Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Children: A Multinational Survey

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One of the most significant trends in contemporary English language teaching is the dramatic increase in English as a foreign language (EFL) programs for younger children (ages 3–12) in school systems throughout the world. These programs have created special challenges for teachers who are nonnative English speakers (NNES). To document the methodology of NNES teachers of younger children, the authors of this article created 14 classroom teaching videos which were embedded in a web-based survey. This survey was sent to EFL teachers of children in schools throughout Asia and Latin America as a needs analysis for teachers who would be participating in training programs related to an international textbook series. The results of this survey challenge the stereotypes about these teachers, deepen our understanding of their methodological practices, and provide models for professional development. Although some of the techniques were more familiar to the respondents than others, most of the teachers in this study indicated that they use a broad range of techniques within their local communities of practice. These teachers expressed their willingness to adopt the less familiar techniques if they were provided with appropriate materials and training. Finally, most of the teachers in this study favored collaborative, relational forms of professional development.

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“We know that! Let us show you how we do that here,” is a common refrain that we have heard from teachers of young children during our workshops on English as a foreign language.
(EFL) methodology in countries such as Indonesia. Using an interactive approach, we have watched carefully as these teachers demonstrate local forms of techniques\(^1\) for children such as total physical response (TPR), picture walks, songs, and role playing. As we engage teachers in workshops for an EFL textbook series, we are particularly concerned with documenting their “situated English language teaching pedagogy” so that we can better meet their needs (Dogancay-Aktuna and Hardman, 2008, p. xi).

The past two decades have witnessed a remarkable global increase in the number of EFL classes for young children. The desire to begin formal language instruction at increasingly younger ages has been documented in a number of countries throughout East Asia, Europe, and Latin America (Nunan, 2003). In Asia, for instance, a number of countries have created national curriculums focused on foreign language teaching for children (Guangwei & McKay, 2012; Musthafa, 2001). Although this global trend has been defined as a research priority by TESOL (Tucker, 2001), during the past decade only a limited amount of research has focused on EFL programs for younger learners.

These preschool and elementary EFL programs are taught primarily by nonnative English speakers (NNES). A common stereotype is that NNES teachers have limited proficiency in English and must resort to traditional methodologies such as translation, memorization, and rote instruction (Butler, 2004; Park, 2012). Because of the paucity of cross-national research on the methodologies used by EFL teachers of younger children, the NNES stereotype has persisted. As Holliday and Aboshiha (2009) have documented, this stereotype has led to the marginalization of NNES teachers in teacher education programs and in professional discourse. At times, this marginalization has been internalized by the teachers themselves, especially elementary-level EFL teachers (Llurda & Huguet, 2003). On a broader level within the TESOL profession, there is a need for a more complex, nuanced understanding of what EFL teachers know about teaching.

\(^1\) In this article pedagogy, methodology, and methods will be used to refer to teaching practices in general. The term technique will be used to refer to a particular teaching practice.
methodology in general and which techniques are commonly used in their particular local contexts. Rather than addressing the NNES stereotype directly, we would like to focus in a positive way on what EFL teachers do within their local communities of practice. This concern is related to our practical need for information about situated ELT pedagogy so we can provide appropriate training related to a textbook series.

The international study described in this article has two primary purposes. Our first goal was to survey teachers in a number of countries in order to assess the familiarity of a series of EFL teaching techniques for children. This goal is directly related to our needs analysis for training related to the textbook series. A second goal is to allow these teachers to communicate their preferences for the format of English language training. To examine these issues we employed an innovative research methodology. Through the use of 14 original teacher training videos embedded in an online survey and sent to EFL teachers throughout the world (with a particular focus on East Asia and Latin America), we were able to ascertain the familiarity of specific EFL techniques as well as the training preferences of these teachers. The results of this survey challenge the stereotypes about NNES teachers. By allowing teachers to respond directly to each technique, we were able to determine the teachers’ local practices without forcing them to identify with any specifically defined methodological orientation.

Current Research on EFL Teaching Methodology
During the past two decades the term method has become problematic in describing the practices of foreign language teachers. Kumaravadivelu (1994, 2006) has identified the postmethod condition—a mindset which questions the validity of any broad methodology as the best way to teach a foreign language and instead focuses on decisions that teachers make within specific local contexts to create their own distinct methodologies. Canagarajah has persuasively argued for a greater emphasis on local varieties of English and a pedagogy which is “practitioner-generated and collaborative” as opposed to the adoption of methodology from outside contexts (2005, p. xxvii).
The research literature is only beginning to explore the characteristics of this postmethod pedagogy in EFL classrooms with younger children.

Several recent studies have specifically looked at EFL teachers’ pedagogical practices. These studies have often contrasted communicative and traditional orientations. Some researchers have defined specific activities as communicative or traditional for their participants (e.g., Griffiths, 2011). Other researchers have allowed teachers to define the activities themselves (Beaumont & Chang, 2011; Pae & Shin, 2011), whereas others have used the suggestions of a national curriculum, defined as communicatively oriented, to delineate the categories (Butler, 2005; Kirkgöz, 2012). In studies that allowed teachers themselves to define the methodology, several found that teachers could articulate traditional techniques clearly, but were often unclear about what types of activities should be considered communicative (Beaumont & Chang, 2011; Guangwei & McKay, 2012; Pae & Shin, 2011). Some of the techniques that were defined as communicative were the use of songs, puppets, picture book read-alouds, role plays, realia, and content-based lessons.

As noted above, the communicative/traditional distinction seems increasingly to be a false dichotomy. Beaumont and Chang (2011) have challenged the concept of communicative and traditional methodologies as a dichotomy and have instead portrayed them as a continuum in which teachers choose from an eclectic mix of techniques in order to contextualize their teaching. This perspective reflects the practices of teachers in ethnographic research focusing on EFL teaching in specific countries such as China, Korea, Japan, Turkey, and Brazil (Beaumont & Chang, 2011; Bohn, 2003; Griffiths, 2011; Kirkgöz, 2012; A. M. Y. Lin, 2012; Z. Lin, 2013; Pae & Shin, 2011). Griffiths and Kirkgöz, for instance, specifically document the increasing prevalence of teachers who use a mixture of traditional and communicative techniques over those who use exclusively one orientation. And Zheng Lin’s study of kindergarten-level EFL teachers in China found that these teachers were using an eclectic approach which included a variety of “form-based” and “playing-embedded” techniques.
—“whatever they believed to be best for their students” (Z. Lin, 2013, p. 73).

Although the above research provides insights into EFL methodology within particular countries, these studies were limited in scope. The international study which most closely resembles our research was conducted by Butler (2005), who used videotaped lessons in order to examine teachers’ perspectives on various techniques in several Asian countries. Elementary teachers in South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan were filmed using techniques suggested by the new governmentally designed curriculum. These teaching techniques included role play, singing, chants, games, and TPR. The films were then edited down to 24 activity clips and combined into a 60-min video which included approximately 20 minutes of video from each country. The 60-min videos were then shown to groups of teachers in each of the countries.

In Butler’s study, the teachers viewing the videos were primarily homeroom teachers who were being asked to teach English due to curriculum reforms calling for more English instruction. After watching the video, they met in small groups for an hour of discussion. An analysis of the discussions revealed that virtually all the teachers were familiar with and had used the various techniques shown in the video, but that they used them for a variety of underlying purposes. For example, some had used role-plays as a way to provide students with specific vocabulary and formulas (more like an audiolingual dialogue) whereas others had used role-plays to allow students to use language in a creative and authentic way. Another theme from the discussion was the teachers’ desire to use the techniques in a way that was contextualized to their specific teaching locations.

These studies have suggested that many EFL teachers are familiar with a broad range of techniques. To some degree, this familiarity may reflect curriculum reforms, especially in Asian countries, focusing on new techniques in language teaching (Guangwei & McKay, 2012; Musthafa, 2001; Yang & Bernat, 2012). Some of the most intriguing results have come from studies, like Butler’s and Zheng Lin’s, which have documented EFL teachers working together to create instruction that includes a mixture of techniques and that is tailored to their particular local contexts.
Current Trends in EFL Teacher Training

In many of the recent studies focusing on EFL methodology, teachers expressed the desire for more training. The training they desired fell into three main categories: personal English language development, understanding of teaching techniques, and skill in adapting techniques to their local contexts. Several recent studies highlight teacher-training programs that address these needs. These studies note the need to train teachers in how to identify what they are truly implementing in their classrooms, why they are doing so, and how to introduce new techniques (Beaumont & Chang, 2011; Butler, 2005; Guangwei & McKay, 2012; Mak, 2011).

For example, Bof (2004) described the Brazilian government’s distance education model, Proformação, which provided general teacher training for uncertified primary classroom teachers. The program included both independent study through written materials and face-to-face interaction through tutors and through group sessions analyzing videos. Proformação was successful in helping teachers identify techniques they currently used, incorporate new techniques, and understand the basis of their choices. Personal results included increased confidence in their skills and in their involvement within the school and community on a professional level.

Liu (2012) has similarly detailed a program for preservice teachers in Hong Kong which allowed for the blend of classroom observation through videos with specific mentoring in classes. The videos were filmed in the classrooms of experienced teachers, and supplementary materials such as the lesson plan, student materials, and student products were also provided. The preservice teachers were then led through a discussion by their professor. The video modules were used in response to research indicating that exposure to teaching in action is needed to truly change teaching habits. The preservice teachers rated the use of video to be highly effective and also noted the professor’s facilitation was a crucial element in the effectiveness of the training.

Finally, as we have seen, a number of studies of training programs have documented the desire of EFL teachers to implement techniques in a format that is more contextualized to
their particular cultures (Bohn, 2003; Butler, 2005; dos Santos Lima & Fontana, 2007; Guangwei & McKay, 2012; Z. Lin, 2013; Mak, 2011; McKay, 2003; Mirici, 2008; Musthafa, 2001). For example, Palmer and Chodidjah (2012) describe a successful training program for Indonesian teachers (in a network of Islamic schools) that developed contextualization skills in its participants. Schools identified lead teachers to be sent to workshops held in the city. They received training in how to adapt new EFL techniques to their local contexts while interacting with other teachers. Those teachers were then asked to return to their local schools and train others in what was called a cascading system. These teachers in turn provided training for other schools within their local regions. This remarkable training system allowed for teachers to fully contextualize their techniques and materials and also gave the local teachers a strong voice at all levels of the process.

Although the research literature on EFL methodology and training for teachers of children is rather limited, a clear trend has emerged over the past decade. Increasingly, research is moving beyond the dichotomies of traditional/communicative practices to explore locally situated methodology, and the most promising training programs involve approaches which emphasize collaboration among teachers within local communities of practice.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Research Questions**

Our own international survey builds on both the concepts and the research methodology of these studies, with a particular focus on EFL teachers of younger children. The research goals of our global survey were as follows:

- To determine the extent to which certain EFL techniques are familiar to English teachers in a broad sampling of schools in Asia and Latin America.
- To determine the training needs and preferences of EFL teachers who wish to acquire and use these techniques with a particular focus on two key countries, Indonesia and Brazil.

To determine the familiarity of EFL teaching techniques for children, we used an approach which combined original
teacher-training video clips with an online survey delivered through SurveyMonkey.

The Survey and Videos
First, in the spring of 2013, to prepare for future training programs involving the launch of our textbook series, we identified 14 prominent teaching techniques across the eight levels of an EFL textbook series which has been developed for use in preschool through sixth-grade classrooms. These 14 techniques were selected as most representative of each level of the series. Seven techniques were selected for the lowest four levels (preschool–Grade 2) and the other seven were selected for the higher four levels (Grades 3–6).

Second, we created a series of teacher-training videos in a TV studio, using seven experienced teachers of English language learners (ELLs) and children from a summer program for refugees and immigrants. A classroom set was created in the TV studio, and the videos were filmed by a camera crew over a 7-day period. The filming featured children in the target age range of the technique (e.g., preschoolers) and a teacher who specialized in teaching that age range. For the purpose of this survey, the footage for each technique was edited down from a 5-min training video to feature a 30–60-sec segment. For an example of a preschool-level teaching technique, see “Puppet” at http://vimeo.com/69276738 and for an example of a technique for primary children, see “Letter B” at http://vimeo.com/69497155.

Once the videos had been edited, we developed a survey with three sections. The first section focused on demographic information in the following categories: country, age-level focus of teaching (either ages 3–7 or 8–12), years of teaching experience, frequency of English teaching each week, prior training, gender, and familiarity with the textbook series. The second section of the survey featured each video clip followed by a written description of the technique and three questions. For each video, these questions used the following format:
Items for Video “Money” (Ages 8-12)

36. How often have you used objects (such as paper money) with a role play in your classes?

1 – often
2 – sometimes
3 – rarely
4 – never

37. How often have you seen other teachers in your school use objects (such as paper money) with a role play?

1 – often
2 – sometimes
3 – rarely
4 – never

38. Would you use this teaching idea in the future?

1 – Yes, without any training.
2 – Yes, if I had a textbook with the materials.
3 – Yes, if I had some training.
4 – No.

A key feature of the survey was the fact that each of the respondents only observed seven of the videos. Respondents who indicated that they taught children at the age 3–7 level were automatically directed to the seven videos for younger students; respondents who indicated that they taught at the age 8–12 level were directed to the seven videos for older students. This made the survey efficient and relevant to the teaching experience of each respondent.

The final section of the survey included three items which were intended to elicit longer, more qualitative responses related to training needs. These items focused on identification of the most common teaching techniques currently used in the teacher’s context, and the forms of training that were favored by the respondents (e.g., online training, conferences, workshops, reading).

Analysis
This survey, with links to the embedded videos, was sent via email to regional administrators of private schools in Asia, Latin
America, Europe, and Africa. These regional administrators forwarded the email (with instructions and a link to the survey) to a sample of EFL teachers in their schools. From July 27 to September 10, 2013, 79 English language teachers representing 16 countries responded to the survey.

In September 2013 we began data analysis on the survey responses. We narrowed the sample to include only complete responses to the survey. This led to a final sample of 47 complete survey responses representing 15 countries. Although the survey was sent to EFL teachers in some schools in Eastern Europe and North Africa, the respondents were primarily located in two continental areas (Latin America and Asia), with the largest concentration of responses from two countries with a number of schools that have adopted the textbook series, Brazil and Indonesia. Any generalizations related to the survey results must relate to the survey sample itself, so we will avoid making broad generalizations about countries or continents.

The data analysis focused on determining the familiarity of each method and summarizing the training needs of each. Using statistical software (SPSS), we aggregated the results for the first two questions following each methodology video (“have you used this method in your context?” and “have you seen others use this method in your context?”) and calculated the mean ($M$) in order to formulate a familiarity index. The key statistical measures of this index were the mean (which identifies the level of familiarity in relation to the other methods), and the variance (which identifies the range of variation within the responses). For example, responses with means of over 2.0 were on the unfamiliar end of the spectrum, and responses with higher variances demonstrated a greater range of responses to the question, indicating that some teachers found the method familiar, while others did not. Preferences for training were analyzed by focusing on the third question for each method (“would you use this method in the future?”) and through a content analysis of the general responses to the final section of the survey.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Who responded to the survey? It is important to note that each of the 47 respondents represented the English teaching program for younger children at a particular school. These teachers and schools were evenly distributed between Asia and Latin America. To illustrate the typical respondents on each continent, let’s look at two hypothetical teachers who display a number of the characteristics of the survey sample.

For the lower age range (3–7 years of age), the representative teacher is a woman who teaches English 3 days each week rather than every day, although many of her colleagues at other schools teach English daily. She studied English language teaching at a university in her country and has taught for less than 5 years. A majority of the techniques shown in the videos were familiar to her, but she is still eager to receive more training to improve her use of these techniques.

For the higher age range (8–12 years of age), the representative teacher is also a woman and she teaches English in her school every day, like most of her colleagues at the other schools in the sample. She did not study English language teaching at her university, although many of her colleagues did, and she has been teaching for 8 years. A majority of the techniques shown in the videos were also familiar to her. Still, she is interested in using even the most unfamiliar techniques in the future if she has strong materials.

These teachers represent some intriguing cross-continental patterns in the data. For both continents, these teachers of younger children were very likely to be female; approximately 8% of the survey respondents were male. On average, the Latin American teachers had less training but more years of teaching experience than the Asian teachers. The Latin American teachers were more likely to teach English every day, and they were slightly more likely than the Asian teachers to view the videotaped teaching techniques as familiar. For the less familiar techniques, the Asian teachers showed a stronger preference for training in order to use the techniques, while the Latin American teachers showed a greater preference for materials incorporating the techniques.
The Familiarity of EFL Teaching Techniques

The primary focus of this project was to determine the familiarity of several teaching techniques which were fundamental to the textbook series. The validity of these results was enhanced through the use of multiple channels of communication about the techniques: each technique was demonstrated visually and aurally through the videos, and each was also described in a short, simple paragraph. The same three questions were asked about each video, with the results recorded on a 4-point Likert scale. When the results for the first two questions for each technique were aggregated, a mean showing the level of familiarity could be established and compared with the other means. By ordering these means from lowest to highest, we determined a familiarity index for the 14 techniques shown in the survey (see Table 1). The lowest means represent the techniques that the respondents rated most familiar, while the highest means represent the least familiar techniques. To understand this index, let’s look more closely at the most and least familiar techniques for the entire sample of respondents to the survey.

Warm up—A familiar technique (http://vimeo.com/68726588). Teachers throughout the sample strongly identified the warm up technique demonstrated in the video as familiar. This technique, in which a teacher reviewed vocabulary by holding up paper versions of objects and had the students repeat the names of each object in English, was identified as often used by 83% of the respondents, and as either often used or sometimes used by 100% of the teachers in the sample. It was slightly more familiar to the Asian teachers than to the Latin American teachers. Two thirds of the teachers stated that they would use this technique in the future without any training or materials. These findings are reinforced by the fact that using vocabulary cards with pictures was the second most common teaching technique mentioned by teachers in the 3–7 age group in response to survey item 41, which asked them to list their three most common methods (see the Appendix). Clearly, this technique was recognizable, and the teachers felt confident using it.

Taste test—An unfamiliar technique (http://vimeo.com/69497431). The results for warm up stand in sharp contrast to the results for the experiment demonstrated in a video for teachers of children in
the 8–12 age range. In this video, the teacher provided some instructions for a blindfolded taste test involving foods, and the children performed the experiment in pairs and recorded the results on a chart. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents stated that they rarely or never used an experiment as a teaching technique, and the overall mean of 3.00 centered on rarely in terms of frequency of use. Using an experiment was an unfamiliar technique to teachers throughout the sample. Roughly 75% of the teachers stated that they would need materials or training to use this technique in the future. Although the teachers in the sample were unfamiliar with this technique, nearly all stated that they would like to use it in the future if they had support through training or materials.

TABLE 1. Familiarity Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video name</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>EFL technique description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warm up</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>Use a warm-up activity with pictures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minibook/Pet</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>Read to the students and then read together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>Use an audio CD with a book to teach listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPR</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>Use commands and student motions (TPR).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter B</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>Use pictures to teach vocabulary for a letter of the alphabet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brave Abbie</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>Preview pictures to teach vocabulary before reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parts of plant</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>Use a real object such as a plant to teach vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>Use a song to teach vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backpack</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>Have students use their own set of pictures to review vocab.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided reading</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>Have students preview text features and summarize.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture walk</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>Use a picture walk as an idea for listening and vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>Use objects (such as paper money) with a role play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puppet</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>Use a puppet as a teaching idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste test</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>Use an experiment as an idea for teaching English.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Money—A technique with varied responses (http://vimeo.com/69276737). In addition to examining the most and least familiar techniques, we can also look at techniques which generated the broadest variation of responses from the survey participants. Among the 14 techniques, the responses that generated the highest variances were backpack and picture walk (for the 3–7 age range), and money and guided reading (for the 8–12 age range). The money video showed a teacher leading the class in a dialogue which was demonstrated between the teacher and a student, followed by pairs of students using realia (paper money) to perform a similar dialogue. This technique generated a wide range of responses from the survey participants, with roughly two-thirds (66%) stating that they used it often or sometimes and one-third (34%) stating that they used it rarely or never. This variation was even more pronounced when the results were analyzed by continent. While a broad range of responses was generated by teachers in both continental areas, the results also showed that a significant group of the Latin American teachers (36%) rarely or never used this technique (compared with 25% of the Asian teachers), and that a strong majority (64%) of the Latin American teachers felt that they would need a textbook or training in order to use this technique in the future.

Were the teachers in the sample who found the money technique to be unfamiliar different from the teachers in the sample who found this technique to be familiar? Further analysis revealed that the respondents who had rarely or never used the money technique (or had rarely or never seen it used) were likely to have fewer than 6 years of teaching (63%) and were very likely to have studied English language teaching at a university in their own countries (100%). Interestingly, this technique was more familiar to those teachers with no prior training than to teachers with prior university training in their own countries. These results possibly indicate that teachers who were relatively new to the profession may not have received exposure to certain techniques through the teacher-training programs in their countries.
When planning teacher-training workshops for particular countries, a more specific familiarity index may be most helpful. For example, Table 2 shows a few key differences between the respondents from Brazil and Indonesia in terms of the familiarity of specific techniques. Whereas the general sequence from the most familiar (warm up) to the least familiar (taste test) is similar to the familiarity index for all respondents to the survey, there are a few differences between the two countries. For example, guided reading was one of the most unfamiliar techniques for the respondents from Brazil but not for those from Indonesia. On the other hand, puppet was rated far more unfamiliar by the teachers from Indonesia than those from Brazil. Identifying the seven most unfamiliar techniques for each country (shown in bold in the table) makes it possible to set priorities for techniques to be demonstrated and discussed in teacher-training workshops.

The comments of several of the teachers in the final qualitative section of the survey vividly illustrate the construct of familiarity. In commenting on the optional question, “Why or why not would you use the series in your classes?,” 19 of 22 respondents pointed to positive features of the methodology, often highlighting the novelty of the techniques. For instance, as one teacher wrote,
Some of them were totally new for me: experiment, using an object when learning new words/facts, and using real objects in drama. I liked it and will gladly include them in my methods. (Item 52, comment 21)

Another teacher noted approvingly that the techniques are applicative, communicative, and fun for the students. Besides, it encourages student-centered learning processes. (52:16)

Other teachers felt the techniques were “interesting method(s) that would make the students feel fun while learn something” (52:12) and would “provide efficient learning” (52:22). These positive comments were balanced by a few teachers who felt that the techniques could only be used as a “supplement to our regular curriculum” (52:13) due to academic pressures, or noted a very high level of familiarity: “We already use many of these activities, so using the series would be supplementary” (52:4). Even the few negative responses still clearly demonstrated that these NNES teachers are already familiar with a broad range of EFL techniques. This level of familiarity challenges the NNES stereotype that EFL teachers must resort to “traditional” techniques due to lower levels of English proficiency.

Teacher Training Preferences
The results for individual techniques on the survey yield valuable data about teacher-training needs related to these techniques. For some, access to better materials would allow teachers to use the technique in their classes, while for other techniques training would be required. For example, nearly all of the teachers in Asia who observed the video puppet were interested in using the technique in the future, but 66% felt they would need materials and another 22% felt they would need training. The use of a song to teach vocabulary was much more familiar to the Latin American teachers than to the Asian teachers, but a majority of the Asian teachers (75%) would use this technique in the future if they had a textbook (with audio tracks) or training. Hence, the results of this survey have implications for teacher-trainers in each area of the world,
helping them prioritize certain techniques over other techniques which are more likely to be familiar.

To assess particular training needs, it can be helpful to look at clusters of techniques which fall within a particular category. For example, one cluster of techniques focused on literacy development. These techniques included minibooks, alphabet activities and, at the higher levels, guided reading of an academic text (see Table 3). Based on the results of the survey, what are the apparent training needs related to second language literacy? The minibook *Brave Abbie* (which assessed the technique of previewing pictures to teach vocabulary) was more familiar for the teachers from Latin America ($M = 1.5$) than those from Asia ($M = 2.13$), and 75% of the teachers from Asia indicated that they would need training or materials to use this technique in the future. A majority (63%) of the teachers from Latin America indicated that they could use this technique in the future without training or materials. On the other hand, the *guided reading* technique, which focused on reading strategies involving text features in a complex academic text, was more familiar to the teachers in Asia ($M = 1.85$) than those in Latin America ($M = 2.18$). Fifty percent of the Latin American teachers in this study stated that they would use this technique in the future if they had materials or training. For these literacy techniques, we can generalize that certain techniques were more familiar to teachers in some local contexts than to teachers in others, and that the teachers with less familiarity were eager for additional materials or training related to the technique. Although these generalizations only relate to the teachers in the study, the survey sample may be suggestive of broader trends related to training needs.

An analysis of the final section of the survey reinforces these generalizations and provides detailed information about training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3. Literacy Techniques With Means From the Familiarity Index</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minibook/pet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brave Abbie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided reading</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
preferences. Responses to the question “What type of teacher training would be most helpful for the teachers in your school?” fell into the categories shown in Table 4. Even though most of the teachers responded positively to the material in video form, in the end they also showed a strong preference for face-to-face training (either at conferences or in school-based workshops) over more individualized training such as reading books or viewing teacher-training videos online. It seems that teachers in these contexts value a more relational approach to training where they can interact with the trainer and be part of a community.

In several of the qualitative responses, the teachers expressed the idea that adopting the textbook series itself would function as a form of professional development by exposing teachers to challenging new methodology. This idea was illustrated by several of the comments written by teachers in the qualitative sections of the survey. One teacher’s comments summarized this view:

> Those methods will support teaching and learning process because they will enrich teachers and students and will develop their minds. Our English teachers still need improvement on their competency including most of them did not have English education background. Those methods will help the teachers thus will help the students. Note: I am a parent as well as a board member that are so thankful for having [this EFL series] as our English curriculum. (52:10)

From this perspective, simply adopting a new textbook series can lead to professional development by opening up new vistas for teachers through the process of trying out the techniques with their students.

### TABLE 4. Teacher-Training Preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Preference</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conferences with workshops by teacher-trainers</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops in your school led by teachers</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-training videos (online or DVD)</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking a university course on teaching methods</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading books that present or explain ideas</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSIONS

As we see from both the recent research literature and the results of the survey, a number of EFL teachers have already adopted an eclectic mix of techniques. The familiarity of many of the techniques illustrated in our survey is more general than NNES stereotypes would lead us to believe. The specific population we surveyed—EFL teachers of younger children in private schools—displayed a strong desire to adopt techniques that were less familiar if offered support through materials and training.

These results are consistent with other studies which show that NNES teachers have a strong desire to adapt new techniques to their local teaching contexts and, in various areas of the world, are already working together to do so (Bohn, 2003; A. M. Y. Lin, 2012; Palmer & Chodidjah, 2012). In the contextualization process, teachers of younger learners have felt free to draw from a variety of methodological orientations to create the best fit for their particular teaching situations. This supports the view of Beaumont and Chang (2011) that the dichotomous view of traditional and communicative methodology is no longer a functional perspective and is suggestive of Kumaravadivelu’s (1994, 2006) postmethod condition. We would argue that the construct of familiarity is more helpful than the traditional/communicative distinction when evaluating a range of EFL techniques to define teacher practices and training needs within local communities of practice.

The belief that NNES teachers are generally resistant to new techniques should also be rethought. Often when there is hesitation to implement new curriculums, it is not because the teachers feel they are unable to teach them or are unwilling to do so, but because the new techniques have been instituted in a top-down fashion without providing the proper training. A recent example of this problem is documented in a study of Korean teachers by Sang-Keun Shin, who notes that the willingness of novice teachers to use an innovative approach to teaching English to children was stymied by institutional pressures (Shin, 2012). As shown through the literature and our research, when teachers are given the opportunity to receive training, they are eager to learn
and incorporate new techniques into their classroom as long as they are given a voice in the process.

Suggestions for future training come from the expressed desires of teachers as well as the documentation of which techniques are least familiar in various regions. In recent EFL research and in our findings, teachers express a desire for communal training. While they believe that being provided materials and viewing videos which incorporate the various techniques is beneficial, teachers still desire to interact with those materials and videos with mentors and peers. Meeting together in a conference setting or having in-school workshops allows teachers to collaboratively adopt new techniques and improve their English by spending concentrated time in a more immersive setting.

Ultimately, the results of this survey will positively affect how we conduct teacher-training workshops in the future in contexts such as Brazil and Indonesia. The familiarity index will allow us to begin with what the teachers know and move toward techniques which are less familiar, while encouraging the teachers to use a collaborative approach to identify how these techniques fit within their communities of practice. We hope that our research paradigm, with its use of embedded videos in an online survey, might serve as a useful prototype for needs analysis for other training programs.

As EFL teachers adapt new techniques to their local contexts in collaborative settings, the training models that we have reviewed in the published literature can provide useful prototypes. For example, the cascading model described by Wati (2011) in Indonesia seems to provide clear benefits for both teachers and teacher educators. Incorporating the presentation of videos and materials during the initial sessions would allow teachers to learn new techniques and then meet together to discuss how to adapt them to their local contexts. As the teachers leave the training, they are then empowered to take the contextualized forms of the techniques back to their towns and schools. As they then set up training sessions for others, the communal model is continued, but in a way that is further contextualized and is cost-effective for large-scale training.
On a final note, we have seen that through the documentation of what NNES teachers of children in EFL classrooms are actually doing throughout the world, common stereotypes can be challenged and a more nuanced picture can emerge. As one of the teachers surveyed in our research shared, instead of seeing the techniques demonstrated in the video clips as a foreign methodology imposed from outside, she would like to adopt a textbook featuring these techniques due to their familiarity and “because I have used them, for my first, second, and third grade” (52:8). Further research is needed to provide a platform from which these NNES voices can be heard as they develop new interpretations of EFL pedagogy for young children.

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41. What are the three most common methods you use to teach English to your students? Results of Content Analysis (number of respondents mentioning each technique)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most common overall</th>
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<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role play/drama</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary cards</td>
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<tr>
<th>Most common: Asian teachers</th>
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<td>Games</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary cards</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role play/drama</td>
<td>5</td>
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<table>
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<th>Most common: Latin American teachers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio CD listening</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role play/drama</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary cards</td>
<td>7</td>
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</table>

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<th>Most common: Ages 3-7</th>
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<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary cards</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role play/drama</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio CD listening</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most common: Ages 8-12</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role play/drama</td>
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<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workbook activities</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading/answering questions</td>
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