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MEN AND MASCULINITIES IN GLOBAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

ROSLYN APPELBY

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ROSLYN APPELBY

ISBN 978-1-137-33178-6



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Men and Masculinities in Global English Language Teaching

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University of Technology Sydney, Australia

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First published 2014 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

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Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

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ISBN: 978-1-137-33178-6

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Appleby, Roslyn, author.

Men and masculinities in global English language teaching / Roslyn Appleby, University of Technology Sydney, Australia.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-1-137-33178-6 (hardback)

1. English language—Study and teaching—Foreign countries. 2. English language—Study and teaching—Foreign countries—Social aspects. 3. Sex differences in education. 4. Male teachers. 5. Education and globalization. I. Title.

PE1128.A2A574 2014

428.0071—dc23

2014025130

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

*To Tom, Nick and Lucy, and to the men who gave
their time so graciously for this research.*

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Transcription Conventions

((laughs))	non-verbal communication and gestures
<i>text</i>	emphasis by speaker
[. . .]	some original text has been omitted
[text]	inserted by researcher to ensure clarity
text –	speaker's false start or self-interruption

1

Masculinity and Heterosexuality in English Language Teaching

This book is about the experience, construction, performance, and effects of masculinity and heterosexuality in global English language teaching. It analyses masculinity as a social construction that is historically and geographically contingent. To illustrate this approach, and in keeping with the situational specificity of masculinity, it provides a particular focus on Western men teaching English in Japan.

The book argues that masculinity and heterosexuality have been invisible – as the unmarked dominant – in official histories and theoretical analyses of global English language teaching. Moreover, although gender and sexuality have been explored in an increasing number of books on language teacher identity and practice, these have focused almost exclusively on the experiences of female teachers and learners, while experiential accounts of men, masculinity, and heterosexuality have largely been ignored. The purpose of this book, then, is twofold. First, it aims to open a scholarly conversation about the cultural history, discourses, and experiences of masculinity and heterosexuality in English language teaching as a global industry. Second, it presents a series of studies that indicate a range of ways in which research on masculinity and heterosexuality in English language teaching might be approached in other contexts. In doing so, it opens the way for further consideration of gender as a significant dynamic in the personal and professional politics of English as a global language.

The first part of the book begins with an overview of theoretical concepts and discourses that have emerged in masculinity studies over recent decades. I then explore selected historical accounts and cultural representations of white, Western masculinity and heterosexuality that, together, illuminate particular aspects of contemporary English language teaching (ELT) as a gendered practice. The second part of the book draws on data generated in interviews with white, Western men living

and working in Japan as English language teachers over several decades, dating from the late 1980s to the present time. The context of Japan is of particular interest as the location of a sizeable ELT industry, as a site where the majority of 'native speaker' English language teachers are men, and as a site where Western men have been idealised in discourses of racialised erotic desire. Although Japan offers many distinguishing features as a location for foreign teachers of English, I expect that certain dimensions of these studies will resonate in other contexts and will provide a touchstone for wider claims about masculinities in a globalised profession.

Invisible men

More than a decade ago, Bethan Benwell argued that the burgeoning field of language and gender studies had been slow to include a focus on masculinity and that the near-exclusive focus on women and 'women's talk' had contributed to the phenomenon of invisible masculinity, whereby men are constituted as the unmarked, universal norm (Benwell 2003a: 155). Since then, much has changed in the field of language and gender studies, where masculinity has become a significant topic of scholarly interest (see, for example, Edley 2001; Kiesling 2005, 2007, 2011; Milani 2011; Wetherell & Edley 1999, 2009; and separate chapters in Cameron 2006; Coates 2003; Speer 2005; Talbot 2010). However, studies of gender and English language teaching remain primarily concerned with the experiences of women teachers and have tended to overlook the experiences of men and the effects of masculinity in professional practice (Davis & Skilton-Sylvester 2004). Moreover, although men have published research on almost every aspect of language teaching and learning, men's personal reflections as gendered participants in professional practice have been sadly missing. All this is perhaps understandable since, in many locations, women outnumber men in the language teaching profession. But it could equally be argued that the invisibility of men has served to perpetuate an unbalanced gender regime that continues to shape the professional experiences of both women and men. If we take seriously the notion that classrooms always operate in the context of broader social, economic, and political domains, then the connections between pedagogical masculinities – that is, the experiences of men as classroom teachers – and gender regimes in society at large, are worthy of investigation.

Heterosexuality has also been an unmarked category in ELT research and, as such, has received little explicit attention. Yet, as Cameron and

Kulick (2003) observe, sexual identities and practices are significant in shaping performances of gender, and many performances of gender will involve the affirmation of heterosexual identity 'because of the heteronormative assumption that heterosexuality is an indispensable element of "proper" femininity or masculinity' (p. 73). The absence of studies that explore heterosexuality in ELT might be explained by the difficult, and often taboo, nature of sexuality in the classroom, where relationships between male teachers and female students, for example, are 'sexualized as harassment' (Gallop 1995: 81). The result has been that both women and men, as language teachers, have been represented as 'sexless'. And yet research on education outside of the ELT field suggests that the frisson of eroticised attraction that can emerge within the pedagogical relationship is a significant experience for some teachers and students (see, for example, Gallop 1995; T.S. Johnson 2006; Sikes 2006, 2010). The construction and performance of heterosexual masculinity is not only about relations between men and women as teachers and students, but also about relations of status and prestige among men. Thus, in ELT, masculinity and heterosexuality are constituted not only in the relationship between male teachers and their female students or colleagues but also in the various relationships amongst men in professional and personal domains.

A further complexity for any consideration of masculinity in ELT concerns the ways in which gender intersects with other categories of difference, and especially with race and/or ethnicity, in the construction of teacher identity. As Kubota and Lin (2006) point out, professional practice in ELT inevitably involves groups of people who are 'perceived as racially and culturally distinct' (p. 472) and, given the historical links between ELT and Western imperialism, it is not surprising that the significance and experience of whiteness, and the positionality of white teachers and researchers, have been subjected to critical inquiry in a number of studies. However, like studies of gender more broadly, studies that focus on the intersection of gender and race have also predominantly been authored by women and have focused on the experiential and narrative accounts of women teachers and researchers. While this is not necessarily a shortcoming, it does raise questions about the absence of male teachers writing about their own experiences and positionality as men who are working in the racialised contact zone of an ELT classroom. It is only very recently that a few isolated studies of language teacher identity have taken seriously the production and experience of Western masculinity in a transnational contact zone: notable in this group are Lan's (2011) study of Western English language teachers in

Taiwan, Cho's (2012) study of Korean-American male English teachers in South Korea, and Stanley's (2012, 2013) study of Westerners' gendered identities in China. With these few exceptions, an understanding of the ways in which Western male identities are experienced within global English language education remains largely unexamined.

By turning the spotlight on white Western men's accounts of heterosexuality and gendered subjectivity, this book begins to address these gaps in research on professional identity in ELT and aims to contribute more broadly to an understanding of masculinity within ELT as a professional practice shaped by the diverse dynamics of gender and ethnicity. In doing so, it speaks to a broader set of challenges to do with the ways in which English language teachers negotiate the complex geopolitical context of their work. While the particular studies that form the basis of the book are located in a specific set of contextual circumstances, I believe they also speak more broadly to the transnational nature of ELT, and have significance for the sorts of conversations we have around teacher education and practice. Clearly, further research is needed on masculinity and heterosexuality in English language teaching, and I hope this book will encourage others in the field to explore these dynamics and their effects on professional practice.

The historiography of English language teaching

In the course of developing a broad background understanding of men and masculinities in English language teaching, I became aware of a striking, yet obvious, curiosity. It became apparent that extensive, historically contextualised accounts of men in English language teaching had already been written: conventional histories of the origins and influential ideas that have shaped the discipline, such as Howatt's (1984, 2004) *History of English Language Teaching*, are often written *by* men, and *about* men, in English language teaching. In such historical accounts, it would seem that men have singularly populated the practice, intellectual development, and professionalisation of English language teaching over several centuries. Indeed, Howatt (2004: 295) notes, as an aside, that 'there were very few women in ELT until it developed strongly in the United Kingdom in the 1960s'. This sole focus on men as traditionally the only participants in this field is all the more odd because in the present day, at least in the Anglo-American 'Centre' countries, ELT is a feminised profession. As Connell (2005a) points out, however, academic historical writing has, of course, always been about men – and mostly famous men. And yet conventional historical accounts of

men are not really about men *as men*, nor about the idea of masculinity as a social construct: the men in Howatt's *History* remain invisible as gendered beings, despite their overwhelming presence. Men, it seems, are 'everywhere but nowhere' (Tosh 2005: 32).

Another specific reason why histories of English language teaching are often populated solely by men is that the spread of English language and English language teaching was, for so long, linked to British and American imperial expansion. Indeed, I would argue that it is the original link between these broad sets of activities that has shaped the official histories of English language teaching as a highly gendered practice. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, the Empire 'was quintessentially a masculine arena' (Tosh 1999: 174), a domain for working men, for manly pursuits and for the production of 'frontier masculinities' (Connell 2005a: 74; see also Beynon 2002; Blunt & Rose 1994; Kimmel 2011; Mills 1994; Stoler 1995). It was in concert with this expansion over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the teaching of English language to speakers of 'other' languages in 'foreign' countries (as distinct from the teaching of English to children in British schools) emerged as an integral activity and eventually an independent profession based on the development and dissemination of 'scientific' knowledge.

Those developments that led to the emergence of ELT as an autonomous profession in the twentieth century were led, according to conventional histories, exclusively by men. In Howatt's *History*, the intellectual and practical foundations for this professional autonomy coalesced in the inter-war years around the work of three men working abroad as English language teachers in the 1920s and 30s: Harold Palmer in Japan (promoting his 'Oral Method'), Michael West in India, and Lawrence Faucett in China. Palmer and West, both British, and Faucett, an American, have been referred to, in language reminiscent of Empire, as the 'pioneers' who 'succeeded in establishing a principled [scientific] basis for the teaching of English to speakers of other languages' (Smith 2003: xi). The work of Harold Palmer was particularly important: his academic and research endeavours in Japan focused on the articulation of a 'scientific' pedagogical method for foreign language teaching, and his emphasis on oral communication in English language teaching has served to secure a central place for the native speaker of English in the ELT profession (Howatt 2004; Smith & Imura 2003).

The professionalisation of English language teaching was further strengthened by institutional activities which were also in the hands of 'a very closely knit group of men' (Howatt 2004: 295). These activities

included the establishment of an EFL teacher training course at the University of London Institute of Education (coordinated by Faucett); the founding of an EFL professional association and career structure (through the British Council); and the publication of coursebooks for British teachers working abroad. Together, these moves constituted 'turning-points' in 'marking the initial emergence of a "central" discourse on EFL teaching which could then be re-exported outwards to "peripheral" contexts' (Smith 2003: xvi) and promised a sense of professionalism and potential career structure for EFL teachers (Howatt 1984: 216). Given these links with the Empire, with 'science' and progress, and with institutional power, it is perhaps not surprising, then, that the conventional history of English language teaching as a profession has been populated by men.

Why Japan?

Any exploration of masculinity needs to be situated within a particular historical and geographic context. My own focus on the situation of Western men in Japan brings together many of the strands discussed above in the construction and experience of white Western masculinity and heterosexuality in global English language teaching. In part, my choice of Japan as a focus has come about serendipitously, initially through chance connections emerging from my interest in gender and language teaching in Asia and through the subsequent realisation that so many of my Australian male colleagues had taught, at one time or another, in Japan. To be sure, Japan is the home of a large and lucrative ELT industry that provides varied employment opportunities, at all levels, for a large number of white Western teachers, but I became curious to know just why so many of those teachers were men.

For many Western men (and women) who wish to work in Japan, English language teaching provides ready employment, but it is the gendered pattern of employment amongst Western teachers that is of interest for gender researchers. The exact gender breakdown of Western English language teachers in Japan is difficult to determine, but some indications can be gleaned from employment statistics published in Japan. These figures suggest that, on the whole, male teachers far outnumber women in this context, particularly amongst those Western teachers working in the Japanese higher education system. To a certain extent, the predominance of Western male teachers corresponds with the overall male-dominance in Japanese higher education, particularly in the university system. In two-year colleges, the number of Japanese male and female staff members is roughly equal, but men outnumber

Table 1.1 Japanese Junior College Staff by Gender

Japanese Junior (Two-Year) Colleges 2012	Male	Female
All full-time academic staff (n = 8,916)	50%	50%
Non-Japanese full-time academic staff (n = 180)	59%	41%
All part-time casual academic staff (n = 20,190)	50%	50%
Non-Japanese casual academic staff (n = 851)	61%	39%

Table 1.2 Japanese University Staff by Gender

Japanese Universities 2012	Male	Female
All full-time academic staff (n = 177,570)	79%	21%
Non-Japanese full-time academic staff (n = 6,835)	74%	26%
All part-time casual academic staff (n = 191,308)	71%	29%
Non-Japanese casual academic staff (n = 12,361)	64%	36%

women by approximately two to one amongst foreign (non-Japanese) staff (MEXT 2012). In Japanese universities, amongst all staff, men occupy almost four out of every five academic positions. Amongst non-Japanese staff, men outnumber women by three to one in full-time positions, and it is only in less secure casual academic appointments that the proportion of women increases slightly, though they still comprise only one third of staff in this category (MEXT 2012).

Although no definitive data is collected or published in regard to the number of English language teachers in the university system, estimates suggest that the pattern of gender disparity is even more pronounced in this disciplinary category. Hayes (2013), for example, extrapolates from several sources to estimate that male teachers comprise up to 90 percent of the 1,600 foreign (non-Japanese) full-time and fixed-term contract lecturers employed in ELT or related fields in Japanese higher education institutions. A further source of evidence for the predominance of foreign men across Japan's ELT industry can be seen in the membership of the Japanese Association for Language Teaching (JALT). In 2014, the non-Japanese membership of JALT stood at 1,732, of which 73 percent were male (B. Green, personal communication 28 April 2014). This contrasts with the gender pattern amongst Japanese members of JALT, where Japanese women comprised 68 percent and Japanese men only 32 percent of total membership (numbering 934). Similarly, approximately 75 percent of the membership of TESOL International (based in the USA) is female (R. Aronson, personal communication 21 June 2012),

Table 1.3 Membership of ELT Professional Organisations by Gender

ELT Professional Organisation	Male Membership	Female Membership
TESOL International (USA)	25%	75%
IATEFL (UK)	38%	62%
JALT (Japanese members)	32%	68%
JALT (non-Japanese members)	73%	27%

and 62 percent of the IATEFL membership (based in the UK) is female (V. Barnett, personal communication 5 November 2013), with these figures reflecting the feminised pattern of ELT employment in the English-speaking 'Centre' countries.

The question remains, then, why should this be so? Why should Western men so outnumber Western women amongst foreign English language teachers in present-day Japan? The gendered patterns of international marriage provide a possible, though partial, insight into this phenomenon. Over recent decades, the number of 'international' marriages between Japanese and non-Japanese has increased each year, from 5,546 in 1970 to a peak of 44,701 in 2006, before falling back to 23,657 in 2012 (MHLW 2012). In Japan today, international marriages now represent almost one in thirty marriages. Within these figures, a highly gendered and racialised pattern is evident: almost three quarters of all international marriages in 2012 were between a Japanese man and a non-Japanese woman (predominantly from China, the Philippines, Korea, and Thailand). However, where one partner is from the USA or the UK, the pattern is completely reversed, in that the most common marriage pattern is between a Japanese woman and a Western man. For example, in Japan in 2012, 86 percent of marriages between a Japanese and a spouse from the USA were between a Japanese woman and an American man. This pattern of gendered Japanese-Western partnering, shown in the tables below, reflects a now-substantial body of research that has explored Japanese women's desire for the West, Western men, and English language learning (see, for example, Bailey 2006, 2007; Kelsky 2001; Ma 1996; Piller & Takahashi 2006; Takahashi 2013). If this pattern of international marriage can be extrapolated – even partially – to the population of foreigners teaching English in Japan, then this would provide a possible explanation for the greater number of Western men in this professional location, particularly in jobs that might require longer-term residence.

The overall pattern of international marriages in Japan also reflects broader hierarchies of gendered desire that are significantly shaped by

Table 1.4 International Marriages in Japan, 2012

Origin of Foreign Spouse	Japanese Groom	Japanese Bride
All international marriages (n = 23,657)	73%	27%
Korea, China, Philippines, Thailand (n = 17,591)	84%	16%
USA or UK (n = 1,676)	14%	86%

Table 1.5 International Marriages in Japan, 2012: Comparison by Country

Japanese Groom		Japanese Bride	
Bride from:		Groom from:	
Korea	3,004	Korea	1,823
China	7,166	China	820
Philippines	3,517	Philippines	139
Thailand	1,089	Thailand	33
USA	179	USA	1,159
UK	52	UK	286

economic disparities between countries (see, for example, Constable 2005, 2009). I refer here to the norms of hypergamy – or 'marrying up' – that may lead women from poorer nations to marry men from wealthier nations, with the expectation of improved social status, income, and economic well-being, with mail-order brides being just one example of such relationships. For Western men in Japan (and other wealthy Asian countries), the economic situation can be quite distinctive in this respect, due to Japan's remarkable post-WWII economic success. In recent decades, as a consequence of this success, Japanese women have, for the most part, enjoyed an economic status equal to, or higher than, that of many Western men lured to Japan with the expectation of making money from English language teaching. Without the gender asymmetry inherent in unequal economic status, other factors to do with exoticised erotic desire, and ideologies of romantic love associated with the West, are rendered more salient in the construction and perception of Western masculinity in Japan. Yet erotic desire between the West and Asia also stretches back over centuries and has given rise to both historical and fictionalised accounts of the relationship between Western men and Japanese women that will be further explored in subsequent chapters and will, in turn, influence my reading of teachers' experiential accounts of English language teaching in Japan.

Chapter overview

The chapters in this book are designed to demonstrate a variety of approaches in the study of masculinities in global English language teaching. My reading of masculinities in these chapters is, however, of a particular kind. It is 'provisional and imperfect, open to debate and improvement' like any contribution to knowledge (Connell 2005b: xxv), and presumes to be neither definitive nor comprehensive. It aims, instead, to explore a range of issues around men's experience in English language teaching in a particular transnational context. Through these explorations, it seeks to contribute new understandings to the effects of gender in the practice of English language teaching as a global industry and provide an opening for further explorations in other contexts. This introduction has provided a starting point, by sketching some of the ways in which masculinity and heterosexuality have remained hidden in, or absent from, research on English language teaching. It has also pointed to some of the reasons why an exploration of men and masculinity might be significant in a particular context, such as Japan.

Contemporary studies in masculinities emerged in the wake of feminist theories developed in the late twentieth century, and have expanded into a flourishing field of scholarship over recent decades. Chapter 2 draws on research literature from fields such as sociology, poststructural discourse analysis, and postcolonialism to identify key themes, concepts, and discourses through which a study of masculinities in English language teaching can be approached. Inspired by the themes and discourses emerging in masculinities research, Chapter 2 also presents a summary of key discourses that are central to the positioning of Western men working as English language teachers in Japan.

In Chapter 3, I take a fresh look at historical accounts of English language contact between the West and Japan and argue that the historical processes that produced ELT as a global industry were, from the start, gendered. Opening with the seafaring accounts of fictional and historical castaways, the chapter illustrates the ways in which Western men's seafaring adventures and romantic engagements encapsulate the shifting power relationships between the West and Japan, and provided the grounds on which practices of language exchange and English language teaching emerged.

Chapter 4 focuses on fictional tropes and narratives that frame contemporary accounts of gendered and sexualised cultural contact between a masculinised West and a feminised 'other'. At the heart of these fictional narratives is the story of Madame Butterfly and her American

lover, Lieutenant Pinkerton. These figures, and the power relationships in which they participate, have been reworked and recirculated on the page, the stage, and the screen for more than a century, with various iterations reflecting broader shifts in global politics at particular historical moments. Tracing the historical provenance of these fictional tropes offers a means of understanding their continued appearance in present-day popular culture. Moreover, the intertwining of men's 'real-life' experiences with these fictionalised forms provides a particular insight into the cultural construction and performance of Western masculinity abroad.

Chapter 5 is an introduction to the empirical studies in the second half of the book. In this chapter, I describe the background to those studies, introduce the participants whose experiential accounts form the basis of the studies, and discuss the analytical process adopted. I also consider my own positioning in relation to my research site and to the participants in the study.

The first empirical study, presented in Chapter 6, examines the important concept of gendered embodiment and the production, positioning, and performance of the male body in a particular context of English language teaching. The contextual focus is men's employment in private English language conversation schools, a situation which presents both opportunities and challenges for those who work as English language teachers in Japan. Considered by some to be the lowest rung on a hierarchy of ELT in Japan, the *eikaiwa gakkō* (conversation school) industry has traditionally offered ready employment for native speakers of English and, for some Western men, has also afforded a means of meeting Japanese women. But the industry has also been known to commodify Western men, exploiting their embodied romantic appeal in order to attract potential customers in a competitive market. The dynamic interplay of embodiment, sexualisation, and professional aspirations constitutes a complex field for the men in this study to navigate, and their experiential accounts demonstrate the significance of masculinity for the large commercial enterprise of English language teaching.

Chapter 7 considers the ways in which the institution of marriage affects the status of masculinity in the ELT workplace. Distinctions drawn between singleness and marriage have a significant influence on the perceptions and experiences of the men in this study, with marriage serving as a symbol of mature masculinity, normative heterosexuality, and enhanced professional capacity. In the context of Japan, a Western man's marriage to a Japanese woman can also represent a form of cultural integration that appears to facilitate professional recognition

and advancement. In contrast, dominant discourses of marital maturity can reinforce a marginalised social and professional position for teachers who do not conform to heteronormative expectations.

Chapter 8 looks at Western men and professional masculinities within the context of ELT in Japan's higher education institutions. Through the men's accounts, the chapter discusses the ways in which a male-dominated industry of university teaching is discursively constructed as non-gendered and non-sexualised. It then considers how favourable images of Western male teachers are produced through a series of negative contrasts with Western women and Japanese men. Bringing these two aspects together, the final section looks at the men's accounts of homosocial networks, both inside and outside the ELT workplace, and shows how these are linked to discourses that may prove, however unintentionally, hostile to 'outsiders', including men and women who fail to comply with normative gender practices.

Following these situated empirical studies, Chapter 9 returns to the themes and concepts of masculinity outlined at the beginning of the book and discusses their realisation in English language teaching as a global industry. Through the insights developed in each of the preceding chapters, the intention here is to demonstrate how understandings of English language teaching can be enriched with studies of masculinities and heterosexualities and how theories of masculinity and heterosexuality can contribute to a more nuanced, contextually situated account of professional practice. I conclude with some possible directions for further research.

Notes on terminology

I recognise that several terms I have used throughout the book have deeply contested meanings. The terms 'white' and 'Western', for example, have been extensively problematised in critical whiteness and critical race studies as well as within the fields of applied linguistics and English language teaching. In keeping with contemporary scholarship, I see both 'whiteness' and 'Western-ness' (like 'masculinity' and 'heterosexuality') as discursive constructions and ascribed identity markers that have significant material and structural consequences for English language teachers and learners (as discussed, for example, in Kubota & Lin 2006). In this book, I have used the terms 'white' and 'Western' mainly for practical reasons, as these are the terms that are most commonly used in existing research literature emerging from the sites I have studied.

'White', 'Western', 'foreign', and the Japanese word '*gaijin*' are also the terms that my participants used most frequently, and interchangeably, to refer to themselves and other non-Japanese teachers of English in Japan. Throughout the text, they are used to denote English language teachers who are so-called 'native speakers' of English from what is considered to be the Anglophone Centre or Inner Circle, that is, the USA, the UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia, or New Zealand, where English is regarded as the dominant first language. These terms are also used by, and about, those teachers who are regarded as 'Westerners' in Japan and are fluent bilinguals employed to teach English but are not originally from English-dominant countries. Participating teachers in this category were from Europe and South America.

'Native speaker' is a term also used frequently by some of the teachers participating in this study. While the term has been deconstructed and found to be a fiction (see, for example, Seargeant 2009: 96), it is nevertheless a powerful term that is used to establish an ideal for English language speakers who hail from the Inner Circle countries and travel abroad to find employment as English language teachers.

To refer to the teachers' occupation I have used the acronym ELT, for English language teaching. To describe the industry, occupation, or profession in which the teachers work, I have used the acronyms TESOL for 'Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages' and TEFL for 'Teaching English as a Foreign Language', where this is the term used by a participant. While TESOL is widely understood within the industry, it is also a contested term and has been critiqued for its implied 'othering' of people who do not speak English as a first language. At certain points, I have also used the acronym EFL for English as a Foreign Language, in order to denote the teaching of English in countries where English is neither an official nor national language. For my purposes, EFL is distinguished from ESL, or English as a Second Language, which I use to denote the teaching of English, often to migrants or international students, in countries where English is an official language.

Finally, I have used the terms 'Centre' and 'Periphery' (Phillipson 1992) to distinguish between the original English-speaking 'Centre' countries from which English language teachers, and ELT methods, are dispersed throughout the non-English speaking world, known in Phillipson's analysis as the 'Periphery'. I have also used the term 'Inner Circle' (Kachru 1997) as a convenient shorthand to refer specifically to those countries from which most of my participants originated: that is, the USA, the UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.