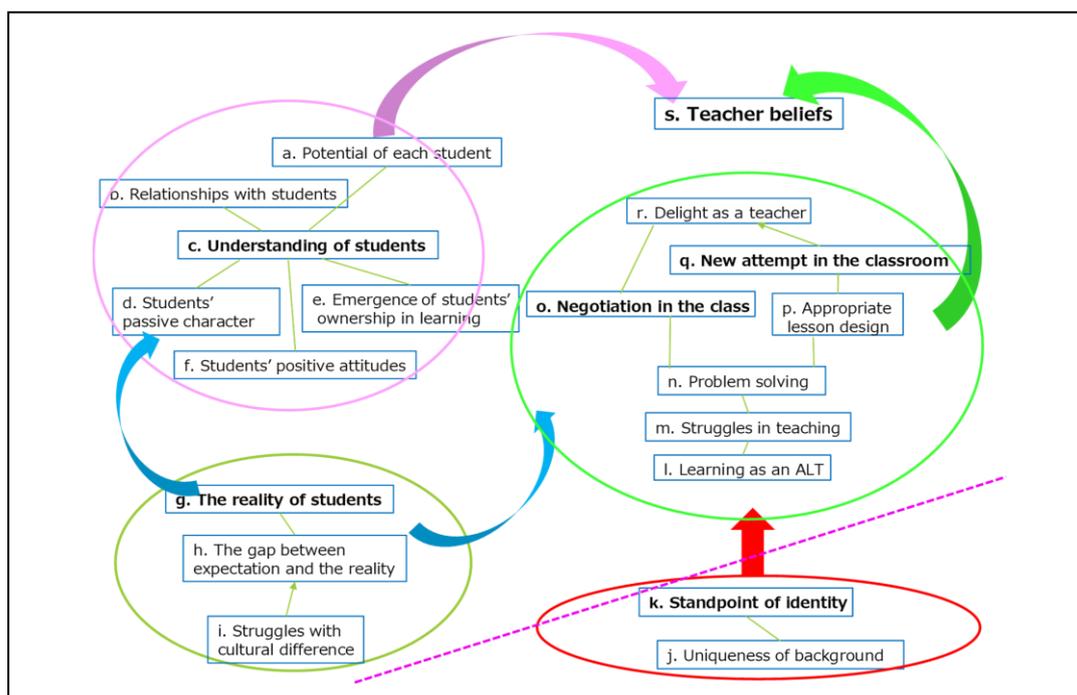


Figure 2. Map of relationships from the 1st interview.

At the beginning of the first interview, he observed that (g) the gap between his expectations about Japanese students and the reality of those students, and (i) cultural differences and the different characteristics of each school caused confusion for him in the classroom. By focusing on the inner aspects of each student, he gradually came to (c) understand each of his students. At the same time, he started to think of becoming a skilful teacher who could equip students with the ability to use English without hesitation in the classroom, and began to (o) negotiate his teaching with the reality of the students, and kept making (q) new attempts at language activities in his lessons. The sight of students struggling with English made him think of himself studying Japanese. In such moments, he reflected on his own position in the classroom, wondering how to (s) reconstruct his teacher beliefs. When he started teaching, it was a big surprise to him that students could not understand his spoken English in the way he had expected before he came to Japan. He described his frustration in the classroom as follows.

- 1 I was surprised a little bit because once I dropped the level of what I was expecting to teach them and I actually started teaching, a lot of them, a lot of the students still

struggled to understand some of my basic sentences, conversations and explanations. And in the beginning, that started to frustrate me. (Data 19)

He also talked about the shyness of his students.

- 2 They are very shy. That was what I..., it was also another surprise for me. I didn't expect the students to be so shy. (Data 144)

As he started teaching day to day, he noticed that the English level of his students was different from the image that he had had before coming to Japan. In the first interview, he reflected on those days, when he spent his teaching life perpetually puzzled. The more he taught to his students, the more struggles he noticed in their English study. He also experienced his own struggles with how he should design language lessons to develop the English ability of the students.

### 6.1.2 Andrew's second interview

In the second interview, as in the first, Andrew's narrative covered his stress or struggles in his teaching. Starting from those emotions, he searched for deeper understandings of the students and worked on new activities adapted to his students' language learning. His perspective on teaching also moved on to his own teacher learning. The map of concept relationships from his second interview is shown in Figure 3.

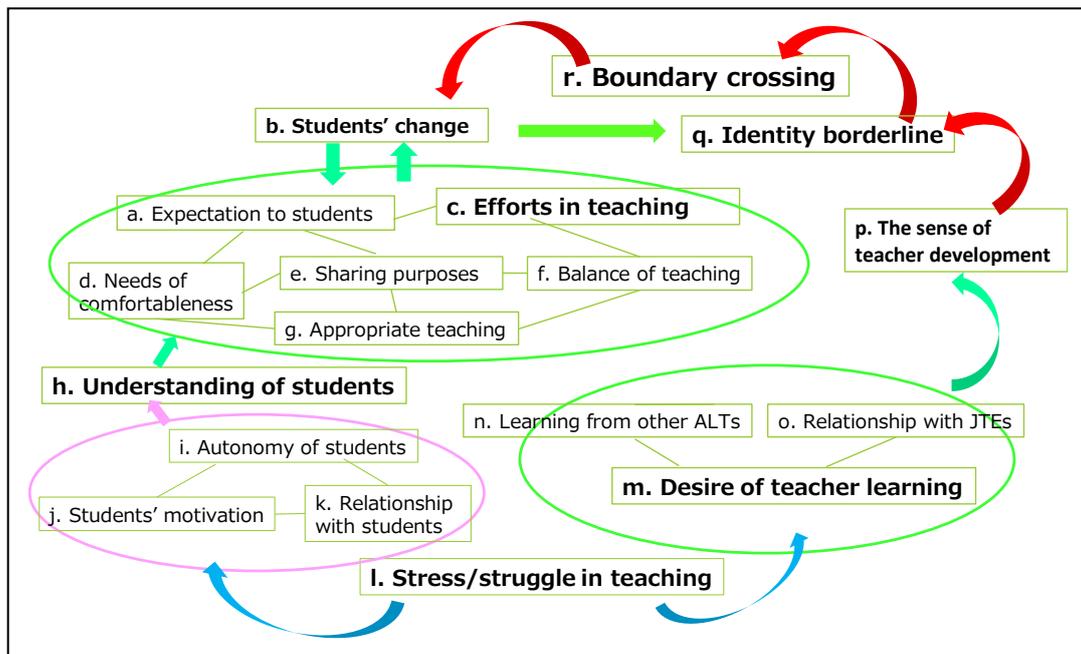


Figure 3. Map of relationships from the 2nd interview.

Comparing these concepts to the map of the first interview, they are seen to include the new concept of (r) boundary crossing (Figure 3). This is related to Andrew's (q) understanding of identity borderlines. Here 'borderline' refers to the line separating two of his standpoints in the classroom: a teacher side and a friendly side for students. These are words that he himself used in the second interview. His (q) understanding of identity borderlines emerged from aspects that supported his professional teacher development, such as (m) desire for teacher learning, (n) learning from others, and (p) the sense of teacher development. At the same time, he notes (b) students' change, which is a phenomenon supported by his teaching efforts in the classroom. Starting from (l) stress/struggles in teaching, while continuing his efforts based on his understanding of his own classroom, he gradually came to understand his identity borderline and identified a key element in the achievement of identity reconstruction: (r) boundary crossing. Here, we employ the word 'boundary' as a distinct factor from 'borderline.' 'Boundary' in this study is the imagined line that marks and divides the classroom community and him. The second interview illuminates how he crossed this boundary in his teaching life in Japan.

After qualitative analysis of his narrative data, the three loops of awareness, cognitive, collegial, and emotional, emerged in the map of relationships from his second interview (Figure 4).

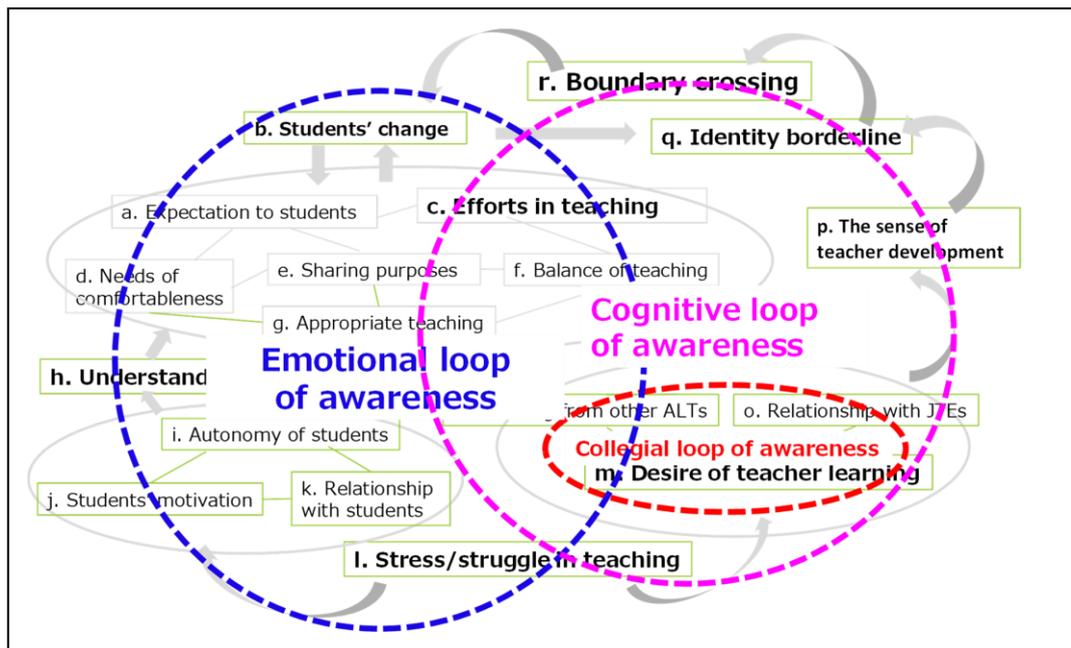


Figure 4. The three loops of three layered awareness.

Among his three-layered loops of teacher awarenesses, this paper will focus on his cognitive awareness, which focuses on concepts he gained from experiences in the classroom.

When Sakamoto conducted this interview, Andrew was teaching at two different schools, and in the process of building the relationships with his students, he noticed the borderline which separated his standpoints as ‘a professional teacher’ and ‘a friendly person’ to his students as shown in data 298.

- 3 I would see myself as a teacher sort of figure. I wouldn't say full teacher, but I would say like nearly in that same area. Whereas with my other school, I would see myself nowhere near a teacher, I see myself in the borderline between the teaching side and they, like trying to be friendly. (Data 298)

In data 298, his word, ‘the borderline’, seems to be an equivocal expression, but it is one of the key concepts that helps him understand his identity as an ALT in the classroom. Throughout the second interview, Andrew uses several words which express his standpoint among participants in the classroom. Regarding his cognitive awareness in the second interview, it is instructive to examine why he referred to himself in nine different ways in his relationships with his students as shown in Table 1.

Table 1  
*A professional standpoint and a personal standpoint*

Teacher side	Friendly side
teaching side	not full teacher
near a teacher	as a friend
professional side of me	a friend side
a teacher	trying to be friendly
the teaching side	

Considering the kind of situations in which he meets students, it seems that he changes his identity to match each environment. In data 298, he used the word ‘borderline’, explaining his position as being between two different standpoints: a teacher and a friend. He identified himself on both the teacher side and friendly side for his students. Naming himself helped him to understand his identity: in other words, who he is, what he is like, and whom he faces. This cognitive awareness led him to construct relationships with his students through language teaching and learning.

If we look at data 298 from a stylistic point of view, the use of the first-person singular pronoun seems conspicuous. For example, the expression ‘I see myself’ suggests that no one else engages in his identity construction. Therefore, this quote seems to show that he has been

struggling alone in a new, strange environment. These struggles and difficulties in his teaching can be seen in data 108.

- 4 'I'm never going to use English. So I'm not going to participate. This is a – this is a free class, so I'm going to just sleep.' Because they don't see me as a proper teacher. I have no real authority as a proper teacher or like proper teachers do, that they can like issue out disciplinary actions. For me it's just I am there to try and like encourage them to do learning by themselves. (Data 108)

In data 108, in addition to the repeated use of 'I', the use of direct speech is significant from the viewpoint of stylistics. It is not certain whether the quoted sentences are his student's actual speech or this ALT's imaginary words. However, the fact that he represents his students' words in direct speech shows that this negative experience of not being regarded as a proper teacher is ingrained in his mind.

On the other hand, from the sociocultural perspective, the quote in data 108 describes Andrew's experience of (l) stress and struggles over his relationships with his students because he felt that they didn't see him as a proper teacher, but in the context of his teaching, in seeking for a way to overcome these difficulties, this ALT designed (c) new efforts in teaching, conducting English drama, as (g) appropriate teaching for his students. In his drama lessons with his students, through his awareness or *kizuki* of the borderline between his standpoints, he gradually came to experience (r) boundary crossing over this borderline in the classroom. Naming two of his different standpoints to recognize his identities enables him to see the transformation of his students as shown in Figure 4.

- 5 From a professional standpoint, not the best things, but from a personal standpoint, it [being like their brother] makes my life in Japan more, much more memorable, because now I know that the students there are willing to talk to me, they are willing to do something, they are willing to share their ideas and just try and joke with me, which I will probably never get that kind of interaction like in, outside of Japan, outside of the school anyway. (Data 300)

In fact, through boundary crossing between two standpoints in the classroom, he got to know how to communicate with his students, and in data 300 he describes the change in his students' attitude. In addition, the quote 'it makes my life in Japan more, much more memorable' expresses the transformation of his relationships with students in the classroom. Through cognitive awareness, boundary crossing led him to understand his standpoint and identity as an

ALT in the classroom, and it made his teaching life much richer. From a stylistic point of view, his narrative in data 300 is highly evaluative. For example, the sentence is long and complicated, and it seems he will never stop speaking. Also, he uses several repetitions, of both words and syntax, and uses emphasizees too. This linguistic evidence shows how excited he is.

The cognitive loop of awareness led him to construct or reconstruct his identity as an ALT in the classroom, and he started to move forward in his own (p) teacher development as a language teacher. The analysis of the second interview allows us to tease out cognitive, collegial, and emotional loops of awareness in his teaching theory and how they supported the transformation of his identity in the classroom in the process of professional development.

## 6.2 May's narrative

Next we would like to briefly examine the narrative of another ALT, May, because it provides us with significant spoken narrative data from a stylistic point of view. As with Andrew, Sakamoto interviewed May twice, first just after her arrival in Japan and then one year later. These interviews show how much she has developed as a teacher. Her narrative provides us with very valuable data from both the sociocultural and stylistic points of view as shown in data 84, 86, and 87 from the first interview.

- 6 Actually, at first I only did it when I was asked to, so if you asked me to do listening, then I would just make one. (Data 84)
- 7 ...but then you said 'Oh, if you can use grammar and vocab from their learning.... from their recent learning, that's best.' And it clicked and I realized 'Oh, I should have something specifically for that grammar.' (Data 86)
- 8 So this is the kind of thing they want us to do, teach culture in class, but I don't wanna just... but I wanna make it relevant to the language, so this is a good chance to merge [in] something personal. Like this is why I'm here. (Data 87) (Emphasis provided by authors.)

From the sociocultural viewpoint, the word 'clicked' is showing the key concept of her cognitive awareness in her teaching. In conversation with a JTE, that JTE seemed to turn on the switch of her awareness, all of a sudden. May's awareness drove her to go on the next stage of her teacher development. At the same time, stylistically, her use of the first-person pronoun is conspicuous. As in Andrew's interview, in the first interview she consistently uses 'I' to refer to herself. However, in her second interview, her usage of the first person changed, as shown in data 25 and 36.

- 9 They also need a conversation partner to listen to them. If **we teachers** are with them, **we** can help them produce original sentences and correct any big mistakes. (Data 25)
- 10 I think that those students are able to find their own ways to study English outside of the classroom. They still come to **us teachers** with questions, but they discover a lot by themselves, either in books or the internet. (Data 36) (Emphasis provided by authors.)

In the second interview, she often uses ‘we’ or ‘us.’ This is stylistic evidence that she has developed her collegiality. This means she has identified herself not only as an ALT but also as a member of the teaching staff as a whole. In literature, different use of personal pronouns often provides a very important clue to the theme of the works, as in Thomas Hardy’s poem ‘Oxen’ or Saul Bellow’s novel *Herzog* (See Carter & Long (1997) and Teranishi (2008)). The analysis of ALTs’ narratives suggest that the personal pronoun is a significant stylistic device in non-literary narratives as well. Here the connection between literary and non-literary texts becomes much stronger. This time, in the case of May, the collegial loop of awareness functioned as one of the three important aspects of her professional development, and this was visible both socioculturally and stylistically.

## 7. Conclusion

The current study described the landscape of how ALTs position themselves in the classroom and work out their identities in their teacher development. Their narratives are powerful tools for inquiring into their inner aspects and investigating their teaching theory. As topics for further study, we would like to investigate four points:

1. How collaborative teacher learning among ALTs and JTEs can be developed.
2. What the relationships between an interviewee and an interviewer are.
3. What kind of language classroom study can be done as a Teacher-Researcher.
4. How stylistics can contribute to deep and accurate understanding of an ALT’s state of mind and identity construction.

To conclude, this thesis traced the identity transformations of ALTs in public junior and senior high schools in the Japanese context. Based on the findings of the current study, one possible further study would be to inquire into the situation of ALTs in the context of other countries to assess how parochial or universal the cases of ALTs in Japan are.

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