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**Offshore Teachers' Work: Preparing International Students For  
Australian Based Studies**

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*Abstract: The rapidly changing demands made of teachers and the work that they do means that it is becoming important to better understand the work of teachers. This paper explores how one group of teachers talk about the work that they prepare international students to study in Australia. Drawing upon interview accounts, these teachers talk about the gap that has to be bridged. In doing so, the teachers suggest a range of strategies that they implement. Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing and visible and invisible pedagogy are used alongside Bourdieu and Passeron's notion of primary and secondary pedagogic work to theorise these teachers' understanding of their cross-cultural work.*

**An Era of Changing Demands for Australian Teachers**

An investigation into the phenomenon of teachers' work could not have been more timely given that the last decade has seen dramatic shifts within the working lives of Australian teachers. Australian Universities, TAFEs and private training providers are becoming increasingly involved in preparing international students for vocational and University studies with Australian providers. It is also likely that there will be considerable opportunities for Australian providers to expand their work in this area given the increase in the population of people seeking an education (Castells, 1996; Helsby, 1999). To date, groups of people within the geographical region known as Asia have been the major clients accessing the various forms of world-wide exported education. In particular, there has been a significant demand for tertiary education, vocational training and studies in English from Indonesia. Since the 1994 mandate by the Indonesian government that extended the formal years of schooling to Year Nine, there has been an unprecedented demand for higher education that Indonesian providers have not been able to handle alone (Peacock, 1996; Jolley, 1997). Provided the sustained economic growth of the middle class returns in the wake of the recent economic crisis (see Forrester, 1999), it is possible that international providers will be able to secure a share of this market.

Thus teachers who are involved in these programs with international students have had to consider ways that they will undertake their work. This paper sets out to examine some of the teaching strategies one group of teachers utilise. In particular, this paper investigates the talk of teachers employed by Australian educational providers who provide instruction to Indonesian adult students in the offshore context of Indonesia. These Indonesian adult students are preparing to take up vocational or University studies with Australian educational providers in the Australian context in the near future. According to one teacher manager who was interviewed for this study, onshore institutions welcome international students, but their programs and pedagogies are not geared to these students. This study thus employs semi-

structured interviews to generate teachers' talk about their work in an attempt to make visible their understandings of the work that they do. In general terms, this paper has three aims:

- To document and theorise how teachers talk about the characteristics of their Indonesian students;
- To document and theorise what the teachers say about the characteristics international students need to be successful in their studies in Australia; and
- To document and theorise the strategies that the teachers use as they attempt to meet the demands of their work.

### **Case Study: Preparing Indonesian Students For Australian Based Study**

This paper reports on interview data from a group of teachers who provide instruction to Indonesian adults completing studies at one of five Australian owned colleges in the city of Tirojaya, on the island of Java, Indonesia. These colleges are commercial enterprises that prepare students for the IELTS or a specialist study area before the students undertake short term vocational training or longer term Australian based University studies. Specialist areas of study include vocational training such as ELICOS (English through English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students) or hospitality courses and University studies in business, science, information technology, education studies, nursing and engineering. All courses are delivered in English and none of the programs are required to implement an Indonesian National curriculum. Ten teachers and eight teacher managers formed the cohort interviewed for this part of the study. Participants were randomly selected according to their availability for interviews during the researchers' limited time in this location. This random selection provided a range of ages, experiences and seniority levels. Single participants were interviewed in all cases, except in one case where two teachers attended the same interview. All seventeen interviews were conducted by members of the initial ARC research team.

All ten teachers had internationally recognised teaching qualifications and had between three and ten years teaching experience. The teachers all identified with different training backgrounds, travel and international employment opportunities. Of the ten teachers interviewed, five were Australian, three were from the United Kingdom, one was from the United States and one was an Indonesian National who had completed his teaching qualifications in Australia. On average, the teachers taught up to eighteen students at a time in a tutorial format.

Of the eight teacher managers interviewed, five identified as Australian citizens. All five held formal University or teaching qualifications from Australia, were native English speakers and had spent considerable periods of time working abroad. The sixth manager defined herself as an 'Indor', that is, a person of half Indonesian and half Australian descent and classified herself as 'bi-cultural'. The seventh manager, a United Kingdom citizen, was also a native speaker of English. The eighth manager, an Indonesian National, obtained formal teaching qualifications during a residency in Australia and considered himself to have native like English proficiency. In the following section discussion focuses on aspects of method and methodology.

### **Generating the Teachers' Understandings of Their Teaching Practices**

The deep, tacitly implicit nature of teachers' work means that it is difficult for outsiders to 'see', 'articulate' or 'reveal' teachers' understandings (see Holliday, 1994; Melia, 1997). Therefore this study utilises semi-structured interviews to generate teachers' talk about their work. Researchers spent time before each interview establishing rapport with the teachers, explaining the purpose of the study, assuring confidentiality of responses, indicating the

likely length of the interview and ensuring that authority to participate had been signed. The interviews travelled in what Frankenberg (1993:30) describes as the 'traditional' direction where researchers ask questions and the teachers respond. While this strategy enables complex issues to be explored in detail (Miller & Glassner, 1997), this also means that the interview schedule was not followed rigidly.

This also means that these accounts have not been generated solely by the teachers. Rather they are formed out of a relationship with one of the researchers. This is why Kvale (1996, p. 2) aptly describes this process as an 'interview', meaning that accounts are actively and communicatively assembled by both the researcher and the teacher/s. This means that both participants bring possible biases, predispositions, attitudes and physical characteristics that have the potential to colour the accounts produced (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997). While this study acknowledges that semi-structured interviews may add to the depth and meaning of the teachers' talk, this same process may also partly 'disturb' the teachers' understandings.

Another issue associated with semi-structured interviews relates to the power of the teacher/s to decide on the frame of reference and the amount of detail provided. The teachers have to consider how much of the private they want to make public and for what purposes they provide talk. For example, teachers may also render accounts they think the researchers want to hear, or alternatively, they can vet their accounts if they are concerned about making private practices of teaching public. There is also the chance that teachers could 'perform' accounts, or tell 'cover stories' (Olson & Craig, 2001, p. 669) with the expectation that the research can become a messenger of their voices for their own agendas.

These implications are raised because they need to be acknowledged. What is clear is that far more is going on than researchers simply accessing teachers' talk. What is important is that the teachers' talk is understood as being a subjective creation rather than an objective recount.

Following the interview collection period, all interviews were transcribed. It was during the transcription stage that teachers', institution and place names were replaced with pseudonyms and standard transcription conventions were used (see, for example, Silverman, 1985, 1993). The transcribed interviews were then fractured into episodes. Episodes began with a researcher's question and ended when the teacher finished answering the question regardless of how many turns of talk had occurred. The episodes of data were then labelled with a title that reflected the content of the episode. For example, two titles were 'Rote Learners But They Change' and 'Seniority is Age Based But Bridges the Divide with Group Work'.

In the next phase common topics were collated to form the descriptive categories that reflected the purpose of the research (Mostyn, 1985). In the case of this paper, the collations centred on teachers' talk about the characteristics of Indonesian students, characteristics of students studying with Australian providers, and strategies employed to bridge this divide. This stage of the coding uncovered commonalities and differences within and between the teachers' accounts.

This study also acknowledges to simply recount the teachers' talk would not provide a richer insight into what the teachers are saying about the nature of their work or their implicit understandings of pedagogies for international students. So, a theoretical structure that is sensitive enough to make visible the obvious and not-so-obvious markers of authority, power, control and meaning that underlie the teachers' accounts of their work will be used. Sociological theories, as developed by Basil Bernstein (1977, 1990, 2000) and Pierre

Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1996), provide the rules for reading the data. The key theories are Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing and visible and invisible pedagogy and Bourdieu and Passeron's notion of primary and secondary pedagogic work. In the following section illustrative analyses are presented.

### **Teachers' Talk: Characteristics of Indonesian Students**

The teachers who were interviewed for this part of the study provided instruction to Indonesian adult students who are preparing to take up study opportunities with Australian providers. As these Australian based institutions do not explicitly cater for international students (see Exley, 2001), the teachers had to assist their Indonesian students in bridging this divide. So, in an attempt to better understand the work of the case study teachers, interview questions centred on characteristics of the Indonesian students and the characteristics needed for success within Australian education. Out of the ten teachers and the eight managers interviewed for this part of the study, fifteen participants provided talk about these issues.

According to the eight participants who responded to researchers' questions about the characteristics of the Indonesian student, all understood that the Indonesian students' learning characteristics were a response to what was rewarded within Indonesian education. In other words, these eight teachers understood that students' learning characteristics were institutionally constructed. Nell's extract, below, was typical of the accounts provided.

#### *Extract One:*

An experienced offshore teacher from Australia, Nell Anderson, has been teaching in Indonesia for eight years. Her students are preparing to take up mathematics, science and education studies in Australia. In her one hour interview she provided the following comments:

**Researcher:** *Teachers in Australia tend to say that Asian students are rote students.*

**Nell:** *Yeah. Well I think their education system is designed that way. I mean you do have to write papers in Indonesian Universities here, as I said the emphasis is on quoting bits from here and there to show that you've read the books, that sort of thing and length tends to be highly favoured over quality. If you write a long paper it looks like it's good, just my experience of the education system here is that there's a lot of things to be learned off by heart. That's what children are taught to do and that's what the rewards are for.*

According to Nell's account the Indonesian system socialises students to read lots of books, quote and learn off by heart. According to this account and the accounts provided by all eight teachers, reproducing passages from books is one legitimate marker of academic success. Students who conform to this system are duly rewarded. What was also salient within the accounts of these teachers was their belief that Indonesians could be critical thinkers when the situation either demanded it or legitimised it. Extract Two, also from Nell, was typical of the teachers' talk on this theme.

#### *Extract Two:*

In continuing the interview and in moving into a description of her work as a teacher, Nell provides the following lengthy but significant episode of data:

**Nell:** *Um, well we're just moving onto critical review at the moment, that's what they're working on and something I do notice is that everyone understands what the government*

*point of view is and that sometimes you don't have to take your own point of view. It's quite appropriate to just present what the government view is and then end your paper by saying therefore the government should do such and such or should consider such and such, but just presenting the government point of view as being right, rather than thinking about what could it be or what are the other alternatives or how about if it were something different. Um, that's been coming up a little bit in papers that I've been reading just recently, just an acceptance of the government point of view. People say that Indonesian students are not very good at critical thinking. I'm not sure that that's the case. I think they don't voice it openly, particularly not in a formal class, but I think they do, they're very critical, but they choose who they're going to be critical with, if they're close friends, things like that. I mean just taking taxis in Tirojaya, the taxi drivers are the most critical people of the government and it's obvious what they talk about when they stop for dinner or coffee. I'm sure that these students are exactly the same. They criticise us and they criticise government policy and things like that, but they don't do it openly and certainly not in writing with their name and class and AUS-Aid scholarship written on the top and I think they have to develop a sense of security that things are safe here. That's one of the first things that they have to learn, that it is safe to make these comments, and presumably they might feel it's safer to say them in English because there's a little bit of distancing from doing it in your own language.*

**Researcher:** *Mmm. So do you get much in the way of criticism as this is worked through, or does it stay pretty much a fairly wary situation?*

**Nell:** *Sometimes, but I think the wariness stays there. I mean I think it does disappear to a certain extent and I think it probably disappears a lot more when they actually go to Australia and they are actually out of Indonesia, but about things that are not criticising the government I think they can become reasonably critical, yeah.*

**Researcher:** *So that's a political choice you're saying, rather than a cultural habit?*

**Nell:** *Um, a choice about where to do it and how to do it, but I'm sure it goes on, but not amongst all people. I think you've got to be reasonably well educated or have some sort of political interest. Yeah, I don't go along with this feeling a hundred percent that they're not critical, because I think, reading a lot of their critical reviews they pick up some reasonable points that I myself probably wouldn't have thought about. You know, that's being critical in their field, not necessarily openly critical of the government unless they happen to be in a political topic, but yeah, it's difficult to say.*

In this part of the interview Nell suggests that the Indonesian students display weak critical review skills and are not encouraged or rewarded for being openly critical in what she refers to as the 'field' of education. Her talk suggests that forms of politics give students reduced options about how to be a student within the space of the Indonesian system. In supporting her claim, she puts forward Indonesian taxi drivers, who are openly critical in the space of their cabs and the students themselves, who she suspects are openly critical of the government and the offshore teachers in the space outside of education. According to Nell's account educational space within Indonesia is very particular. Students have set ways of being and set content with which to work.

In summary, the teachers' talk suggests Indonesian students' so-called preference for rote learning and tendency to not be critically reflective is formed by particular institutional conditions. Students are required to defer to their teachers and their books and faithfully reproduce this knowledge. According to the teachers interviewed, the Indonesian students recognise the speciality of the educational context; a context that demands that students wait for teachers to divulge knowledge and for students to reproduce this knowledge for evaluation. What knowledge is validated as being the knowledge of the most worth is

handed out at the discretion of the teacher. This form of relationship means that the role between teachers and students is unambiguous. Both teachers and students know what is expected of them.

In Bernstein's (1977, 2000) terms, this heavy regulation over what knowledge is rewarded within the curriculum is referred to as *strong classification* of curriculum. This strong classification creates clearcut guidelines for what is held up as legitimate and rewardable knowledge. It thus follows that the strong classification of knowledge carries the power to restrict certain other knowledges from being legitimised or rewarded within the educational space. Another Bernstein (1977, 2000) term, framing, can be used to describe the degree of control teachers and students possess over the pedagogical relationship. According to the teachers' accounts, the teachers within the Indonesian system explicitly regulate the distinguishing features of the transmission. The students seem to be accorded very few options, if any, over how knowledge is communicated. This means that framing could then be described as strong. This *strong framing* restricts the possibilities of the encounter. For example, if modes of critical thought are not normalised, they are then invalidated.

When practice is described as strongly classified and strongly framed, Bernstein (1977) calls this *visible pedagogy*. Visible pedagogy is considered advantageous as deviance or threats to discipline are easier to detect. Visible pedagogy also encourages greater competition between students and is favoured by some institutions as it prescribes minimal spatial requirements, can tolerate larger teacher: student ratios and ensures expediency of acquisition relative to other forms of pedagogy (Bernstein, 2000). In summary, the accounts presented by the teachers suggest that the education system with which the Indonesian students are most familiar would be described in theoretical terms as a visible pedagogy. As these students are preparing to take up studies with Australian providers, it is also necessary to look at the way that these teachers talk about the characteristics of students' learning with Australian providers.

### **Teachers' Talk: Characteristics of Students Learning with Australian Providers**

Out of the cohort of eighteen participants, three teachers and two teacher managers provide talk about the characteristics of students learning with Australian providers (see Exley, 2001). The five participants who provide this talk are unanimous in their declaration that the Australian system is different from the Indonesian education system. An episode of talk by Angus Fabian, an Australian educational administrator who, at the time of the study, had managed a non-profit Australian-owned institution for eight years. His extract is typical of the other four accounts.

#### *Extract Three:*

Although Angus expresses discomfort in using the term 'Asian' to describe the Indonesian teachers, he describes differences between Western teaching characteristics and Asian teaching characteristics. His account also supports the earlier accounts that suggest the Indonesian system has strongly classified curricula knowledge and strongly framed pedagogies. Crucially, he suggests that not all those categorised as Indonesian teachers are the same. The extract below is his response to the researcher's question about Western teaching characteristics. In his opening sentence, he compares the similarities of some Western teachers' practices to the practices of the stereotypical Indonesian teachers. The remainder of this extract centres on his description of Western teachers generally.

**Angus:** *Um, much more varied. And then there's some of that amongst Western teachers. I wouldn't say that there's not. We find a difference with our people, particularly American trained, versus, we see more, some of the British/Australian trained. There's just more of a*

*variety. I suppose we would like to think, and I suppose there is a more of a focus on students and learning, less teacher domination in terms of the amount of teacher talk. Ah, a lot more pair-work, group-work, students work with each other. Much more of a focus on independent and individualised learning. Um, so I, you know, I think that would generally characterise [Western teachers].*

His account generally characterises Western teachers as being more varied and espousing a student centred pedagogy where the teacher is less dominant in terms of the amount of teacher talk. His talk also suggests that Western teachers generally focus on independent and individualised learning where students are able to participate in a lot more pair-work and group work. In Bernstein's (1977, 2000) terms, Angus's talk, and the talk from the other four teachers, describes Western teachers' pedagogies as being more weakly framed than the pedagogy of the Indonesian teachers. According to the teachers' accounts, the relations between Western teachers and their students is much less subject to restriction, however, the students are never accorded complete control. Rather, the pedagogical relationship between Western teachers and their students is open for negotiation and while this negotiation is not always explicit, students are still expected to internalise what is expected.

#### *Extract Four:*

Nell, the experienced offshore Australian teacher who was introduced in Extract One and Two, provided talk about who controlled the knowledge in the Western system of education. She spoke in response to a series of questions from the researcher that centred on the core question from the first turn of the episode, below:

**Researcher:** *So how does that compare then with the students that you've got who are going to Australia to do study overseas?...*

**Nell:** ...Well I don't think Indonesian students understand a lot about what plagiarism is, also in the West we tend to paraphrase a lot more, whereas Indonesians are told as far as I know in their Universities always to quote directly, and so this means that their paper is full of quotations and doesn't have very much discussion and they don't use transitions to join ideas together. It's sort of like a jigsaw puzzle that doesn't quite fit with bits and pieces from everywhere... Yeah, just getting ideas and synthesising and putting them together and coming out with something original, I don't think it's a very easy thing to do, and I think it's a lot more difficult to do it in a second language. Because these students are not that good when they come here. It's not a language that they use or read in and speak a lot of. I think some of them have reasonably good listening skills sometimes or they use it to talk with people in the office, some of them, not all of them, but they're not used to doing a lot of academic reading because they happen to be academics.

Nell suggests that the control of knowledge within the Indonesian system is significantly different from the control of knowledge in the Western system. In Bernstein's (1977, 2000) terms and according to Nell's talk, the Western system's regulation of knowledge is not so powerfully controlled by the system in comparison to the Indonesian system. It could be inferred that the category of knowledge that is held up as valid in the West is less restricted because it is what Nell refers to as the 'originality' of the knowledge that is of most significance. In other words, students must bring to the learning experience knowledge from somewhere else. Bernstein (1990) suggests that this weaker classification of knowledge means that the teacher focuses less on matching the students' competences against performance based outcomes and is more concerned with individual representations of knowledge.

The other two teachers who provide comparisons between characteristics of students in the Western system and the Indonesian system, Beatrice and Helena, both provide accounts that separate the two systems. In Bernstein's (1977) terms, the weaker classification and weaker framing of Western pedagogy means that its pedagogy is more *invisible* than the pedagogy of the Indonesian system. The term *invisible pedagogy* means that the manner of transmission is considered to be more implicit and the criteria for evaluation of knowledge and skills is considered to be diffused. While invisible pedagogy appears to create a less explicit hierarchy between teachers and students, it in fact disfigures or masks the control that the teachers have, the outcome of which is that students are not provided with explicit codes to understand how the education system works. The nomenclature of invisible pedagogy does not mean that institutional power and control are absent, rather that these relations of power and control operate in a different mode (see Hasan, 2001). Thus the rubric of invisible pedagogy really means that the specific specialised knowledge and pedagogic relationships of visible pedagogy operate beneath the surface of an invisible pedagogy (Bernstein, 1990). Visible pedagogy is understood as being effective if students possess the requisite codes for operating within the system, however, when students do not possess the codes, they are then excluded from effectively participating in the system (Bernstein, 1990).

The theorisation of the teachers' talk exposes the complexity of the work that these teachers must do if they are to prepare their Indonesian students to take up studies with Australian educational providers. Essentially their work involves them moving their students from a system that they know very well, what Bourdieu and Passeron (1996) would call *primary pedagogic work*, to a new system of education, which Bourdieu and Passeron (1996) calls *secondary pedagogic work*. In this theorisation, movement from the primary phase of pedagogic work to a secondary phase of pedagogic work is complex. This is because primary pedagogic work inculcates the students with particular knowledges and moral orders as deemed necessary for successful participation within a particular education system. This phase sets the boundaries from which students select knowledge contents and practices of learning that are durable enough to last a life time and to be maintained during transportation to another context of learning.

According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1996), acquiring competencies for secondary pedagogic work requires students to be 'remade'. The 'success' of this remaking process is largely dependent upon the degree of similarity or difference between the primary and secondary phases of pedagogic work. However, while one can always acquire a theoretical knowledge of another way, appropriation in the full sense rarely occurs (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1996, p. 42). This is because of the durability and transportability of the primary phase of pedagogic work. However, students who have acquired some of the requisite codes for the secondary phase of pedagogic work will be more able to participate within that system.

Thus, the teachers' accounts of the work that they do could be theorised as assisting their students in acquiring the code for a secondary phase of pedagogic work. However, attempts at radically reforming the students' primary phase of pedagogic work would always be problematic if they involve the overthrowing of traditions which form the basis of their cultural identity. So the question is this: What strategies do these teachers bring to their work so that they can assist their students in bridging the divide between phases of pedagogic work? The next section will provide extracts of teachers' talk on this area of interest.

### **Teachers' Talk: Bridging the Divide Between Primary and Secondary Pedagogic Work**

Four of the teachers, Helena, Thomas, Emilia and Nell, provide talk that confirms the demanding nature of the work that teachers do. Helena, a program manager and a British

citizen with previous ESL experience, summed up the teachers' struggles the most succinctly: 'We don't know all the hierarchies that are operating in the group or the dynamics. We could never know that. I'll never know what really is going on underneath the class, the other agenda for the students ...'. Despite this, the teachers all spoke at length about strategies they employ to bridge the divide between students' primary pedagogic work and the context of pedagogic work they are preparing to enter. It will be recalled that in Extract Two, Nell has already provided insight into one strategy for bridging this divide: the English language. In this extract she comments: 'That's one of the first things that they have to learn, that it is safe to make these comments, and presumably they might feel it's safer to say them in English because there's a little bit of distancing from doing it in [their] own language.' Further extracts of data are provided by Helena, Thomas and Emilia because they provide articulation of a second, third and fourth bridging strategy.

*Extract Five:*

To assist the teachers' teaching and the students' transition to Western forms of pedagogy, Helena Williams, a British manager, describes how she meets with teachers on a weekly basis and with students monthly.

**Helena:** ... *I meet with the teachers on a weekly basis on whatever course they're teaching on, and more often than that usually, and I meet with the students every month for evaluation sessions, where they give me their feedback.*

**Researcher:** *So you're sort of in the interface between the students and the teachers when it comes to feedback?*

**Helena:** *Uh-huh... I get [the students] to write down their thoughts on paper, and the teachers are given that to see.*

**Researcher:** *In raw form?*

**Helena:** *Yes, yes, they get it in the raw form, because [the teachers] asked for it and I don't think I've ever doctored anything actually. And they seem to be quite able to handle it. There have been occasions when the students have made a point, where they haven't quite got the language to express what they really think, and so they've made a comment, for example, 'So and so ridicules us and makes us feel embarrassed and is very demanding and gets cross, is very emotional when we make mistakes', and I think the use of "ridiculing us" was in fact the student's mis-use of the language, having talked to the student and said, 'Well this is a very, very strong term, do you really think that your teacher is doing this to you?' and I described what ridiculing means and they said, 'No'...[Students] can misunderstand or take wrongly something which was meant as banter or fun and they take it seriously and it has quite a devastating effect.*

These meetings serve to make the invisibility of Western pedagogy more visible for the Indonesian students as they learn to interact in the secondary phase of pedagogic work. This is because Helena recognises that a misunderstanding in the social order of the classroom can have a 'devastating effect' on the students. The suggestion is that misunderstandings in the social order of the classroom negatively affect the students' success in acquiring understandings of the secondary phase of pedagogic work. According to Helena's account, the teachers are aware of potential misunderstandings of the social order of the classroom for these groups of students and are receptive to Helena's strategies for uncovering them.

Another teacher, Thomas, spoke about a strategy that he uses to assist his Indonesian students in enacting the secondary phase of pedagogic work. This is an extract from his account:

*Extract Six:*

In direct response to the researcher's question about the background of the Indonesian students, Thomas Brady, an offshore teacher with four years experience in Indonesia, and prior to that, experience as an offshore teacher in Japan, provides the following lengthy comments:

**Thomas:** ...*The other day I asked who's the most senior in the class and it was in age seniority rather than a professional seniority.*

**Researcher:** *How does this other stuff get played out in group work, you know, the business of seniority?*

**Thomas:** *Um, well I try to distribute it. I try to distribute it between sometimes I have all people of similar age or similar background. I mean it usually conforms that the older they are the more senior the position they have, not exclusively, so I at various times will put them into a group where they're all senior and into a group where they're all younger, and sometimes I will divide it by sex, a group of all women and a group of all men, sometimes I will combine those two, depending on whatever kind of task or thing that I'm addressing. Um, this takes an awful lot of preparatory work to actually sort of hone into those groups and to be able to guide, because I also believe in trying to create very much an independent student, so I very much try and negotiate with the students and with the class their own divisions and their own kind of tasks and their own evaluations and things.*

**Researcher:** *How does that work then where there's stuff about seniority? I mean, are they deferring to that sort of, I'll call it a pecking order, put it this way, are there inhibitions to communicating in a class where students are conscious of the seniority of a class mate, that sort of stuff?*

**Thomas:** Yes. Yes there are.

**Researcher:** *So you have to work around that?*

**Thomas:** *Yes, you have to work around that. Um, in certain instances it's allowing, I mean sort of culturally, it's very much kind of a, well it sounds so awful to use such sort of sweeping, generic, general terms, but generally it's divided by age and divided by sex. Men usually have the more senior position than women, so sometimes it is just, I just allow the older, more senior men to talk for a while and being 'mmm, mmm, mmm, great, that's a very interesting point, next', and move on, so there is a bit of time of where one has to give them aspects of attention and validity to what they're saying by drawing attention to it, even if it's way off the mark, one has to be sensitive to that.*

In attempting to better understand the students' primary phase of pedagogic work, Thomas simply asks the students directly. Although Thomas understands that hierarchies are based upon age relations and gender, he also understands that it is not always quite this simple. Most significant in Thomas' account is his talk about the way that he responds sensitively to the students' social formations whilst simultaneously preparing the students for the secondary phase of pedagogic work. He uses various formations of group work to delineate a sphere of legitimate action for Western pedagogy and to create distinctively new patterns for the framing of pedagogical relations between students that lie outside of hierarchies

based upon complex relations of age and gender. The final extract of data for this section is provided below.

*Extract Seven:*

In talking about the structuring of her pedagogical practice, Emilia Marlowe, an Australian teacher who is married to an Indonesian National, explains how she uses group discussion and role play to prepare her Indonesian learners for the up take of the secondary phase of pedagogic work.

**Emilia:** ....another thing I cover is giving opinions because I said, 'Australians are very forthright with their opinions and tend to directly disagree with each other and in academic circles you are encouraged to do that too. You know if everybody in a tutorial sits around and says, 'we agree sir with everything you say', the lecturer is very disappointed. That's not going to encourage intellectual debate and creative thought. He wants people to disagree and he even plays a devil's advocate so people have something to knock down. And this to them is really strange because to show respect for an academic in Indonesia and the elders in general, people older than you, you just say, 'Yes sir, yes sir' to everything they say, no matter what you think yourself.... My teaching characteristics, I try to put them in groups to discuss things where I think they won't be open in front of the whole class. So particularly those difficult questions, I break them into groups and hand them a card each and I say, 'When you've got this card in your hand, you're an Australian asking the question', so that identity is taken away from them and they can be a little more candid, we hope.

Like her colleagues, Emilia separates Indonesian pedagogic work from the pedagogic work of the Australian system. According to her talk, the pedagogic work in the Australian system is very 'strange' and students are not required to show respect the same way as Indonesian students do in their phase of pedagogic work. So her talk discusses her way of encouraging her Indonesian students to take on the demeanors she deems necessary to be successful in the secondary phase of pedagogic work. She uses drama and role cards to provide her students with an identity that also gives them access to the secondary phase of pedagogic work without explicitly conflicting with their Indonesian identity. The thrust of her practice is to remain sensitive to her students' primary phase of pedagogic work, whilst also repositioning them to take up the role of student within a secondary phase of pedagogic work. In other words, she uses drama and role play to broaden the students' identities rather than engaging in pedagogical practice that forces the identities to explicitly come into conflict with each other.

Thus, these four teachers' strategies for bridging the divide between the primary and secondary phase of pedagogic work can be summarized as using English as the medium of instruction, meeting with students and explicitly discussing the ways to enact the secondary phase of pedagogic work, employing group work to re-distribute the socially constructed hierarchies from the primary phase of pedagogic work and using drama and role play to legitimize the up take of Western students' demeanors for the secondary phase of pedagogic work.

## **Conclusion**

Theoretical concepts from Bernstein and Bourdieu and Passeron have been utilised to analyse the pedagogical processes underlying the teachers' talk about their work with international students. Significant within this discussion was the following three points: these teachers understood the characteristics of their Indonesian students as being socially or institutionally constructed; these teachers suggested that the characteristics of their Indonesian students were strongly bounded from the characteristics of Australian students;

and these teachers utilised a range of explicit strategies to broaden their students' identities as a means of bridging the divide between the primary and secondary phases of pedagogic work. Specifically, these teachers' practices centre on rendering visible the invisible power and control relations of Western pedagogy. From this data, these teachers' accounts suggest that participation in Western pedagogy does not have to be at the expense of sacrificing one's identity. The teachers believe that they have found ways to remake the students' way of learning for a new phase of pedagogic work that does not explicitly challenge the authority or validity of the primary phase of pedagogic work.

Limitations exist within this part of the research, the most significant of which is the study's limited sample size and its narrow focus on one group of teachers and one group of international students. This study is also focused on a group of teachers who must remake their students to access a system of education that is not geared to their needs. In other words, these teachers had control over the means of pedagogy but had no control over the educational ends their students were attempting to pursue. Finally, this topic of discussion needs to also be extended to incorporate a problematisation of a system that focuses on ways to assist students in taking up alternative learner characteristics. This paper did not enter discussion about the lack of neutrality of imposing Western ways of being on Others (see Cannon, 1997) or the linguistic imperialism of using English as the medium of instruction (see Phillipson, 1992, 1993; Pennycook, 1994, 1998; Crystal, 1997). This paper has merely provided extracts of talk about the way one group of teachers say that they respond to a particular population of international students when the ends of education are controlled. There is an urgent need for this study to continue to explore the political dilemma of catering for international students in this way.

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