

THE ENGLISH SPY NOVEL AND THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER ABROAD: KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES IN THE GLOBAL WORKPLACE

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Abstract

This paper is a critical examination of how the depictions of double agents in English spy novels can broaden our understanding of the types of knowledge, skills and competencies that language teachers need in order to become successfully acculturated to unfamiliar working environments. The specific cases considered are three fictional characterizations of double agents created by Graham Greene and John le Carré. The first aspect of spy work considered is the learned ability of spies to “pass” as locals, the concept of “going native” and the need to reappropriate these two terms. The second is the question of loyalties or “affiliations” to one’s home country and the foreign country where one is working, and the problematic nature of binary approaches that assume one must choose one or the other. The paper argues that foreign teachers who go native, learn to pass as a local and develop an intellectual detachment from both their native country and their new workplace, a detachment that allows them to transcend national, cultural and epistemological boundaries, are uniquely positioned to acquire the ability to work successfully in unfamiliar cultural settings in the global workplace.

1 Introduction

English novelists and their readers have continued to show a strong interest in stories of espionage since the genre of what is commonly termed English spy fiction first emerged in the work of Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), John Buchan (1875-1940) and W. Somerset Maugham (1874-1965). The genre encourages suspense, allows the writer to move complex characters across exotic foreign locations, and provides numerous opportunities for human drama on an international scale as characters confront life-threatening events that can change the course of history and deal with complex questions and various cultural and political themes. While spy novels continue to be published that betray the early childhood of the genre when they were generally thrillers or novels of adventure, some authors have created works that have taken on characteristics of a more serious literature that critiques powerful governmental institutions, their ideologies and the humans who work for them and are at times sacrificed by them on the global stage of international espionage. It is the authors of this latter approach that have created the characters and themes that are most relevant to language teachers working abroad or in intercultural environments. Although the real world of espionage also provides examples of relevance to language teachers working abroad, the portrayal of the global knowledge marketplace found in spy novels is more varied, revealing, and in some ways more accurate than what can be gleaned from government portrayals of the world of espionage, and is thus more

relevant to the work of the wide and growing variety of language teachers working abroad.

Because ideological imperatives condemn governments to portray the work of spies and double agents in binary terms of good/evil, and loyalty/betrayal and to justify their work with geopolitical arguments which ignore individual human experience, the information that governments provide on real cases of espionage is couched in these binary terms and concepts that fail to capture the complexity inherent in the work of spies. The result is a narrative of espionage that is of little value in understanding the varied worlds in which language teachers are working, and a narrative that shares similarities with the binary and problematic native/non-native speaker dichotomy that has continued to plague language teaching and research in this field. Novelists, however, are not bound by the same political ideologies that dictate a binary approach and cloud government portrayals. In addition, human complexity is their stock in trade. At the same time, the two novelists whose writings are the subject of this study worked for the British Secret Intelligence Serviceⁱ (SIS) and are thus capable of providing both accurate and nuanced portrayals of the work of spies. Indeed, both authors knew Britain's most famous double agent, Kim Philby, whose defection to the Soviet Union influenced their writing work as well as their personal and professional lives. The genre of the English spy novel then, in addition to providing light entertainment and insight into the political world of espionage, also explores many complex issues that face individual spies working in international or intercultural settings and does so without the ideological constraints and binary perspectives evident in governmental portrayals of espionage work.

The choice of double agents over ordinary spies as the focus of this study is due to the double agent having acquired sufficient knowledge of the target country to pass in that country as a local and also to develop an affiliation for that country (to go native) and yet continue to pass as a local in their own country. In addition, the issue of the loyalty or affiliation of double agents to both countries is a common theme in spy novels. Although Seidlhofer (1999) has made reference to non-native teachers as "double agents" in that they, "are at home with the language(s) and culture(s) they share with their students, but they also know the relevant terrain inhabited by the target language", and noted the need to view the concept of double agents in a more positive light, I have yet to discover any formal exploration of how the work of double agents from the spy world, fictitious or otherwise, may be relevant to language teachers, be they local, foreign, native or non-native (p. 334). Keeping in mind, therefore, the preliminary nature of this enterprise, this paper will analyze what can be learned from three fictional characterizations of double agents about how language teachers can develop the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to acculturate themselves to unfamiliar working and living situations in the global workplace.

The three double agents discussed in this paper are by no means exactly the same in what they can tell us about how language teachers might approach their work in unfamiliar settings. These differences, however, rather than detracting from their value for this study, provide multiple ways of understanding how individual teachers might approach their own adjustment to the varying workplaces they might encounter. Two aspects of the work of spies that are most relevant to language teachers working abroad and that will be discussed in this paper are their training that allows them to pass as locals and the question of the loyalties or affiliationsⁱⁱ of those teachers who

have gone native. Crucial to this discussion will be a consideration of how the notions of passing and going native can be reappropriated and thus divested of their pejorative and discriminatory legacies. A second and related consideration that will be discussed is how the concept of intellectual detachment from Edward Said can assist a language teacher in transcending problematic dichotomies such as those between native and non-native speaking teachers and foreign and local teachers and avoiding problematic ideologies and teaching approaches.

2 Globalization, local knowledge and reappropriating terms

As the profession of language teaching has become increasingly involved in the global knowledge marketplace, the need to consider the implications of this change for teachers working in unfamiliar environments has also grown. A variety of different approaches and terminology have been applied to better understand the globalization of this profession, each having some relevance to the discussion in its own way, and some more problematic than others. The native/non-native teacher dichotomy, initially seen as a natural and linguistically based place to begin, remains deeply ingrained in people's thinking. The distinction between local and non-local teachers has also begun to be examined to determine its relevance to the globalization of the language teaching profession. The issue of teacher training for the global marketplace is another area that has been given significant attention. The impact of national and international laws, especially those related to citizenship as a prerequisite for some categories of employment and to the issuing of visas and contracts, is also of concern to many teachers working abroad. Likewise, the growing economic disparity that has accompanied the globalization of recent decades and the roles of religion, thought (as in Confucianism) and political systems must also be considered. Finally, the application of critical pedagogy to language teaching has demonstrated the necessity of the inclusion of class, race, gender, sexual orientation and human rights in any consideration of the globalization of the language teaching profession.

The point of the above is not to suggest that the plethora of approaches and issues makes it impossible to discern a means for understanding how language teachers might adjust to the globalization of their profession and to varied work environments. Rather, it suggests that there may need to be multiple approaches employed to any consideration of how a language teacher might need to acculturate themselves to such diverse locations as North Korea, North Dakota, the immigrant suburbs of Sydney, Australia or the outer islands of Okinawa, Japan. It also suggests that this process of acculturation could change depending on the race, gender, citizenship, linguistic skills, teaching experiences and other characteristics of the teacher in question.

The pace of globalization has also resulted in a plethora of attempts to define, redefine and reappropriate the terms by which the discussion of language teachers in the global workplace is carried out. In the English languages, the terms "native" and "non-native speaking" teacher are still commonly used along with "foreign" teacher, "expatriate" teacher, "local" teacher, "foreign born" teacher, "alien", country specific terms such as "Assistant Language Teacher" and "Foreign Expert" (which designate non-Japanese and non-Chinese teacher in Japan and China respectively) in addition to author specific efforts such as "bilingual teacher" (McKay, 2002), "bilingual English speaker" (Jenkins, 2000) and "resourceful teacher" (Pennycook, 2012). In the search for appropriate terminology, descriptive terms that can be used as a basis for

discrimination, that lack a pedagogical basis or that fail to demonstrate how a teacher's approach can change through time based on place and changing circumstances should be rejected in any discussion of the globalization of the language teaching profession. In regard to the use of discriminatory terms, Pennycook (2012) cites the examples of how the reappropriation of "Black" and "Queer" has allowed these terms to be both reclaimed and given positive connotations. In the following paragraphs, I suggest that the terms "passing" and "going native" are two terms that might be reappropriated for similar purposes. In addition to allowing for the development of concepts divorced of their pejorative past, the reappropriation of these two terms allows for the inclusion within their definitions of transformative processes rather than only static descriptions, pedagogical considerations, and new meanings that can be applied to language teachers working in multiple and varied circumstances. By examining the different approaches that can be applied to understanding the globalization of the profession, reappropriating terminology to redefine how we might describe different types of teachers, and reconsidering the transformative processes that teachers might undergo as they transition to new workplaces, this paper proposes to illuminate the knowledge, skills and competencies any teacher might need when faced with the unfamiliar and the processes of acculturation that allow them to transcend problematic orthodoxies, ideologies, dichotomies and teaching approaches.

2.1 Concerning the native versus the local

Initial efforts to understand the globalization of the language teaching profession focused on differences between native and non-native speaking teachers and this remains a major consideration for many, especially lay people and those professionals who benefit from this distinction. Although the exposure of the myth of the superiority of the native speaking teacher (Phillipson, 1992), and arguments on the relative value of the non-native speaking teacher (Braine, 1999; Medgyes, 1992, 1999) have gone a long way toward a better understanding of some issues related to the globalization of the language teaching profession, arguments against the validity and usefulness of the concepts of native and non-native speakers have shown the native/non-native dichotomy to be a discriminatory and harmful construct (Pennycook, 2012). It should thus be seen as problematic for understanding the globalization of the profession. In contrast to the focus on the native/non-native dichotomy, less attention has been given to the question of foreign versus local teachers to determine if it might be an equally problematic dichotomy. Alternatively, just as Medgyes (1992, 1999), has suggested that although there are differences between native and non-native speaking teachers, these differences should be perceived as a continuum rather than a dichotomy, it may also be useful to consider differences between local and foreign teachers as a continuum that can be examined in ways that might add to our understanding of how the development of local knowledge, skills and competencies can enhance a teacher's ability to succeed in the global knowledge workplace by learning to pass as a local and transcending the difference between foreign and local.

The value of a consideration of questions related to locality and mobility in language learning has increasingly been examined (Canagarajah, 2005a; Pennycook, 2010, 2012). If these questions are applied to the role of language teachers in a globalized profession, a new focus on movement, location and the local knowledge, skills and

competencies of a language teacher rather than their status as a native or non-native can be shown to have several advantages. In the first place, while it is possible to define and codify local knowledge, the definitions of native and non-native have been shown to be socially constructed rather than linguistically based concepts and thus problematic for describing language teaching (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999). In addition, in contrast to an individual's status as a native or non-native speaker, a status often seen as connected with birth and race, most would agree that local knowledge can be imparted and acquired. This echoes the early call by Rampton (1990) to consider the expertise of a teacher rather than their status as a native or non-native speaker. Furthermore, even those who would prefer to define themselves as native or non-native speaking teachers can both be found working in unfamiliar cultural settings where their work would benefit from the acquisition of local knowledge. Finally, even so-called "native" speaking teachers using their native language to teach their native language in their native country can find themselves in need of acculturation when entering foreign worlds of classes full of students who have brought their local cultures of knowledge and learning from abroad. For all the above reasons, the acquisition of local knowledge in the anthropological, social, academic and professional senses (See Canagarajah, 2005c, p. 3-4) should be seen as of paramount importance for language teachers entering unfamiliar teaching environments.

2.2 *Passing*

In this consideration of the value of local knowledge, the extensive training that spies receive in the language and culture of the target country in order to blend into that country and "pass" as a local is especially relevant to language teachers who find themselves living and working in an unfamiliar setting. In contrast to static dichotomies, the concept of passing carries with it the advantage of including both process and result, the learning of skills over time that can lead to individual acculturation and transcendence of problematic dichotomies. Although there have been negative connotations associated with the concept of passing, for example the denial of one's race or ethnic identity in order to pass in a dominant culture and the at times impractical and problematic goal that language teachers and students can have of passing as a native speaker, these problems can be resolved by re-appropriating the term to describe a degree of successful acculturation to an unfamiliar work environment based on the acquisition of local knowledge, skills and competencies that manifests itself in the ability to be accepted as a local teacher.ⁱⁱⁱ Certainly, the fluency in local languages and knowledge of local customs, cultures and political and economic institutions that spies acquire in order to pass as a local are all knowledge, skills and competencies that language teachers can and should acquire when they embark on teaching work in a unfamiliar setting. While the spy might be expected to concentrate more on knowledge of military or political institutions and the language teacher more on knowledge of local educational systems, the value of the acquisition of culturally specific work related knowledge should be of equal importance to both.

The language teacher who has developed their knowledge of local languages and educational systems to the degree that they are able to pass as a local will certainly be better prepared to succeed in the classroom than one who is ignorant of the needs of their local students or the education system in which they are working. As I have argued in relation to the case of foreign English teachers working in China (Jacobsen,

2012a, 2012b), local expertise that extends to the lifestyle of the local community outside the classroom should also be seen as a prerequisite for success in the classroom. Classrooms are extensions of their societies, and the language teacher who is ignorant of local life outside the classroom runs the risk of living an isolated and ghettoized existence that negatively impacts on their work.

The language teacher working in an unfamiliar cultural workplace can also benefit from acquiring the knowledge that spies do of the socio-cultural diversity that exists in any society. Spies are made keenly aware of the diversity existent in their target culture and are trained to play on that diversity to achieve their goals by exacerbating differences to further divide groups in the target country. One would of course hope that teachers would not follow the example of spies seeking to disrupt local societies and would use this knowledge instead to better understand and accept these differences. This pairing of the acquisition of local knowledge with a critical approach to diversity would also carry with it the added benefit of allowing teachers to avoid succumbing to notions of cultures of learning that are based on essentialist notions of culture resulting in otherness and that ignore the diversity in societies, schools and classrooms (Kubota, 1999).

2.3 Going native

As the masters of the British Empire came to realize how the teaching of the English language could serve that empire and began to promote English through the sending of native English speaking teachers to the colonies, they were adding yet another layer to the personnel charged with managing the empire and continuing its strength and growth. English teachers thus joined the ranks of military men, missionaries, diplomats, colonial administrators, engineers, spies and other servants of empire. The secret agent, trained to move seamlessly from one society to the next, to pass as a local in multiple settings, possessing of the most intimate cultural knowledge and even top secrets of both governments, was capable of immense service to empires. The fear that these servants of empire might “go native” and sympathize with local natives, or even worse turn against empire and resist on behalf of the native inhabitants of the colonies, was ever present, but the individual foreign English teacher was perhaps not perceived to be in a position to threaten the foundations of Empire. Individual spies, however, and double agents especially, were clearly seen to be capable of inflicting great harm on the Empire because of the knowledge and skills they possessed.

The legions of English teachers who were sent abroad in service of empire were also a considerable resource of potential benefit to empire. Living amongst colonial people as cultural ambassadors, teaching the English language and culture to impressionable young people destined to become future leaders, training future generations of local English teachers and helping local students prepare for studies in London and other centers of British learning, the often young teachers sent abroad were promoters of one of Britain’s most valuable export products, its language and culture. Those who remained abroad for long careers and mastered the intricacies of local languages and cultures, the old hands who might at times be accused of having gone native, could become even more valuable tools of empire as they might develop the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to rise to positions of greater influence in local

educational systems. This could only be the case, however, if the negative connotations commonly associated with going native could be dispelled.

The common caricature of the English teacher who has gone native is of one who studies and embraces the language and culture of the society in which they are working, dresses in local garb and takes the side of local people over that of their compatriots, all at the expense of their work as a teacher.^{iv} Their teaching work is secondary to their mastery of the local language and culture as the teaching contract is only a means to live in the foreign country in order to master the intricacies of the local culture. The mastery of local expertise, though valued to a certain extent, has continued to be viewed with suspicion by both local and foreign teachers. Both the spy who betrays their country and the English teacher who seems to be spending an inordinate amount of time studying local culture, who abandons practices learned in their own culture, and who fails to perform the role of the foreigner expected by both local teachers and fellow foreigners can end up being mistrusted by their own compatriots as well as by local colleagues. “You are an Englishman, a foreigner. You should be teaching your classes in English.” This lack of trust in those who have gone native can also be seen in the lives of real double agents. Despite years of undercover work for the Soviet Union, British suspicions that he was a Soviet agent, and his subsequent defection to the Soviet Union, Philby’s Soviet handlers were reluctant to believe that he was indeed their man. Because the notion of going native, whether in colonial administration, the military, spying or English teaching, has carried these pejorative connotations since the beginning of the European colonial era, the notion as originally conceived can only result in problematic caricatures of little use to language teachers working in an unfamiliar environment. The notion of what it could mean for a language teacher to “go native” can thus benefit from a reappropriation of the term, and the critical examination of the portrayals of the double agents in English spy novels that follows will illustrate some examples of how this term can be reconsidered.

In order to illustrate the choice between serving empire or “going native” in the pejorative sense and working against empire, the foreign English teacher and spy can be depicted as two Weberian ideal types. The English teacher who has traveled out from the metropole and served as an agent of English linguistic imperialism as defined by Phillipson (1992), teaching the English language to serve the needs of empire and contributing to the destruction of local languages and cultures can be equated with the spy whose mission it is to encourage the corruption and collapse of local societies through stealth, blackmail, violence, the theft of the most valuable secrets of colonial societies and other means. The other ideal type is the English teacher who acquires extensive knowledge of the local culture, goes native in the pejorative sense and pays scant attention to their teaching work, and the English spy who though entrusted with the task of defeating the enemies of empire also goes native in the same sense and becomes a double agent working against the very empire that trained him and sent him forth.

While the above exercise allows one to easily identify which of these four ideal types are serving whose interests, they are based on negative associations, are limiting in that they leave little room for individual variance, and lack the ability to suggest means of transcendent change. When we turn to the real world of local schools and local societies inhabited by foreign teachers and foreign spies, these two ideal types

lose their analytical value. Indeed, when describing the affiliations of double agents in their novels, both Graham Greene and John le Carré have consciously avoided binary terms such as traitor, patriot, betrayal and loyalty. Rather, they have depicted their double agents as conflicted individuals who believe that their actions can be of benefit to governments at odds with each other, to the societies ruled by these governments and even to third parties. Because of the public and continuing nature of his revelations, the case of the former CIA and NSA employee Edward Snowden provides a rare glimpse into how this ambiguity in the issue of affiliations can also be found in the real spy world, this despite the desire of the American government to describe that world and Snowden's actions in binary terms of good and evil. Though denounced as a criminal and traitor by the American government, Snowden's argument that his actions have been of great service to that government, the American people and the broader global community has gained considerable resonance from wide sectors of American and international society.

Viewing the lives and work of language teachers who are working abroad in the binary terms of loyalty and betrayal is equally problematic. In a situation akin to the problems described by Phillipson (1992) as "linguistic imperialism" or by Holliday (2005) as "nativeness", individual language teachers can and do employ methods and materials from the metropole that harm the interests of their local students and colleagues and lead to dependent relationships with the metropole. Ironically, teachers working in a new locality are at times even encouraged by local authorities to apply knowledge, methods and materials from their native countries. At the same time, the field of English language teaching has grown increasingly aware of the dangers of imposing inappropriate foreign methods on local students and the need for this to be incorporated into teacher training (McKay, 2002). There are also many local teachers who strongly resist attempts made by foreign teachers to implement methods that are inappropriate for their locality. Viewing the choices that face teachers as being between a binary set of pejorative choices is reminiscent of the false dichotomy between native and non-native speaking teachers. The choices facing the teacher going abroad to work are not as simple and binary as between fostering linguistic imperialism or going native in the pejorative sense. As an alternative to this, the example of double agents from English spy novels suggests that the notion of going native might be reappropriated, divested of its negative past, and used to describe a process of developing an affiliation for the new culture based on the acquisition of local knowledge, skills and competencies and that can result in a language teacher becoming better acculturated to a new living and working environment.

While the reappropriation of "passing" and "going native" carries with it the benefit of divesting these terms of their discriminatory legacy, we need to be cautious lest it works to further exacerbated differences between local teachers and those from elsewhere, a process that Pennycook (2012) describes as "the hard work of critical resistance", the paradox of simultaneously reclaiming and rejecting a discriminatory division or dichotomy in order to undermine it (p. 97). Although Pennycook is referring here to undermining the native/non-native dichotomy, it clearly resonates with the distinction between local and foreign teachers. In the following analysis of three double agents from English spy novels, Edward Said's analysis of the intellectual detachment of exile will be examined along with the reappropriated concepts of passing and going native in order to demonstrate how discriminatory

distinctions between foreign born and local teachers can be undermined and rejected in favor of local knowledge and new affiliations.

3 John le Carré and his two double agents

Since publishing his first novel in 1961, and then achieving international prominence with *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold* (1963), written while the Berlin Wall^v was being built and while he was still serving in the SIS, John le Carré has devoted nearly his entire writing career to the world of the spy novel. The hallmarks of his work are a mistrust of empire in all forms, accurate portrayals of the banality of espionage work, and a focus on individual agents struggling against powerful political and personal contradictions. Although living and working during the Cold War, an era portrayed by the British government as a binary world of good versus evil, John le Carré has suggested in his novels that the world could be seen from a more pluralistic perspective.

The double agent is especially prominent in two of his works, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* (1974) and *A Perfect Spy* (1986). The critical acclaim of these two novels can be attributed at least in part to his nuanced use of double agents and the complexity that they bring to these two novels. The two double agents he created provide examples of how language teachers might learn to pass, to go native and to remain detached from or transcend dichotomies orthodoxies and political ideologies. In addition, they can also be used to remind teachers of the importance of individual relationships over ideological concerns. Although they share some features in common that are illustrative of how language teachers working abroad might adapt to unfamiliar work environments, it is in their differing approaches to their espionage work that we can discover the variety of examples necessary to illuminate how the broad spectrum of language teachers working in varying situations abroad might reconsider their approach to their work in ways that can transcend problematic orthodoxies, ideologies and dichotomies.

3.1 Bill Hayden: The tailor chooses Moscow

Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy, one of John le Carré's most famous works, tells the story of the search for a double agent working for the Soviet Union in one of the top five positions in the SIS. The author's depiction of this double agent allows us to discern the value of training in local knowledge, skills and competencies that allows the double agent to pass as a local in both societies and that might result in an agent going native and developing a loyalty to the society that is the object of their training. Although this double agent is the most ideologically driven of the three considered in this study and thus a less likely candidate for demonstrating the notion of ideological detachment associated with Said, the author's characterization of his betrayal and the reaction of his British colleagues to that betrayal nonetheless does bring into question the value of binary perspectives on the question of loyalties or affiliations and raises the question of the importance of personal relationships.

The double agent, Bill Hayden, is a member of the British elite recruited out of Oxford University to work in the SIS, this at a time when espionage was envisioned to be a job for the upper classes who would defend the British Empire against its enemies. Through his training as a spy, he was to have mastered the language and

culture of the enemies of that empire to the extent that he could work undercover in those countries, to pass as a local. As a member of the English upper classes, trained in its most elite educational institutions and given access to its most highly classified secrets, Hayden is also able to work at the very heart of the British spy world for many years without attracting notice from his British colleagues. He is thus able to move seamlessly between both worlds, to pass as a local wherever he goes. Just as individual language learners can learn to pass as a so called “native speaker” in their language of choice and transcend the native/non-native dichotomy, the foreign teacher who develops the same degree of competence to pass as a local has also effectively transcended any divide between foreign and local.

The process of acquiring local knowledge, however, can result in a deeper appreciation of and respect for other societies. In the case of le Carré’s characterization of Bill Hayden, this acquisition of local knowledge also results in him going native, that is developing an understanding of and affiliation for the other side, the very people he is charged with spying on, and either corrupting or bringing over to the British side. In the world of espionage, betrayal of empire and going over to the other side is the ultimate sin. Though trained to know the language and culture of the enemy, they are expected to use that expertise for the benefit of empire.

While the real world of espionage has unequivocal penalties for the double agent who has gone native in the pejorative sense, the world of spy fiction is more suspicious of dichotomies and more forgiving or understanding of the agent who has taken to the culture they were charged with destroying. George Smiley, the central character in *Tinker Tailor, Soldier Spy*, and the British agent entrusted with finding the double agent hidden in the SIS, marshals all his considerable skills to uncover the double agent who threatens not only the British establishment and state but also Smiley’s very life. Despite this, Smiley is ultimately and somewhat surprisingly sympathetic when he discovers that an old friend, and a man who cuckold him, is the double agent. Smiley and other British colleagues that Bill Hayden has betrayed seem reluctant to denounce him, finding the personal relationships perhaps as compelling as the need to be loyal to a particular country, its institutions and its empire. Though initially angry at this betrayal by his friend turned double agent, Smiley is able to understand his willingness to go against the very system that raised and nurtured him. “Smiley felt not only disgust but, ... a surge of resentment against the institutions he was supposed to be protecting ... why should anyone be loyal to them?” (le Carré, 1994b, p. 236). Here, the author uses the vehicle of the double agent to demonstrate his mistrust of binary approaches to the question of where one’s affiliations might lie.

In a similar vein, although it may be appropriate to ponder where the affiliations of individual language teachers might lie, it would be a mistake to assume that the only choices are to serve an amorphous English linguistic imperialism or go native in the pejorative sense and serve some equally amorphous or ill-defined and idealized local equivalent that even local teachers may well be at odds with. As will be discussed later, the creation of a false dichotomy between competing ideologies masks the benefit of standing between or apart from those ideologies. Rather than choosing one side over the other, the resourceful foreign teacher is more likely to develop an approach that understands both but embraces neither. In addition, it can be in some cases difficult or impossible for foreigners to become fully acculturated to or accepted by local societies, especially in those societies where cultural distance is especially

great for the foreigner or where local identities are defined based on exclusive notions of race, gender or other such insurmountable barriers. In these situations, the language teacher may not be able to pass unnoticed as a local in the new location. This should not exclude them, however, from the possibility of going native in the reappropriated sense discussed earlier in this paper that is to develop an affiliation for the new culture based on the acquisition of the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to become acculturated to the new workplace.

3.2 Magnus Pym: A perfect spy serving both sides

In *A Perfect Spy*, John le Carré's most autobiographical work of fiction, the double agent Magnus Pym grows up along lines similar to that of the author, with a father who is a con artist and with experiences studying in public schools and a university in Switzerland, studying again at Oxford and then working for British military intelligence before joining the SIS. In the character of Pym, the author shows another spy who develops the skill to pass in both societies and goes native. Pym is also a double agent who defies the binary characterization of the double agent as one who betrays one country for another. Instead, and in contrast to Bill Haydon, Pym seeks to serve both countries, to act as a knowledge bridge between these two countries and chooses to do so based more on personal relationships than political ideologies. In this regard, Pym is the more transcendent character, one who is able to detach himself from an ideological dichotomy and thus of more interest to language teachers who would want to avoid arriving with inappropriate foreign baggage as well as avoid succumbing to problematic local orthodoxies, ideologies or teaching approaches.

While studying in Switzerland and working as a junior apprentice for the SIS, Pym betrays his stateless^{vi} friend named Alex to those services, an act that later assists that friend in recruiting Pym to work as a double agent for the Czechoslovakian secret services. Alex uses Pym's guilt, their friendship and Pym's predilection to please those around him to persuade Pym that the two can help each other's careers and make a more peaceful world through the sharing of classified information. Though not born into elite British society, Pym aspires to belong and has made a careful study of and acculturation to that world that results in him developing the skill to pass as the quintessential English gentleman, soldier, diplomat, husband, father, son or any other role he is asked to perform. His ability to pass makes him the perfect spy of the title. But although Pym is also a secret agent trained to serve Britain, he forsakes that training, goes native, and due to his skill at passing, is able to take the side of the enemy without being discovered for many years. In *Magnus Pym* we also have a double agent whose affiliations are as much to individuals as they are to ideologies, and one who believes he is serving a higher interest that will ultimately benefit both sides.

The ability of the language teacher to act as a bridge between their native country and the country in which they are working, that it to serve both countries, is a skill that is perhaps too often overlooked when considering the relative value of local and foreign teachers. Just as the native/non-native dichotomy argues for a binary perspective on language teachers, one is either a native or a non-native, it is commonly assumed in the realpolitik world of spies that the double agent is a binary agent, betraying one country to serve another. Though the vehicle of the spy novel, however, le Carré shows a more multifaceted Magnus Pym who believes that rather than choosing one

country over another, he is serving the interests of both by acting as an efficient knowledge bridge, sharing with both sides the most closely guarded knowledge of the other. In describing the thoughts of another double agent in his novel *Smiley's People*, le Carré (1994a) writes, "*Gentlemen, I have served you both well*, says the perfect double agent in the twilight of his life" (p. 777). In a similar fashion, the English language teacher who leaves their own country to work in another need not choose between merely serving the interests of the Kachruvian core English speaking countries or making themselves over as a local teacher, that is going native in the pejorative sense. Rather, the foreign teacher can serve their native land, their new locale, and broader communities, educating and learning from each. Indeed, it can be argued (Said, 1994; Jacobsen, 2012b) that it is in the very crossing of national, cultural and epistemological boundaries, the mastery of knowledge in the new locale and the reflection that one can achieve by physical and intellectual detachment from both one's native and new local orthodoxies that allows the language teacher, writer of fiction or other exile to know and serve both their own and their adopted culture, and to do so from perspectives that non-exiles - those rooted in only one community - might not so easily develop.

Ironically, both the language teacher and the spy must be cognizant of the fact that their acquisition of local knowledge might not always be perceived in a positive light. In the end, the double agent is trusted by neither side. Likewise, the so called "foreign" or "native" teacher who adapts to the use of the local language and local ways of living and teaching runs the risk of being viewed as having lost their "foreign" or "native" value. In some extreme cases of xenophobia and mistrust, language teachers who have dedicated their lives to a country other than their native homeland such as during the Cultural Revolution in China have even been accused of and incarcerated for spying for their home countries.

The issue of affiliations to individuals rather than political ideologies that is so well portrayed by le Carré in the character of Pym, and again by Greene in the final double agent, should also give language teachers pause to reconsider the important role played by individual personal relationships in the processes of language learning and teaching. In addition to reflecting on the personal in their characterizations of double agents, both le Carré and Greene also emphasize the plodding banality of espionage work over the action and violence still found in the genre, a banality that can mirror so well the working lives of the many language teachers burdened with immense class sizes, heavy teaching schedules and mind numbing administrative responsibilities. For teachers facing these workloads, the consideration of issues related to the cultural politics of language teaching can at times be of less import than issues related to their individual relationships with students, colleagues and the wider community in which they live and work. This is not meant to depreciate the value of critical pedagogy and all that this field has contributed to deconstructing the myths that language teaching is immune from politics or that the teaching of dominant languages such as English is natural, neutral and beneficial (Pennycook, 1994). Rather, it is meant to suggest that the strong personal loyalty to an individual exhibited by Pym has its counterpart in the teaching world, and these personal relationships can be independent of any consideration of ideology or a teacher's status as a local, a native, an outsider or an exile. Indeed, language students often seek after individual teachers from their own and from different cultural backgrounds to stand as models of language learning and

language use, and these individual relationships can be as significant in the language learning process as any text, methodology or other source of knowledge.

In the foregoing discussion of Pym, we can see another example of passing and going native and how they are relevant to language teachers working abroad. In addition, in emphasizing the power of individual relationships between spies from differing cultural and ideological backgrounds, the English spy novel here again illustrates a useful example for language teachers who are working in unfamiliar environments, regardless of whether they view themselves as local, foreigners, native speakers, non-native speakers or prefer to transcend these labels.

4 Graham Greene's double agent: Transcending orthodoxies

Graham Greene's class background and education in English public schools and then Oxford made him an ideal candidate for the SIS during World War II. His forays into spy fiction and political topics of his time, however, increasingly indicated an unwillingness to toe the ideological line of the British establishment. Greene's writing is also characterized by a concern with moral ambiguity, evil and their effect on human lives. Although Graham Greene is not known primarily for his writing of spy fiction, at least five of his works have major characters and plot lines that involve the world of espionage: *The Confidential Agent* (1939), *The Third Man* (1949), *The Quiet American* (1955), *Our Man in Havana* (1958), and *The Human Factor* (1978).

In the early stages of his writing career, Graham Greene tended to classify his writing into two types, entertainments and novels. While the earliest of his spy novels, *The Confidential Agent*, falls into the former category and shares much in common with works such as John Buchan's *The Thirty Nine Steps* (1915) from the early era of adventure thrillers, by the time Greene wrote *The Human Factor*, the distinction between entertainments and novels had become less pronounced. In *The Human Factor*, Greene created his most well developed characterization of a double agent. This double agent is the least ideologically motivated of the three double agents of this study, and as suggested by the title of the novel, he exhibits a stronger sense of loyalties to individual humans than to nation states or their ideologies. This lack of allegiance to nation states and ideologies allows him to detach himself from the binary political ideologies of the Cold War based on nation states and develop stronger allegiances to individual humans, thereby transcending that ideological dichotomy in an example suggestive of how language teachers who are working in unfamiliar cultural settings might also transcend cultural, epistemological, ideological and pedagogical boundaries and dichotomies that divide the profession and hinder teaching work.

4.1 Maurice Castle: detachment & affiliation to neither side

Maurice Castle, the main character in *The Human Factor*, is a member of the SIS who has been supplying the Soviet Union with classified information since his return to Britain from a posting in Africa. Castle comes from a class and educational background typical of the English spy of that period and similar to that of the author himself. By the time we meet Castle, he is a long-standing and trusted member of the SIS with a responsibility for the former British colonial areas of Africa, trusted in large part because of his family, class and educational background. He has also

already gone native in the reappropriated sense of the term as well as completed the transition from servant of the British post-colonial effort in Africa to an agent passing classified information to the Soviet Union. On learning that a leak has been detected in his section of the SIS and that further clandestine work will reveal him to be a double agent, he decides to retire. He then discovers that the United States, Britain and West Germany are preparing to secretly cooperate with the white government in South Africa and that that government is contemplating the use of nuclear weapons to maintain their apartheid state. Although he knows that leaking this information to the Soviet Union will mean that he will be discovered and must then attempt to defect to the Soviet Union and leave his wife behind in Britain, he decides to do so even though it risk his life and their happiness.

As was the case with Pym, Castle's transition from British agent to double agent provides another example of how viewing a person's affiliations in binary terms masks the complexity facing both spies and language teachers as they work in varied international and intercultural setting. In contrast to Hayden and Pym, however, what little political allegiance Castle exhibits is not to the two sides of the Cold War dichotomy, his own country or the country he is sending secrets to. In fact, in the author's (Greene, 1978) own words, Pym wishes to send a "signal of defiance to both the services" (p. 142). Rather, his affiliation is to a third party, his African wife and the oppressed people of Africa, a people who do not belong to either the East or the West. Pym has gone native, developed a strong affiliation to a new people, but it is not Britain's enemy in the Cold War.

What Castle does share with Pym, however, is a stronger sense of loyalty to individuals than to nation states. His affiliations are more personal than political, stemming from his love for his South African born black wife, his desire to thank a South African communist who assisted him in spiriting her out of that country as well as a strong affinity for the people of Africa, especially those suffering under apartheid in South Africa. Castle has not chosen to provide the Soviet Union with sensitive information due to any political affinity with that state or its ideology. Living and working in the binary political world of espionage, he chooses between one of two sides in order to make a difference, and the Soviet Union appears to him to be more likely to help the people of Africa than the British or the Americans. When it appears that his leaking of secrets to the Soviet Union has been detected, he attempts to defect to the Soviet Union even though he is neither a Marxist nor particularly enthralled at the notion of living in the Soviet Union. He does so in part because he is appalled at the behavior of the SIS who are willing to cooperate with their counterparts in the racist South African state security services and whose bungling results in their killing of his innocent colleague whom they suspected to be the double agent.

Castle did not set out to "betray" his country. Nor did he feel any particular affinity to the Soviet Union, a fact that the author makes abundantly apparent as Castle attempts to flee Britain and again in the final chapter when he depicts Castle at odds with his Soviet handlers in his self imposed exile in a barren Moscow apartment. This is not a binary story of good and evil. Rather, he has developed a sense of loyalty to a third party. He deeply loves his black South Africa wife and her child, and through the experience of living there and with his wife back in Britain, he goes native and comes to develop a personal loyalty to them and to South African friends and a somewhat broader affiliation to the plight of Black Africa as a whole. He is white, but as

described by one of the characters in the novel, he has become a “naturalized black”, a white Englishman who has gone native. It is these African people that constitute the human factor in his deliberations over who to serve.

While clearly a different story from the true-life defection of the British double agent Kim Philby to the Soviet Union, Greene’s take on the double agent in this novel was informed by Philby’s defection and the personal relationship Greene had with him (Sherry, 2004, p. 604-605). Philby was the most prominent member of a group of British spies, collectively referred to as the Cambridge Five, who spied for the Soviet Union during the time they worked for the SIS, Foreign Office and or other organs of the British establishment. During the time Greene was employed by the SIS, he worked under Philby in Britain and socialized with him outside of work. Green’s decision to continue that relationship with Philby after his defection to the Soviet Union, and after the rest of elite British society had turned against Philby, indicates that Greene own concept of loyalties was certainly quite different from that of the British government and elite British society in that it devalued the nation and emphasized the personal. That personal relationship allowed Greene to pen the foreword to Philby’s 1968 autobiography (cited in Sherry, 2004) and excuse Philby for his treason by writing, “He betrayed his country – yes, perhaps he did, but who among us has not committed treason to something or someone more important than a country” (p. 751).

Castle never acquires the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to pass as a local in the Soviet Union. What he acquires is the ability to critique the two dominant ideologies of the Cold War, and the result is that when he goes native, it is to a third party. Just as Maurice Castle was at odds with both Britain and the Soviet Union, the two countries he was ostensibly working for, so language teachers who have left their own native countries can also find themselves at odds with both the new societies in which they are working and the societies from which they have come. This lack of affiliation to either side, however, need not always be seen as a hindrance. Rather, it can be seen as a positive perspective akin to the notions of exile and detachment from Said (1994, 2000), Said’s (1999) notion of what he terms being “out of place”, or the perspectives of “double vision” or “inbetweenness” to use Bhabha’s terms (cited in Canagarajah, 2004, p. 14). This detachment or inbetweenness is a perspective that can allow language teachers to more clearly see and critique problematic orthodoxies, ideologies and conventions, both local and foreign, and avoid succumbing to them. According to Said (1994), the position of “intellectual exile” is also one that can create conditions that allow exiles to become “marvels of adjustment” to the culture to which they have been exiled (p. 50-51). The language teacher who is forced to leave their own country or who chooses their own career abroad can also avail themselves of this detachment from problematic orthodoxies and ideologies to develop approaches to their life and work that allow them to better understand local pedagogical needs and innovate successfully without imposing inappropriate teaching methods from abroad or succumbing to equally problematic local methods.

5 Conclusion

Just as the predicaments facing Bill Haydon, Magnus Pym and Maurice Castle are examined, understood and resolved in the world of the spy novel without resorting to daggers, guns, and fast cars, so the globally mobile language teacher, akin in many

ways to the double agent, exile, or refugee, must also rely on intellectual processes to become a more resourceful teacher able to draw on and add to their knowledge, skills and competencies in order to adjust and become acculturated to unfamiliar work environments. Indeed, it is likely that many language teachers who choose to live in new and unfamiliar working environments are predisposed to acquiring local knowledge necessary to pass as a local, to go native and yet to remain somewhat detached from both their native and their newly adopted societies. For some teachers in some situations, total assimilation may be possible and preferred. They become natives. They become locals. However, given that legal, racial, cultural and other limits placed on the role of teachers from the outside can make it impossible for outsiders to become fully assimilated in some societies, the state of intellectual detachment can be a step on the road to acculturation or a permanent state. It can also be a preferred state when it might be better to distance oneself from problematic pedagogical orthodoxies encountered in the new locale or left behind in another locale. The path to acculturation will be different for each teacher.

Though a preliminary study, the discussion of the three examples discussed above suggests that research on the acculturation of language teachers working abroad can indeed benefit in several ways from an analysis of the depictions of double agents in English spy novels language. These include the value of acquiring local knowledge, skills and competencies and of learning to pass as a local, to go native, to work to undermine problematic dichotomies, and to maintain an intellectual detachment from problematic pedagogical and other orthodoxies.

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Endnotes

ⁱ Although the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) underwent a number of name and organizational changes during the period covered in this study, the organizations that the authors and their characters were associated with will all be referred to by this name unless information allows this author to be more specific.

ⁱⁱ My preference for the term “affiliations”, a term I wish to reappropriate from Rampton (1990), over “loyalties” is an attempt to find an alternative to the binary terms “loyal” and “disloyal”. Whereas Rampton uses the term to describe a relationship with a language, I wish to use it here to refer to the relationship a language teacher can develop with a new or unfamiliar work environment.

ⁱⁱⁱ The inspiration for re-appropriating and applying the concept of passing to describe the process and result of a teacher’s acquisition of local knowledge comes from Pennycook’s (2012) critique of Piller’s (2002) discussion of the ability of language students to pass as native speakers.

^{iv} A somewhat humorous but instructive illustrated example of this caricature can be found in McConnell, D.L. (2000) who then goes on to describe an ideal type he terms “Nipponophiles” that is similar to the colonial notion of the teacher who has gone native (pp. 202-205).

^v The building of the Berlin Wall, the most profound physical manifestation of the dichotomy between East and West during the Cold War, had a profound impact on John le Carré as he began his career.

^{vi} Alex is not only stateless, but also from Karlovy Vary (Carlsbad), a city that passed between multiple empires and countries, so that when he meets Pym, his lack of an affiliation to a single nation state has already been established.