CHRISTIAN DISCOURSING ACROSS TELLINGS OF THE SAME STORY: A CASE IN EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHER’S NARRATIVES

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Abstract
This study explores the linguistic ways an EFL pre-service teacher frames English language teaching (ELT) within the context of his religious (Christian) belief. Such ways are encapsulated by the notion of Christian discoursing. Central to this notion is how Christian texts are interwoven with non-religious texts such as ELT practices. The importance of the discoursing transpires when the Christian texts are believed to have some transformative impacts on a teacher’s ELT practices. From the three collected tellings of the teacher’s same teaching experience over a period of less than three weeks, it becomes apparent that his Christian discoursing is similar across tellings in terms of the underlying memory (i.e., “reliance upon God”) and yet slightly or very different from one telling to another with regard to wording and phrasing of routine formulae, including collocations, and allusions.

Keywords: Christian discoursing, telling(s), teaching, routine formulae, collocations, allusions

INTRODUCTION
In light of the Christian teaching in which Adam was told to name things and living creatures – with words, of course – in the garden of Eden (see Genesis 2:19), the divine mandate of nam-
ing has ever since then set the tone for discoursing by humankind. In essence, naming is one aspect of discoursing. In Bahasa Indonesia, naming is *penamaan*, with *nama* as the head noun or root word and *pe-* *-an* as an affix (i.e., prefix *pe-* plus suffix *-an*) indicating the process of giving, making, or coining names. Similarly, *pewacanaan* (*pe-* + *wacana* + *-an*) in Bahasa Indonesia captures the very notion of *discoursing* I suggest in this essay: the process of making discourse[s].

*Christian discoursing* is a specific kind of discoursing which is produced by Christians whose discourses are exclusively related to the embedment of God’s discourses or any discourses that are claimed to have been revealed or inspired by God or God’s people (e.g., prophets in the Old Testament, apostles in the New Testament, pastors in today’s churches). This is in line with Ferguson’s (1985) general understanding of religious discourse that addresses how “…human beings can interweave fixed sacred texts with free texts in ways that accomplish various communicative goals to the satisfaction of the participants” (p. 209). Fixed sacred texts in Christianity come from God, biblical texts, and God’s people whose spiritual authority is acknowledged by churches.

In terms of its impact, Christian discoursing can be used at any point between two ends of “old” and “novel” continuum. While the “old” end typically has a *reproductive* impact (echoing, if not parroting, prior discourses), the “novel” end has a potentially *transformative* impact. Let me begin with the “old” one. The use of an “old” plane of discoursing is by default consistent with human’s need for consistency, especially to people speaking the “same” language; otherwise, the linguistic chaos, reminiscent of the biblical account of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11, will never cease. Bakhtin (1981, 1986), has also, to some extent, discussed how present discourses can be traced back to prior discourses. Regarding Christian discoursing, referring to prior discourses has been a common practice. One of the impetuses of “interweave[ing] fixed sacred texts” (Ferguson, 1985, p. 209) like the Bible is as follows: “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein…”
Christian Discoursing Across Tellings of The Same Story (Joseph Ernest Mambu)

(Joshua 1:8, KJV); In Bahasa Indonesia, the first clause reads: *Janganlah engkau lupa memperkatakan kitab Taurat ini…* (literally translated to “Do not forget to keep saying the Law…”), which fits my purpose of discussion here more suitably; Thus, *memperkatakan* or *memperwacanakan* (i.e., discoursing) has a reproductive impact on the Israelites in particular and Christians in general who depend on rote memorization to “keep saying the Law.”

Unlike the reproductive use of the “old”, the use of a “novel” (transformative) plane of discoursing may be realized by using an “old” discourse for a new insight. Inherently, all discourses stem from the “old”, the already said, when it comes to using single or multiple words. As I noted earlier, using totally new words as what happened post-Tower of Babel will confuse people. However, it is possible to use these “old” words to come up with new, nuanced meanings or *wacana* (recall the Indonesian word *wacana* for discourse). The “novel” meaning usually extends a meaning from a certain context to another. In other words, the “old” meaning applies in a “novel” context – prophetically, in Christian discoursing. As Becker puts it – cited in Tannen (2007):

> “Languaging can be understood as taking old texts from memory and reshaping them into present contexts. (9)…
> “All languaging is what in Java is called *jarwa dhosok*, taking old language (*jarwa*) and pushing (*dhosok*) it into new contexts” (185). (p. 11, italics original)

“Languaging” in Becker’s formulation is the very notion of discoursing I am talking about here.

For instance, in the passage telling that the world hated Jesus and his disciples, Jesus said: “But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, *They hated me without a cause*” (John 15:25, King James Version [KJV], italics original, underline added). This is a reference from David’s Psalms in the Old Testament: “Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: *neither* let them wink with the eye that *hate me without a cause*”; “*They that hate me without a cause* are more than the hairs of mine head…” (Psalms 35:19; 69:4, underlines added). Thus, citing someone else’s words,
phrases, or sentences supports the idea that discoursing is a way of Christian life, which is especially popularized by Jesus Christ. More broadly, this affirms Bakhtin’s (1981) observation that a word (or discourse) is “half someone else’s, [and] becomes ‘one’s own’ only when the speaker populates it with his[her] own intention, his[her] own accent, when [s/]he appropriates the word, adapting to his[her] won semantic and expressive intention” (p. 293).

Numerous studies have been conducted in investigating discoursing in narratives of personal experiences of, inter alia, (1) living under the communist regime of East Germany in (Bredel, 2003), (2) unfavorable encounters with people (Wortham, 2001), specifically those elicited in French and Portuguese (Koven, 2004), (3) second language or literacy teachers’ and students’ lives (see edited articles in Bailey & Nunan, 1996, and Johnson & Golombek, 2002; Knoeller, 2004), (4) converting to another religious belief (Mambu, 2005; Stromberg, 1993). None of these studies, however, have specifically addressed how the discoursing of religious values plays a significant role in a pre-service teacher’s attempt to grow professionally. Moreover, Crookes (2009) recently admits that “[d]iscussions of spirituality or religion in TESOL… have been… looked on with extreme skepticism…” (p. 26). This study is to challenge such skepticism and lend empirical support to the notion that religion is one source of ideas for “a philosophy of teaching” (p. 1).

Thus, we are now in a better position to inquire into how Christian discoursing transpires in multiple tellings of the same religiously oriented story of experiences during an EFL pre-service teacher’s teaching practicum. In particular, I would like to delve into how religious values are salient in his two written and one oral narrative of the same experience.

METHOD

The following data is taken from my larger project on analyzing “evaluations” (i.e., comments of a narrator or those of other people embedded in the narrator’s story; see Labov, 1972) in spoken and written narratives told by EFL pre-service teachers. Out of 18 students in my cohort of data, only one student
(Bono, a pseudonym) produced a narrative of a good experience with very religious evaluations throughout his story. The first and third tellings was written; the second telling was elicited by my American colleague and I in an interview. I will start the analysis from the third telling on the grounds that it gives a relatively more comprehensive account of what happened in his teaching practice.

The first telling was elicited early January 2007 in around 20 minutes in my office, followed by the second telling two weeks after the first telling. The third telling was done at home and submitted to me on the following day. Bono’s three stories are copied verbatim from his handwriting or Microsoft Word document.

Narrative inquiry in multiple tellings of the same experience has been pioneered by Chafe (1998), in particular. He asserts that a person can represent the essence of his/her memory across tellings. To identify what religious memory is retained across tellings, I underline any sentences or utterances whose tone is Christian-sounding. The underlined parts in the third telling will then be compared to the first and second telling in terms of (key) words, routine formulae (i.e., “highly conventionalized pre-patterned expression[s] whose occurrence[s] are tied to a more or less standardized communication situation” – Yorio, as cited in O’keeffe, McCarthy, & Carter, 2007, p. 82), which include collocations (i.e., “two-word combinations whose component words... may or may not occur immediately adjacent to one another” [p. 53]) and allusions (i.e., “something that is said or written that bring attention to a particular subject in a way that is not direct” – Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2001, p. 35). In identifying whether a certain expression sounds Christian, I rely on my “ethnographic knowledge” or “insider’s intuitive knowledge” (Koven, 2001, p. 529) as a Christian myself.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reflections on Bono’s third telling

There are at least two questions regarding the relevant language-related problems/issues. First, it is worthwhile to ask what makes Bono’s overall narrative discourse sound Christian. Look-
ing at my underlines, one can see how cohesively tied his discourse is in terms of Christianity, as indicated by words or phrases such as “God” (sentences 2, 14, 26, 39), “Holy Bible” (sentence 5), “Jesus” (sentences 7, 41, 57), and “devotion” (sentences 21, 23), among others (see the section of Comparisons of Bono’s Christian discoursing across tellings below for further details).

Second, and more importantly, the question of whether teacher’s [religious] beliefs have a great impact on foreign language teaching warrants applied linguists’ further attention. In particular, we wonder what readers’ responses – particularly my own personal response, as far as this study is concerned – can be evoked from Bono’s beliefs. There has been a long and established tradition in the applied linguistics that religious issues are not well taken into account; neither are these in psychology, as Larson (cited in Anderson, Zuehlke, & Zuehlke, 2000) put it: “Many see Christianity or any religious commitment as outdated, anti-intellectual, and harmful to emotional health” (p. 41). However, as Bono’s narrative shows, his beliefs in Christian values have salience in his EFL teaching practicum in a senior high school.

3rd telling
GOOD Experience:

1. My previous teaching experience had made me in deep trauma indeed. 2. As a result, I decided not to teach for 2 weeks. 3. But, thank God that I had a lot of friends who [?] me during my bad time. 4. They cheered me up and gave me lot of advice. 5. One of my best friends gave me a verse from the Holy Bible which says that I can do everything through Jesus who strengthens me. 6. I held this verse tightly. 7. I tried to count on Jesus instead myself on the next teaching. 8. As the result...

9. My heart beat so fast as the bell rang three times. 10. It was a sign that the school activity was already started. 11. Outside, the students hurried to their own classes as Mr. BS one of the school teachers started to bawl at the students who were late. 12. I’d never felt so afraid before. 13. If only the electricity had not gone off in my first day of teaching. 14a. God, why do you let me to teach the same class? 14b. O God, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me”, I prayed. 15. Along the way to the class, I was haunted by the failure of my previous teaching. 16. Eko, Yudith, and Betty, their faces always appeared in my mind. 17. I tarried with my steps waiting for Ms. Anna. 18. I was extremely afraid to enter the class alone.
Through the window, I could see all students of 1.2. Some of them scrutinized me with firm eyes which increased my fear. The devotion was started as I entered the class. It was awfully quiet, but I wouldn’t be deceived anymore. During the devotion, I just sat on my chair and prayed to God begging His presence while teaching. To be honest, when praying I still didn’t know what to say to start the session. The worst, I didn’t have any idea of how to explain the material to the students. Thank God, Ms. ME finally came right after I finished praying. I was not alone anymore.

“Betty, shut up!” I yelled. She was aghast and the class was abruptly in silent. “Betty, what do you feel when I said that words?” I asked. Actually, I have written down those words on the blackboard before directing those words to her. She looked bewildered before she finally said that she was shocked. What do you think about my utterance? Was it rude or polite? I continued my question. She answered, “it was very rude, Sir”. Well, could you make it more polite? I asked again. At that moment, I directed the same questions to the other students. Well, those questions were actually my pre-teaching activity of that day’s topic “Command and Request”. I tried to engage the students’ attention by giving them a short command which was probably rude and asking them to change it into polite one. Thank God, I made it. They were engaged and ready for the further discussion.

Greatest glory to Jesus, unlike my previous teaching, my whilst-teaching went very well. I could explain the material well without being ignored by the students. They did listen to me and did the exercise enthusiastically. I didn’t know why, but it was true. Everything did go smoothly until the end of the session.

The best part of my teaching of that day was the game session. We played an old game; “Simon says”, of course I did a bit modification. At first, I was not sure with that game. I thought the students would be easily bored. Amazingly, they were excited instead. We were really having fun. Through the game, the students actually learn to produce simple commands as I nominated some of them to be the Simons. Above all, I could not believe with what had happened to me that day. I could not imagine that my teaching would be successful. In fact, I did less preparation for my teaching and I did not use any AVA as my previous teaching. I did not apply any teaching theories or strategies in my teaching which have been taught in TLS. The only teaching strategy that I used at that time was just counted on Jesus. I just surrendered all to Him. As the results, God granted my wish. He really be with me and gave me strength that enabled to teach. At that time, all I did and
said just subconsciously flowed away. 6°I didn’t even have to think about what to talk next. 6°He sent the holly spirit to speak for me when explain-
ing the material so that the students did not ignore me but listened care-
fully to the lesson instead.

It may be posited that spiritual beliefs are likely to account for some degree of “non-routineness” in teaching (see Kleinsasser, 1993). For instance, Bono opened his class by yelling at a student (sentence 28) – a method which has never been stated in any teaching manuals. Regardless of whether a pre-/in-service teacher is aware of the existence of communicative language teaching (CLT) or deliberately employs it, Bono’s narrative reflects how he was religiously supported by what he believes as God who inspired him to vary his teaching approaches in a school that may be regarded as highly “routine”. The support was obvious when he recalled and held a biblical verse “I can do everything through Jesus who strengthens me” (sentence 5), which alludes to Philippians 4:13 in the Bible. In light of my framework, this verse seems to become an “old” discourse which was reproduced in Bono’s narrative. Nevertheless, this verse also functioned as a “novel” discourse as it transformed his fear (sentences 9-20) and his unpreparedness (sentences 24-25) to a bold and inspiring teaching experience (sentences 28-54), as well as his observation that the students perceived his teaching positively (sentence 63). Furthermore, sentence 60, vis-à-vis sentence 5, signifies the internaliza-
tion of the “old” discourse in a “novel” and “transformative” way: “He…gave me strength that enabled me to teach.” This discourse was also to give a stark contrast to his previous agony in teaching the same class (sentence 14); in fact, the expression “if it is possible, let this cup pass from me” was used by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane to show his anguish before he was cruci-

Another implication of what Bono believed to be the Divine intervention was that he could teach relatively well without using any Audio Visual Aid/AVA, nor any “teaching theories or strategies… which have been taught in TLS [Teaching and Learning Strategies course]…” (sentence 55; recall Bono’s yelling at a student in sentence 28, too). This is highly contestable as an ag-
nostic person may argue that this was merely a coincidence; or he was just lucky; or he was born as a good teacher by nature. Another possible interpretation is that Bono’s discourse indicates not so much a divine reality as it does a discoursing reality. That is, knowing that one of the readers would be me, Bono could have positioned himself as a “godly” Christian. If this is the case then his Christian discoursing was to impress me or like-minded Christian people. This confirms the idea that narratives do not simply contain plots which refer to setting/place or sequential events in the past but also “interactional positioning” in the storytelling event (Wortham, 2001, p. 9; recall also Fergusson’s [1985] observation which supports the idea that religious discoursing will “accomplish various communicative goals to the satisfaction of the participants” [p. 209]). I do not know whether he would have used the Christian discoursing as boldly as it was had the audiences been non-Christians. Had he had the intention to become “God’s living testimony” for non-Christians as well, then he would have used the Christian discoursing just like the narrative discussed thus far.

Whatever Bono’s motives are with regard to his interactional positioning to potential audiences, it is safe to infer that he exhibited an advanced level of Christian discoursing competence, both in a language (English) other than his first language (Javanese), and, most noticeably, in the way he juxtaposed biblical verses in his narrative discourse.

Another conceivable path of inquiry based on a story like that of Bono is to check the consistency of Christian discoursing. By having access to previous (or subsequent) tellings of the same story (cf. Chafe, 1998), we would be able to see to what degree salient voices of Bono are similarly or slightly differently represented across tellings.

**Comparisons of Bono’s Christian discoursing across tellings**

In terms of the distribution of Christian-sounding words or expressions, we can find six possibilities: those which appear only in (1) 1st telling (see Table 1 samples 1 and 2, and Table 2 sample 10 – three occurrences), (2) 2nd telling (see Table 1 sample 3 and
Table 2 samples 5 and 16 – three occurrences), (3) 3rd telling (see Table 2 samples 2, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14 – six occurrences), or in (4) 1st and 3rd tellings (see Table 2 samples 1 and 3 – two occurrences), (5) 2nd and 3rd tellings (see Table 1 samples 4 and 5 and Table 2 samples 4, 8 and 15 – five occurrences), and (6) in all three tellings (see Table 2 samples 6 and 7 – two occurrences).

The distribution suggests that Christian jargons appear more frequently in the 3rd telling than those in either the 1st or 2nd telling (see the first two tellings in Appendices A and B respectively). It also denotes a closer association between the 2nd and 3rd tellings (five occurrences) compared to two such occurrences between the 1st and 3rd tellings. This is probably due to the fact that there was a shorter time lapse between the 2nd and 3rd tellings than that of between the 1st and 2nd tellings (no association/occurrence) or between the 1st and 3rd tellings (only two occurrences). This distinct trend of association implies the common belief that the longer the time interval between one telling and its subsequent telling(s), the less likely for a word or an expression to be similarly phrased. The time interval between the 1st and 2nd tellings was two weeks. On the other hand, as time lapse shortens between two successive tellings (i.e., one day between 2nd and 3rd tellings), there is a greater likelihood that a word or an expression is verbalized in almost the same way. Despite the difference of verbalization, the underlying memory remains across tellings as the routine formulae “count [everything] on Jesus” and “instead of myself / instead of using (or count[ing] on) my own strength” (Table 2 samples 6 and 7 respectively).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Key words</th>
<th>1st telling</th>
<th>2nd telling</th>
<th>3rd telling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>miracle</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>power (i.e., Jesus)</td>
<td>23, 24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>believe</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>devotion</td>
<td>62, 133</td>
<td>21, 23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>pray[ing]</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>14, 23, 24, 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Multi-word religious routine formulae (RF), collocations (C), and allusions (A) across tellings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Routine formulae, collocations, or allusions</th>
<th>1st telling Sentence nos.:</th>
<th>1st telling Line nos.:</th>
<th>2nd telling Sentence nos.:</th>
<th>2nd telling Line nos.:</th>
<th>3rd telling Sentence nos.:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>His presence (RF/C)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“God, why...” (A; cf. Matthew 27:46 – “My God... why have you forsaken me?”)</td>
<td>14a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Thank[ed] God/ thanked [to] Jesus (RF, C)</td>
<td>9, 20</td>
<td></td>
<td>3, 26, 39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Some verses from the Bible (C)</td>
<td>11, 20</td>
<td></td>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I should not be worried (A; cf. Philippians 4:6)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>count [everything] on Jesus (RF/C)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13, 17</td>
<td>7, 57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>instead of myself / instead of using (or counting] on] my own strength (C)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>we can do all thing with Jesus name; I can do everything through Jesus who strengthens me (RF/A; cf. Philippians 4:13)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>O God, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me (RF/A; cf. Matthew 26:39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>confess to Jesus (RF/C)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Greatest glory to Jesus (C)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>surrendered all to Him (RF/C)</td>
<td></td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>God granted my wish (A; cf. Tuhan mengabulkan permohonanku)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>He really be with me (A; an allusion to a Christian song album entitled “God with us” by Don Moen)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>let the Holy Spirit speak to me; He sent the holy spirit to speak for me (A: an allusion to prophet-or apostle-like utterance)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>136-138</td>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>flow away (A: an allusion to typical charismatic preachers’ speech)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another way of interpreting the data is by looking more closely on each telling. Interestingly, there is an increase of Christian jargons used in subsequent tellings. While only seven samples of Christian expressions in the 1st telling (see Table 1 samples 1 and 2 and Table 2 samples 1, 3, 6, 7, and 10), there are 10 samples (see Table 1 samples 3, 4, and 5, and Table 2 samples 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 15, 16) and 15 samples (see Table 1 samples 4 and 5 and Table 2 samples 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15) in the 2nd and 3rd telling respectively.

The sharp increase is even more apparent when a similar or the same expression in each sample occurs (e.g., the expression “Thank God” occurs twice in the 1st telling or three times in the 3rd telling). There are nine occurrences in seven samples in the 1st telling. In the 2nd telling, there are 16 occurrences in 10 samples; and there are 23 occurrences in 15 samples in the last telling, with the “pray[ing]” being the most frequently mentioned word.

As to why there is an increasing number of samples and occurrences of words or routine formulae in subsequent tellings, two explanations are offered. First, in the 1st telling, Bono only had 20 minutes to complete the narrative but in the 2nd telling, both Victor and I as interviewers did not set a time limit. As the 3rd telling was done at home, I suspect Bono could spend as much time as he liked writing the narrative. Second, in the 2nd telling, Victor, in particular, pushed Bono to elaborate on his spiritual experiences (e.g., “do you remember what verses that they shared with you?” [line 114], “… we can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me” [line 123], “and… you felt that… you received help in your teaching as a result of your trust in Jesus?” [lines 126-127], among others – see Appendix 2 below for further details). Victor’s questions hence account for Bono’s more elaborated “evaluations” – to use Labov’s [1972] term – or details on his experiences associated with religious beliefs in the second and third tellings.

Concerning the obviousness of certain words, routine formulae, collocations, or allusions in relation to Christianity, there are those which are very obvious even when a non-Christian audience reads the stories (e.g., “miracle”, “pray[ing]”, “Thank[ed]
God/thanked [to] Jesus”, “some verses in the Bible”, “count [everything] on Jesus”; “I can do everything through Jesus who strengthens me”, “confess to Jesus”, “Greatest glory to Jesus”, among others). However, some others are so subtle that “insider’s intuitive knowledge” of a Christian such as me is required to determine their Christian colors. For instance, the word “devotion” is the English equivalent of the Indonesian word “renungan” or “kebaktian” or “ibadah” that refers (or alludes) to specific time to pray and contemplate about the word of God in typical Christian schools. Another example is the phrase “flow away” (Table 2 sample 16; 2nd telling, line 140). I speculate that Bono alluded to his Indonesian way of thinking “mengalir bersama Roh Kudus” (i.e., flowing with the Holy Spirit in a worshiping, Pentecostal context) to be used metaphorically in the context of his own teaching experience. This is another excellent example of how the boundary of religious worship (i.e., the “old” discourse) is transcended to daily, more “secularly” oriented activity such as teaching practicum.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH OUTLOOK

Crookes’ (2009) implied call for more attention to religious beliefs as essential ingredients for philosophy of second/foreign language teaching has been supported by Bono’s narratives of the same teaching experience in three tellings. Notwithstanding some differences in terms of wording or phrasing from one telling to another, the underlying memory that is accentuated by Bono’s Christian discoursing – particularly his dependence on God’s strength – permeates through the repeated tellings. Most importantly, the seemingly separate, mundane routines of religious worship (usually at church) on the one hand and language teaching and learning (typically in a classroom) on the other hand have been unusually amalgamated in Bono’s narratives. The “jarwo” (“old” discourse) of Christianity typically compartmentalized within the four walls of a church building has been pushed into the new context of language classroom (the “dhosok”) as personally transforming for Bono (cf. Becker, as cited in Tannen, 2007,
p. 11). Put another way, the very same discourse of Christian beliefs regarded as “old” if it is used in an excessively ritualized way at church has a “novel” impact when it is applied to language teaching.

Due to language teachers’ scant attention to and lack of bravery in bringing up spiritual issues that inspire their teaching philosophy, we need more evidence, especially in the form of narratives, from language teachers having various religious backgrounds. Whereas Bono’s Christian discoursing is relatively consistent across tellings in terms of its underlying memory, even within less than a month his wording and phrasing (in terms of routine formulae, collocations, and allusions) are not always exactly the same. Little is known if there is a significantly longer delay between the first telling and subsequent telling(s) of a religiously pedagogical story. At least three questions emerge: To what extent will the underlying religious memory be similar or different; why; and how other school/educational stakeholders respond to a teacher’s religious belief in ELT practices.

REFERENCES


APPENDIX

Bono’s 1st telling

My power

1 I didn’t teach for a couple of weeks after my first teaching.
2 I was so afraid to continue my PPL program.
3 I was haunted by the failure of my previous teaching.
4 I hated the school where I did my PPL.
5 I hated my guru pamong.
6 I hated myself for I could do nothing.
7 In brief, I was very discouraged.
8 I had no spirit to teach.
9 But I thanked God.
10 I had good friends who always supported me.
11 They encouraged to keep on going.
12 I should not give up.
13 One of them said that I need to count on Jesus in my teaching instead of using my own strength.
14 I applied my friend’s advice.
15 I confessed to Jesus that I was so stubborn and could not do anything without his presence.
Bono: the good one
the good one is that after...after my first teaching
that I feel that...e.I've said that I feel so down and
and uneasy unwilling to teach
but at that time my friend gave me a lot of support
e...espec...some of my friends especially e..who..e..take..took
PPL
e..in School A
they said that that's ok, no problem, and so on [???] like that and
one of my best friends also said and...said e...some verses from the
Bible
that I should not be worried about that and
I should count on...count on Jesus and something like that
to me [???] strengthens me for my next teaching
and and unlike my previous teaching I just do whatever I can do at
that
in e...my second teaching then
well...I just count...I just count everything to Jesus and I,
I do not...I do not count on my own strength
everytime I just beLIEVE what...believe what the verses say and and
and
I just do do and do and finally I could e..have a better teaching than
the previous

Bono: before I was...before I entered the class I was haunted with the
faces...the students' faces
they kept...they kept in my mind...my my mind
Victor: @
Bono: that...that's very makes me, well,
it's hard to step...to step on my feet [in front of {?}] the class
it's very very difficult for me
and at that time I just ya..
this is the first...e..jam pertama
so there is also devotion and after the teaching I just e...
I just stand up...stand up and shout...shout to some of my students
e...call [???] e..call call his name or her name if I'm not mistaken
I asked them e..
her name is Betty
I s...I said to her: "Betty, shut up!"
I just said that "Shut up!"
but at that time she was shocked and of course she was shocked
and I also e...said to other students like that and
of course e...the students were e...were shocked and they were
suddenly quiet
and at that time I said to them that what do you feel...what did you feel after I said like that? c..I said like that you... what do you feel? and they answered that they were shocked and they were afraid and...

after the class?

at that time

oh...at that time

what do you...what do you feel?

and they asked me [???]

and then I ask also ask also ask is it rude or polite expression that I used?

and then they answered that it is very rude c...and I [???] I said to them that this is what we are going to learn today that's about comment and request the topic is about comment and request and I tried to [???] to explain to them and they listen to me unlike the previous teaching [???]

Interesting...

were you observed by the same school teacher in that teaching?

the same

ok...and then at the end of the class...he or she?

She

she gave good comments

she gave good comments

on the second teaching?

ya [nodding] I also include games

...what kind of game is that?

a simple game...Simon Says

hm...what specific parts of your lesson plan or teaching...ehm...impressed your school teacher?

the game?

yes, the game, and the pre-teaching

the pre-teaching? When you c..

Shouted

you shouted

@

@

ok...

interesting...do you remember...this is going back to what your friends spoke to you before [???]

hm hm
Some transcription conventions: “@” = laughing; “..” = a short pause; *italicized utterances* = interviewers’ religious-sounding utterances; “[???]” = unclear utterances due to too low volume or poor recording quality.