Conceptions of Oral English Teaching: A Case Study of Teacher Cognition on Oral English Teaching and Classroom Practice

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Abstract
This paper reports a case study investigating and comparing the cognition and classroom practice of two college English teachers with regards to oral English teaching in an agricultural university. Both consistency and inconsistency between their cognition and practice are examined and reasons especially for inconsistency are explored. Findings suggest that teachers do hold a system of cognition which shapes their classroom practice to a very large extent. However, due to the influence of many other factors, both internal and external, their practice in oral English teaching does not always reflect their cognition.

Key words: teacher cognition; classroom practices; oral English teaching

1. Introduction
Within foreign language education, teaching is now viewed as a complex cognitive activity (Borg, 2003: 81), and teachers as “active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex practically-oriented, personalized and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs”. Previous studies indicate that teachers do hold a complex system of cognition, which shapes their classroom practice to a very large extent. Therefore, it is essential to understand and account for the implicit cognition of language teachers and its impact on their classroom practice. Most previous studies, however, examined teacher cognition about language teaching in general, and a few studies examined teacher cognition about grammar teaching (e.g., Borg, 2003; Farrell, 2005), and literacy teaching (e.g., Meijer, Verloop & Beijaard, 1999). Research of this kind is still very limited in number and scope, and few studies were conducted exploring teacher cognition...
about oral English teaching (OET) in particular. Therefore this study aims to address the following questions:

1. What is teachers’ cognition about oral English teaching?
2. What are their actual classroom practices?
3. How does their cognition relate to their classroom practice?

2. Literature review

2.1 Defining teacher cognition

As Borg (2003: 83) noted, “the study of teacher cognition is generally characterized by a multiplicity of labels which have been posited to describe, wholly or in part the psychological context of teaching.” On the one hand, considerable overlapping does exist among different labels. On the other hand, different labels lay emphasis on different dimensions of teacher cognition. For example, Shulman (1987) defines it as teachers’ pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical reasoning, focusing on what constitutes teacher cognition; Kelly’s personal construct theory (cited in Borg, 2003) explains how teacher cognition develops through time; Elbaz’s (1983) concept of “practical knowledge” and Feiman-Nemser and Floden’s (1986) notion of “cultures of teaching” explore the relationship between teacher cognition and teachers’ classroom practice.

Besides, previous research on two topics is particularly informing to the understanding of what constitutes teacher cognition: studies on teacher knowledge and teacher belief. Fenstermacher (1994) distinguishes formal knowledge from practical knowledge, but recently, more and more studies prove that teacher belief has greater influence on their teaching (e.g., Pajares, 1992). However, it is difficult, if not unfeasible to distinguish knowledge from teacher belief (Clark & Peterson, 1986), so they are often used interchangeably with slightly different emphasis (Hativa, Barak & Simhi, 2001; Zanting, Verloop & Vermunt, 2001).

Researchers in China also attempt to explore what constitutes teacher cognition (e.g., Zhang, 2004; Zheng, 2006). For example, Zhang (2004) concludes that the “frame of reference” for six good foreign language teachers is a synthesis of theoretical knowledge and informal personal theory, including personal beliefs and general assumptions.

In this paper, “teacher cognition” is used as an inclusive term to embrace the complexity of teachers’ mental lives, what language teachers, at any stage of their career, think, know, or believe in relation to various aspects of their work.

2.2 Teacher cognition and their classroom practice

Studies in mainstream education show that there is a “symbiotic relationship” between teacher cognition and classroom teaching (e.g., Foss & Kleinsasser, 1996). Several studies have also explored how they are mutually informing in the field of language teaching (e.g., Bailey, 1996; Breen, 1991).

First, teacher cognition shapes their classroom practice to a very large extent. Previous studies have attempted to identify the reasons most commonly cited by teachers
in explaining their instructional decisions. Such factors as teachers’ concerns for cognitive processes, language management, timing and pacing of lessons and teachers’ personal working principles are identified (Breen, 1991; Nunan, 1992; Richards, 1996). Thus, “teacher cognition”, as an inclusive term for all these concerns, shapes teachers’ classroom practice greatly.

However, teachers also have to depart from their cognition sometimes. For example, Ulichny (1996) studied a teacher who intended to promote learner-centered reading initially, but during the lesson had to modify her plan in the face of the unexpected difficulties the students met in carrying out the planned activities. Thus the class became very teacher-centered, and did not reflect her cognition.

In sum, teacher cognition shapes their classroom practice, but inconsistency between the two also exists. Studies show that teachers’ practice is also shaped by the social, psychological and environmental realities of the school and classroom, for example, parents, principal’s requirement, curriculum requirement, school policies and so on (Borg, 1998).

3. Research methodology

3.1 Selection of the research site
This research involves honest inquiries into teachers’ cognition about OET. To obtain a realistic and complete picture of the subjects under study, this research was set in the real-life setting at College English Department, College of Foreign Languages in Shandong Agricultural University (SDAU).

3.2 Participants
To gain insights into teachers’ cognition, and also due to the limited options of oral English instruction in college English curricula, two teachers were selected for this study, and were named Ms. Li and Ms. Zhang respectively. They were chosen because they were both teaching freshman students, since traditionally this university lays more emphasis on listening and speaking for freshman than for sophomore students, largely due to the pressure of the College English Test Band Four (CET 4) for the sophomores. Another reason for choosing these two teachers was that they differed from each other in the materials used, teaching objectives, and the students they taught. Table 1 shows some basic information about these two teachers.

<p>| Table 1. Ethnographic information about the two teachers for case study |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education Background</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Type of University</th>
<th>Working Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Zhang</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>MA candidate</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Normal univ.</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Li</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Foreign studies univ.</td>
<td>12 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type of university means the type of university from which teachers graduated.
Ms. Li graduated from college with a Bachelor degree and then got her Master degree by taking special postgraduate courses.
（在职申请）
3.3 Research instruments
The difficulty in eliciting teacher cognition lies in the fact that it may be subconscious; teachers may be unable to articulate them. Moreover, they may wish to promote a particular image of themselves, and as a result, there might be a difference between the stated cognition and cognition in action. Thus, in this study, multiple instruments were used to explore what the teachers really believed about oral English teaching.

Open questionnaire
The open questionnaire is a self-reporting instrument designed to elicit the teacher’s cognition about OET. It consists of a section about the teacher’s ethnographic information, and an open question, asking the teacher to elaborate on his or her cognition about OET.

Interview protocol
The interview protocol included questions for the semi-structured interview. The pre-class interview, including questions about what teachers think about the nature of OET, what to teach and how, was aimed to confirm and further explore teacher cognition as stated in the questionnaire. The post-class interview was aimed to study how the teachers’ stated cognition was related to their classroom practice. Teachers were asked to reflect on their classroom teaching and asked such questions as “Do you think this class went as you had planned?” “Do you think this class reflected your cognition about OET?” and “What do you think leads to the inconsistency between your cognition and classroom teaching?”.

Classroom observation schedule
A classroom observation schedule was designed to study what the teachers actually did in class, focusing on such issues as the organization of the class, teacher-student interaction, teacher talk. Besides basic information about the course, teacher, and students, the schedule contains two major sections, what was taught and how. Meanwhile, notes or questions of the observer were taken down.

3.4 Procedures
First, an open questionnaire was administrated with the two teachers, in an attempt to elicit their cognition. Then the pre-class interviews were conducted with the teachers respectively to confirm and explore their cognition about OET. After the interviews, non-participatory classroom observations, which lasted for three weeks, were conducted. The classes were recorded with MP3, together with the field notes taken by the researcher. Both teachers were observed for nine hours. Finally, the post-class interviews were conducted immediately after the observation of their teaching. The teachers were asked to reflect on their teaching and explain their teaching behavior, to see how such behavior was related to their cognition. Both interviews were recorded with MP3 and transcribed. The interviews were conducted in Chinese and were later translated into English by the researchers. Back translation was adopted to ensure precision and trustworthiness.
3.5 Data analysis
Data gathered from the questionnaire survey, interviews and classroom observations were coded, analyzed, and reduced through constant comparison (Chen, 2000; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Themes were organized into categories based on patterns such as frequency and similarity of codes (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). The categories that emerged were examined by a colleague of the researcher so as to establish trustworthiness and credibility. The inter-coder reliability was checked, yielding a 95% agreement rate.

4. Results and discussions
4.1 Teachers’ stated cognition about oral English teaching
Table 2 covers the major themes of the teachers’ cognition that emerged from the interviews and the questionnaire survey. These themes fall into three categories, the nature of oral English teaching (OET), the content of OET and the teaching strategies.

As to the nature of OET, Ms. Zhang stated it as “enabling students to use English appropriately, that is, saying the right thing on the right occasion”. Ms. Li did not speak of this. She seemed to be more concerned with helping students pass the IETS.

As to what to teach in the oral English class, both teachers agreed that vocabulary is very important in OET. Ms. Li attached equal importance to pronunciation, saying,

They (the students) are spending a whole year learning the same lessons as those for English majors. I hope they would sound like English majors.

Ms. Zhang, however, interpreted good pronunciation as being “comprehensible” and “making yourself understood”. Neither of them took grammar as an important part of OET. However, Ms. Li did agree that error correction is important in OET, saying she would correct students’ serious errors and mistakes in pronunciation and grammar. Ms. Zhang, on the other hand, did not think error correction was so important.

As to OET strategies, both teachers agreed that the oral English class should be student-centered. Ms. Li said,

It is of utmost importance that teachers encourage students’ participation and oral English class should be student-centered, because it is the students who are supposed to improve their speaking.

Ms. Li also acknowledged the importance of teaching communicative strategies, while Ms. Zhang was neutral to this. Moreover, both teachers agree that it is important to imitate and do pattern drills, and to create authentic context for students to use English.

Ms. Li also acknowledged the importance of teaching communicative strategies, while Ms. Zhang was neutral to this. Moreover, both teachers agreed that it is important to imitate and to do pattern drills, and it is important for the teacher to create authentic context for students to use English.
It can be seen that both teachers’ cognition was a combination of tradition and modern ideas. Differences did exist between them, though. Ms. Zhang, a young teacher still learning for her master’s degree, showed more awareness of the latest theories in second language acquisition, using terms like “sociolinguistic competence” and “strategic competence”, which she had learnt in her study. Ms. Li, however, as an elder teacher with more teaching experiences, showed comparatively stronger influence of tradition, for example, her emphasis on “native-like” pronunciation and her reference to her former teaching experiences from which she had learnt a lot.

Table 2. Teachers’ stated cognition about oral English teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Ms. Li</th>
<th>Ms. Zhang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of OET</td>
<td>The nature of OET is to enable students to speak appropriately.</td>
<td>Not mentioned</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content of OET</td>
<td>Vocabulary is very important in OET.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pronunciation is very important in OET.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar is very important in OET.</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Error correction is very important in OET.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OET Strategy</td>
<td>It is important to teach students communicative strategies.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is important to imitate and do some pattern drills.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OET should try to create authentic context for language use.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Teachers’ actual practice in oral English classrooms

Classroom observation provided the researcher an opportunity to explore the two teachers’ cognition about OET as it was reflected in their actual classroom teaching. It also enabled the researcher to distinguish between their “stated cognition” and “cognition-in-action”. Table 3 lists some of the major activities teachers did in class, and these activities provide deep insights into how teacher cognition was realized or violated in actual classroom practice.

As is indicated in Table 3, both teachers adopted a communicative approach to OET. One notable activity in Ms. Zhang’s class was that she drew students’ attention to the subtle difference among words like “slender”, “slim” and “skinny”, when she was explaining vocabulary and sentence patterns. This exemplified her emphasis on the appropriate use of language. In contrast, in Ms. Li’s class this was not observed.

As to what was taught in class, the two teachers differed slightly. Ms. Li did not spend much time either on vocabulary or pronunciation, while Ms. Zhang spent more time on vocabulary. Directly teaching grammar was absent from both teachers’ classes. Though there was a special section about grammar in the textbook used by Ms. Li, she did not usually teach it in class. Another similarity was that both of them frequently corrected students’ pronunciation errors, but not grammar errors.

Further examination on how they taught also showed great similarity between the two teachers’ classes. The lessons were mainly student-centered, with teachers giving
directions, organizing activities, eliciting students’ participation, and students participating actively and enjoying many chances to communicate. For example, in Ms. Li’s class, student talk took up a large part of the class. The teacher mainly played the role of listener, encourager, and evaluator. Frequently recorded words said by Ms. Li included “Yeah”, “very good”, and “right” to praise or encourage students, and included words like “Any one wants to add something?” or “Anyone disagrees?” to elicit more speaking. Similarly, in Ms. Zhang’s class, after a student presenting a touching story, she introduced the topic, asking students to brainstorm relevant vocabulary and sentence patterns. In this way, students took part in pair work and group work actively. Therefore, this is in agreement with the definition of the teachers’ role in OET as “facilitators of students’ spoken English proficiency, the stimulator of students’ affective factors, and guides for students’ active learning” (Zhang, 2000: 58-60) and students “at the center of language teaching” (Feng & Wu, 2005: 23).

A notable difference, however, was that in Li’s class, the teaching of communication strategies was observed, while in Ms. Zhang’s class, it was not observed. Ms. Li frequently reminded students of the logic organization of their speech, an important element of the general communicative competence. For example, after a student finished his presentation, she always summed up his major arguments and made some comments. After one student made a badly-organized presentation, she said,

Your speech is a little confusing,… I hope you can pay more attention to the organization of your presentation and do better in the future.

Table 3. Teachers’ classroom practice when teaching oral English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Ms. Li</th>
<th>Ms. Zhang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of OET</td>
<td>Teacher paid special attention to students’ ability to speak appropriately in context.</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
<td>Observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content of OET</td>
<td>Teacher taught a lot of words related to the topic.</td>
<td>Limited occurrence</td>
<td>Observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher taught about the pronunciation of words.</td>
<td>Observed</td>
<td>Limited occurrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher taught English grammar rules.</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher corrected student errors in pronunciation.</td>
<td>Observed</td>
<td>Limited occurrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher corrected student errors in grammar.</td>
<td>Limited occurrence</td>
<td>Limited occurrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OET Strategy</td>
<td>Student centered: students engaged in speaking activities</td>
<td>Observed</td>
<td>Observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher taught communication strategies.</td>
<td>Limited occurrence</td>
<td>Not observed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, it can be seen that teachers’ cognition is often but not always clearly reflected in their actual classroom practice, and because of this, it is of vital importance to study how the cognition is related to practice.

4.3 Teacher cognition and teachers’ classroom practice
A comparison between Tables 2 and 3 shows both consistency and inconsistency between
the teachers’ cognition and their actual classroom practice. Teacher cognition does shape teachers’ classroom practice to a large extent, but it is not the sole factor influencing such practice.

4.3.1 Consistency between teachers’ cognition about OET and classroom practice
Consistency was observed between the two teachers’ stated cognition and actual classroom practice. For example, both of them believed in the student-centered oral English class and put this to practice. A direct indication of this student-centeredness in both teachers’ classes was the large proportion of student talk to teacher talk. In both teachers’ classes, student talk took up an overwhelming majority of the class time, with approximately 70% in Ms. Zhang’s class, and 75% in Ms. Li’s. Student talk included the students’ response to the teacher’s questions, pair work, and personal presentations. The teacher’s task was to provide directions, lead the students from one task to the next, make comments and give suggestions for further improvement.

Another case in point is about the teaching of pronunciation in OET. Ms. Li agreed that pronunciation is very important in OET, and this opinion was reflected in her actual classroom teaching, in her frequent correction of students’ mistakes in pronunciation, especially the obvious and serious ones. For example, a student said “when you read the letter”, but she pronounced “letter” as “litter”, and Ms. Li immediately corrected the mistake. Besides, she also helped students improve pronunciation through drill practices.

More examples can be found in the teachers’ cognition about vocabulary in OET. Both teachers believed that vocabulary is very important in OET, and this was reflected in their teaching. After introducing the topic at the beginning of the class, Ms. Zhang asked students to discuss the words that could be used to describe different aspects of a person such as appearance, figure, hair style and personality. More than ten words were listed for each category. Though Ms. Li did not spend as much time in teaching words explicitly, she introduced the topic with a passage, which contained relevant vocabulary. She also helped students learn to use the exercise section about words in the textbook. Moreover, students often came across difficulties in speaking due to the lack of vocabulary, so she often helped them out by providing relevant words and expressions. By doing so, new words were taught indirectly.

Therefore, what teachers think they should do influences what they actually do in the classroom. This was also illustrated by many researchers (e.g., Borg, 2003; Lou & Liao, 2005; Zhang, 2004). Zhang (2004) concluded that the frame of reference for teachers’ decision making is a system of personal theories including theoretical knowledge about foreign language teaching, personal beliefs and assumptions. Lou and Liao (2005) found that teachers’ classroom practice and beliefs are generally correlated. However, as a complex and contextual activity, teachers’ classroom practice also bears influences of other factors. Thus inconsistency between the two emerges as a common phenomenon in classroom teaching.

4.3.2 Inconsistency between teachers’ cognition about OET and classroom practice
Inconsistency was also observed between the two teachers’ cognition and classroom practice.
practice. For example, both teachers expressed the belief in students’ participation and would give much time to student classroom practice. However, in Ms. Zhang’s class, a major activity of students’ participation was class presentations (students making reports), and that meant for each class, two students were assigned to give short speeches on a certain topic and usually came to the class well prepared with these speeches. A major problem with this activity was the lack of participation from other students except for the two speakers. As is observed in class, a lot of students did not laugh at the joke or did not have any response after a very touching story. Obviously they were not paying attention to the speaker and did not get themselves involved in the activity. Thus the teachers’ belief in students’ participation was not put to good practice in this class. Similarly, in Ms. Li’s class, students were often asked to discuss a topic in pairs and then some students were asked to present their discussion to the class. The students were required to add the points that the previous speaker did not mention or to present their different opinions on the topic, but it turned out that many speakers repeated what had already been mentioned. It seemed that each student was working on his or her own. Anyone might be the next speaker, so most students were sitting there, nervous and busy preparing their own presentations, instead of paying attention to what the speaker was saying. Therefore, not many students were deeply involved in the activity. During the post-class interview, Ms. Li explained,

I tried to get all students involved while others were speaking, so I asked them to add something new or just talk about their different opinions, but it did not work out very well.

This inconsistency between teacher cognition and the actual classroom practice has also been identified by other researchers (e.g., Lou & Liao, 2005; Tan, 2007). Then, what leads to the inconsistency between teachers’ cognition and classroom practice?

4.3.3 Reasons for the inconsistency between teachers’ cognition about OET and classroom practice

There were a number of possible reasons for some of the inconsistency noted above between the teachers’ stated cognition and actual classroom practice. The first factor was the unpredictability of the oral English class. Any teaching activity is unpredictable to a certain extent. It is especially true with the oral English class, which involves more students’ participation and improvisatory discussions. For example, Ms. Li spoke of how the unpredictability of the oral English class had caused her to diverge from her original plan. She said,

Teachers can never predict what the students will say in class. I frequently get inspired by some students’ discussion and may want to say more about a certain topic.

Ms. Zhang also talked about her experience of a class which had gone beyond her anticipation. She said,

I planned an activity for students to talk about themselves and their family. I though it would
encourage their participation, but it turned out quite different. Few students volunteered to speak, so I had to call their names. What’s more, some students were not well prepared, or too nervous, or speaking very fast and in a low voice, and other students did not listen, so I had to end this activity in haste.

Besides, teachers’ classroom practice was also strongly influenced by many external factors like time and the arrangement of the curriculum. For example, the two teachers under study were required to work out their teaching schedule at the very beginning of the semester and teaching must be carried out strictly according to the schedule. This schedule featured reading and listening, but speaking was not clearly noted and not carried out so strictly either. The time for oral English teaching seemed to be more flexible. Therefore, OET often gave way to other teaching activities whenever necessary because of the time limit.

Another possible reason was the lack of a legitimate status of OET in the context of college English teaching in China. Unlike listening, writing or reading, speaking is not part of CET 4 or CET 6, two major standard tests in China as accepted as a measurement of a person’s English proficiency. Compared with the written CET 4, the oral CET 4 is much less emphasized and not open to all students. Since the traditional examination-oriented education in China is still prevalent today, the low status of oral English in the examination system leads to the lack of attention to it on the part of many students, teachers, and schools. In this context, therefore, even though some teachers see the importance of oral English, they cannot pay due attention to it in classroom practice. Therefore, their classroom practice is inconsistent with their cognition. This is similar to the findings of Tan (2007) and Zheng (2006), which identified the contradiction between teachers’ cognition and social political environment as an important factor influencing the relationship between teacher cognition and classroom practice.

To sum up, besides teachers’ cognition, their classroom practice is also influenced both internally by the improvisatory nature of oral English teaching and externally by such contextual factors as time, social political factors like examination-oriented education and so on. The influence of such contextual and social political factors has been acknowledged by many researchers (Richards & Penningtong, 1998; Spada & Massey, 1992; Tan, 2007). However, few studies have identified the improvisatory and unpredictable nature of classroom teaching as an influential factor. One reason might be that although all teaching activities are unpredictable, this is particularly the case for oral English teaching. Another reason might be the teachers’ lack of theoretical guidance for teaching in this study. Both teachers mentioned this deficiency in knowledge about OET theories. For example, when asked to talk about her cognition about OET, Ms. Li said, “I don’t know much about theories, and I just want to talk about my own opinions and experience.” To conclude her answer, again she said, “This is only my own understanding.” Similarly, when talking about why her classroom practice was sometimes inconsistent with her cognition, Ms. Zhang mentioned the lack of theoretical guidance. She said, “I tried many methods (to encourage students to participate actively), but I don’t have enough theoretical knowledge, so the result is not so satisfactory.”
It should be noted that the purpose of this study is not to look for the “best practice”; rather, it serves as a mirror for the two teachers so that they could reflect on their work. Consequently, since language teachers’ cognition about successful teaching forms the core of their teaching behavior (Richards, Gallo & Renandya, 2001), it is suggested that opportunities be provided for teachers to reflect on their work so that they can be encouraged to articulate and reflect on their cognition while also investigating any inconsistency between their cognition and classroom practice. As Zheng and Jiang (2005) noted, teachers’ beliefs could be refined and transformed through their on-going reflective thinking.

5. Conclusion

This case study investigated the stated beliefs and actual classroom practice of two college English teachers in SDAU. Findings suggest that teachers do have a complex system of cognition about OET that is sometimes not reflected in their classroom practice for various complicated reasons, some directly related to the nature of oral English teaching in particular, and some related to the context and social political environment of teaching. Even though generalizations of this case study may be problematic, language teachers may learn much about the importance of reflecting on their cognition and comparing cognition with actual classroom practice.

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**《中国应用语言学》自2011年起更改为季刊的通知**

《中国应用语言学》（原名《中国英语教学》）创刊30多年来，一直是国内唯一一本刊登英语撰写的学术论文的外语类期刊，在英语教师、研究人员、研究生当中有较大的影响。但也因为本刊为英语刊物，国内的核心期刊评价体系（如南京大学CSSCI、北京大学的核心期刊要目概览）都只评中文期刊，所以本刊无缘进入中文核心期刊目录。本刊只有把目标瞄准国外的期刊评价体系，并把入选SSCI定为本刊的目标。为尽快实现这一目标，本刊决定自2011年起由双月刊改为季刊，以期精挑细选，进一步提高本刊的学术水准，为申请SSCI做准备。

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