Exploring the Construal of Membership in English Language Teachers' Associations: A Window into Professional Identity through Japanese Voices

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This doctoral dissertation aimed to explore English language teachers’ construal of membership in English language teachers’ (ELTs’) associations. The study initially examined teachers’ perceptions of membership via an examination of their experience of it – why they become or do not become a member, and/or why they continue or forfeit membership. Thereafter, teachers’ perceptions on what membership says about professionalism were probed as well as what the meanings of membership are to them. Data were obtained using face-to-face semi-structured interviews with eight Japanese English language teachers working at universities in the Kanto and Hokuriku regions of Japan.

The findings showed that, experience-wise, teachers become members because they either perceive membership as an occupational norm, a means to gain employment or a way to access CPD. Conversely, teachers do not become members for reasons of being occupied with work, avoiding unwanted responsibility, being able to access the same benefits and/or lacking confidence. Teachers who continue their membership(s) do so because of CPD, feeling unable to leave, and/or because of the financial support provided by their universities. In contrast, teachers who forfeit membership do so because membership fees are too high and/or because they are too busy with work. In terms of what membership says about professionalism, teachers perceived it as not only a marker of professionalism but also, paradoxically, a counter-collegial practice. As for the meanings of membership to participants, it was seen as something giving rise to a fragmented professional self and the feeling of one being either ‘an insider’ and/or ‘outsider’ within an association.
These findings, it is argued, point to membership being more for professionalization rather than professionalism purposes, seemingly as a result of the emerging forces of managerialism and neo-liberalism which appear to have created an atmosphere of accountability and competition rather than camaraderie in Japan-based ELTs’ associations. This, in turn, has led the Japanese ELT practitioner, at least at the university level, to become complicit in the creation of a fragmented/hybrid professional self composed of clashing multiple identities where one is rendered ambivalent and uncertain yet somehow able to adapt and cope. This professional self says much about the need for ELTs’ associations in Japan and perhaps elsewhere to engage in a critical discussion of what counts as ‘professionalism’ by raising and attending to the importance of member voice.
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5
Abbreviations

ACTJ: The Association for Canadian Teachers in Japan
ALC-GELI: English Language Specialists of the Association of Linguists of Cuba
Asia TEFL = Asia Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
BANA: British, Australasia, and North American
CPD: Continuing Professional Development
EFL: English as a Foreign Language
EIL: English as an International Language
ELF: English as a Lingua Franca
ETJ: English Teachers in Japan
ELLTAS: English Language and Literature Teachers' Association of Singapore
ELT = English language teaching
ELTs’ = English language teachers’
IATEFL: International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
JACET: The Japan Association of College English Teachers
JALT: The Japan Association for Language Teaching
KOTESOL: Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
MELTA: The Malaysian English Language Teaching Association
MEXT: Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science & Technology
NESTS: Native English Speaking Teachers
NNESTS: Non-Native English Speaking Teachers
NPO: Non-Profit Organisation
TESEP: Tertiary, Secondary and Primary
TESOL Inc.: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Incorporated
WMIS: Wider Membership Individual Scheme
WMS: Wider Membership Scheme
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Prelude
This study explores how membership of English language teachers’ (ELTs’) associations is construed via the little known viewpoints of English language teachers as both members and non-members. Moreover, it aims to serve as a vehicle for their voices which I argue are rarely heard.

1.2 Rationale for Research
This research emerged from my personal and professional concerns with ELTs’ association membership. On one level, it is grounded in my personal experience as a current and former member of both local and international ELTs’ associations and the problems I have encountered. Having been involved in ELTs’ associations for over ten years, I have long perceived membership as a means to engage in continuing professional development (CPD) and a way to improve myself as an English language teaching professional. This has found shape in such things as attending and giving presentations at a number of conferences put on by ELTs’ associations. It has also found form in writing articles and being published in academic journals linked to ELTs’ associations. Moreover, it has taken guise in undertaking editorial duties for an English language teaching journal connected with an association. Such hands-on experience has meant I have encountered and witnessed firsthand the part membership can play in English language teachers’ professional lives. In
addition, it has meant I have gained a greater awareness of the impact context, whether national or international, can have on association membership and some of the factors which influence an English language teacher’s decision to join or not join an ELTs’ association or continue or forfeit membership in one.

However, over time and through reflection, I have also been prompted by my experience to seriously question ELTs’ association membership. That is to say, I have become uneasy with certain practices closely associated with it. In particular, I have come to wonder if ELTs’ associations are actually meeting members’ CPD needs and if there is not good reason for them to distrust not only what they say but also what they do. What is more, I have become concerned with what I see as the undemocratic actions of association leaders towards lay members and the unclear standpoint many ELTs’ associations provide on professionalism and professional standards and guidelines for members. Moreover, I have become troubled by the apparent chauvinistic behaviour of international ELTs’ associations towards certain kinds of members.

Thus, all told, these concerns serve as my personal justification for problematising and researching ELTs’ association membership.

On another level, this inquiry is also grounded in what I see as the unsettling response of ELTs’ associations to broad trends such as teacher dissatisfaction with continuing professional development (CPD) and professional ambiguity. There has been a proliferation of ELTs’ associations in recent years to account for and serve as a remit for CPD, professionalism, and a medium to forge professional communities. This, in turn, has resulted in many associations prioritising and actively encouraging membership to English language teachers as a means to such alleged benefits. Yet, in spite of this, there is scarce documented evidence and information on ELTs’ association membership and, to
my knowledge, little is known about what its actual impact is on teachers, especially in terms of professionalism and professional identity. This suggests to me that ELTs’ association membership is seemingly taken for granted and presented as apolitical and dilemma free, which I see as equally problematic and therefore worthy of critical interrogation and research.

1.3 Aims of the Study

There are three aims for my study. The first aim is to gain new insights into how ELTs’ association membership is construed by English language teachers through their experience as both members and/or non-members. A second aim is to illuminate what the experience of membership says about English language teacher professionalism. A third aim is to reveal what the meanings of membership are for English language teachers. In achieving these aims, the study serves to gauge what membership says about professional identity.

1.4 Significance of the Study

As my significant contribution to the body of ELT knowledge, this study stands to offer new insights into ELTs’ association membership which may help in informing academics interested in researching ELT professionalism and professional identity where we currently stand with respect to our understanding of it. Moreover, it serves as a knowledge/input piece that aspires to make these researchers further aware of the highly contested and hybrid nature of professionalism and professional identity in ELT, the role ELTs’ association membership plays in it, and the need for ELT academics and practitioners alike to get involved in this debate in order to better understand what it means to be an ELT professional in this postmodern age. Finally, it stands to raise awareness amongst researchers and practitioners that ELTs’ association
leaders are not necessarily engaging teachers in this debate about professionalism and professional identity and how that may ultimately be because associations are either wittingly or inadvertently endeavouring to unnaturally separate the professional from the socio-political.

1.5 Organisation of the Study
This chapter has provided an account of the rationale for, aims of and significance of my research. Chapter 2 discusses my particular concerns with membership of ELTs’ associations as a means to specifically problematise it. Chapter 3 presents a way of understanding the ‘problem’ of membership through the lens of professionalism and professional identity as the conceptual framework driving the research process. Chapter 4 provides a discussion on my research design, an explanation of the data gathering procedure, and a subsequent discussion on the overall trustworthiness of the findings. Chapter 5 presents the analysed findings as they relate to the conceptual framework prefaced in Chapter 3. Chapter 6 discusses the findings with reference to the relevant theoretical and research literature to directly address the research question posed and to present new perspectives and knowledge claims on professionalism and professional identity. This research then concludes with a discussion of study limitations, the main contributions of my research, the implications of my findings for researching ELTs’ association membership and practice and teacher professionalism, and my personal reflections on my study and its effect on my professionalism.
Chapter 2
Problematising ELTs’ Association Membership

Introduction
The aim of this chapter is to build a case for problematising ELTs’ association membership in response to broad trends (e.g., dissatisfaction with continuing professional development (CPD) and professional ambiguity) which have led to a proliferation in ELTs’ associations today. I begin by briefly introducing my experience of ELTs’ association membership before conveying how this has led to my personal unease with it. Thereafter, I introduce a number of membership issues I have come to identify in light of my experience and the relevant English language teaching literature. Finally, I examine each of these issues in turn and in detail to illuminate how ELTs’ association membership is not necessarily dilemma free.

2.1 My Experience of ELTs’ Association Membership
As an English language teacher with over 16 years of experience, I have always striven to attend to my own CPD. I have written and published in academic journals as well as taken on editorial duties for an English language teaching journal. Also, I am a current and former member of local ELTs’ associations in Japan (e.g., ETJ: English Teachers in Japan; ACTJ: The Association for Canadian Teachers in Japan), South Korea (e.g., KOTESOL: Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other
Languages) and an international ELTs’ association (e.g., Asia TEFL: Asia Teachers of English as a Foreign language). At the beginning of my career, I looked to ELTs’ associations as a means to engage in CPD in the form of attending and giving presentations at conferences. I also believed that being a member would somehow help me improve the quality of my practice and service and, in turn, provide me with a sense of professionalism. Moreover, as I moved back and forth between South Korea and Japan early in my career, I felt that regardless of which country I was in, there would be ELTs’ associations I could identify with which would provide me with opportunities to network with like-minded ELT professionals who aspired to enhance their practice and the profession.

Hence, then as now, I fully recognised that, like me, many English language teaching professionals across the globe belong to local and/ or international ELTs’ associations as a result of the perceived benefits they can receive in being a member of them. For example, there are those advantages of a predominantly tangible nature that prompt teachers to join (e.g., conferences, newsletters, journals, teaching certification, etc.). Moreover, there are those of a more intangible constitution that encourage teachers to belong (e.g., a sense of autonomy and professionalism, recognition, socialization, networking, etc.).

However, over time and through reflection, I have come to take a different position on ELTs’ association membership. This has been the result of noticing a lack of or the irrelevancy of input I have received and the absence of opportunities for my personal and professional voice. This is not to say I have changed in terms of my belief in membership as a possible means to CPD, professionalism, and collegiality for example. Rather, I have been unsettled and become uneasy with how membership appears to, at times, paradoxically discourage such practices and how,
in taking ELTs’ associations for granted, I, like perhaps most other teachers, have been inadvertently complicit in allowing this to continue and thrive. Some of these practices I have directly experienced and include ELTs’ associations not meeting teachers’ CPD needs and not being able to trust what they say and do. They also involve association leaders appearing to act undemocratically, providing an opaque view of professionalism and unclear professional standards and guidelines, and international ELTs’ associations seemingly acting in a chauvinistic manner. For ease of initial access, these conundrums are listed as membership issues in Table 2.1 below and are accompanied by relevant ELT sources supporting their significance that I subsequently discuss in greater detail in the sub-sections that follow.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Issue</th>
<th>ELT Source(s)</th>
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Table 2.1: Membership Issues in ELTs’ Associations

2.1.1 Unmet CPD Needs

There appear to be many teachers who believe ELTs’ association membership is a means to CPD. For instance, Naziha (2010) posits that it serves as ‘a platform for development, discussion and debate’ (p.56). Equally, Allwright argues that membership is important because ELTs’ associations are chiefly involved in members’ CPD and that this in itself is enough to warrant their existence (as cited in
This is not only echoed by D. Murray (1992) who advocates the significant role ELTs’ associations play in language teacher development but also Mann (2005) who sees them as assisting in the promotion of the latter. Sarwar lends further support to such claims in stating “…success in teachers’ own development is closely linked with the success and growth of the professional organization…” (as cited in Gautum, 2003, p.88). Also, A. Murray (2010) claims that ELTs’ association membership provides ‘a way to connect with colleagues and pursue personal goals for professional development’ and ‘the opportunity to share and learn from like-minded individuals’ (p. 9). In addition, it is said to serve as a medium for the discourse and exchange of ideas, experience, and engagement in research as valuable and affirmative aspects of such associations (Jordan, 2002). Hence, according to Horne (2003), ELT practitioners ought to be ‘encouraging teachers to form or join associations…to further their professional capabilities….’ (p. 395) and maintain pace with other fields. This, for all intents and purposes, is based on the assumption that an ELTs’ association, as a ‘recognised aspect of quality teaching’ (Dickey, 2004, p. 16), puts teachers in contact ‘with the best of current practice’ (White & Nolasco, 1988). To add, it, as Cagnol & Kawalek (2011) state, ‘traditionally provide(s) affordable, and even free, professional development to its members and affiliates…’ (p.97) which ultimately leads to ‘professional enhancement’ (Ganesan & Shalini, 2011, p. 57).

Yet, in considering the above claims, I have seriously come to question these. From examining information from various ELTs’ association websites (e.g., Asia TEFL, 2013e; IATEFL, 2013a; TESOL Inc, 2013b) and attending and presenting at association conferences and workshops, I have found myself unable to actually say how membership has helped me to develop my practice and professional knowledge.
Also, in considering Allwright’s (1991) past assertion of there being scarce research publicly presented that defends the significant role ELTs’ associations play in CPD, I have gradually found myself equally hard pressed to pinpoint how ELTs’ associations have met my professional interests and helped me in terms of providing CPD that was germane to the contexts I have worked in. However, I am not alone.

Indeed, according to MacPherson, Kouritzin & Kim (2005) and Nobre (2011), many ELTs’ associations do not represent the interests of members and are not always able to meet their personal needs. This is corroborated by Naziha (2010) who, based on her findings, suggests that ELTs’ associations are not necessarily cognisant of nor interested in the needs and voices of their diverse members as exemplified through the organisation of CPD related events such as conferences which have no pertinence to the contexts teachers work in. This appears to confirm England’s (1998) earlier assertion that despite alleging to represent teachers’ interests, ELTs’ associations need to provide more support for CPD that is relevant to where teachers work. It also implies, as Park (2002) contends, that ELTs’ associations lack an understanding of CPD and need to offer more opportunities for teachers to share ideas and experiences at the local level and through diverse exchange initiatives (e.g., conferences, seminars, workshops of varying themes).

To this end, I have been prompted to query whether improvements in my practice and knowledge have not ultimately been the result of my own personal efforts and initiatives. Moreover, I have begun to suspect there are others who share my sentiments, but are choosing instead to express their feelings through avoidance or forfeiture. This is seemingly evident from the string of concerns raised by current and former ELTs’ association leaders over membership. For example, according to Braine (2010), many non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) in English as a
Foreign Language (EFL) contexts have yet to join ELTs’ associations as they ‘seem to be oblivious of the benefits provided by professional organizations’ (p.87). This is apparently the result of being ‘weary from hours of teaching students who appear to be unmotivated to learn English, and unappreciated and unrewarded professionally by local administrators and parents’ who are ‘unaware of the grounded realities of English language teaching’ (p.87). Consequently, they neither create any sense of camaraderie with other English language teachers nor heighten their connections to the global scheme of ELT (Braine, 2010). Further, based on feedback from those helping to run ELTs’ associations in Asia (i.e. India, Japan, Thailand), North America (i.e. Canada), South America (i.e. Chile) and Europe (i.e. Romania, Croatia, Greece, The Czech Republic and Spain), Szesztay reports it has become progressively more difficult to recruit active members who will participate in ELTs’ association events as well as those who are willing to undertake volunteer work to help the organisation (as cited in Falcão & Szesztay, 2006). This is echoed by Kirkham (2011) who states, ‘We often hear the committees of teachers’ associations wondering why teachers do not join up’ (p.22). Moreover, Bailey, Thibault & Nunan’s (2009) interviews with past TESOL Inc. presidents revealed that decreasing membership was a challenge for some of them.

On one level of understanding, the apparent decline in membership leads me to believe that many ELT practitioners are either dissatisfied with what they receive or can receive in terms of CPD or are able to access the same CPD elsewhere. On another, it suggests ELTs’ association leaders are not necessarily being critically reflexive - they are perhaps not looking at their leadership as a possible reason for membership decline or a lack of interest in membership. However, it still does not explain why many teachers have not publicly voiced concern on this issue despite
appearing to outwardly demonstrate this.

2.1.2 Mistrust

In order to become an ELTs’ association member, I have often been required to pay a fee. In first undertaking such a financial transaction, I initially felt I was ensuring that I could trust an ELTs’ association to provide me with the services I needed and wanted. However, in my experience, this has not always proved to be true. For instance, there have been memberships where I never received monthly newsletters despite being entitled to them. There have also been those where all I received was a membership number and no further contact and information. Moreover, there have been memberships where some teachers had access to additional CPD (e.g., special publications; seminars, etc.) that I and other members did not, corroborating Mykolaychuk’s (2011) claim that ELTs’ association leaders need to ensure that knowledge and information of a professional nature is equally distributed amongst members. Although I concede that what I experienced could have been accidental and bad luck, the fact that this happened on more than one occasion has compelled me to question what I have paid for and ultimately convinced me that you cannot take membership for granted. Even more so, such experiences have unfortunately instilled in me a sense of distrust in ELTs’ associations, one that I feel is not without reason and grounded in the ELT literature.

For instance, Brumfit, in discussion with Coleman, has commented there is an issue with ELTs’ associations gaining the trust of teachers and the public and a subsequent need to counter and alleviate suspicion (Brumfit & Coleman, 1995). In particular, he contends that teachers ‘…will not be frank with an organization which they feel is likely to kick them in the teeth if they tell the truth about what their view of
their own experience is’ (p.182). This is corroborated by Odhiambo & Nganyi (2007) who disclose that the most significant reason cited by East African teachers for refusing to join an ELTs’ association was dubiety or misgiving and the belief that those who establish such bodies do so out of ‘selfishness’ and an interest in ‘personal gains’ (p.63). Karavas (2010) provides indirect research support for this through a study she conducted on the motivation and satisfaction levels of 224 Greek teachers with their work. In her investigation, it emerged that those involved were, for the most part, equally divided rather than collectively united with respect to their opinions over the way leaders of local and international ELTs’ associations help in enhancing the profession. This would appear to suggest there are teachers who lack trust and faith in those running such organisations.

2.1.3 Undemocratic Leadership

In my experience, membership has always been presented in a positive manner by ELTs’ association leaders. For example, membership is spoken of as something that can ‘bring together on an equal footing teachers and administrators from a range of institutions operating in the same context without the restraints and power relationships that can sometimes work to hinder co-operation in the workplace’ and ‘tends to give teachers a much broader perspective of their profession’ (Kirkham, 2011, p. 22). In addition, it is said to bring teachers ‘into a global community and provides the opportunity to connect with professionals from around the globe...’ (Williams, 2012, p.145). Moreover, as Szesztay claims, it furnishes one with ‘practical benefits’ and a ‘sense of belonging to a professional community’ (as cited in Falcão & Szesztay, 2006, p.13).

However, as positive as all this may sound, it has been hard not to notice the
conspicuous absence of and request for member voices which support or conversely question such claims. Reflecting on my own membership experience, I cannot think of a time I have been asked for my insights such to inform or improve membership let alone policy, practice, and association values. Moreover, based on my experience of working with Japanese teachers, it appears certain ELTs’ associations like the Japanese Association for College English Teachers (JACET) tend to behave oligarchically and managerially rather than democratically, holding Japanese members accountable to their professional standards with little apparent consideration for their voices. Nonetheless, to my knowledge, Japanese English language teachers have never been legally obliged to join and abide by JACET practices since membership is voluntary and ELTs’ association legislative powers in Japan, much like elsewhere, appear quite limited. Even so, it seems JACET has still succeeded in getting local teachers to comply at least partly on the grounds of culture and tradition as many even appear to self-surveil in order to ensure they are acting accordingly. Whether this is for the purposes of curtailing the autonomy and privacy of local teachers is pure conjecture as, to my knowledge, this has never been investigated. Nevertheless, it does appear important if not necessary for many Japanese English language teachers to belong to and abide by the standards of certain ELTs’ associations like JACET rather than others (e.g. The Japan Association Language Teaching - JALT) despite having no legal obligation. Hence, this suggests that for some ELTs’ associations, managing what their members do professionally without due consideration for their opinions and desires may not only be a norm but also a historically and culturally grounded phenomenon that is by no means novel.

Yet, some, like Mykolaychuk (2011), would claim this is hardly surprising considering how ELTs’ association leaders are not necessarily welcoming of novel
insights or peremptory requests from members. Contemplating this further, I am inclined to agree as I cannot even recall a time I have ever been asked by association leaders to participate in any research related to the gathering of information on membership. Indeed, according to the ELT literature, in the very few cases where research was specifically carried out by ELTs’ association leaders, this appears to have only been to ascertain what members think of their services (e.g., Puchta, 2012), or for internal benefit as ‘no reports of such surveys’ could be found in the mainstream research literature (Walker, 2001, p.188). The contemporary ELT literature appears to show this still remains a significant issue and is supported by Naziha (2010) who has only recently called for further studies in this area in response to the unsettling trend of diminished interest in the English language teacher.

Consequently, I have become unsettled by the top-down manner in which ELTs’ association membership appears to have been constructed as it contrasts sharply with how I have always envisaged it - anchored and raised on the foundations of democracy. That is, built ‘from the bottom-up’ on the beliefs and principles of its members, where the latter’s opinions and insights serve as the driving force behind what membership and its purported benefits are. Moreover, like Mykolaychuk (2011), I have come to feel that it is in teachers’ best interests to pay more attention to membership as it relates to ELTs’ associations and their development. In particular, I believe teachers should at the very least reflect on whether ‘the name of a particular association is not as important as the idea of being involved in one (more)’ (Nakamura & Nakamura, 2002, p.27). Also, as members, teachers should not take for granted the potential for ELTs’ associations to turn into a privileged professional groups (Mykolaychuk, 2011) especially considering how
many are alleged to neglect the rights or claims of those who, albeit less experienced or less qualified, have much to contribute for those considered more ideal (MacPherson et al., 2005; Nobre, 2011). Finally, in having become uneasy with what ELTs’ association leaders say about membership, I now speculate that the lack of opportunities for member voice and input may be a significant reason for the ‘silent revolt’- the decline in ELTs’ association membership - irrespective of an apparent proliferation in ELTs’ associations.

2.1.4 Opaque Professionalism

In ELT today, terms like, professional, professionalism and professionalization commonly appear in association with ELTs’ associations. For instance, Naziha (2010) states that those who belong to an ELTs’ associations are ‘perceived of as professional…’ (p.56). Also, Lorimer & Schulte (2012) assert that ‘increased membership in professional organizations’ has ‘contributed to the growing professionalization’ of ELT (p. 32). Moreover, Maley (1992) in speaking about ELTs’ associations states “There are emerging signs that a process of ‘creeping professionalism’ is taking place” (p.98). In other words, ELT professionalism is starting to take form but at a slow, inconspicuous and perhaps cautious pace.

However, according to Edmundson & Fitzpatrick (2000), understanding what ELT professionalism is in particular is something that has received a fair amount of commentary. In my membership experience, I have often found members’ views on this issue not only differ from association to association but also amongst themselves. Thus, I have come to believe that teachers are by no means united and collegial in their professional principles and how they conduct themselves professionally in ELTs’ associations. Indeed, in light of my experience, it would seem
teachers can be divided into three camps:

1. The ‘Guidance Seekers’: Those who are members for personal reasons and espouse the views of professionalism ELTs’ associations provide, looking to them for knowledge, technology diffusion and professional identity

2. The ‘Compelled’: Those that are members for institutional rather than personal reasons and question the ‘educational, pedagogic, and social validity’ of ELTs’ association views of professionalism (Leung, 2009, p.53)

3. The ‘Uncertain’: Those that lie ambivalently somewhere in between.

This apparent division has thus led me to concur with Leung (2009) that where teachers stand with respect to a view of professionalism largely remains diversified and tenably ‘context-sensitive, reflecting historical, social, political, and ideological contingencies’ (p.51). It has also helped to explain why there continues to be ‘no single publicly espoused definition of ELT professionalism that would apply in all educational contexts’ (Leung, 2009. p. 51).

Yet, I would argue that a major reason why many members are not aligned in their views of professionalism may be, again, because of the lack of opportunities for member voice and input in ELTs’ associations and members taking ELTs’ associations for granted. Although many ELTs’ association leaders claim to promote a view of professionalism that is ‘on behalf of all teachers as a collectivity’ (Leung, 2009, p.49), it does not appear to be one that is necessarily grounded in the diversity of teacher/member perspectives. Nevertheless, in light of Maley’s (1992) warning that ‘it is probably unrealistic for us to expect ever to achieve the full status of a profession’ (p.99), most ELTs’ associations seem more concerned about the public
witnessing a lack of collective understanding and practice of professionalism. To this end, they each appear to believe it is necessary to stipulate their own collective view of professionalism that accounts for ‘…enough institutions for outsiders to believe it reflects the profession as a whole, and is not just the representative of some small regional group, or some specific types of institution, or anything else of that kind’ (Brumfit & Coleman, 1995, p.182).

However, in view of my experience, such a belief in the need to provide blanket cohesion to professional discourse (cf. Scollon & Scollon, 1995) not only appears to ignore the transnational nature of ELT but also shows how many ELTs’ association leaders are not necessarily critically reflexive with respect to their own morals and practices. Thus, it has been difficult not to question whether the types of professionalism ELTs’ associations advocate are simply to appropriate uncertainty and sustain member compliance while compromising any alternative notion of professionalism (cf. Breen, 2007).

2.1.5 Unclear Professional Standards & Guidelines

Having taught English for almost sixteen years, I have had considerable experience dealing with concerns related to professional standards and guidelines. These have ranged from meeting teachers who were overworked, underpaid, or not paid at all to working with unqualified native English speakers who were paid the same wage as qualified English language teachers. As a qualified teacher myself, I initially believed that becoming an ELTs’ association member would somehow help me improve myself professionally and distinguish me from unqualified native and non-native English speakers, therefore raising my professional status and credibility in the workplace. Yet, soon after joining, I found that some ELTs’ associations allowed such
unqualified individuals to become members, which struck me as highly unprofessional. Consequently, I decided to forfeit these memberships, but thereafter could not help feeling wary of many ELTs’ association’s standards and guidelines as a result of such experience.

However, according to the ELT literature, member concerns with the professional standards and guidelines of ELTs’ associations are not unheard of. For example, Dickey (2006) argues that international ELTs’ associations such as TESOL Inc. and IATEFL have no established guidelines on conduct for teachers in EFL domains. Likewise, Fraser (2011) found that teacher participants in his study felt that ELTs’ associations not only do not provide enough guidance for teachers but that they also need to be more explicit about their ‘commitment to any code of conduct or framework of standards’ (p.155). This is supported by Walker (2011) who contends that the lack of clarity ELTs’ associations provide regarding professional ethics has led to teacher confusion over what mindset one is supposed to have and how one is expected to behave. Also, MacPherson et al. (2005) and Walker (2011) contend that ELTs’ associations also erroneously interpret professional standards and guidelines to a minimal degree by seeing these as no more than a code of professional conduct chiefly bound by jurisprudence or an assortment of standard-based normative and prohibitive rules. In other words, maxims that are for the purposes of regulating the enterprises of the profession instead of distinct precedents from which a professional disposition and a system of behaviour and teaching can be envisaged and eventually assembled. Relatedly, Breshears (2004) warns there are ethical issues to sort out in terms of the strong tendency amongst ELTs’ associations to ‘focus on the creation of professional discourse’ without clearly identifying ‘who controls the discourse’, whether it truly ‘represent(s) the voices from the field’ (p.35, p.37), and whether it and
the vested interests behind it conflict with one’s professional interests and values (cf. Johnston, 2003; Pennycook, 2001). This appears especially relevant in light of the diversity of ELTs’ professional identities and paradoxes in the morality behind our deeds and actions (cf. Johnston, 2003). To this end, it would seem there may be good reason for a teacher not to support any ELTs’ association especially if its purposes and discourse(s) conflict with one’s personal and professional beliefs (cf. Walker, 2011).

2.1.6 Chauvinistic International ELTs’ Associations

Three notable international ELTs’ associations in the world today are TESOL Inc., IATEFL and Asia TEFL. TESOL Inc. (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Incorporated) was the first major teacher association in ELT and was set up in the U.S in 1966 (TESOL Inc., 2013a). It was established as a result of professional unease over the absence of an independent, comprehensive professional body able to link teachers and leaders in education with an interest in teaching English to those who speak different languages (TESOL Inc., 2013a). Membership wise, TESOL Inc. holds and promotes belonging to it as something that ‘enables thousands of educators, researchers, and administrators worldwide to become more effective, more knowledgeable and more skilled and to have a voice in shaping policies that affect their work’ (TESOL Inc., 2013b, para. 1). This parallels the association’s mission which is ‘to advance professional expertise in English language teaching and learning for speakers of other languages worldwide’ (TESOL Inc., 2013c, para.1).

IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language) was established in Britain in 1967 (Arthur, 1997). It was founded to create
a nexus between institutions and professionals involved in English language education and to provide ‘a forum for teachers, teacher trainers, academics, researchers, writers, publishers and managers from all over the world to share and air their views, problems, experiences and developmental ideas’ (Arthur, 1997, p. 50).

Membership in IATEFL, a ‘sister’ association of TESOL Inc., is described and advertised as something that ‘gives you access to a worldwide network of English language teachers, plus a host of exclusive benefits’ (IATEFL, 2013a, para.1). This is in line with the association’s mission to ‘Link, develop and support English Language professionals worldwide’ (IATEFL, 2013b, para.2).

Asia TEFL (Asian Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language), as a young but ‘vast pan-Asian organization’, was founded in 2003 in South Korea and is made up of ‘134 founding committee members from 16 different Asian regions’ (Pakir, 2010, p.333). It functions as an ‘umbrella association’ that attempts to ‘centralize…related organizations’ (Pakir, 2010, p.333) such as those based in Japan (e.g., JACET; JALT), in Singapore (e.g., English Language and Literature Teachers’ Association of Singapore or ELLTAS), in Malaysia (e.g., The Malaysian English Language Teaching Association or MELTA) and in Thailand (e.g., Thai TESOL) among others (Asia TEFL, 2013a). It was created because ELT professionals in Asia sought to have an ‘international organization for the Asian region’ to help achieve the ‘goal(s) of developing TEFL in Asia’ and because English is taught in most Asian countries (Asia TEFL, 2013b, para 1).

Of the three international associations mentioned above, my membership has been limited to only Asia TEFL. Nevertheless, this experience has revealed something concerning to me that I feel may not be symptomatic of this international organisation alone. I initially joined Asia TEFL in 2005 thinking this was something
unique and applicable to me since I was based in Japan at the time. It was only upon reflecting on the scarce input I received and the lack of opportunities to voice my insights and opinions that I became unsettled. Consequently, I decided to find out more about Asia TEFL through its website. There, I was surprised to discover there appear to be no native English speaking teachers (NESTs – Medgyes, 1994) on its foundation committee and on its board of directors (Asia TEFL, 2013c; Asia TEFL, 2013d). Although this association was set up in Asia for ELT professionals teaching in the region, I had not anticipated that it would seemingly be run by only NNESTs. As such, this was disappointing for me as it appears to be as chauvinistic as the past tendency to, membership-wise, privilege NESTs within TESOL Inc. and IATEFL (Braine, 2010), which I did not join for partly this reason.

Since their inception, TESOL Inc. and IATEFL have thrived and grown extensively into the two main ELTs’ associations today and have arguably come to impact upon many local ELT contexts and associations around the globe. This is evident by how many English language teachers in non-Western contexts (e.g., Asia: Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos), whether working in private institutions of British, Australasia, and North American origin (BANA – see Holliday, 1994) or tertiary, secondary and primary education environments (TESEP – see Holliday, 1994), look to associations like TESOL Inc and/or IATEFL for insight and guidance on methodology, language testing, materials development, and curriculum design (Pakir, 2010). It is also noticeable by the increase in the number of local ELTs’ associations that have been set up and are affiliated / associated with TESOL Inc. and/or IATEFL (IATEFL, 2013c; TESOL Inc., 2013d). Scollon & Scollon (1995) argue that this apparent trend in establishing local ELTs’ associations is perhaps the profession’s response to recognising and publicly conceding that among
teachers locally and globally there has been ‘little formal organization within such a
widely dispersed group of professionals’ (p. 208). Others contend this has been the
profession’s way, as a young and new branch of teaching, of combating its pervasive

However, there have been concerns that TESOL Inc. and IATEFL, which are
based in the U.S and the UK, do not give due regard to the varying social contexts
and cultures of teachers that join them, especially those from non-Western countries.
In particular, the fundamental importance of context with respect to the impact any
national cultural differences have on deciding what is of value to professionals
appears to be ignored by such associations (cf. Holliday, 1992). For example, based
on my experience in Japan and South Korea, it appears to be a cultural norm to
consider the teacher as the only authority on subject knowledge whereas in contexts
like Canada and the UK, students are seemingly seen as being another source of
knowledge. By the same token, in Japan and South Korea teacher-fronted
classrooms appear to be the cultural norm whilst in Canada and the UK, student-
centred classrooms seemingly are. Consequently, what TESOL Inc. and IATEFL can
offer in terms of CPD and professional knowledge (BANA or TESEP-based) may not
only be unsuitable for the contexts of local ELTs’ associations they affiliate with but
might also be deemed inappropriate (Holliday, 1994). With this in mind, it would
seem that in light of the possibility of ‘denying the reality of cultural differences’,
TESOL Inc. and IATEFL may be subscribing to a kind of ‘cultural chauvinism’ - the
prosperity of a ‘false consciousness’ grounded in the misconception that ‘where
cultural difference is not perceived, neither is ideological hegemony’ (Waters, 2007,
p.368).
However, as Phillipson (2009) argues, this does not necessarily seem to matter to a ‘global education association’ like TESOL Inc. or IATEFL (p.193). Indeed, in light of their ‘explicit global ambitions’, Phillipson (2010) opines they are increasingly coming to view English language education ‘as a commodity, and as an economic opportunity for strong Western interests’ (p. 161). Moreover, they seem to have got ‘caught up in developing an international character and attitude’ (Bailey et al., 2009, p. 244). This attitude appears to be political at times with respect to TESOL Inc., which has arguably led to the development of what may be interpreted as exclusionary, undemocratic, and chauvinistic affiliation and membership practices.

For example, according to Martin (2007), TESOL Inc. rescinded its affiliation invitation to *English Language Specialists of the Association of Linguists of Cuba* (ALC-GELI) owing to ‘internal U.S. policies hostile to Cuba’ (p.553). Also, ALC-GELI’s representatives have been refused visas to attend TESOL Inc.’s conferences as of 2002 by the U.S Interest Section in Havana (Martin, 2007). Hence, membership wise, ALC-GELI came to the conclusion that, ‘it made no sense to pay the annual fees if their representatives were not permitted to attend TESOL Inc’s conferences’ (p.553). In another instance, TESOL Inc. granted NNESTs the privilege of setting up their own special interest group within the association (TESOL, 2013e). However, in allocating a particular ‘space’ or ‘slot’ for them, TESOL Inc.’s action could be construed as exclusionary (although NNESTs’ acceptance of this could be too). That is, it could be interpreted as sustaining the native/non-native English speaker dichotomy and encouraging native speaker chauvinism, which may explain why an association like Asia TEFL has seemingly opted to have only NNESTs on its foundation committee and board of directors.

Yet, such behaviour is not necessarily characteristic of TESOL Inc. alone.
IATEFL appears to have also demonstrated practices of a similar nature. For example, it uses the voices of well-known ELT practitioners to promote and encourage teachers to join. It quotes McCarthy as saying ‘I consider my membership of IATEFL to be a vital part of my professional context’ (IATEFL, 2013b, para.4). Moreover, Swan is mentioned as stating ‘I personally owe a great deal to this remarkable association...’(IATEFL, 2013b, para.5). Likewise, it quotes Cook as saying ‘The IATEFL conference provides a necessary meeting point between academics and practitioners’ (IATEFL, 2013b, para.7). Johnson, the current Leadership and Management special interest group (SIG) coordinator, is also mentioned as stating, ‘After joining IATEFL, my eyes were opened to what teacher training really is, on an international scale’ (IATEFL, 2013b, para.8). Finally, Harmer remarks ‘I love IATEFL. It’s my professional family’ (IATEFL, 2013b, para.9).

On the surface, these comments may appear only encouraging and harmless to some teachers. Nevertheless, the fact that IATEFL quotes no well-known NNESTs to encourage its membership despite its benevolent efforts - Wider Membership Scheme (WMS), Wider Membership Individual Scheme (WMIS), web conference and specific projects - aimed specifically at supporting NNESTs in ‘low-resource contexts in the developing world’ (Read, 2014, p.3) not only appears contradictory but also suggestive, at least indirectly, of native English speaker chauvinism. Moreover, it may stand to explain Asia TEFL’s apparent NNEST chauvinism. Consequently, it would seem that Amin (2004) and Bernat (2008) are quite justified in their calls for international ELTs’ associations to abandon the native/non-native dichotomy for the sake of promoting egalitarianism and unity in diversity through membership. However, at the same time, it also appears important for international ELTs’ associations to be wary of coming across or being interpreted as economically
chauvinistic in relation to membership. For example, on its website, IATEFL publically cites Rinvolucri as stating, ‘The conference is mind-bogglingly reasonable in price…’ (IATEFL, 2013b, para.6) to encourage membership through a specific event. Yet, in quoting him, this would seem to imply that, notwithstanding the 30 conference scholarships IATEFL generously offers to financially disadvantaged teachers wishing to attend (IATEFL-British Council, 2013, 2014), the association assumes most teachers, irrespective of the different contexts and economic climates they work in, can pay what Rinvolucri or other well-known UK-based practitioners like him deem affordable.

Even so, in light of what I have discussed, there are still concerns that many teachers in non-Western contexts do not recognise, have yet to encounter, or take for granted the possible presence of chauvinism in international ELTs’ associations. I would speculate this is partly because they have come to believe what is said about them through international ELTs’ association publications in terms of how they are still ‘developing’ (e.g. Draper, 2012) and thus, deficient in terms of CPD and ELT knowledge. In looking at the views of some African-based teachers, one can find evidence of this. For example, Nwokolo (2012) criticises Nigerian teachers’ efforts to form and run ELTs’ associations by claiming ‘very few functional English language teachers’ associations exist presently’ while praising IATEFL and TESOL Inc. for not only being able to ‘provide networking opportunities, opportunity to participate in conferences and workshops, as well as foster team feeling’ but also going ‘a long way in ensuring the development of the language teacher’ (p.356). This outwardly resonates with Mbaye (2012) who, in reproving Sudanese ELT’s failure ‘to pay attention to career issues’, appears to implicitly advocate and endorse international ELTs’ associations by telling Sudanese teachers to ‘link up with other organisations
outside the country’ so they can be ‘a source of professional empowerment’ (p.25). Likewise, Ntam (2012), in wanting Sudanese ELTs’ associations to ‘achieve the goal of improving ELT’, argues this can only be done by entering ‘into partnerships and affiliations with international institutions and associations, such as…IATEFL, TESOL, and a host of others’ (p.46).

With these current perceptions in mind, Phillipson (2009) would argue there is need to raise awareness among many teachers that the professional aspirations of international ELTs’ associations are only ‘based on the questionable assumption that their expertise is globally relevant’ (p.193). To add, he would contend that such teachers need to be made cognisant of the fact that many in “‘Third World” contexts are ‘… likely to learn more from well-functioning departments of English in countries where English is learned successfully as a foreign language’ and ‘which declare no allegiance’ to organisations like TESOL Inc. or IATEFL (p.193). Indeed, as Lee (1992) has asserted before, international ELTs’ associations such as TESOL Inc. and IATEFL still need to do more in terms of founding vibrant relationships with local teachers and ELTs’ associations which are beyond mere affiliation so that ‘generally-agreed views on the advancement of foreign-language teaching can be publicized more effectively’ (p.11). They also seemingly have a lot more to do in terms of reconciling international representation in their organizations, especially with respect to their committees as most people involved in these appear to be native English speakers of American and British origin (cf. Goethals, 1997). Furthermore, in claiming to be international ELTs’ associations, they need to be sensitive about what connotations are made by or about NNESTs vis-à-vis their association practices and rhetoric. For instance, concerns have been raised over what certain parts of international ELTs’ association names connote (e.g., ‘Other’ in TESOL Inc.; ‘Foreign’
in IATEFL) which some cite as proof that these organisations need to be ‘aware of the debate over their acceptability’ (Lovtsevich & Ryan, 2003, p.551).

**Summary**

This chapter has problematised ELTs’ association membership. By discussing membership based on my experience and in light of the relevant ELT literature, I have illuminated some issues I believe are problematic with it today. In particular, I have discussed how ELTs’ associations appear to not be meeting members’ CPD needs and how there may be reason to mistrust what they say and do. I have also examined how association leaders seem to behave undemocratically, how they provide an opaque understanding of professionalism and unclear professional standards and guidelines, and how international ELTs’ associations appear to act chauvinistically.

In the next chapter, I take a step further by arguing a way to comprehend such ‘problems’ of ELTs’ association membership via a discussion of its impact on professionalism and professional identity.
Chapter 3
A Rationale for Exploring ELTs’ Association Membership

Introduction
In Chapter 2, I discussed my experience of membership in light of the relevant literature as a means to problematise ELTs’ association membership. The aim of this chapter is to illustrate a way of understanding such ‘problems’ of membership through the lens of professionalism and, in turn, professional identity. First, I examine the professional status of English language teachers as a means to better understand the reason for the proliferation in ELTs’ associations and the ideal of membership in them. I then theorise how this increase has led ELTs’ associations to construct and promote a particular notion of professionalism associated with membership which can directly conflict with a teacher’s personal notion of professionalism. This potential tension, I argue, can have implications for the professional identity of the English language teacher and stands as my justification for exploring English language teachers’ construal of ELTs’ association membership especially in light of the lack of documented information on it.

3.1 The Professional Status of English Language Teachers
A specific English language teacher concern highlighted by research has been professional status, particularly the importance of being recognised as a professional and respected and accepted as one (Blaber & Tobash, 1989; J. Brown, 1992).
However, the contention that English language teachers have not attained sufficient recognition, respect, and acceptance as professionals is by no means novel (Vazquez, Guzman & Roux, 2013). Indeed, most outside the field are not always clear about what ELT is and where it is should placed in the academic world (Pennington, 1992). This has led to questions over its authenticity as a profession (Nunan, 2001) and, in many respects, to it being undervalued and marginalised (Johnston, 2003; Nunan, 2001, Pennington, 1992).

Part of the problem is seemingly grounded in the perception that English language teachers do not have control over professional standards, which some see as synonymous with teaching in general and, therefore, indicative of its ‘semi-profession’ status (Etzioni, 1969). The other part appears rooted in two issues. For one, ELT has long maintained a preference for socialization as a professional discourse system where a robust ideological commitment to learning through practice continues, in many respects, to eclipse those of education - formal learning via coursework and research - which has only perpetuated the perspective that ELT is noticeably and conspicuously different from other accepted and recognised fields (Scollon & Scollon, 1995). Secondly, a comparison of ELT with established professions (e.g., medicine; law, etc.) and the variety and lack of consensus on professional qualifications within it has only fuelled the view of ELT as an insecure occupation to be in and one lacking in secure benefits (Johnston, 1997) despite its transnational nature. This, in turn, has encouraged the belief that ELT ‘lacks a clearly defined career pathway’ which results in better ‘remuneration and heightened status’ for teachers (Skinner, 2002, p.269). Certainly, there has been some documented evidence that supports this. For instance, research carried out by the Centre for British Teachers (1989) indicated that many teachers felt they have ‘probably
nowhere to go but sideways’ after working in the field for more than five years and getting qualified (p.17). Moreover, according to McKnight (1992), many ELT practitioners are said to suffer from ‘low morale and low status’ (p.30) in part because of how easy it is to enter and leave the field especially for unqualified native speakers of English (Clayton, 1989; Gabrielatos, 2002, Maley, 1992, Perkins, 2002) and the fact that this practice continues (Vazquez et al., 2013).

Hence, as many outside the field seem to believe ‘we are not yet a profession’ and that ‘what we do is still regarded as a job’ (Freeman, 1992, p.4), the question of whether ELT is an occupation or not has become ‘one of the most urgent issues facing the field at the present time’ (Johnston, 1995, p.213). In response, specific efforts have been made to address this.

3.2 The Rise of ELTs’ Associations & Membership

Over the last twenty years, there has been progress in the development of professional recognition in ELT (Vazquez et al., 2013). For instance, consistent use of terms such as profession and professional as notions convenient for membership in our field (Crookes, 2009) have, by all intents and purposes, ‘gone unchallenged’ (Johnston, 1997, p.681). Moreover, as ‘the nature of teaching demands that teachers engage in continuing career long professional development’ (Day, 1999, p.1), there has been a move toward providing a visible space for this. Indeed, as English language teachers ‘will only be able to fulfil their educational purposes if they are both well prepared for the profession and able to maintain and improve their contributions to it through career-long learning’, many in ELT have come to believe that “support for teachers’ well-being and professional development is therefore an integral and essential part of efforts to raise standards of teaching, learning and achievement” (Day, 1999, p.2). This is especially true considering the necessity for
teachers ‘to keep pace with change and to review and renew their own knowledge, skills and visions for good teaching’ (Day, 1999, p.2). However, as teacher isolation is a factor that can interfere with this and potentially cause the profession of English language teaching to suffer, sustained collegiality and collaboration via ‘being an active member of adult communities in but also outside the workplace’ in ELT has become one such way to meet such demands (Day, 1999, p.4). This, in turn, has sparked a proliferation in ELTs’ associations as an external attempt to not only further professionalise the field and convince those outside ELT that the work teachers do is relevant and important but to also exemplify how professionalism in ELT has become a growth industry (Burns & Richards, 2009, p. 2).

Thus, not surprisingly, alongside this proliferation in what Allwright (1991) calls ‘associationism’ - the value of English language teachers collectively organising themselves for common support and CPD across macro (i.e. international or national) and micro (i.e. local) boundaries (pp. 2- 4) - there has emerged an expectation for teachers to professionally locate themselves as members (cf. Allwright, 1997). That is to say, affiliation with an ELTs’ association has seemingly become a way to gain professional acceptance. Thus, membership appears to have become a part of the professional discourse of being an English language teacher and one means to earn his/her ‘badge of respectability’ in the field. This is evident in the positive rhetoric written about ELTs’ association membership. For instance, Scollon & Scollon (1995) state that English language teachers feel part of the same professional discourse system as a result of ‘membership in a common association’ (p.195). By the same token, Edstam (2001) claims that English language teachers are able to ‘create a wonderful professional network for themselves’ through membership which helps keep one up-to date and able to ‘remain on the cutting edge’ (p.17). Likewise, J.

However, with membership has arguably come debate over what ELTs’ associations mean and imply when they speak of the professionalism of a teacher – a teacher ‘being professional’ (Walker, 2011, p.308) or ‘behaving as a professional’ (Day, 1999, p.6). Farmer (2006) refers to the professionalism advocated by ELTs’ associations as something service-oriented that is grounded in best practice, delineating what teachers must have knowledge of and must be capable of doing. This is corroborated by Pasternak & Bailey (2004) who see such declarative knowledge (knowledge about something) and procedural knowledge - a capability of doing things - as necessary for English language teachers to have in order for them to be effective (p.158). Burns & Richards (2009) also concur, seeing English language teaching as a profession that ‘requires a specialized knowledge base obtained through both academic study…’ and ‘a field of work where membership is based on entry requirements and standards’ (p. 2). Thus, ELTs’ associations appear to assist teachers in emphasizing and laying claim to professional knowledge we should have and act upon.

Yet, this is highly contentious as any effort by ELTs’ associations to qualify the nature of teacher professionalism via membership is ‘liable to the charge of different kinds of bias, since such an attempt is bound to reflect understandings that are shaped by culture, by context, by individual belief and preference as well as by limitations in our present state of knowledge’ (J. Richards, 2010, p. 120). What is more, it raises serious questions over who determines best practice and under what authority. Indeed, up until Edstam’s (2001) research, English language teachers had
never been asked for their own views of what constitutes professionalism (Johnston, 1995) and, in light of my membership experience and the issues with membership cited in Chapter 2, I would argue this still remains problematic.

Thus, the professionalism ELTs’ associations endorse would seem to suggest ‘teachers’ knowledge is not necessarily the knowledge of the individual teacher but rather the knowing practices manifested by groups of teachers in social organizations under better or worse conditions’ (Crookes, 2009, p. 124). This seemingly points to an imposed view of what counts as professionalism. That is to say, ELTs’ associations often appear to take ‘a managerial approach to professionalism...that specify(ies) what teachers as members are expected to know and what quality teaching practices consist of’ (J. Richards, 2010, p.119). This professional discourse system, or sponsored professionalism (Leung, 2009) as appropriated by ELTs’ associations, seemingly aspires to maintain and preserve this system even though it claims to support its members ‘in the realisation of their own career interests’ (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p. 204). In a sense then, this can be interpreted as an attempt by ELTs’ associations to ‘universally’ characterize the nature of professionalism through claims of what counts as best practice irrespective of the presence of various kinds of embedded cultural, contextual, and individual influences and preferences that exude bias (J. Richards, 2010; Phan & Le, 2013). Consequently, this top-down, knowledge transmission approach can come into direct tension with a more personal approach to professionalism - independent professionalism - in which teachers see themselves as contributors to rather than simply recipients of best practice as well as individuals who engage in critical reflection on their own values, beliefs and practices and the contexts they work in (Burns & Richards, 2009; Eckerth & Leung, 2009; Leung, 2009). Indeed, according
to Woods (1994) ‘teachers have a strong sense of professionalism’ and are not necessarily ‘going to be dictated to’ when it comes to what they should know and do (p.402). Moreover, many may see more value in the practical knowledge they gain through experience which is ‘personal, context-bound, and…includes implicit knowing’ (Berry, 2007, p.12). Likewise, they may prefer to align themselves with a view of professionalism that is grounded in their individual values and moral roles as teachers (Crookes, 2009; Phan & Le, 2013), seeing that espoused by ELTs’ association as ignoring or avoiding the socio-political realities of their teaching lives (Johnston, 2003; Perkins, 2002). Indeed, with exception to TESOL Inc. which has lobbied the U.S Congress on matters germane to ELT on numerous occasions, worked to inform teachers on important ELT policies, and strived to politically empower them to do something to better their local educational contexts (PR Web, 2015; TESOL Connections, 2014), Johnston (2003) contends that ELTs’ associations rarely engage teachers in socio-political issues. Instead, they collude ‘in the artificial separation of the political from the professional’ and thus fail to help improve the conditions teachers work in (p. 137). Thus, for some teachers, ELTs’ association membership may only serve to spark inner conflict and ambiguity over what stands as ‘professionalism’. This, I argue, can have an impact on the professional identity of the English language teacher as I shall subsequently demonstrate.

3.3 Membership & Professional English Language Teacher Identity

Although teachers can be said to be members of a professional discourse system where they identify themselves collectively as English language teachers, this is by no means clear cut. Indeed, on an individual level, if a teacher is a member of an ELTs’ association, this may result in a split in professional discourse where how one
thinks and behaves professionally is dichotomised into that which is dictated by the discourse of the association (i.e. *sponsored professionalism*) and that grounded in the individual's agency (i.e. *independent professionalism*). As such, the emergence of this split can result in the tendency for one type of professionalism to, at varying times, 'undercut or call into question' (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p. 198) the other, creating a dominant identity favouring one or the other depending on the links established between the association one belongs to and one's sense of professional self. Thus, this suggests that membership in a ELTs’ association can lead to a tension over professionalism that is ‘not easily reconciled’ (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p. 201), resulting in a professional identity conflict between how a teacher positions oneself and how one is positioned by an ELTs’ association.

Yet, in this day and age, it is common for English language teachers to encounter and engage in ‘multiple discourse communities, each with its own cultures, values, and role expectations’ (Alfred, 2002, p.9) as well as knowledge and ways of viewing and understanding the world they live in and the one they hope to (cf. Hayhoe & Pan, 2001; A. Little, 2003; Rahnema, 2001; Zeera, 2001). Indeed, according to Lim & Renshaw (2001) the communities we belong to each have their own distinct culture which ‘influences who we are, our values, assumptions, beliefs, and practices’ (p.9). Likewise, the culture of each ELTs’ association can be said to have the same kind of impact on a member. That is, in joining, one comes to ‘gain or appropriate sociocultural knowledge and practices such as ways of speaking and behaving, conventions for representing ideas, procedures for communicating, modes of inquiry and verifying knowledge claims, and values and beliefs, which constitute the explicit as well as implicit features of community culture’ (Lim & Renshaw, 2001, p.14). Hence, to understand what it means to be a member, due consideration must
given for not only what one does but also what one is asked to become in light of the distinct history of an ELTs’ association and how it handles exclusive social, political, and economic conditions (cf. Litowitz, 1993; Trice & Beyer, 1993). Indeed, in many respects, belonging to an ELTs’ association appears to involve the de-construction and reconstruction of the self in order to make space for the creation of an identity within it that is in line with the organisation and very much grounded, as Soldatova asserts, in the ‘interactional experiences of members… through the communicative process and the activities in which they engage’ (as cited in Alfred, 2002, p.7).

However, this is a far from simple as one must often endeavour to make sense of a cultural realm within which others have advanced while conceptualising who one is in connection to them and how they have come to take in, understand, and codify this particular domain (Perez, 1998). In other words, it is requisite a teacher try to understand and fit into the culture of an ELTs’ association in which others have already been socialised and historically situated within according to pre-determined ‘rules of behaviour and correct practices’ (Alfred, 2002, p.6). This suggests, as Trice & Beyer (1993) contend, that to find a place one must accept what others accept as true and act as they do in light of the distinct social, physical, economic, political, and historical conditions of the association or risk being ostracised or banished from the group. In this sense, it is very much like a receptacle into which one is placed or deposited (Lave & Wenger, 1991), defining who the individual is and what that person does at a certain period of time and under specific conditions. This is echoed by Miller (2009) who sees professional identity as not something simply grounded within the moral compass of the individual but also ‘powerfully influenced by contextual factors outside of the teachers themselves’ (p.175) such as associational practices and even cultural differences between
members. This gives credence to the notion that, in light of ELTs' association membership, an English language teacher's professional identity is 'multiple, a site of struggle, and changing over time' (Pierce, 1995, p.14) and that 'issues of agency and power...cannot be ignored' (Miller, 2009, p. 172) since one seemingly 'floats in and out of' (Alfred, 2002, p.7) clashing professional internal and external domains with discordant values. Thus, as one ceases to be tied to place (cf. Sassen, 1998) and is 'pushed' and 'pulled' in different directions (cf. Hvenmark, 2008) by internal and external forces of variable strength and influence, a sense of uncertainty and complexity may arise. That is, one may be driven into a plausible state of fuzziness or ambivalence with respect to his/her professional English language teacher identity.

Thus, in its totality, professional identity appears to represent 'the influences on teachers, how individuals see themselves, and how they enact their profession in their settings' (Varghese, 2006, p.212). In this sense then, professional identity linked to ELTs' association membership seemingly involves being problematically positioned by the 'Other' (i.e. the association) whilst discovering how to individually work and function within this 'complex socio-political and cultural political space' (Pennycook, 2004, p.333). This is only made all the more complicated when holding membership in contextually different ELTs' associations where one is 'judged against multiple layers of professionalism’ with internationally, nationally, and/or locally defined codes of practice (Phan & Le, 2013, p.222). Indeed, beyond the domain of the individual, there are strong local, national and international forces which do have an impact on ELTs’ associations and their members. In particular, the local culture, customs, and traditions of contexts in which ELTs' associations are embedded have a powerful influence on how their members think and act professionally and can be said to shape how teachers create and conceive knowledge, assisting them in the
mutual interaction and understanding while potentially restricting them through borders, limitations, and protocols for membership which propagate preclusive practices (cf. Alfred, 2002).

However, at the same time, there are equally impacting international forces such as globalisation, neo-liberalism, and/or English as an International Language (EIL) / English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), which conflict with the localised and nationalised practices and values of certain ELTs’ associations while being embraced or adapted by others and subsequently encouraged amongst their members (cf. Spring, 2008). The latter situation, in particular, is now more prevalent than ever as evidenced by the number of local ELTs’ associations now affiliated and thus seemingly influenced by ‘global’ organisations such as TESOL Inc. and IATEFL (IATEFL, 2013c; TESOL Inc., 2013d). Also, the increasing ease of access to world knowledge made possible through developments in information technology and communications has also meant that these global forces are, at least in theory, more pervasive (Lim & Renshaw, 2001; Stromquist, 2002; Sunstein, 2001; Wilhelm, 2000) and have a more significant impact on education (Stoer & Magalhaes, 2004) which appears still unfamiliar with them and unsure in terms of how to respond (Fitzsimons, 2000; Heath, 2002).

Hence, in this day and age, what transpires in local or national ELTs’ associations is seemingly no longer isolated from the international domain and the English language teacher as member now finds himself / herself literally living and working on the frontiers or interfaces of different ‘cultures’ – varying and contextually defined professional discourse communities (cf. Appadurai, 1990; Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007; Hermans & Kempen, 1998; Raggatt, 2000; Spiro, 1993; Wolf, 1982). This appears to compel one as a teacher to deconstruct an identity to construct
another based ‘as much on the absence of what it is not as on the presence of what it is’ (Crotty, 2009, p. 206) while negotiating any existing and opposing identities within one’s self as a means to manage and cope with membership in such disparate professional communities (cf. S. Hall, 1990, 2000). Consequently, it would seem that, concurrently, professional English language teacher identity is the product of the negotiation between teacher agency and positioning by different people and that it is not only an individual matter but also a highly social one (Miller, 2009; Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005) which ELTs’ association membership appears to play a significant role in with respect to where teachers locate and thus professionally identify themselves.

However, at the same, Benne (1970) argues that membership is contingent upon whether or not professionals accept a teacher association as a professional authority and are willing to be inducted or appropriated into its particular world view. Indeed, no English language teacher as a member is always socially, culturally, and historically bound to one particular ELTs’ association for his/her professional identity (cf. Trice & Beyer, 1993). Thus, from an individual perspective, the degree to which an English language teacher manages these social encounters and engagements depends to some extent on how he/she psychologically internalises the historically determined and culturally organised practices of each ELTs’ association (cf. Foucault, 1980; Luria, 1979). However, one could assert that it is also seemingly contingent upon the development and application of ‘a technology of self-regulation and self-monitoring’, a form of power ELTs’ associations may impose through subtle member indoctrination which has ‘implications for how individuals manage themselves through the rules, standards, and styles of reasoning that construct boundaries and possibilities for everyday life’ (Popkewitz, 1994, p.11) and what they create in terms
of identities within one’s self.

Yet, in addition to this, membership appears to be something that very much depends on whether an ELTs’ association is perceived as being open to varying perceptions of what is professional. Indeed, teachers do differ in terms of how they construct and assert their professional identity, from those resisting external regulation by carrying out their duties but not holding membership in any teacher association to those denying their autonomy in order to hold leadership positions on various association committees (Helsby, 1995; Scollon & Scollon, 1995). This not only means there are distinct professional dispositions among teachers to take into consideration but also that adopting a professional identity tied to a teacher association may plausibly not be something many are willing to accept (Servage, 2009). Even so, as there are few studies on ELTs’ associations (Falcão & Szesztay, 2006) and, to my knowledge, none have ever been carried out on ELTs’ association membership per se, there is little else one can do other than speculate on the relationship between membership and professional English language teacher identity. Indeed, although I have discussed ELTs’ association membership issues of personal and professional concern to me in light of the available and relevant ELT literature in Chapter 2, little else is known and much remains terra incognita - unmapped territory. Hence, there is a need to explore English language teachers’ construal of ELTs’ association membership so to be able to account for the impact it has on the professional identity of the English language teacher.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I initially discussed the professional status of English language teachers to put its problematic image into perspective. Thereafter, I examined the rise of ELTs’ associations and the ideal of membership in them to show how these
exemplify the efforts of the ELT field to deal with this issue and further professionalise and grow professionally as a discipline despite appearing to cause a conflict between competing notions of professionalism – that endorsed by ELTs’ association through membership (i.e. sponsored professionalism) and that personal to the teacher (i.e. independent professionalism). Subsequently, I theorised the impact this tension can have on the professional identity of the English language teacher. I then explained how, because so little is known about membership, there is a need to explore English language teachers’ construal of it through research to get a better understanding of its influence on professional identity. Consequently, in the next chapter, I discuss the research design of my study.
Chapter 4
Researching Membership of ELTs’ Associations

Introduction
Based on my rationale for exploring the construal of ELTs’ association membership in Chapter 3, this chapter describes the research design of my study, the rationale for it and the processes involved in data collection. I begin by discussing the ontology and epistemology driving my inquiry, along with the research methodology they informed. Subsequently, I examine ethical issues taken into consideration for my study. Thereafter, I explain the processes involved in the collection of data as driven by my research methodology. In particular, I discuss my research participants and briefly review ELTs’ associations in their country to better account for their viewpoints on membership. Next, I describe the research approach taken, the type of sampling utilised, the data collection method used, and the means of data analysis and presentation utilised. Finally, I discuss the logistical issues involved in my research and the measures taken to heighten the trustworthiness of my research.

4.1 Research Design
In this section, I outline the ontological and epistemological views which informed the methodology I used. Thereafter, I discuss the research methodology I utilised that was driven by these.
4.1.1 Ontology & Epistemology

As very little is known about membership of ELTs’ associations as construed by members themselves, the purpose of my study was to illuminate how English language teachers see membership. Consequently, I chose to undertake a qualitative research inquiry that was critical socio-cultural/post-structuralist in nature. The reason for this is grounded in my perception of reality (ontology) or what I believe can be studied, and knowledge (epistemology) or what I can know about it (Grix, 2004), as socially constructed in light of cultural contexts I see as not easily defined as a result of being prone to instability and uncertainty and which may be taken-for-granted and even falsely understood by those both within and beyond them.

From a socio-cultural standpoint, reality, as a creation of social and cultural practices and subsequent individual consciousness, is multi-layered or pluralistic and thus intricate, while knowledge is not something unearthed but interactively and culturally made, then subjectively shaped (A. Hall, 2007; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 2009; K. Richards, 2003). Thus, from my perspective, no two English language teachers are alike and do not construct meaning of ELTs’ association membership as part of the social world in the same way even though ‘one’s way of making sense of the world is as valid and worthy of respect as any other’ (Crotty, 2009, p.58). Moreover, I see such construction of the meaning of membership as ‘an ongoing accomplishment’ (Fish, 1990, p.191) and subject to social, cultural, and historical negotiation (Creswell, 2009) since it is ‘contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context’ (Crotty, 2009, p.42).

However, at the same time, I also see reality and knowledge as sometimes
problematic for the English language teacher. That is, I believe these, in the post-structural sense, can be complicated and not always fixed and untouched. Instead, they can be fragmented and ambiguous as a result of contradictions and inconsistencies that arise with respect to membership, power struggles over its meaning, and conflicting social, cultural and historical forces which, in emerging through interaction with others and in possibly being taken for granted and falsely understood, can render one ambivalent about membership (cf. Grix, 2004; K. Richards, 2003; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). To this end, reality and knowledge relating to membership can appear ‘blurry’ (Grix, 2004, p.99), and invoke feelings of “in-between-ness” (Edge & Richards, 1998, p.348) since the only thing that seems sure is precariousness and that there are numerous ontological and epistemological truths (Grix, 2004). As such, one’s view of reality and knowledge in relation to membership, as shaped through interaction and cultural context(s), can be unstable and not definitive and may require interrogation and deconstruction at certain times to understand what each is and is not so that other realities and knowledge can be created to deal with such uncertainty (cf. Derrida, 1981; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

These ontological and epistemological standpoints form the basis for my decision to choose a methodology and a method that could reveal my research participants’ construal of ELTs’ association membership by furnishing them with the opportunity to voice ‘their opinions, hopes, and worries’ on it ‘in their own words’ (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.311). As such, I took the initial step of letting such ‘lived experience’ emerge from their perspectives as individuals ‘who live it’ (Schwandt, 1994, p.118) before making sense of their responses in light of my own theoretical perspectives on ELTs’ association membership. Subsequently, I followed up on what
surfaced as a means to illuminate ‘new information about and new angles on the topic’ (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.106). Nevertheless, in taking these steps and in positioning myself as an insider and a participant observer grounded in my experience of membership - one of a relational and therefore understanding nature but by no means identical to others - it was still vital to concede that my view of the social world is by no means a ‘neutral window’ (K. Richards, 2003, p.39) or “an objective ‘window on reality’” (Edge & Richards, 1998, p.340). Indeed, as I am the aggregate of my beliefs, feelings, and morals (cf. Grix, 2004) where my own ‘personal, cultural and historical experiences’ form the very basis for how I understand things (Creswell, 2009, p.8), it was important for me to be cognisant, clear, truthful, and self-reflexive about how I commenced and approached my research as well as how I positioned and situated myself in it (cf. Reiter, 2013; Haraway, 1988). To this end, it was requisite that I implement measures to free myself of ‘all conceptualizations acquired’ in my history that may ‘slant the present collection and interpretation of data’ (Stebbins, 2001, p.18) to ensure participants’ responses emerged unscathed from my personal biases and were analysed with objective and critical lenses.

4.1.2 Methodology

Methodology is described metaphorically as ‘the skeleton of the study’ (Perry, 2008, p. 48). However, in pragmatic terms, it is understood as ‘how we go about acquiring the knowledge which exists’ (Hay, 2002, p.63) or what approaches or strategies one uses to ‘provide specific direction for procedures in research design’ (Creswell, 2009, p. 11). In my study, I made use of an exploratory methodology to address this issue. According to Davies (2006), an exploratory methodology is an approach that is
‘primarily concerned with discovery and with generating or building theory’ (p.110). It is a strategy a researcher employs when having little to no information on a specific group or situation one wishes to study even though there are grounds to believe it has aspects worth investigating (Stebbins, 2001). It is also an approach, as Stebbins (2001) asserts, suitable for addressing the myriad of aspects on social life that remain altogether or almost completely unprobed. Hence, I saw such a strategy as useful in proposing ‘a new, insightful, fruitful, and plausible way to think about and explain reality’ as it pertains to my participants while being potentially emancipatory for them in laying bare ‘new relations and causal mechanisms’ that would otherwise ‘escape… disciplinary scrutiny’ (Reiter, 2013, p.12, p.15).

4.1.3 An Exploratory Approach

Taking an exploratory approach requires that the researcher demonstrate creativeness through inductive reasoning as a means to find patterns in what, at first glance, appears as disorder (Stebbins, 2001). This is corroborated by Reiter (2013) who states that a researcher must use his/her ‘imagination, experience, insight, and skill to propose new and innovative ways how to understand and interpret reality’ (p.8). However, in intending to understand how English language teachers construe ELTs’ association membership, it was pivotal that I, at the same time, tackle this phenomenon from a position of ‘flexibility in looking for data and open-mindedness about where to find them’ (Stebbins, 2001, p. 6). Further, it was necessary that I iteratively situate myself in what must be recognised as an intentional ‘cumulative, choice-laden, interest-governed process’ where ‘discovery is possible and broad’ and ‘nonspecialised interests can be pursued’ (Van Maanen, Manning & Miller, 2001, p.vi).
Nevertheless, my success in this process depended upon acknowledging that I am ‘part of history’s unfolding and deeply involved in the reproduction of the knowledge’ (Reiter, 2013, p. 13). To add, it was contingent upon embracing an understanding that all information as truth can only be ascertained within the researcher-participant totality - that “all facts embody the knower as well as the doer; they thus ‘contain’ subjectivity in their very structure” (Marcuse, 1960, viii). To this end, it was my intent to methodologically proceed in a manner that not only permitted a clear point of departure in the course of knowledge construction, understanding, and conversance but also allowed me to conduct my research ‘in a structured, self-aware, transparent, and honest way, which translates into being aware, as a researcher, of one’s situatedness, limitation, and biased outlook’ (Reiter, 2013, p. 10).

4.2. Ethical Considerations

In any study, it is important to envisage and account for any ethical issues that may arise (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). This is especially true of qualitative research where it ‘often intrudes more’ than other types of social science research since it tends to focus on ‘the most sensitive, intimate, and innermost matters in people’s lives’ (K. Punch, 2009, p.50). Consequently, it was requisite that I take steps to ensure no ethical issues arose that would pose any risk to my participants in light of how ‘ethical issues saturate all stages of the research process’ (K. Punch, 2009, p.50).

Certificate of Ethical Research Approval

In order to carry out my doctoral research, The University of Exeter required me to fill out and submit a ‘Certificate of Ethical Research Approval’ (see Appendix 1) to the Ethics Committee Chair of the Graduate School of Education. On this certificate, I
needed to provide a concise account of my research project, participant and context details, information on potential ethical issues contemplated before the collection of data, and how I planned to handle these.

**Informed Consent**

According to Ritchie & Lewis (2003) and Miles & Huberman (1994), informed consent involves providing potential participants information about the aim of a study, who will be undertaking it, how data will be utilised, what will be required of them as informants, and whether they will be identifiable or have any reported comments ascribed to them. It is also important that such potential participants know and understand they are not obligated to participate and that taking part is completely voluntary (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996). All participants who agreed to partake in my study were informed by e-mail of the topic of my study, what part they would play in it, how data would be collected and recorded, and the importance of their input well before (i.e. three months prior) my study commenced. They were also sent the informed consent form downloaded from The University of Exeter’s Graduate School of Education website (Appendix 2) five days before interviews to read in order to make certain they were aware of their rights as research participants, their right to withdraw from my study at any time, and what the data I collected from them would be used for.

**Privacy**

All participants’ right to privacy was given the utmost respect. This was demonstrated to them through my signing of two original copies (one for me and one for the participant) of the informed consent form (Appendix 2). These were signed just
before face-to-face interviews took place and were prefaced by asking each participant if they had any questions or queries about the form before I signed both and each participant added his/her signature. By ensuring each participant had a signed original copy of the informed consent form, this stood as one way of showing and honouring my commitment to research integrity and honesty and my participants’ right to confidentiality and anonymity (Miles & Huberman, 1994; M. Punch, 1994; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). As a further step, I made use of pseudonyms and substituted these for the real names of my participants in my transcriptions, analyses, and understandings so they could not be identified and would remain completely anonymous. With respect to the location of my interviews, I asked each participant to choose where he/she wanted to be interviewed to make them feel comfortable and at ease and to avoid potentially intruding by situating an interview in a place deemed private to him/her (Creswell, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Some chose to be interviewed in the privacy of their offices at their workplace while others preferred meeting at a café.

4.3 Data-Gathering Procedure

In this section, I discuss the research participants in my study and review the literature on ELTs’ associations in Japan to put their viewpoints on membership into perspective. Thereafter, I explain the data collection approach I took before describing the type of sampling utilised, the data collection method I opted to use and theoretical justification for it. Subsequently, I discuss the data gathering schedule and structure I devised followed by an explanation of how data was analysed and presented. Lastly, I discuss relevant logistical issues that I accounted for.
4.3.1 Research Participants

There were eight participants in my study. They were all Japanese nationals living in the Kanto (Tokyo & Chiba-ken) and Hokuriku (Niigata-ken) regions of Japan. They were employed in private, national, and/or public Japanese universities as English language teachers with a minimum of five years’ teaching experience. Hence, the constituency or category of membership I specifically investigated was tertiary teachers. Half of the teachers were employed full-time on a tenured or contract basis. The other four were employed part-time, working at one or more universities.

Full-time and part-time Japanese university teachers were chosen for this study as a means to provide a diverse range of responses on the construal of membership in ELTs’ associations. They were also selected not only to gauge if there were any similarities and differences between them in terms of how they construe membership but to also see if any known or previously unidentified membership issues emerged.

4.3.2 Japanese ELTs’ Associations

In order to better account for my participants’ views of ELTs’ association membership and to put their views into context, I felt it was pivotal to have a well-grounded understanding of Japanese ELTs’ associations as part my research framework. Consequently, irrespective of my experience, a review of the relevant literature on Japanese ELTs’ associations was carried out. This revealed there are two major ELTs’ associations in Japan. One is The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT), which was founded in 1976 (JALT, 2013a) and is a non-profit organisation (NPO) with approximately 3,000 members (JALT, 2013b). Its mission is the ‘improvement of language teaching and learning’ (JALT, 2013b, para. 1). The other is
The Japan Association for College English Teachers (JACET) which was established in 1962 and is also an NPO with over 2700 members (Jimbo, 2012). Its mission is to ‘contribute to the improvement of university English education and the development of studies related to English education in Japan’ (Jimbo, 2012, p.5). There are also a number of smaller ELTs’ associations that exist alongside JALT and JACET but appear to be less well-known.

According to Fraser (2011), JALT and JACET provide ‘a loose professional framework for the teaching of English in Japan’ (p.203) and offer ‘an opportunity to network with others in the field, share research and teaching practices and receive support on various issues relating to teaching English in Japan’ (p.155). Even so, according to Fraser (2011), they both ‘lack the universality to enforce self-regulation for standards of practice that define other professional entities with the capacity for self-regulation’ (p.203). Moreover, they need to do more to ‘provide a standard for professionalising the teaching of English in Japan’ (p.204).

Membership-wise, JALT is composed of ‘mostly foreign nationals while the members of JACET are mostly Japanese nationals’ (Fraser, 2011, p.155) and their leaderships more than echo this trend (JACET, 2013; JALT, 2013c). Such tendencies have resulted in claims of a ‘considerable feeling of rivalry’ between JALT and JACET and concerns the ‘two groups futures are diverging’ (Swan & Knowles, 2000, p.3). However, another reason for such claims might be related to the ‘Westernness’ or ‘Foreignness’ of JALT and the ‘Japaneseness’ of JACET (cf. P. Dale, 1986; Yoshino,1992) and how they differ in their relationships to the state. As an ELTs’ association with a predominantly Japanese membership and leadership, JACET naturally appeals to the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) on a national level and appears to have some influence on
the decisions it makes on English language policy as it, unlike JALT, acts to gain MEXT’s financial support through germane work. This is evident by JACET’s preference for ‘policy-relevant research’ and interest in ‘acquiring trust funds and research grants’ (Jimbo, 2012, p.5) such as the grant aide it received from MEXT on three research projects between 2004 and 2012 (Hisamura, 2012). JALT, on the other hand, as a foreign-run ELTs’ association, has a questionable and unclear relationship with MEXT and does not appear to have a discernible impact on it and what it decides. It does nonetheless discuss and provide information on MEXT policy through articles in its journals (e.g., Tahira, 2012; Tanabe, 2004) and through presentations (e.g., Nakai, 2012; Yoshida, 2009) and efforts have been made within the organisation to help and encourage its members to secure grant funding from the ministry (e.g., Kikuchi, 2010).

With respect to internal relations, there is evidence to suggest competition and division is a reality within both JALT and JACET. For instance, disputes have arisen and concerns have been raised on such issues as opportunities for member voice/input, democracy, and neo-liberal leadership and economic practices (e.g., Jannuzi, 2000; Scott, 2000; Swan & Knowles, 2000; Tomei, 2000), younger vs. older teachers (e.g., Morizumi, 2007), female representation and influence (e.g., Morizumi, 2008) and native/non-native English speaking teacher and Japanese/non-Japanese English teacher representation and influence (e.g., Morizumi, 2008; Oda, 1999).

JACET and JALT also appear to share, as Szesztay (as cited in Falcão & Szesztay, 2006) and Haig (2003) report, declining membership rates and difficulty in securing members, especially with respect to recruiting younger teachers in JACET (Morizumi, 2007). These trends are seemingly consistent with studies carried out in Japan on professional association membership across a variety of disciplines.
including education. Such research has revealed that, despite being a highly flourishing, democratic nation for some time, Japan has surprisingly shown persistent low rates of professional association membership allegedly as a result of its traditional beliefs and hierarchical and centralised social structure (Azumi, 1972, 1974; Curtis, Baer & Grabb, 2001; Curtis, Grabb & Baer, 1992; Hardacre, 1991; Lipset, 1996). Moreover, as Drucker (1994) argues, it has been ‘openly hostile towards anything that smacks of voluntarism’ (p.76). Even so, some, such as Howe (2005), contest such claims arguing that ‘most teachers in Japan belong to professional associations’ (p.128) despite citing no evidence.

Yet, notwithstanding the apparent decline in ELTs’ association membership in Japan, others like McCrostie (2010), argue that being a member of JALT or JACET is still vital since ‘setting yourself apart from the crowd is necessary’ especially ‘in the current atmosphere of brutal competition’ where neo-liberalism has pervaded and fostered teacher rivalry for jobs which ‘remains fierce’ (p.34). Moreover, he asserts that ‘it is no longer enough to simply pay your JALT and JACET membership fees – you have to get involved with meetings, conferences, editing journals, and similar volunteer service’ (p.34). However, with hardly any information on how members actually construe ELTs’ association membership in Japan let alone in the field, it is difficult to ascertain the credibility of McCrostie’s claims.

4.3.3 Data Collection Approach

Initially more than six-hundred Japanese English teachers across Japan were contacted via e-mail to participate in what began as a mixed-method study involving the completion of an online questionnaire (Appendix 3) and an invitation to participate in interviews. These teachers were informed of the topic of my research
study, the importance of the part they would play in it, how much time they would need to invest, and the research processes involved. Unfortunately only twenty-seven teachers responded to my questionnaire with just eleven of those teachers contacting me and agreeing to participate in face-to-face interviews. Not deterred, I elected to drop the use of the questionnaire and abandon taking a mixed-method approach since the total number of completed questionnaires was not only small (i.e. < 100) but also I would be unable to make use of inferential statistics and only be able to utilise the data from the twenty-seven teachers for descriptive purposes (Borg & Gall, 1979; Cohen et al., 2007). I thus opted to conduct a qualitative inquiry using only interviews.

4.3.4 Sampling

With eleven teachers agreeing to participate in interviews, I decided to make use of purposive sampling not only because my research was now rendered small-in-scale (cf. Ritchie & Lewis, 2003) but also to select what I felt were the most suitable participants for my study. Purposive selection of participants is often used in qualitative research to choose those who will most assist a researcher in making sense of an enigma or dilemma and help in answering one’s principal research question (Creswell, 2009). It also provides the means for an in-depth probing and discernment of key themes or, in some cases, enigmas which a researcher wants to examine (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). That is, it helps in acquiring an understanding of the essence and shape of a phenomenon, in deciphering meanings, and in generating reasons, views, concepts, and assumptions while guaranteeing the ‘inclusion of relevant constituencies, events, processes, and so on, that can illuminate and inform that understanding’ (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p.82).
With the above in mind, and considering other issues such as participant accessibility and proximity to one another, and costs journeying from Exeter to Japan and within Japan to carry out interviews, I narrowed the selection of participants for my study from eleven to eight. Age and gender did not factor in the selection process since I saw these as not particularly relevant to my inquiry. However, other factors did (see Table 4.1). The eight participants were seen as having knowledge of ELTs’ association membership either on the basis of the professional position they held (e.g., a full-time university academic and a member of an ELTs' association), the authority they possessed (e.g., an ELTs’ association leader or an ELT’s association journal editor), their experience (e.g., membership in an ELTs’ association or knowledge of members and their membership activities) and/or their accessibility to ELTs’ associations (cf. Ball, 1990). Thus, they were chosen for my study on the grounds of their ‘particular characteristics or nature’ (Shank & Brown, 2007, p.46) or their ‘symbolic representation’ (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p.83). In other words, they epitomised a situation or had characteristics that were anticipated or recognised as prominent to the topic being researched (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Moreover, because they live and work in accessibly proximate but different regions of Japan (Kanto: Tokyo & Chiba-ken; Hokuriku: Niigata-ken), this allowed for multiplicity within my sample population. Hence, they were also selected since such diversity ‘optimises the chances of identifying the full range of factors or features that are associated with a phenomenon’ and provides more opportunities ‘to identify…different contributory elements and influences’ (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p.83).

All interviews were conducted between August and September 2012 and all teachers were contacted by e-mail five days prior to their interview and asked to think about my research prompts. Before leaving for Japan in late July, I made every
effort to establish a prior rapport with my participants via e-mail over a span of three months. This was in order to build a sense of trust and comfort upfront to heighten their willingness to divulge information on how they construe membership of ELTs’ associations in actual interviews. I also readily encouraged them to feel free to ask any questions or raise any concerns they had prior to meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Professional Position</th>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Membership Factors Used For Purposive Sampling

4.3.5 Type of Interviews

In my study, I made use of semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. Such interviews were used for a number of reasons. To begin with, they were in line with my ontological viewpoint. I see semi-structured interviews as ‘inter-subjective’ (Laing, 1967, p.66) where the interviewees all ‘have parts to play’ (K. Richards, 2003, p.80) in the construction of social reality. Hence, they provide an opportunity for interviewees to express how they each construe the world we inhabit and to divulge how they each see circumstances from their own individual standpoint (cf. Cohen et al., 2007). More specifically, they provide an interactive space for the construction, emergence, and illumination of discourses that make up their worldviews and shape their deliberate and indeliberate thoughts, feelings, and views (Foucault, 1980; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Weedon, 1987). To this end, they show how, as a form of human
interaction and therefore ‘part of life itself’, the notion of ‘human embeddedness is inescapable’ in the construction of reality (Cohen et al., 2007, p.349).

Semi-structured interviews also fit my epistemological stance. They are theoretically localist in their position (Alvesson, 2003), functioning as ‘production site(s) of knowledge’ (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.54) where interviewees construct knowledge in the form of novel or alternative ‘accounts’ or ‘versions’ (Rapley, 2001, p.304) and subsequently make meaning from them as they interact with the interviewer (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Dingwall, 1997; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Rapley, 2001).

Semi-structured interviews also parallel my methodological position. From experience, I have found interviews can be unpredictable with unanticipated lines of inquiry emerging which are worth pursuing. Consequently, as semi-structured interviews are ‘a half-way house between rigid formality…and flexibility’ (Moore, 2000, p. 121), they allowed me to develop ‘specific lines of questioning’ (K. Richards, 2003, p.65) that did not have to adhere to a particular schedule or order (Potter & Hepburn, 2005) and could be applied as prompts or probes in a ‘relatively loosely structured’ manner (Alvesson, 2003, p.13). Hence, they enabled me to construct and ask specific questions paired with ‘pick-ups’— specific information I wanted to gain knowledge on within each question (Radnor, 2002). According to Patton (1980), this is particularly useful in extending, or expanding meaning (Morrison, 1993) and maximises the chances for conversation and interaction between participants and the interviewer. Moreover, this not only assists in constructing rapport but also lowers the potential for participants to provide socially desirable or preferential responses (Patton, 1990) - answers that present a self that attempts to meet the tacit requests of the interviewer (Denzin, 1989). Such prompts, probes and/or pick-ups are also
quite useful in addressing and confirming the meaning of participant responses in the form of ‘social cues, such as voice, intonation, body language’ which can provide the interviewer with ‘a lot of extra information that can be added to the verbal answer’ of an informant (Opdenakker, 2006, p.3). Further, they can be especially advantageous when interviewing those for whom English is not a mother tongue where the cautious choice of words and the verification of meaning is vital (Barriball & While, 1994; Britten, 1995).

Thus, on the whole, semi-structured interviews allowed me to take the approach of going ‘with the flow’ (Radnor, 2002, p.62) in order to cover the main areas sought after for understanding in a natural way rather than risk using ordered questions one might not be able to finish asking while potentially making the interview less true to life (i.e. artificial). I also sometimes put questions to participants differently or began from a different commencing point based on my reading of the interview situation and the interaction between myself and each participant (cf. Radnor, 2002). Each interview lasted about an hour and a half with a few lasting slightly longer and were conducted in locations chosen by my participants and recorded using an mp3 player with their consent. After all interviews were complete, they were transcribed verbatim and sent to my informants for member validation to verify the views they expressed ‘given that a stated principle of qualitative research is to privilege participants’ perspectives’ (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott & Davidson, 2002, p.729) and trustworthiness is enhanced through their confirmation of ‘the credibility of the information and narrative account’ (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127).

4.3.6 Schedule & Structure for Semi-Structured Interviews
I conducted interviews with the aforesaid eight participants between the months of
August and September 2012 in the Kanto (Tokyo & Chiba-ken) and Hokuriku (Niigata-ken) regions of Japan. Six of the eight interviews were carried out on the weekends due to teachers’ work schedules. The other two teachers were able to meet me during the week. However, because of time constraints and lack of flexibility with my participants’ schedules (see Appendix 4), no follow-up interviews could be carried out. The structure for my interviews was driven by a desire to illuminate how English language teachers construe membership of ELTs’ association and whether this, in any way, echoed my problematisation of it based on my membership experience and review of the relevant theoretical and research literature in Chapter 2 and the theoretical justification I provided for my study in Chapter 3. Consequently, the following three areas of interest were explored:

i. participants’ experience of membership of ELTs’ associations

ii. establishing what ELTs’ association membership says about professionalism

iii. ascertaining the meanings of ELTs’ association membership to participants

Five days prior to interviews, participants were contacted and asked to ponder how they construe membership of ELTs’ associations in light of the three areas of interest listed above. This was so the chances of them providing comfortable responses in line with their true self - how they really think and feel - would be increased, making the transition from meeting for the first time to the actual interview process smoother. All efforts were made to keep within the time frame discussed earlier in this chapter considering how this may have imposed on participants and put them at risk of interview fatigue (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).
4.3.7 Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed using inductive qualitative content analysis. This type of analysis, where ‘themes or categories emerge from the data through the researcher’s careful examination and constant comparison’ (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009, p. 309), is useful for making reproducible and well grounded inferences from data to their contexts with the aim of offering new information, novel understandings, an account of facts, and a pragmatic means to action (Krippendorff, 1980). In addition, it is a method that is considered sensitive to context (Krippendorff, 1980) and is adaptable with respect to research design (Harwood & Garry, 2003) in spite of the challenge of there being no correct way of carrying it out (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007).

In my study, I adapted Schilling’s (2006) approach to inductive qualitative content analysis. Such analysis began right from the start and before the transcription of all the data I collected since I believed it was necessary to ‘progressively focus’ my study and ‘test emerging conclusions’ (Schilling, 2006, p.36). To prepare for analysis, I first transferred recorded data from each interview to my laptop followed by the making of additional copies of every interview which were saved to portable disk. Subsequently, I listened to each recorded interview as I thought it might help me to gain a sense of the overall data as it emerged (cf. Creswell, 1998; Tesch, 1990). Thereafter, I proceeded to do an assessment of memos taken during each interview and subsequently memos written up while listening to each interview recording. These interview memos were then constantly compared as part of my first analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). That is, I iteratively compared them to find specific and parallel meaning units which were, in turn, condensed, labelled as codes, and grouped into initial categories. Thereafter, I transcribed all my interviews but took time before to listen to each interview again
and double-check initial categories before doing any further analysis to further ground myself in my participants’ accounts. Then, taking Sandelowski’s advice (1995), I read through each interview a few times to ‘apprehend its essential features, without feeling pressured to move forward analytically’ (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007, p. 113). Afterwards, I began my secondary analysis by searching for meaning units in the interview texts which were condensed and labelled as codes before being grouped into categories. Figure 4.1 below presents an example of this from one interview transcript (see Appendix 6 for the Fully Coded Transcript):

**Q: What did you identify specifically as benefits?**

Junichi: Um, the occasion or opportunity to talk about what I’m interested in. Yeah, I mean, I want to say I am so willing to share my work and if I have an audience, I will do this. That’s totally fine with me. If I can see sparks of interest from people, then that gives me happiness. But one thing I learned in this country (Japan) as a Japanese teacher and a researcher is that people regardless of nationality never want to share their work...competition! (smiles). I can read what they wrote but if I ask them questions, they don’t answer them.

**Q: Why do you think this happens?**

Junichi: Rivalry…(thinking)…insecurity. So, even though you are in an association, this happens between persons. So, I don’t think belonging to an organisation makes any difference in such circumstances. You can’t really share your work, get ideas, and develop ideas. It’s not easy.

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**Figure 4.1: Coding Example from an Interview Transcript**

These categories were then constantly compared with my initial categories derived from memos alone in order to deconstruct or fragment the overall data (Maxwell, 1998), construct new categories, draw and validate conclusions, and ultimately present major themes.
4.3.8 Data Presentation

Taking inspiration from Kvale & Brinkmann (2009), data from individual interviews are presented thematically in Chapter 5 as findings below each of the objectives participants were interviewed about. Findings are supported by specific participant quotes for ‘illustrative or amplificatory’ purposes rather than as evidence since what participants said during interviews is subject to contextual and social influences (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 312). To avoid being irksome and potentially confusing the reader with respect to interpretation, it was decided that reference would only be made to specifically how many participants held or shared same or similar views when there was a clear consensus. This decision was made considering how meaningless it would be to otherwise draw conclusions in relation to sample size when the number of participants in my study was small and they were purposively selected (cf. Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

Presentation of my complete data is organised by the three interest areas I explored (see 4.3.6) and re-configured according to themes of equal significance that surfaced and function as sub-headings below each interest area. This is so a thick description can be provided that not only gives a clear and intelligible picture of the nature and form of the phenomenon I explored but also displays it anew in a manner that is anchored in the accounts of my participants while illustrating its intricacies (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The themes that arose are further utilised in Chapter 6 (i.e. Discussion) for critically and reflectively examining my findings. For quotes provided in Chapter 5 (i.e. Findings), each Japanese English teacher is identified by only a corresponding pseudonym to avoid compromising participant confidentiality.
4.3.9 Logistical Issues

Piloting of Interviews

Before carrying out actual interviews, it was necessary to pilot my interview questions (Appendix 5) to ensure their credibility and dependability in my study. Hence, adapting Mann, Radford & Kanagawa’s (1985) approach to piloting, two Japanese colleagues who were English language teachers in Japan (albeit not at Japanese universities) were asked and agreed to separately read and examine my questions to gauge if there was not only anything vague, misleading, and/or inappropriate about these but also to see if they interpreted them in the same way as I intended. This resulted in some minor changes in wording. Subsequently, I asked and received their consent to interview each of them with these amended questions for an hour and half to gain some sense of what kind of responses and reactions I might get from my participants. This too resulted in some adjustments to my line of questioning. Upon completion of these pilot interviews, I also took the opportunity to ask these colleagues for any further tips on establishing rapport with my participants and advice about Japanese interview culture that may have escaped my attention and my experience of having lived and taught in the country.

Preparation & Countermeasures

Carrying out semi-structured interviews is by no means simple as they require careful preparation and the ability to anticipate and counter any potential problems. Consequently, time was needed to contact and inform potential participants about the nature of my research in English and in Japanese (see Appendix 3: Introduction 1 A & B). It was then necessary to secure those who were willing to participate in my study through their informed consent before coordinating when and where to
interview them which, to note, sometimes required rescheduling. Subsequently, I needed to ensure all participants had knowledge of my research questions well before I met them so they could contemplate their responses without being influenced by my presence. Thereafter, it was requisite that time be set aside prior to the collection of data to ensure the recording device I used to capture interviews was fully operational and not prone to malfunction. With respect to the data collection process itself, it was often necessary during semi-structured interviews to make consistent use of prompts and probes when necessary to not only encourage the emergence of participant accounts and verify these but also to prevent any possible misunderstandings. Finally, upon the completion of interviews, the often long and arduous task of listening, noting, transcribing, and iteratively analysing what emerged from interviews needed to be undertaken in order to make the best sense of what participants said.

4.4 Trustworthiness of Research

In this section, I discuss the issues of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability as they pertain to the trustworthiness of my research. Edge & Richards (1998) describe credibility as providing ‘a credible version of what happened’ in the research process, ‘both in terms of description and interpretation’ (p. 345). In other words, that I am examining what I assert to be examining (Arksey & Knight, 1999) and providing a version or an account that accurately typifies ‘those features of the phenomena that it is intended to describe, explain or theorise’ (Hammersley, 1992, p.69). In terms of dependability, Edge & Richards (1998) see this as a matter of ensuring the invariable changes occurring in the circumstance(s) under study, in one’s informants and in the nascent research design, are aptly supported with proof such that any judgements and determinations made are contextually tenable. With
respect to transferability, they argue that the researcher must be able to answer the question, “Where to?”—to construct an understanding of a situation that an individual with information of another circumstance can possibly employ (p.345). Finally, concerning confirmability, Edge & Richards (1998) believe it pivotal that proof be imparted that verifies the data’s existence from the viewpoint or moral framework the researcher has adopted.

**Credibility**

Prior to conducting my semi-structured interviews, the recording device I used (i.e. mp3 player) was checked to ensure it worked both before and after recording. Data were then collected. During the interview process, notes were taken in memo form and all interviews were recorded so they could be meticulously interpreted (cf. Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Following transcription of all interviews, these were returned to my participants via e-mail for member checks/validation (Creswell & Miller, 2000) so they could confirm their responses, make any amendments, add anything further, and delete anything they thought might be sensitive or prove detrimental to them. This resulted in some changes to the data. To counter researcher bias, I used what Altheide and Johnson (1994) refer to as ‘validity-as-reflexive-accounting’ (p. 489) where I went over my data numerous times in order to ensure that ‘constructs, categories, explanations, and interpretations make sense’ (Patton, 1980, p.339). I also made use of peer debriefing (Ezzy, 2002; Barber & Walczak, 2009; Spall, 1998) where I asked two colleagues familiar with undertaking qualitative inquiry to act as ‘external lenses’ and review the research processes of my study, giving them the freedom to challenge and question my assumptions, scrutinise my interviews and interpretations of them while standing to ‘serve as a sounding board for ideas’
(Creswell & Miller, 2000, p.129). Finally, I made every effort to provide a detailed account - a thick description (Denzin, 1989) - of the scope and background of my research, my informants, and the themes that emerged so that readers could feel ‘they have experienced, or could experience’ what transpired in my study (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p.129).

**Dependability**

To heighten the dependability of my research, the same questions with pick-ups were used in each of my interviews. However, sometimes questions were phrased differently in circumstances where a participant wanted to make sure he/she understood a question properly. Nevertheless, the core meaning of my questions did not change. All transcribed interviews were checked for any errors and meanings and labels for codes and categories were re-verified for their consistency (Gibbs, 2007). Time was also taken to document all the processes and steps of my research (see Figure 4.2) not excluding transcripts, tables, outlines and rough drafts of my data and final versions of the latter as a kind of audit trail (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This was to show ‘the audience of research studies as much as is possible of the procedures that have led to a particular set of conclusions’ (Seale, 1999, p. 158) such that these may be deemed contextually justifiable and ‘a level of replication’ perceived plausible (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p.271).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Exeter’s Graduate School of Education Approval &amp; Supervision</td>
<td>Graduate School of Education’s Oversight for Ethical Research Purposes; Certificate of Ethical Research Approval and Participant Consent Documents included as appendices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>Detailed literature review covering prior literature relating to ELTs’ association membership (Chapter 2), my ELTs’ association membership experience (Chapter 2), professional status, professionalism and professional identity in ELT (Chapter 3), and qualitative research (Chapter 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>Notable concepts in relevant literature: Professional status, proliferation of ELTs’ associations and membership, types of professionalism and tensions between them, and professional identity implications of such tension for those holding ELTs’ association membership (Chapter 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Critical socio-cultural / post-structuralist paradigm, with an ontology emphasising multiple but unstable realities (Chapter 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Protocol, Procedures &amp; Method</td>
<td>Information on research study protocols, procedures and method used; interviews used as method with questions developed and refined as a result of piloted-interviews, interviews framed as semi-structured (Chapter 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Selection</td>
<td>Criteria listed to select participants (Chapter 4); purposive sampling – 8 participants selected from 11 teachers who agreed to be interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection &amp; Storage</td>
<td>In-depth, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with 8 participants; data stored in hard copy and computer formats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw Data</td>
<td>Mp3 files (audio data), memos, interview transcripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processed Data</td>
<td>Interview transcripts coded for key participant responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coding Scheme</td>
<td>Example of how data were coded (Chapter 4) and shown in full appended interview transcript; codes manually assigned with some in-vivo types used for participants’ precise words; specific codes analysed to pinpoint themes prevalent throughout the overall data and further condensed into core categories of prominent emergent themes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.2: Research Audit Trail
Transferability

In my research, I attempted to provide a transparent and unique account of the cultural and contextual aspects of my research, choice and traits of my informants, the collection of data and the latter's subsequent analyses (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). I also strived to present my findings in a rigorous and robust way, making use of suitable participant quotes when necessary. These steps were taken because I see the applicability of my findings as contingent upon the clarity of 'the likeness between bodies of knowledge, or contexts, as judged by those wishing to apply the findings' (Fossey et al., 2002, p. 730). Hence, it was important to make it easy for readers to determine if my findings were transferable or not to some other setting or context (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Kennedy, 1979; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

Confirmability

To enhance the trustworthiness of my research, I endeavoured to provide a clear and visible representation of the internal cohesiveness of the data I collected and of my subsequent findings, understandings, and suggestions. This was done via the use of specific outlines and diagrams (see Figures 5.1 to 6.2). However, it was important to acknowledge that interlaced in this coherence were aspects of my subjective being – the paradigm I espouse, my personal viewpoints, my knowledge, and my biases (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, 1998). Even so, as a qualitative researcher, I deemed such cognisance of my subjectivity as essential in placing myself in my research and in prompting me to reflexively and objectively gauge my impact on interpretations (Jöhnsson & Lukka, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) while concomitantly presenting my informants’ views, ‘taking the role of the other through
immersion in data’ (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 32).

Summary

In this chapter, I provided an explanation of my research inquiry’s design. I first explained the rationale for my research design. This included a discussion of my ontology and epistemology driving my study followed by a discussion of the exploratory research methodology that informed the method I used to collect data. From that point on, I discussed ethical issues taken into consideration followed by an account of the data gathering procedures of my study. The latter was inclusive of a description of my research participants, information on Japan-based ELTs’ associations to better account for participant views on membership, the initial and adapted methodological approach I took, the kind of sampling used, the type of interviews carried out to collect data, the schedule and structure for interviews, and the means of data analysis and presentation. Thereafter, I explained logistical issues I needed to account for in my research. Finally, I discussed the trustworthiness of my research in terms of how I established credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability in my study. In the next chapter, I disclose the findings of my research.
Chapter 5
The Construal of ELTs’ Association Membership

Introduction
The purpose of this chapter is to present my findings on the construal of ELTs’ association membership based my research inquiry described in Chapter 4. It is organised according to the three aims of my investigation. The first section reports on my participants’ experience of ELTs’ association membership, disclosing the defining aspects they provided for becoming or not becoming a member and/or continuing or forfeiting membership. The second section outlines what participants think ELTs’ association membership says about professionalism. The third section discusses the meanings of ELTs’ association membership to participants.

5.1 Data Categorisation: Themes & Sub-Themes
The coding process, as explained in Chapter 4, led to the categorisation of interview data into three main themes, each with sub-themes. These are indicated in Figure 5.1 below. A complete list of the codes used in this inquiry is appended along with definitions of each theme (see Appendix 7). As participants’ responses are analysed in more detail within this chapter, relevant definitions are provided.
### Codes & Sub-Codes for The Theme: The Construal of ELTs' Association Membership

**The Experience of ELTs' Association Membership (The Defining Aspects):**

- **Becoming a Member**
  - an occupational norm
  - gaining employment
  - Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

- **Not Becoming a Member**
  - occupied with work
  - unwanted responsibility
  - access to same benefits
  - lack of confidence

- **Continuing Membership**
  - CPD (Continuing Professional Development)
  - The ‘Lock-in Effect’ (Once in, Difficult to Get Out)
  - financial support (Funding Provided by Universities)

- **Forfeiting Membership**
  - cost of membership fees
  - occupied with work

### What ELTs' Association Membership Says About Professionalism:

- ELTs' Association Membership as a Marker of Professionalism
- ELTs' Association Membership as a Counter-Collegial Practice

### Meanings of ELTs' Association Membership to Participants:

- Fragmented Professional Self: Multiple Identities
- The ‘Insider’
- The ‘Outsider’

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**Figure 5.1: The Construal of ELTs' Association Membership: Codes & Sub-Codes**

### 5.2 The Experience of ELTs' Association Membership: The Defining Aspects

In seeking to illuminate something about English language teachers’ construal of ELTs' association membership, I first aimed to shed light on my participants’ experience or the defining aspects of such membership for them. That is, I explored
why these Japanese university teachers become or do not become ELTs’ association members and/or continue or forfeit ELTs’ association membership and their reasons for these along with any issues.

5.2.1 Becoming a Member

Based on participant responses, it emerged that the majority of interviewees either belong or belonged to ELTs’ associations (see Table 5.1 below).

Table 5.1: Participants’ Current and Past Memberships in JACET, JALT and Other ELTs’ Associations

However, most joined local (e.g. JACET; JALT) rather than international ELTs’ associations with their reasons for belonging culminating in three themes. These are presented in Figure 5.2 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>JACET (Current)</th>
<th>JACET (Past)</th>
<th>JALT (Current)</th>
<th>JALT (Past)</th>
<th>Other ELTs’ Associations (Current)</th>
<th>Other ELTs’ Associations (Past)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hiroko</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Asami</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Risa</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Junichi</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Minami</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Chieko</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Taku</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Junko</td>
<td>√</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1: Participants’ Current and Past Memberships in JACET, JALT and Other ELTs’ Associations

Code: Becoming a Member

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Code</th>
<th>Definition of Sub-Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Occupational Norm</td>
<td>Comments suggesting membership is a normal part of one’s job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining Employment</td>
<td>Comments inferring membership is used to secure employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Comments implying membership is used for continuing professional development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.2: Becoming a Member (Code): Sub-Codes & Definitions of Sub-Codes
An Occupational Norm

The majority of participants mentioned that joining an ELTs’ association was the norm for Japanese English language teachers at Japanese universities. For instance, one interviewee stated:

‘Becoming a member of an association is one of the requisites of being a university researcher and educator….it’s more of a custom or part of a researcher’s everyday life. It’s an ordinary thing for a university teacher. Something one just does….’ (Int.1 Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

In addition, it emerged that this view was commonly associated with local ELTs’ associations whether a member or not as the following example responses show:

‘…most of them [my ELTs’ association memberships] are Japan-based because I can be involved in them more actively.’ (Int.1 Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘It has to be something local because Japanese universities are different. They have different policies and so on and I don’t believe these are the same as other countries. So, it has to be something Japan-based and related to teaching in Japan.’ (Int. 5, Minami, September 8th 2012)

However, it surfaced that becoming a local ELTs’ association member was a specific norm enacted through the influence of different people of equal or greater status. This was exemplified by the following interviewee comments:

“The idea of associations was partly introduced to me by my friends and professors…my colleagues belong to a special interest group of JACET so they always told me that it was much better for me to join them so we can always discuss issues together. So, I eventually decided to join them. I wanted to feel close to them so in that respect I felt I should definitely join
them and have more time to be with them’ (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)

‘...most of my English language teaching colleagues in my career joined professional associations and recommended I join as well. So, I just joined because my colleagues were members...a kind of group mentality.' (Int. 3, Risa, August 24th 2012)

‘...my mentor at the time asked me to join JALT which I did...’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

Also, as the subsequent responses convey, it appears customary for many Japanese English teachers at Japanese universities to join a particular local ELTs’ association:

'I'm a Japanese teacher so in a university community maybe JACET is for Japanese professors.' (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘...many Japanese English language teachers feel more comfortable being in something like JACET, a certain community with Japanese culture.' (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

Hence, according to my participants, it seems to be an occupational norm for Japanese English teachers at Japanese universities to join ELTs’ associations, especially those that are local with membership in JACET being a common choice. However, the mere fact that there is an expectation to join would seem to suggest membership is being coerced. Yet, it could also be these teachers actually see value in joining a community of practice with more experienced peers who are supportive of inviting them in.

**Gaining Employment**

A second theme to emerge for why Japanese English teachers become ELTs’
association members is to gain employment via status and networking as the following responses show:

‘...if you want to change jobs and apply for a new job, people will be looking at your resume for such associations. That’s important...professional associations are things that university employers look at. So, you need to put something. It’s a good thing that you list what you belong to. People want to hire someone who will follow an organisation and who can belong to an organisation.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

'It [Belonging] provided opportunities to apply for jobs. That was the main thing. I would have had no idea who I should have contacted or where I should have looked to find work without being a member of an association. So, knowing many more people was very important for me to get some teaching position. That’s one of the benefits of belonging to an association and one of the reasons why I have remained a member for many years…' (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

Nevertheless, it surfaced that it appears especially important to become a member of JACET regardless of being Japanese or not if one wishes to heighten his/her chances of being hired:

‘...one of my friends recommended I belong to one of the biggest professional associations in Japan, JACET, and guaranteed me that I could get a job by joining’ (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

‘...some non-Japanese join JACET but they just join to get job information’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

‘The primary reason I joined JACET was to get a job. There are many Japanese scholars who belong to JACET and when applying for a job I think there are many of these scholars on hiring committees. Because when they look at my CV and find that I’m a member of JACET, it has more of an affinity
for them. So, for me, that was one primary reason I joined it.’ (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)

Moreover, as the following comments illustrate, there appears to be a stigma or a risk attached to not belonging to JACET:

“I need to write the names of the associations I belong to on resumes I send and if I keep only JALT on my resume, people in Japanese colleges and universities may ask me ‘Oh, so, you only belong to JALT, huh?’ They don’t ask me anything more but they give me a kind of image of what is expected. Actually, a friend of mine told me that she had a job interview once where she didn’t list any associations she belonged to on her resume because at the time she actually didn’t belong to any. However, she told me that this annoyed some of the interviewers, especially one guy who was a key member of JACET.” (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

“Actually, I remember what one professor said to me when he found out I wasn’t a member. He said, ‘You aren’t a member of JACET? Why aren’t you a member? That’s crazy!’ He then said ‘You should join otherwise you can’t be a teacher at university in Japan.’ I was like ‘What?!’” (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

Such a stigma or risk also seemed to be associated with perceived lower levels of activity in JACET as the following brief anecdote reveals:

“Actually, in one job interview I had in recent years one person asked me, ‘You seem active in JALT but not in JACET. Why?’ So, I said to myself, ‘You’re a key JACET member so that’s why you are asking me this question.’ But perhaps he was just checking to see how I would answer the question.” (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

Even so, not all participants shared the view that being a member of JACET or any
ELTs’ association for that matter necessarily guarantees or increases one’s chances of getting a part-time or full-time/tenured teaching position as the subsequent comments show:

‘When I was a graduate student I thought there was some kind of advantage, so I joined. But putting professional associations on your CV does not work much, especially after having many interviews. So, now, I feel belonging to associations does not give one much of an advantage. I probably belong to more associations than others my age but some of these people were hired easily and I had a lot of difficulty finding employment.’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29\textsuperscript{th} 2012)

‘I got all my part-time jobs through connections and the people who interviewed me never mentioned anything about having to belong to a professional association. I have never been encouraged to join and have never had this suggested to me.’ (Int. 5, Minami, September 8\textsuperscript{th} 2012)

These comments then, suggest that for some teachers, belonging to local ELTs’ associations, especially JACET, is important to gain employment although some interviewee responses suggest getting a job may be more about knowing particular people and having certain connections.

\textit{CPD}

Most participants reported joining ELTs’ associations to attain professional information and skills for the purposes of CPD. For instance, two interviewees who joined local ELTs’ associations remarked:

‘My main reason for joining…was to improve my professional and research skills. I have the opportunity to attend workshops and discuss these and I can update my practical skills. These provide me with very good teacher development opportunities.’ (Int. 3, Risa, August 24\textsuperscript{th} 2012)
‘I joined because I particularly felt I didn’t have much in terms of professional ideas and information…professional research skills…things I thought those in associations might have that I did not. So, I felt it was really important for me to expand my horizons through professional development. I can get more information about teaching and work with other teachers…and get some new ideas from them. These were things I just couldn’t do by myself.’ (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

However, for a few participants, a distinction was made between the CPD offered by local ELTs’ association and by international ELTs’ associations with the latter appearing more appealing if not better:

‘For me, that [CPD] is very much important particularly with regards to international associations. There are lots of things to learn about and by belonging to these organisations I can always keep myself updated. Also, it is one of the criteria I use when choosing an association to belong to.’ (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)

‘I joined associations, particularly international ones to gain more state-of-the-art technology and methodology. However, at the local level here in Japan, although there are many workshops and lectures put on by associations, most of them are at the basic level…things that can be learned just by reading books. So, I don’t expect much from many local associations.’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)

Consequently, CPD in the form of specific information and skills was an important reason for joining but the perceived value of it varied between teachers according to type of ELTs’ associations (i.e. local or international).

5.2.2 Not Becoming a Member

Participants provided four main reasons for why Japanese English teachers do not
join ELTs’ associations. These are presented in Figure 5.3 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code: Not Becoming a Member</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Code</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupied with Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwanted Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Same Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5.3: Not Becoming a Member (Code): Sub-Codes & Definitions of Sub-Codes**

**Occupied with Work**

A few participants reported that either they or their colleagues do not or did not join ELTs’ associations because of being busy with work. For example, three participants stated:

‘In terms of my colleagues, at my university, they are either careful or not very interested in joining an association. They are primarily occupied with everyday tasks – school work and students.’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)

‘I was very busy with work at that time so I thought I didn’t have time to belong to and be active in such associations.’ (Int. 2, Asami, August 31st 2012)

‘I teach at different places and, um, I’m very busy and actually do not have enough time to belong to these associations. The courses I teach at each university are quite specific and vary significantly from one another. So, in that respect, I’m sort of, really, you know, always having to catch up with all these different courses…I’m really occupied…and it takes quite a lot of time…to deal with preparation’ (Int. 5, Minami, September 8th 2012)

To this end, those who do or did not become ELTs’ association members do or did
not have the time because their priorities are with work-related commitments. However, one could speculate from these comments that they perhaps see ELTs’ association membership as more work or burdensome (e.g., Asami; Minami), or may have heard things which have made them circumspect about joining (e.g., Junko).

**Unwanted Responsibility**

A second theme that arose was how participants reported wishing to avoid being burdened with unwanted responsibility by Japanese-run ELTs’ associations as the following comments show:

“So, I remember at one association conference, I had a teacher working at the same university as me who said, ‘Oh, I’m thinking about having a conference at our university, would you help me?’ So, I said to myself, ‘Ok, I got to get away from this association otherwise this person will ask me to help it.’” (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

‘I have learned that joining an association can result in unwanted work for me, so I should be careful about joining.’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)

Consequently, it appears that even though one in theory is at liberty to choose to volunteer to help an ELTs’ association, these comments suggest that, in joining, this is not necessarily the case.

**Access to Same Benefits**

A third theme to surface for not joining an ELTs’ association was being able to access the same benefits ELTs’ associations offer. That is, for many participants, what ELTs’ associations offer as perks were perceived as being already available and not necessarily unique or different. This is exemplified through the following comments:
‘…my colleagues and I often talked about teaching and sometimes had workshops and teaching observations to develop so…yeah. I thought it was enough.’ (Int. 2, Asami, August 31st 2012)

‘…if I want to know something about how to teach or what to teach I often go to the Internet and consult some websites where professional lecturers and teachers give some suggestions about how to conduct, for example, discussion or debate, you know. So, I can get quite a lot of useful information from the Internet and I can choose whichever method I feel is appropriate for my courses and so on. Somehow that is sufficient to me, you know. I think I get enough resources through my fellow teachers and through the Internet. The information I have gotten so far without associations has been sufficient. If I truly felt I needed to be a member to get more information or whatever I would have joined some association even if it cost me money and time. Frankly, I have never felt that necessity, you see. That’s basically the main reason why I haven’t joined anything’ (Int. 5, Minami, September 8th 2012)

Moreover, they did not seem concerned by the idea of losing or not having any benefits if there were no ELTs’ associations to join. In fact, many responded with answers that raised questions about the value of membership:

‘Well, because of the Internet I can find information.’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘Well, I want to describe myself as an autonomous learner…Buying books and reading them and if I want to talk about what I’m thinking, I will, you know, get in touch with my friends and talk. So, associations don’t really give me too many benefits personally. I’m just building my own personal network and that’s quite helpful.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

‘…now without becoming a member, we can join a mailing list and get information on a website.’ (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)
Thus, the benefits many ELTs’ associations provide or claim to provide are not necessarily any different and any more appealing than those which can be accessed by other means.

**Lack of Confidence**

A fourth and final theme to arise for not becoming a member was a lack of confidence. Some interviewees mentioned feeling daunted by the sheer magnitude and scale of some ELTs’ associations, especially large ones. For instance, when asked about not belonging to JALT, one interviewee remarked:

‘I had no negative reasons for not joining but I did think it was also too difficult for me to understand…very big, vague, and had a high aim. I just could not imagine myself belonging to such an association. I thought it sounded huge…broad and wide but vague and…too academic for me. It just sounded difficult for me and I had very limited information.’ (Int. 2, Asami, August 31st 2012)

Yet, it also surfaced that part of the reason for not joining related to English language ability, presumably in non-Japanese-run ELTs’ associations as the following comment shows:

‘Actually, I thought I couldn’t do such a thing. I didn’t think my English language ability was high enough for it and for me, honestly. It takes me time to do things so I thought someday I want to join but not at that time’ (Int. 3, Risa, August 24th 2012)

To this end, it appears that lacking confidence in being able to handle the size and scale of an ELTs’ association and being able to communicate with others in English in it is significant enough to prevent some Japanese English teachers from joining.
5.2.3 Continuing Membership

Three main themes arose for why Japanese English teachers continue their membership in ELTs’ associations. These are shown in Figure 5.4 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code: Continuing Membership</th>
<th>Definition of Sub-Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Code</td>
<td>Definition of Sub-Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Comments implying membership is continued for reasons of continuing professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 'Lock-in Effect'</td>
<td>Comments inferring that once one joins an ELTs’ association, it is difficult to quit/leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Support</td>
<td>Comments suggesting continuing membership is contingent upon a university’s financial support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5.4: Continuing Membership (Code): Sub-Codes & Definitions of Sub-Codes**

**CPD**

Consistent with Hargreaves & Fullan’s (1992) concept of teacher development as knowledge and skills development, CPD in the form of information and skills or ‘the necessary knowledge and skills to provide pupils with improved opportunities to learn’ (p.2), emerged as a reason for continuing membership. This was conveyed via the following comments:

‘I feel they help me to grow as a teacher and help my professional development. I can get a lot of ideas and also publications…conference information and workshop information. I can make a contribution and get a lot of ideas by reading articles.’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th)

‘...to build relationships with other enthusiastic teachers and getting new, effective, practical and helpful information and materials…these are good for me because they can help me develop…which is good for my students and society’ (Int. 2, Asami, August 31st 2012)

Even so, it surfaced among many participants that continuing as a member often
resulted in unwanted requests from Japanese ELTs’ association leaders to volunteer to help run ELTs’ associations. For instance, one interviewee stated:

‘…there is lots of work to do… I don’t like that…I’m already busy with my work at the university and I don’t want take on any extra job.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

Moreover, as the following comment shows, such requests were not necessarily interpreted as requests at all but as something else entirely:

‘…it’s just an opportunity for leaders to bully others in an association…you know, those they consider subordinate’ (Int. 3, Risa, August 24th 2012)

This was confirmed by other interviewees with the subsequent comment serving as an example:

‘…younger people are not so interested in working together with older people…old teachers with traditional minds. The main people in JACET are the older ones with many years of experience. They are at the top and so things are kind of top-down, you know. Really top-down…it’s still like this. It’s very difficult to change the organisation.’ (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

Yet, paradoxically, many interviewees mentioned complying with such unwanted requests and often rationalised why. To this end, CPD took on a quality where it was no longer simply a benefit one received but something these teachers felt compelled to work for as the following comments illustrate:

"I was forced to be on a committee…I couldn’t have said ‘No’. So, maybe I can say it was a bad experience. But, in one sense, someone has to be a volunteer to run an organisation. So, maybe, I felt that, if I can do such a thing, I should volunteer for it at some stage of my life.” (Int. 1, Hiroko,
August 17th 2012)

‘It [this ELTs’ association] required our help. It was a volunteer association but they [the Japanese ELTs’ association leaders] need our help. So we have to help…I wanted to learn and gain skills so that’s why I helped. Yeah. To be honest, it was a kind of trade off. It is difficult for me to say I wanted to help them. I had to help them. They helped me so I had to help them. That was the system. You must help if you want to get any benefits.’ (Int. 2, Asami, August 31st 2012)

“…sometimes I feel what I’m doing is not for myself especially when I see teachers taking advantage of my efforts in the association. I don’t feel like what I’m doing is beneficial for me particularly when I see people just belonging to gain benefit from me…and, of course, it’s very difficult to find some time for JACET but…well, there’s no choice. It’s a kind of ‘give and take’. I can get rewards from it [membership] so I have a kind of responsibility to do what I do.” (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

It also emerged that those who were asked to volunteer and complied appear to fit a certain profile. For example, one interviewee stated:

‘They [Japanese ELTs’ association leaders] find younger blood and give them a job to do and there are many who are willing to please their superiors...if you are young, you have to do this work...I don’t like that. Younger people get stuck with administration work...’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

Moreover, it surfaced that one gender is the specific target of such unwanted requests and for a particular reason:

“…younger females and older females can’t say ‘no’” (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)
Nevertheless, there were some participants with similar experiences who rejected such requests, seeing them as burdensome and ostensibly made with ulterior motives in mind. For instance, one interviewee offered the following anecdote:

‘In the beginning, people in this association were really friendly and I was very impressed with them…then they offered me a higher position within the association which I turned down. Of course, this sounded really nice, but I think the reality was they were really just looking for someone to do all the hard work…you know organise conferences, be the conference chair, write a newsletter twice a year…there was hard work to do…and not so many people wanted to do this…Hmm [thinking].’ (Int. 3, Risa, August 24th 2012)

The significance of comments like the above was further strengthened by similar responses from other interviewees:

‘I want more committee members in associations to be more active and motivated to volunteer their time to help make the society stronger.’ (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)

‘…they [Japanese ELTs’ association leaders] don’t want to work hard.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

Thus, it seems that although most interviewees continue their memberships because of CPD, many feel forced by Japanese ELTs’ association leaders to earn it by complying with requests to carry out duties they think are not their responsibility.

The ‘Lock-in Effect’

A second prominent theme to emerge was how many teachers reported feeling as if they are ‘locked-in’ (Hvenmark, 2008, p.147) to some Japanese-run ELTs’ associations and find it difficult to act independently of them. For example, two
interviewees offered the following comments which are illustrative and supportive of Hvenmark’s notion:

‘I started off with a certain idea or image about associations but I soon realised that once you join it is hard to get out…it is hard to get out once you get in…” (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

‘…it’s difficult to go out of this world and that’s perhaps why many Japanese maintain membership in the same association.’ (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

When pressed on why it is difficult to get out, many, such as the following participants, cited their history in such organisations as being a reason:

‘I thought about that [quitting]. But, I have been a member for more than ten years.’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘…I have been a member for so long…I have belonged to these associations for ten years or so.’ (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

However, some cited relationships as reasons for why they or others continued:

‘I have built so many partnerships over the years…you know, those I have something in common with and have known for many years…” (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

‘They [my colleagues] want to pay respect to their supervisors…as for me, my advisor used to be the president of one association, a small association, which I would have quit if that person wasn’t there. But in just thinking of this individual, I felt bad leaving that society so I just kept paying for my membership.’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)

‘…they [my colleagues] want to maintain their relationships.’ (Int. 7, Taku,
Hence, it appears that many feel bound to certain Japanese-run ELTs’ associations because of historical and relational reasons which suggest it may be challenging at times for them to make decisions independent of their memberships in these.

**Financial Support**

From interviews, it emerged that most participants continue as ELTs’ association members if they receive financial support (funding) from their universities. This theme was exemplified by the following comments:

‘They [the university] pay for everything. That’s one reason why I still belong to so many organisations.’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘…because I have a research budget, these associations help me a bit. So, it’s a fair way to use up my budget.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

‘…now that I work at a university I can use my research budget to pay for my memberships so I don’t worry about that.’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)

However, as the following interviewees explained, receiving such financial support depends on the status of one’s employment:

‘…if you are a part-time teacher they [Japanese universities] don’t give you any money. You have to be a full-time teacher to receive that.’ (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

‘Well, I can’t speak for myself [as a part-time teacher] but for those with permanent jobs they are provided with a subsidy or allowance to become a member.’ (Int. 5, Minami, September 8th 2012)
Yet, paradoxically, it surfaced that permanent employment (i.e. full-time/tenured work) does not always mean one will receive financial backing from a university as the following comment illustrates:

‘I have some friends [full-time/tenured colleagues] who do worry about it because their universities don’t pay’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)

In addition, when those who received financial support from their universities were asked if they would continue being ELTs’ association members if their universities did not provide such funding, many interviewees saw ELTs’ association membership differently:

‘Probably not. Yeah, so like I said, I don’t want to belong to any organisation.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

‘If the university did not support me, I would not pay for my membership in any association except one…one that is beneficial for me.’ (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

‘Maybe I would reduce some memberships, yes. They’re expensive!’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

Thus, the value of ELTs’ association membership for most interviewees appeared contingent upon whether they had the financial backing of their institutions or not when employed. This stands in contrast to how participants appear to value membership when looking to gain employment.

5.2.4 Forfeiting Membership

Based on interviews, it emerged very few participants forfeited membership, with
those that did citing two reasons as shown in Figure 5.5 below:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Code: Forfeiting Membership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Code</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Membership Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupied with Work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5.5: Forfeiting Membership (Code): Sub-Codes & Definitions of Sub-Codes**

**Cost of Membership Fees**

Although only a few members mentioned having the experience of forfeiting membership in ELTs’ associations, those who did conveyed that the cost of membership fees in relation to income was a reason for it. This was particularly true for those employed on a part-time basis as the following comment illustrates:

‘Yes…Basically, I quit all of them [ELTs’ associations] to save money. Even though I work part-time at a university my salary is very low…I just couldn’t afford to pay for these memberships.’ (Int. 3, Risa, August 24th 2012)

However, this does not mean only part-time teachers forfeit membership. Indeed, as the following comment shows, full-time/tenured teachers also do despite most receiving financial support for membership from their institutions:

‘I once belonged to JALT but I discontinued because the membership fee was very expensive’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)

In exploring this further, the following interviewees’ comments emerged which appear to shed further light on such a decision:

‘If you pay say 10,000 yen per year or 5000 yen at least, and if you just get a
publication you feel that you don’t get any benefits. Yes, sometimes I think it is not worth it.’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘I think they [membership fees] are reasonable but getting the benefits in terms of cost and performance I’m not sure.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

Hence, although membership fees may be high and not affordable for some teachers, one could speculate that the quality of benefits received in return for membership stands as another reason for forfeiting membership.

**Occupied with Work**

Another reason for forfeiting membership that surfaced was being occupied with work as the following comment demonstrates:

‘When I was really busy, I thought it was troublesome but I managed to do it…for 5 years. But after 5 years, like I said, I decided to quit…I had more work…it became too much for me.’ (Int. 2, Asami, August 31st 2012)

Thus, it appears that as much as it is a reason for not joining ELTs’ associations, being occupied with work commitments can equally stand as a reason for forfeiting them.

**5.3 What Membership Says About Professionalism**

Having gained insight into participants’ experience of ELTs’ association membership, I also wanted to know what this experience says about professionalism. In exploring this notion, two conflicting notions emerged. These are shown in Figure 5.6 below:
Membership as a Marker of Professionalism

A prominent theme that surfaced was that most participants see membership as a marker of professionalism. That is, it is something that indicates and proves their professionalism and is pivotal towards feeling or becoming more professional as the following responses show:

‘Joining a professional association is important to show you are professional and academic and if you don’t write them [ELTs’ associations] down [on your CV], then you don’t look like an academic or a professional.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

‘Being a member of an association gives you a sense of responsibility to society. This is the way I have improved my professionalism. I feel like I am more a university teacher…I feel I am more a member of the language teaching world…more than ever before. So, I feel more professional.’ (Int.6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

There were also comments, such as the following, where a few interviewees reported that forfeiting membership resulted in feeling less professional:

‘You know I cut the connection to that world [ELTs’ association membership]. In this way, maybe I feel less professional. When I quit, I didn’t know how I felt, but now maybe I feel less professional.’ (Int. 2, Asami, August 31st 2012)
At the same time, many revealed they had serious doubts that one could have a sense of professionalism without ELTs’ association membership as the following comments illustrate:

‘…as a researcher and a teacher you have to belong to a professional association…if a professor does not belong to any organisation, I wonder if he/she does any research or if he/she makes any effort to improve his/her own teaching.’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘It’s very difficult to get the feeling of professionalism when you are a non-member…I mean, it is difficult for non-members to have a sense of professionalism. I don’t think they can understand professionalism correctly because they can’t see what is happening in the English language teaching world and in English education and what for example, the Ministry of Education wants. If you are a non-member, it is very difficult to get information. You can’t listen to what the Ministry of Education wants and requests directly.’ (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

However, some expressed concerns with professionalism as it relates to local (i.e. Japan-based) ELTs’ associations:

‘Professionalism matters to me when I think of local associations. But, I sometimes feel that, even though I belong to them, I somehow can’t improve myself. So, I feel I am not so enthusiastic about belonging to them. They have so many members but they are not so active and I don’t feel they are so enthusiastic or really interested in improving their own professionalism. So, I don’t always feel they are the best for me…I feel most loyal to international associations only because they are very serious and do their utmost to promote professionalism.’ (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)

‘…they [JACET] seem to be doing their work for their own sake...to maintain a superficial level of professionalism.’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)
Moreover, it emerged that a few interviewees did not necessarily see ELTs’ association membership as having any significant bearing on professionalism whatsoever. For instance, one participant stated:

‘You know, I don’t belong to one [an ELTs’ association] but I regard myself as professional. So, in that respect, I don’t feel that being a member means you’re more professional than not being a member. I don’t see it that way. I have my own pride as a teacher and I think I’m doing as much as I can do even though I don’t belong to any associations.’ (Int. 5, Minami, September 8th 2012)

Thus, although most appear to see ELTs’ association membership as important to professionalism, some were sceptical and/or critical about it based on personal experience and individual standpoint.

**Membership as a Counter-Collegial Practice**

In contrast to ELTs’ association membership as a marker of professionalism, the paradoxical theme of membership as a counter-collegial practice also arose. That is, as I see it, a practice that instead of bringing teachers together, splits or divides them as a result of power or authority being vested unequally rather than being shared. For instance, one interviewee stated:

‘…one thing I learned in this country [Japan] as a Japanese teacher and a researcher is that people regardless of nationality never want to share their work...competition! (smiles). I can read what they wrote but if I ask them questions, they don’t answer them.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

When asked why things like this occur, the same interviewee had this to say:

‘Rivalry…(thinking)...insecurity. So, even though you are in an association,
this happens between persons. So, I don’t think belonging to an organisation makes any difference in such circumstances. You can’t really share your work, get ideas, and develop ideas. It’s not easy.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

The depth of such rivalry and insecurity was further illuminated by interviewee comments such as the following with respect to JACET:

“Some teachers join JACET just for status so it’s more like a business. They join to take advantage of membership. They think it gives them a good label. You know, ‘I teach at such and such university’. They really want this. So, some are there for prestige and some are like me. It’s difficult to say but I would say it’s fifty-fifty. Yeah, because every area of the association has people like these. But by belonging to other associations, I can sometimes get away from the reality of competing or taking advantage of others and you know, rumours, rumours, rumours where everybody knows this, this, and that and you have to be careful about certain people and clever about many things.” (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

Yet, this is by no means isolated to JACET alone as it also emerged that such internal rivalry and insecurity exists between JALT members who see themselves as holding different roles in the ELT profession. For instance, one interviewee remarked:

“I see some people [researchers] looking down on non-researchers while non-researchers would say ‘Oh, researchers are …somewhere else’…you know, in terms of background, where one is coming from or their interests. It seems to me there is something going on there.” (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

There were also other membership concerns interviewees shared with respect to inclusion and equality in local ELTs’ associations as the following comments show:
‘I would like to see more recognition from some Japanese-run associations for female researchers because I feel we are still more or less treated like subordinates and assistants and just used…you know, not treated as equal members.’ (Int.3, Risa, August 24th 2012)

‘There are few non-Japanese teachers in JACET because many activities are done in Japanese. So, more workshops and conferences should be done in English because there are so many non-Japanese university teachers.’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘I have this impression that there are divided groups in multicultural associations like JALT. I think there should be more done to promote interexchange between them…to mix the groups. This would lead to a more friendly and accepting image of membership in a professional association. But, I suppose there are already rumours or whatever and they have already established their reputations. So, my friends mainly belong to JALT and choose to belong to it because they are non-Japanese. By doing so, things don’t and haven’t changed, you see… the image is already set and established. So, being Japanese you go this way. Being non-Japanese you go that way, you see.’ (Int. 5, Chieko, August 25th 2012)

It also surfaced that such counter-collegial practices reach beyond local ELT association borders and exist between different Japan-based ELTs’ associations as the following comment illustrates:

‘I have met people who take pride in what they do and they just brag about what [which association] they belong to and they say something bad about other organisations they don’t belong to.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

Hence, although many claim ELTs’ association membership provides a sense of professionalism, there is equal evidence to suggest that it may be encouraging the
opposite. That is, it is promoting deprofessionalism in the form of counter-collegiality.

5.4 Meanings of Membership to Participants

A final area I sought to explore was what the meanings of ELTs’ association membership are to informants. From interviews, three notions emerged. These are presented in Figure 5.7 below:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code: Meanings of Membership to Participants</th>
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<td>Sub-Code</td>
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<td>Fragmented Professional Self: Multiple Identities</td>
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<td>The ‘Insider’</td>
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<td>The ‘Outsider’</td>
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Figure 5.7: Meanings of Membership to Participants (Code): Sub-Codes & Definitions of Sub-Codes

**Fragmented Professional Self: Multiple Identities**

Based on analyses of participant responses, most interviewees appear to maintain a fragmented professional self composed of multiple identities with each differing from association to association. That is to say, my informants appeared to position themselves differently depending upon the association. This was suggested by the subsequent interviewee comments:

‘JACET is one of the main research organisations. So in belonging to this, I feel I am a member of the university community, especially for Japanese university teachers. JALT is a different standard from that for a Japanese university. Therefore, I feel I can be myself. Mm, I don’t know. I can be more relaxed. I regard myself as a plain, simple teacher or researcher. Also, maybe because there are many non-Japanese teachers, I feel, um, I’m
connected to the wider world. Not only just Japan. However, I don’t have a preference. I have a different persona for each of them. I think I am quite flexible so I think I can be a particular person in JALT and a different person in JACET. I can adapt to the atmosphere or purpose of each community.’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘I feel very different in each of them [the ELTs’ associations the interviewee belongs to]. For example, in Asian EFL, I’m an editorial team leader for its journal so my position is sort of middle management but in JBAET [Japan-Britain Association for English Teaching] and JACET, I felt I was just an assistant, not an equal. And although I was a JBAET committee member, my status was more like a junior…a subordinate.’ (Int. 3, Risa, August 24th 2012)

‘For me, JACET is a much more traditional Japanese organisation so in belonging to it, I feel I should be much more conservative and I feel I should always respect the elders. In contrast, with JALT, they are much more willing to accept new ideas and are much more open minded and I feel I should make a contribution to them and be more active in it. So, I’m more comfortable in JALT because I have many friends who belong to JALT and they are much more open minded and accept new ideas and they are always working very hard to make their conferences more meaningful by inviting scholars from overseas and try to hear new perspectives. That is not so common in JACET. It is much more closed and I don’t feel so comfortable with it.’ (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)

However, as the following response reveals, some presumed professional identity is inevitably conditional upon how specific ELTs’ association leaders position members:

‘…they [Japanese English language teachers] probably act differently I suppose based on how the people at the top administrate or organise them and who those particular people at the top are.’ (Int. 5, Minami, September 8th 2012)
In addition, many interviewees expressed ambivalence over their local ELTs’ association memberships as the following remark shows:

‘I contribute to associations here in Japan but I don’t always feel my efforts help in a good way. That is, have a positive impact on them. So, I don’t think I want to contribute even though I do. Sometimes even though I am a member, I don’t see so much privilege or much benefit, and sometimes I wonder why I am still a member. So, I always have mixed-feelings’ (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)

Nevertheless, it emerged that most of this uncertainty was expressed in relation to membership in JACET. For instance, three interviewees stated the following:

‘…quite a lot of Japanese teachers belong to it [JACET] but maybe I am one of the central figures in the community. I feel it is comfortable and I am not segregated. I feel I am part of the academic community. But I don’t feel positioned as an important person even though I want to be acknowledged as an active researcher or educator in that community. That is important for me.’ (Int. 1, Hiroko, August 17th 2012)

‘As long as you stay with JACET, I believe there is a greater chance of benefit for oneself. So, I’m optimistic I suppose as a rule. 100%. Not pessimistic…but as a member, I would like to see it make changes in its system…to be more flexible in how it sees English language teaching…to shift and make a transition …to move towards a philosophical change…to move in new direction by listening to the real voices of teachers. Also, I would like it to be more transparent in how it uses membership fees so I know how my money is being used and I know what I am getting. Sometimes it is very difficult to see what they use the money for. If it is more transparent in this way, then I will feel more comfortable being a member and feel more comfortable with respect to helping them.’ (Int. 6, Chieko, August 25th 2012)
“I joined JACET several years ago and I was asked to join one of its committees but one problem was that they had monthly meetings where I had to commute to Tokyo and the discussions at these were not so productive and based on these meetings they had a conference and the conference itself was not so good so I felt, ‘What's the point of joining JACET?’ Even though they [committee members] think they should be open minded and active to improve English education in Japan, for me, I felt they were not so serious as they claim. So, I felt I shouldn’t have belonged to JACET. But I still belong to it because some members are quite active and they have much influence on those committee members, so I am still a member.” (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)

Even so, the vast majority interviewees still maintain membership in JACET and never spoke of anyone they knew who forfeited it when asked. However, many were forthcoming about what they see as a pervasive ‘insider’ vs. ‘outsider’ professional identity associated with ELTs’ association membership.

_The ‘Insider’_

Almost every interviewee reported the existence and presence of an ‘insider’ professional identity associated with Japanese-run ELTs’ associations, using different but nonetheless synonymous terms to describe it and the subculture it represents. Each account, like the following three, appeared to point to a negative internal differentiation within such associations where certain members are perceived as standing ‘much closer to or even within the inner circle that oversees the organisation’ (Rogers & Hoover, 2010, para.5) and are thus privileged while other members are not.

“If you are from a certain teacher training or research oriented university...that is, a student from it, where there are some key people...
working, you are automatically in this ‘village’. In this kind of ‘village’, you get lots of work dumped on you and because you keep doing it, they keep surviving in this environment. I have seen those people. So I think there is perhaps some link between some Japan-based professional English language teaching associations and graduating from certain types universities. If you are a graduate of a certain university, you should be in this professional association kind of thing…” (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

“…I feel this association was basically created for Japanese male teachers…a kind of ‘old boys’ network.” (Int. 3, Risa, August 24th 2012)

“…I try very hard not to be connected with the official ‘circle’ so I don’t have to obtain some new responsibility.” (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)

One interviewee, who has never been a member of any local or international ELTs’ association also showed an awareness of such an identity. However, in contrast to other interviewees, this individual suggested it may be something common to all ELTs’ associations whether local or international:

“…it seems to me they [ELTs’ associations] are like a ‘club’ thing like they have in Britain. You know they have these ‘exclusive clubs’ where members gather and discuss things…a bit isolated in some respects. So, they have their own kind of world while we, who cannot afford it [membership], look at it as a kind of different world. It's not terribly attractive when you think about it. It's a kind of clique thing. They already have groups of people they know very well in those associations and it's like a reunion party every time they see them. There's a kind of insinuation that they belong to something which is their ‘own’ group. Yes. I can't help thinking there's some established links or roots there that may make it somehow difficult to ‘get in’ even if I become a member.” (Int. 5, Minami, September 8th 2012)
Moreover, in mentioning having many non-Japanese friends and colleagues who were ELTs’ association members, the same interviewee went on to imply that such an identity may even be a more common phenomenon among such teachers:

‘Japanese teachers never really talk about that [joining ELTs’ associations] much. Thinking about it now, I’ve never discussed membership in professional associations with them [Japanese English language teachers], tenured and non-tenured. They may be members but it does not seem that important to them. It has just never come up. It’s mostly non-Japanese that do…I see all these non-Japanese lecturers sticking together. That’s for sure…maybe non-Japanese teachers are more into this prestige thing or find it very important to be a member.’ (Int. 5, Minami, September 8th 2012)

Hence, although there appears to be agreement among most interviewees that an ‘insider’ professional identity exists and persists in relation to Japanese-run ELTs’ associations which have their origins in certain institutions and in specific communities, there is reason to speculate that such an identity may be just as pervasive among non-Japanese run ELTs’ associations both locally (e.g., JALT) and perhaps internationally (e.g., IATEFL; TESOL Inc) as well.

*The ‘Outsider’*

From interviews, it surfaced that there was a certain expectation among most participants to identify professionally with JACET first and foremost. When asked why, one interviewee stated:

“People in Japan believe if you belong to a certain kind of group this makes you feel more comfortable. Japan has a very community-oriented culture…if you are not a member of a specific group, you are an ‘outsider’. It’s very difficult for Japanese to join a different group because one would be a new
This was echoed by other participants who also added that having an identity other than one associated with JACET had its disadvantages. For example, one interviewee remarked:

‘…if you have more than one identity, you will have to keep working hard and you will get out of favour.’ (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

Yet, as the following comments illustrate, being a JACET member can still result in feeling like or appearing as an ‘outsider’ regardless of being Japanese or not:

“I submitted a paper to JACET journal several times but I got rejected and the feedback I got was not useful and I just felt the JACET editors didn’t understand my research. I even tried to present at its conference and my proposal got rejected maybe twice. So, I went to see one of its conferences and what I felt is that people come to listen to their friends presenting but I am not in that ‘village’ and I didn’t enjoy that because people within this ‘village’ just chatted amongst themselves but not about anything professional or academic. I really felt that some of them want to protect themselves or keep the distance from other participants. I felt they didn’t want to interact with people. So, I felt perceived as an outsider. I feel everything they do is just for them – the ‘village’, not for people outside of it.” (Int. 4, Junichi, September 7th 2012)

“In the case of JACET, most of the teachers are Japanese speakers and there are only a small number of native English teachers. So, I feel they are somewhat isolated and if I ask them why they joined this group, they tell me they were asked by Japanese teachers to help organise a conference or review a journal. So, they seem like they are just ‘outsiders’…just helpers.” (Int. 7, Taku, August 29th 2012)
‘I’m an officer of JACET but I rarely attend its meetings because when I talk with its main organisers and representatives I feel that they have very strict and rigid minds...I don’t feel there is room to contribute to that association.’ (Int. 8, Junko, August 29th 2012)

Even the same interviewee who has never joined a local or international ELTs’ association appeared quite aware of this situation. However, when this individual spoke of it, it was again conveyed with respect to all ELTs’ associations, local or international, and not just to JACET alone:

‘...I have a little bit of fear that even if I did become a member that I would still be left out or whatever, you know. Yeah, so that’s how I feel. It leaves me in a position where I need to be more conscious of such associations and whether it is really worth entering them or not.” (Int. 5, Minami, September 8th 2012)

To this end, it appears that one can be an ‘outsider’ whether belonging to an ELTs’ association or not and that this is not necessarily something common to Japanese-run ELTs’ associations like JACET.

**Summary**

In this chapter I have disclosed and discussed the data from my inquiry based on three areas I set out to explore and interpret: my participants’ experience of membership; what they think membership says about professionalism and what the meanings of membership are to them. This was in order to shed light on how English language teachers construe membership of ELTs’ associations. Participant (i.e. Japanese English language teachers) responses as to whether they belong or do not belong to ELTs’ associations and/or continue or forfeit ELTs’ association membership along with any accompanying reasons and issues that emerged were first presented...
and analysed. Subsequently, I displayed and examined what the relationship is between ELTs’ association membership and professionalism based on interviewee comments. Thereafter, I showed and evaluated what the meanings of membership are to my participants. In the next chapter, I will discuss the findings in relation to the Japanese English language teaching context and what implications these have for English language teacher professional identity.
Chapter 6
A Discussion of ELTs’ Association Membership

This chapter provides a critical discussion of my findings presented in Chapter 5. First, a brief summary of what emerged from my analysis of informants’ perceptions of ELTs’ association membership is provided (Figure 6.1 is a schematic representation). Thereafter, attention is turned to a discussion of how ELTs’ association membership is construed. In particular, I discuss the experience of ELTs’ association membership and what this says about professionalism. Subsequently, I examine why membership is perceived this way by considering the impact of localisation and globalisation on ELTs’ associations and the forces of managerialism and neo-liberalism localisation and globalisation give rise to that ultimately influence and result in a fragmented/hybrid professional self composed of multiple and conflicting identities.

6.1 The Findings
From my inquiry, eight Japanese English language teachers’ experience of ELTs’ association membership emerged in the form of reasons for becoming or not becoming members, continuing or forfeiting membership and what these say about professionalism, the professional self, and professional identity. Teachers become members either because it is an occupational norm, to secure employment, or to gain CPD. In terms of why they do not become members, it surfaced that being occupied with work, unwanted responsibility, having access to the same benefits,
and a lack of confidence were reasons for this. With respect to continuing membership, CPD, feeling ‘locked-in’ (i.e. unable to leave because of one’s history in an association and relationships formed) and receiving financial support from their universities arose as common reasons. As for forfeiting membership, the cost of membership fees and, again, being occupied with work emerged as reasons.

Figure 6.1: Japanese English Language Teachers’ Construal of ELTs’ Association Membership

**Becoming a Member:** i. An Occupational Norm; ii. Gaining Employment; iii. CPD

**Not Becoming a Member:** i. Occupied with Work; ii. Unwanted Responsibility; iii. Access to Same Benefits; iv. Lack of Confidence

**Continuing Membership:** i. CPD; ii. The ‘Lock-in Effect’; iii. Financial Support

**Forfeiting Membership:** i. Cost of Membership Fees; ii. Occupied with Work

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In gauging what interviewees’ collective experience of ELTs’ association membership says about professionalism, a paradox surfaced. On the one hand, most interviewees claimed they saw ELTs’ association membership as a marker of professionalism. That is, it gave them a sense of professionalism which they felt distinguished them from non-members. This was despite concerns raised about the quality and self-serving nature of the type of professionalism provided by local ELTs’ associations and queries over the implication that teachers are not professional if they do not belong to ELTs’ associations. On the other hand, there were equal accounts expressed of ELTs’ association membership as a counter-collegial practice exemplified by rivalry, insecurity, exclusion, and inequality. In aiming to ascertain what this contradiction with respect to professionalism says about one’s professional self, evidence arose that suggested a fragmented/hybrid professional self composed of multiple professional identities in member or non-member forms. However, these member or non-member identities were further broken down into both ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ sub-level identities at the membership level and an ‘outsider’ sub-level identity at the non-membership level regardless of whether one was a Japanese national or not. At the membership level, it emerged that one is either part of the privileged membership elite – the ‘village’, the ‘circle’, the ‘old boy’s’ network or the ‘exclusive club’ - as a result of roots in certain institutions or communities, or not part and made to feel as such. The latter also appears to apply equally to those at the non-membership level.

6.2 ELTs’ Association Membership: ‘Keeping Up Appearances’

From my findings, it appears ‘professional discourses are increasingly being colonised from without’ (Stronach, Corbin, McNamara, Stark & Warne, 2002, p. 130). That is, although the majority of interviewees conveyed a sense of ELTs’ association
membership as a marker of professionalism, this seems to be something rooted in
the discourse of ELTs’ associations rather than their voices as members. Indeed, on
the surface, most appeared to see ELTs’ association membership as important
because this was an occupational norm they were ‘born into’ and something they
came to understand and believe through their peers and/or mentors. Yet, this
appeared to be more so for the sake of ‘keeping up appearances’ than about
professionalism per se. In other words, it appeared more important for most
interviewees to convey a sense that they were ‘being a professional’ (i.e.
professionalization) - how they feel they are perceived by others in terms of status
and standing (Hargreaves, 2000, p.152) as opposed to ‘being professional’ (i.e.
professionalism) - the quality of what teachers do; and of the conduct, demeanour
and standards which guide it (Hargreaves, 2000, p.152). On the basis of this, it
appears that professionalization is being dressed up as professionalism, as the latter
seems to be understood by most to be an individual trait subject to a professional’s
actions (Breen, 2007). That is, it is something where ‘personal and professional
worth’ is reduced to ‘what individuals can be seen to do’ (Breen, 2007, p.1071). Such
a restricted or ‘pure’ view of professionalism as expressed by most interviewees
appears to echo Naziha’s (2010) claim cited in Chapter 2 that one is seen as
professional if one belongs to an ELTs’ association and suggests that what one
visibly does determines their merit despite the fact that ‘stronger professionalization
does not always mean greater professionalism’ (Hargreaves, 2000, p.152).

This in many respects explains the perceptions of most interviewees towards
JACET in particular and how, despite expressing concerns about and even ill-
feelings towards this association, most of them are and remain members of it for
particular traditional, historical and/or relational reasons (see Chapter 5 - pp. 80-81,
pp. 94-95, p.103 and pp.109-110). It also sheds some light to some extent on how some members appear to invoke membership in an ELTs’ association like JACET as a means to distance or distinguish themselves from non-members, seeing and positioning them as professionally deficient based on the rationale that non-members are lacking something and thus not yet professional. However, such rationalism is not just symptomatic of a Japanese ELTs’ association like JACET. TESOL Inc. openly defines an ELT professional as ‘one who enhances his or her career through…active membership in a professional organization’ (as cited in Lorimer & Schulte, 2012, p.31). Moreover, it appears to assume and position non-members such as student-teachers in graduate TESOL programmes as professionally deficient by stating that ‘many students believe they must be teachers or have achieved some level of success before becoming a TESOL member. This is not true. Membership in a professional association during your formative years can give you a head start in your career development’ (as cited in Lorimer & Schulte, 2012, p. 41). At the same time, it stresses the objective of becoming professional - that one is not professional yet - through CPD by constantly ‘moving toward the professionalism side of the spectrum’ via membership (as cited in Lorimer & Schulte, 2012, p. 33).

Yet, as my findings indicate, membership appears important for Japanese English language teachers at Japanese universities for another reason. Many JACET leaders are also on hiring committees at Japanese universities and have a direct influence on teacher employment. This seems to have had the added effect of prompting most of my interviewees to be wary of being perceived for ‘what they are not’ (MacLure, 1993, p.321), especially when seeking employment. This apparent concern with being seen as ‘deficient’ appears to explain why these teachers feel the need to be a JACET member and why some rationalised taking on unwanted
membership responsibilities and maintaining membership in it despite expressing concerns and ill-feelings. Subsequently, this raises the question of whether such membership is perhaps a way for these teachers to make themselves feel holistic so they can account for what they think others will perceive as ‘shortcomings of the self’ and, if necessary, (re-)establish, (re-)incorporate, or liberate themselves professionally (MacLure, 1993, p.321).

However, after successfully gaining employment on a full-time/tenure basis, these teachers appeared to see JACET membership differently despite maintaining it. Indeed, most expressed significant concerns with it and even claimed they would likely forfeit it or reduce their memberships in it and others if they hypothetically did not receive the financial support of their institutions. Considering how important membership appears when seeking to gain employment, this leads me to think these interviewees expressed such thoughts partly because they are in a position to do so - they are currently employed, not searching for work, and membership is not necessarily important to them. Nevertheless, because they still maintain membership in JACET, it is hard not to speculate that the fear of job insecurity and the potential professional repercussions of forfeiting JACET membership are ultimately the real reasons they maintain membership in it and others, especially when these interviewees all acknowledged that they used the financial support they receive from their institutions for this very purpose.

To this end, JACET appears to rationalise and dictate who is ‘in’ and ‘out’ professionally and what professionals ought to do such that ‘when professionals do things, they reinforce professional associations’ of this ilk (Noordegraaf, 2007, p. 766). Yet, such rationalism and my interviewees’ reactions to it appear to only point to ‘a narrowing down of the range of options as to what a person may be or become,
into a small set of coercive identities’ (MacLure, 1993, p.321) which I argue not only give rise to and make up part of what is a fragmented/hybrid professional self but can dominate and conflict with other identities that form it. Moreover, they are seemingly indicative of what I would contend is a pervasive delusion that has become symptomatic of ELTs’ associations in Japan and perhaps elsewhere and their ‘more direct participation in global economic and institutional processes that, paradoxically, destabilize former personal and community identities’ (Breen, 2007, p.1074). Such participation, however, is likely to be distant in the minds of teachers like my interviewees especially when the majority of English language teachers believe they work in a profession free from the clashes between localisation and globalisation and the political and economic influences that accompany them. It is for this reason that a discussion of localisation and globalisation and the ‘change forces’ (Fullan, 1992) they bring is relevant and necessary to show their prevalence and subsequent impact on ELTs’ association membership and, in turn, professionalism and the professional self of English language teachers.

6.3 ELTs’ Association Membership: Localisation & Uncertainty

As my findings show, the way local ELTs’ associations and their members behave within their unique contexts appears to be strongly grounded in culture and tradition (cf. Appadurai, 1990; Liebes & Katz, 1993; Thompson, 1995) and is rooted in sustained and salient disparities (cf. C. Brown, 1995; S. Hall, 1992; Smith, 1990) – inequalities that are maintained. Moreover, they are seemingly grounded in and materialise from ‘people’s struggles to manage uncertainties and to create some degree of order in social life’ (Trice & Beyer, 1993, p.1). As a result, members, such as those belonging to JACET, ‘often become what they are taught that they are’ (Papastephanou, 2005, p.548) and anything uncertain (i.e. unfamiliar or ambiguous)
encountered is seen as incongruent with the practices and values of the local association(s) one belongs to, and, in some cases, resisted. This may be a reflexive action that not only emerges out of a fear of potential ‘de-realisation and de-territorialisation of place’ (Papastephanou, 2005, p.538) but also the possible stress on or demise of localised social meaning and the unsettling of grounded notions of community and identity (Brahm, 2002; Usher, 2002). Nevertheless, others argue this is perhaps the result of members being indoctrinated to interpret the uncertain for neo-colonial or neo-imperial symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991; Singh & Doherty, 2004) that attempts to render established practices and values archaic (Heath, 2002) by sparking disjointedness and confusion within the self (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007). There are also those who assert this may be because what is uncertain is considered irrelevant irrespective of the conflicting suppositions of ‘global’ ELTs’ associations like TESOL Inc. and IATEFL (Phillipson, 2009). Whatever the case may be, it appears clear that such uncertainty in the form of unknown, unfamiliar, and new practices will, for many local ELTs’ associations and their members, be dialectically opposed (cf. Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007) and ‘will be always negotiated in local terms so that it is unsuccessful in its homogenizing effects’ (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007, p.33).

However, if such uncertainty escalates to the point where it comes to permeate and threaten many areas and aspects of personal and professional life, this may, in turn, transform into insecurity and anxiety (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007). As a result, many members, like interviewees Hiroko and Chieko in my study, may be prompted to seek refuge and safety in their local ELTs’ associations to manage these emotions which, in turn, not only reinforces faith in and defence of association practices and values but also the sustenance and potential growth of them (cf.
Adams, 2004; Giddens, 1991; Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007; Trice & Beyer, 1993). Yet, this may have the unintended effect of enhancing the dominance and potential oligarchy of association leaders in response to members’ desire for certainty which could, in turn, result in the silencing or marginalisation of their voices especially if they take ELTs’ associations and the appearance of certainty they offer for granted. Hence, although English language teachers like many of my interviewees may look to local ELTs’ associations as safe havens from uncertainty, this may inadvertently lead to the construction of new anxiety and unease one must struggle to make sense of and cope with.

Even so, most members may not be cognisant of this especially when seeking protection from uncertainty is potentially ‘intertwined with the exclusive opposition between the superior and the inferior’ (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007, p.41). In other words, that which is deemed uncertain may be seen as less pervious and subordinate (cf. Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007; Kinnvall, 2004; Moghaddam, 2005; Welmond, 2002). Hence, many members, like interviewees Hiroko, Asami, and Chieko in my inquiry, may be inclined to react in a conservative and culturally purist manner (cf. Papastephanou, 2005), invoking the cultural practices and values of their local ELTs’ associations as convenient narratives to justify the absence of dialogue with the uncertain. This is corroborated by McAdams (2006) and Salvatore, Dimaggio & Semerari (2004) who contend that individuals are often encouraged to create accounts focused on topics or ideas that aid them in handling critical issues in their lives. These can range, as my findings show, from falling back on their history in ELTs’ associations to their relationships with others in them (see Chapter 5 - pp. 94-95) as a means to rationalise such absence. As such, when amassed, behaviour of this ilk can have serious repercussions for the English language teacher who may be
able to handle uncertainty but is either not an ELTs’ association member, or become a member of an association that is perceived as an ‘outsider’ and therefore seen as a competing rival. This is evidenced by the anecdotes that were provided with respect to the apparent hostility expressed by JACET leaders towards lack of membership or membership in another ELTs’ association besides JACET during job interviews (see Chapter 5 - p.83). Indeed, because the values and practices of known and accepted local ELTs’ associations like JACET can extend to local society (e.g. universities, colleges, etc.), there appear to be issues of surveillance and control Japanese English language teachers have to deal with (cf. Becher & Trowler, 2001). These appear to be so pervasive that external regulation is no longer necessary since teachers, like most of my informants, seemingly engage in self-surveillance where control is exercised ‘over and against’ the self (Foucault 1980, p. 155) as a result of wittingly or unknowingly internalizing the values and practices of local ELTs’ associations. Thus, those not in with or a part of such associations may find it exceedingly difficult to secure specific work-related vacancies or positions leading to an imposed limitation of their position range (Hong & Chiu, 2001). To this end, an English language teacher may feel the dire need to expand the self to make room for the construction of a monologically dominant professional identity that he/she may not actually desire and wish to invoke but feel compelled to on emotional or personal grounds to counter such trepidation and threat (cf. Foucault, 1980; Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007). It is this very use of ELTs’ association membership to manage the professional selves of Japanese English language teachers that I now turn to discuss next.
6.3.1 The Managerialism of ELTs’ Association Membership

Since the 1980s’, there has been, as Kerr (2009) asserts, a contemporary and widespread movement towards the ‘rewriting of academic and political agendas’ which has resulted in the subsequent metamorphosis of ELT professionalism from one of ‘scholarship and pedagogy to managerialism’ (as cited by Phillipson, 2010, p. 154). This is also echoed outside the field by Hargreaves (2000), Merson (2000) and Stromberg (1992) who see changes like this as an attempt to regulate professionalism within constricted schemes of accountability. Yet, this is by no means a modern day, global phenomenon. Indeed, as my findings show, managing what teachers do has existed and been the driving force behind professionalism in local ELT contexts such as Japan for some time. However, not very much is known about such managerial driven professionalism or ‘sponsored professionalism’ (Leung, 2009, p.49) as it specifically pertains to ELTs’ association membership.

What does appear clear though is that professionalism is something that emerges from within teaching cultures (Schön, 1983) and is, according to Silcock (2002) ‘lodged in the long-standing traditions’ and the ‘phase-related cultures of teaching’ – cultures of teaching that have arisen over different periods of time (p.139). To this end, it can take on different forms, some of which are preferred and some of which prevail depending on how it is culturally and historically constructed within a given context. However, ELTs’ associations like JACET which attempt to professionally manage teachers through a discourse of power ‘by defining patterns of interaction…characterised by formal and informal rules and expectations’ (Hilferty, 2008, p.165) and attempting to have an impact upon the shape and essence of teachers’ work (Sachs, 2003) may create more problems than they solve. For instance, some teachers, like Junichi in my study, may perceive such practices as
infringing upon their autonomy and privacy whilst attempting to proletarianise - undermine - their practice (cf. Draper, Fraser & Taylor, 1998; Hoyle & Wallace, 2003; J. Little, 1990; C. Richards, 1999; Whitty, 2001; Winter, 1997). Moreover, as my findings suggest, there are likely to be members (e.g., Hiroko and Chieko from my study) who privately see such managerialism as destroying their personal and professional freedom through surveillance and monitoring as a control (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 169) whilst pressuring them to prove themselves and engage in self-monitoring as a result of wariness of ELTs’ association surveillance and the chances of being discriminated against for lack of ‘fit’ (cf. Deem & Brehony, 2005; Snyder, 2001). Further, some members may view attempts to professionally manage them as proof of ‘class belonging-ness’ (Deem & Brehony, 2005, p. 221) within ELTs’ associations. That is, evidence that ELTs’ association leaders in particular, see themselves as ‘part of social groups from the dominant classes, even if they do not in any sense constitute a class’ (p.221) – an element of the ‘village’, the ‘circle’, the ‘old boy’s’ network, or the ‘exclusive club’ as my findings show - which not only raises questions over democracy and collegiality in light of such social differentiation but also trust. This is substantiated by Servage (2009) and Codd (2005) who assert that such managerial practices appear to only deprive teachers of influence, suggesting a lack of belief in their abilities to collaborate effectively and a need to regulate them through accountability measures. This translates to, with respect to my findings, expecting Japanese English language teachers to belong to ELTs’ associations like JACET and to take on association-related responsibilities or face the risk of disfavour, job insecurity, and difficulty finding employment. As a result, many comply and join ELTs’ associations such as JACET even though they may in truth not want to. Yet, I would argue that such conformity is also a consequence of unavoidable political and
cultural factors that are specific to a nation’s education and society.

Looking at Japan as an example, the close reciprocal relationship between MEXT and JACET (mentioned in Chapter 5) for instance is very much symbolic of Gramsci’s (2007) political and civil society and appears to say a lot about the importance of hierarchy/oligarchy in Japan and the role that is effectively ‘reserved’ - allocated - for Japanese English language teachers. Indeed, the latter’s professional self is something which appears to be critically managed and shaped by JACET in many respects as already discussed. However, JACET, albeit able to influence MEXT’s English language policy, is still seemingly an ‘apparatus’ of MEXT, functioning to implement the latter as a form of managerial control which, in turn, appears to weaken the control of Japanese English language teachers. Hence, it would seem such teachers can never fully escape the economic, ideological, and governing force of political society (i.e. MEXT) exercised through civil society (i.e. JACET) and are often compelled to engage in a ‘treaty’ in which their personal ambitions and expectations are molded by and come to compromise with MEXT and JACET’s demands.

The same top-down/managerial rhetoric is seemingly characteristic of interrelations between Japanese English language teachers as ELTs’ association members which are purportedly constructed within the greater hierarchical structure of relationships in Japanese society (Nakane, 1970), especially in Japanese dominated ELTs’ associations like JACET. Such a social hierarchy consists of ‘sempai (one’s senior) and kohai (one’s junior) relationships’ which are key in member relations (Howe, 2005, p.129) and necessary to ‘maintain group harmony above partisan interests of subgroups and individuals’ (Mann et al., 1985, p.1557). Yet, such relationships are said to also require understanding of and compliance with
*kaisha* - a group of principles, implicit beliefs, assumptions, actions and processes through which individuals are integrated into an organisation’s culture (Yoshimura & Anderson, 1997). Moreover, it is seemingly requisite that members grasp and embrace *kaizen* - the notion that something (e.g. an ELTs’ association) is in need of continuous improvement (Morley & Rassool, 2000, p.176).

*Kaisha* allegedly ensures that members are regulated - that members subject themselves “to the totalizing ‘gaze’ of task, self- and external monitoring” (Morley & Rassool, 2000, p.177). However, some, such as Benedict (1946), argue this is more of an external rather than internal process of reciprocal surveillance and sanctioning. That is, members make outward ascriptions of their own and of other members’ actions on the assumption that members act the way they do since external sanctions compel them to, not because it is natural (Yamagishi, 1988). Thus, in the absence of such sanctioning, individuals are said to trust other members less and to not be very collaborative (Yamagishi, 1988). Whatever the case may be, it, nonetheless, appears important that this Japanese ‘way of life’ be created and recreated (Morley & Rassool, 2000, p.177) so that members maintain the right ‘social character’ (Morley & Rassool, 2000, p.176).

However, Morley & Rassool (2000) also warn that constructing members and the organisation according to *kaizen* or being ‘in need of improvement’ may be construed by some as a ‘powerful regulatory device’ which ‘compels docility and compliance and shifts attention away from values and ideologies…’ (p.177). Hence, on the one hand, *kaizen* may be seen as comprising cultural capital of a hegemonic ilk as ‘vast amounts of energy are invested in enhancing effectiveness, quality and productivity rather than questioning whose interests are being served’ (Morley & Rassool, 2000, p.177) or, on the other, problematising the issue of ‘who is invoking
culture on whose behalf and to what end’ (Singh & Doherty, 2004, p.36).

Still, some members may feel ambivalent about challenging such cultural constructs which may ultimately be a key issue since ‘not to be able to speak management leaves one marginal, disenfranchised or rendered speechless – using words no longer recognised’ (Clarke & Newman, 1992, pp.19-20). This also appears to hold true for those contemplating resistance in the form of subversion, objection, and/or deviation which they see as susceptible to being “managed away” (Hoyle & Wallace, 2003, p.99). Yet, if Japanese ELTs’ associations like JACET hope to resolve issues such as a decline in membership, attempting to professionally orientate members from without rather than from within - with member input (Evetts, 2003) - and in the absence of compromise (Karseth & Nerland, 2007) hardly seems the best ‘means to a worthy end’ (Hoyle & Wallace, 2003, p.94). Indeed, as it stands, it seems that many teachers, like most of my informants, have grown ‘impatient with the preoccupation to focus on management issues and not membership issues’ (Bailey et al., 2009, p.241) and the ambiguity this creates, the ‘variable uncertainty, dilemmas and confusion’ it sows and the teacher discontentment it fosters (Hoyle & Wallace, 2003, p.100) over the demise of traits and idiosyncrasies previously linked to the ELT profession (cf. Rothblatt, 1995). This is echoed by Walker (2011) who argues that instead of saying anything about ‘what it means to be professional’ (p.308) - what conduct, position, and mindset one is to have - ELTs’ associations now only focus on developing frameworks to manage teachers. This is in spite of queries and possible dilemmas over their ‘ability to navigate in shifting landscapes’ and concerns they ‘draw upon various and partly contradictory discourses in these efforts, which illustrates the complexity and ambiguity related to their modern roles as knowledge agents’ (Karseth & Nerland, 2007, p. 349). Adding to this are the complex influences
of nationality, class, race, and gender - something initially thought irrelevant to my inquiry (see Chapter 4 - p.62) but deemed germane vis-a-vis female members by a few participants (see Chapter 5 - pp.92-93, p.103 and p.108) thus giving further credence to Morizumi’s (2008) claims (see Chapter 4 - p.59) - which can reveal themselves in the managerial practices and knowledge of ELTs’ associations irrespective of unanswered questions and sustained differences over what passes for knowledge and professionalism in ELT (Crookes, 2009). To this end, it would seem members are left to face many ELTs’ associations which operate on, as Du Gay & Salaman (1992) contend, disturbed ground characterised by instability that impel them to take part in managerialism as a project of ‘hegemonic construction’ (Laclau, 1990, p.56). Not surprisingly, this appears to leave many members, such as several of my interviewees, feeling they are not in ‘a deepening context of de-professionalization’ (Hargreaves, 2000, p.169) but rather an intensifying circumstance of deprofessionalism marked by ambivalence, ambiguity, and paradox over who they are and how they should act.

6.4 ELTs’ Association Membership: Globalisation & Uncertainty

Although localisation is highly influential on many levels in teachers’ lives, English language teachers still find themselves ‘placed at the uncomfortable intersection of contradictory demands made on education systems...demands that come from all corners’ (Welmond, 2002, p.37). Some of these demands are the result of certain globalisation forces such as neo-liberal politics and economics with the potential to transform the circumstances in which language learning and language teaching at the local level occur in intricate, unbalanced, and diverse ways (Block & Cameron, 2002; Giddens, 2000). For instance, there has been a world-wide rise in liberal unease over social justice and democracy in relation to English language education
(Spring, 2008), increasing global awareness of critical theory and critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 2001) and, as Huntington (1996), Singh & Doherty (2004) and Vaish (2005) convey, a global de-ethnicising of English such that it ceases to be linked to a specific culture, is recognised in various forms (e.g., EIL/ELF), and is arguably seen as ‘the language of a global industrial-consumer culture’ (Spring, 2008, p.352). This means, as my findings establish, that local (e.g., Japan-based) ELTs’ associations and their members now find themselves confronted by and having to deal with influences such as rivalry/competition, insecurity, exclusion, and inequality which they perceive as unsettling and ‘deeply disjunctive and profoundly unpredictable’ in nature (Appadurai, 1996, p.35). These have forced some members to be decisive with respect to how to respond to such uncertainty while others have been left ambivalent. Some almost reflexively resist these globalisation forces by using their history and established relationships, seeing the uncertainty they bring as only unwanted alterity - difference or being otherwise - that sows the seeds of unease and insecurity whilst threatening and potentially destabilising the practices and values they hold (cf. Marková, 1987; Nandy, 1997). Thus, they seek refuge in the local grounded in the certainty of a known culture with a history of fearing ambiguity (cf. Nandy, 1995).

However, others appear to have come to terms with the reality of these globalisation forces and have subsequently adjusted to them, focusing more on what their potential positive effects are rather than risking the elimination of their local idiosyncrasies (cf. R. Dale, 2005; Giddens, 2001; Hobsbawm, 1998). Indeed, as Singh & Doherty (2004) would argue, many in the ELT profession need to face up to uncertainty just as these teachers have in order to suitably serve the field and its close connections to ‘the cultural intersections of the global contact zone’ (p.34). This,
they contend, will be more much sufficient and appropriate than English language teachers continuing to see themselves and the organisations they belong to (e.g., ELTs’ associations) as ‘geographically (and quite often nationally) distinct entities, as relatively unchanging and homogeneous, and as all-encompassing systems of rules or norms that substantially determine personal behaviour’ (Atkinson, 1999, p.626). They also call on English language teachers to reconstitute and reinvigorate the ‘discoursal baggage’ (Holliday, 2001, p.124) they have culturally and socially been inculcated with by accepting uncertainty as a means to dislodge prior beliefs and build novel frameworks. This is substantiated by Hermans & Dimaggio (2007) who believe the uncertainty globalisation brings can ‘open and broaden the space for possible actions, adventures, and explorations of the unknown’, suggest ‘a definitive farewell to the dogmas and ideologies of institutions that restricted and confined the self’ (p.34) and stand as a welcome call for change. That is, it can serve as an opportunity to fully embrace new and different ways of doing things or, alternatively, a chance to adapt and form hybrid practices and values as a result of believing the uncertainty globalisation brings is ‘domesticated, indigenised, or transculturated to produce innovative patterns that sustain a sense of the local’ (Singh & Doherty, 2004, p. 18). Moreover, it can encourage teachers to unfurl themselves and their identities as members such that they surpass the grasp of the sure and familiar and experience the uncertain (cf. Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007).

Nevertheless, as my findings more saliently show, this is perhaps more idealistic thinking than anything else. Indeed, it would seem that this uncertainty globalisation brings has unfortunately been interpreted differently by Japan-based ELTs’ associations and resulted in a situation where membership as a means to collegiality has come to be replaced by competition as a counter-collegial practice
that is driven by neo-liberal politics and economics.

6.4.1 The Neo-Liberalism of ELTs’ Association Membership

Like managerialism, not much is known about neo-liberalism as it relates to ELTs’ association membership and its influence on members. As most ELTs’ associations outwardly operate as non-profit organisations, it would seem very little thought has been given to membership as a ‘product’ and to teachers as ‘customers’ or ‘clients’. In fact, it is probably fair to say these notions have been neglected or taken for granted in light of their contemporary exemplary nature, which signifies a pivotal change in how the function and organisation of ELTs’ associations is delineated (cf. Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). Yet, despite the belief they ‘do not exist primarily to generate profits either directly or indirectly’ and ‘are not primarily guided by commercial goals and considerations’ (Salamon & Anheier, 1996, p.3), some Japan-based ELTs’ associations in practice act like they do as evidenced by how they package and present membership to teachers.

For instance, by looking at the JALT website, one can see strong evidence of this. If one clicks where it says ‘membership’ on the tool bar of the JALT website, reasons for joining JALT in the form of listed benefits of membership are first presented followed by a list of the types of memberships, membership fees, and how to join (JALT, 2013d). Upon clicking to join on the bottom of the page or from unravelling the tool bar, modes of payment are presented followed by a list of seven membership options you can click to display their varying prices (JALT, 2013e). Subsequently, by clicking on any membership option and then clicking ‘select option’, the membership option chosen is displayed on the top left hand side of the page under ‘registration options’ (i.e. a ‘cart’) where one can either click to ‘view cart’,

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‘remove product’ or ‘checkout’ if one is ready to proceed to purchase. This packaging, I argue, very much commercialises membership, treating it as a good for sale and the teacher as a potential ‘customer’, ‘client’ or what Du Gay & Salaman (1992) refer to as ‘the new overruling institutional imperative’ (p.616) rather than a professional considering entry into community of scholarship, pedagogy, and professionalism.

Similarly, albeit not in Japan, a proposal was put forth within IATEFL suggesting the introduction of membership tiers (IATEFL, 2013d) ‘based on professional qualifications and experience’ as a means to ‘motivate members to engage even more in continuous personal development’ (Puchta, 2012, p.281). This proposition, however, was rejected rather than accepted by the organisation coordinating committee as one could speculate there was concern it would be interpreted as not only an attempt to increase the commercialisation of membership but, like JALT, also a means to drive competition rather than collegiality between teachers through the lure of cultural capital and its potential for conversion to symbolic capital – prestige, advantage, and/or distinction (cf. Bourdieu, 1990, 1991). Nevertheless, in IATEFL’s case, this would have apparently involved splitting membership into hierarchical levels of increasing cultural capital such that these variants of membership were set apart from the standard thereby enhancing their purchasing appeal (cf. Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). As English language teachers around the world already possess disparate historical trajectories and cultural identities, it would have been difficult not to have been concerned that such membership tiers, if they had indeed come into effect, would have had the undesired effect of encouraging an atmosphere of competition where members ‘meet, clash, and grapple with each other...in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination’ (Pratt, 1992, p.4) rather than focusing on personally and
collaboratively improving themselves.

To this end, as there appear to be novel propositions and visible ‘new patterns of international economic organization where corporate and commercial power is extensively globalised’ (Hargreaves, 2000, p.167), some ELTs’ associations or specific leaders in them seem to be acting or thinking like national economies. That is to say, they appear to be more ‘market oriented and frantically competitive economically’ (Hargreaves, 2000, p.167). Indeed, in this day and age, like many other organisations, they are no longer ‘obstacles to the marketization of education’ (Hargreaves, 2000, p.161). Consequently, I wonder if market principles have become so strongly embraced that Japan-based ELTs’ associations have been set in competition against one another for ‘clients’ – teachers as members (cf. Hargreaves, 2000). Whatever the case may be, it appears English language teachers in Japan are being confronted by ELTs’ associations driven by neo-liberal economic interests which eclipse those of a professional nature in ways that are not only quite unprofessional (Kontra, 2000) and entrepreneurial (Rothblatt, 1995) but also ‘legitimate(s) inequality and disadvantage’ (Crichton, 2004, p.323). That is, interests which not only hamper and ostracise those who lack a habitus in sync with them but which also foster counter-collegial power struggles between those holding an appropriate, synchronised habitus whilst determining the value of ELTs’ association membership to ensure it maintains appeal (cf. Bourdieu, 1998). These circumstances arguably explain why teachers in JALT are, as one of my interviewees (i.e. Junichi) mentioned, apparently wary of openly sharing ideas with one another as a result of possibly disadvantaging themselves knowledge wise or the apparent intra-association rivalry between the ‘tribes’ of ELT researchers and ELT practitioners (see Chapter 5 - pp.101-102). They also, I contend, explain why, despite expressing
concerns and knowing the risks, many teachers feel compelled to become members of organisations like JACET since it serves to ‘maximise their capital’ and, in turn, improve their ‘life chances’ (Postone, LiPuma & Calhoun, 1993, p.5) in what appears to be an ever increasing culture of competition riddled with uncertainty - precarious employment and risk of redundancy. This is further exacerbated by their apparent tendency to feel the need to, as Bourdieu contends, regularly ‘prove themselves’ (as cited in Crichton, 2004, p. 324) and rationalise their actions as a form of self-justification and belief in having command of their professional lives (Du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Habermas, 1984, 1987). This is irrespective of the fact that they have no alternative and are at the mercy of the market which ‘increases the risks people face in managing their lives while simultaneously undermining their ability to do so’ (Crichton, 2004, p.102.).

Hence, as it stands, it appears difficult for most of my interviewees to escape JACET’s ‘antimony of domination’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p.82) as resisting membership or joining out of conformity for example, may only lessen one’s capital. Indeed, as these choices are seemingly decided according to neo-liberal economics as ‘advanced by the discourse of commercialisation’ (Crichton, 2004, p.401), English language teachers who resist may only succeed in re-verifying their scarcity of economic capital while those who conform may only assist in perpetuating the purchase of membership as an economic good (cf. Crichton, 2004). Moreover, because many teachers perhaps feel they have no alternative but to comply with the dominant neo-liberal discourse of commercialisation, this heightens the liberty of the market to fix the conditions they must survive in whilst setting the significance of discourses and their ranking of value (Crichton, 2004). In this sense, the notion of membership as a means to an ELTs’ association standing as a collective of
scholarship, pedagogy, and collegiality is one that is being methodologically destroyed by Japan-based ELTs’ association leaders functioning as agents of the neo-liberal discourse of commercialisation. It is a discourse that by no uncertain terms diminishes the value of English language teachers’ practices, corrodes their reasons for being dedicated to and in charge of standards of professionalism, and separates them from their professional propensities and principles which came about through history and, by intimation, the ambitions to which they create (cf. Bourdieu, 1998; Crichton, 2004).

This, thus, compromises English language teachers’ abilities to collectively unite as members of ELTs’ associations under the banner of professional knowledge, principles, and understanding of practice, isolating and preventing them from socially interposing in the economic by valuing them ‘only in terms of attributes which lead them to consume products: their aspirations, needs and skills’ (Crichton, 2004, p. 329). As such, ELTs’ association members become self-interested, fragmented, and, in turn, deprofessionalized - neither possessing the ends nor the means to professionalism while feeling as if one has no profession to be of service (Hartley, 1997) - as a result of the ‘intensification of insecurity’ (Bourdieu, 1998, p.84) and perilously mistaking what they do with entrepreneurship (cf. Rothblatt, 1995). This, I argue, is the threat Japan-based ELTs’ associations like JACET or JALT appear to pose as agents of the neo-liberal logic of commercialisation, a discourse which demands that teachers share in the modern day contradiction of consuming, being different, and revealing that disparity in the image of a purchased identity (Hartley, 1997).
6.5 The Fragmented/Hybrid Professional Self

As the majority of my interviewees’ membership experience demonstrates, there are strong grounds to argue that the contradictory and competing forces of managerialism and neo-liberalism have permeated the boundaries of this practice. This is evident by the uncertainty expressed by most of them with respect to their professional self which leads me to assert that ELTs’ association membership is functioning as a medium for these forces and is complicit in bringing such ELT professionals into a state of ‘in-between-ness’ or the feeling that they are ‘caught between polarities’ (Stronach et al., 2002, p.113). That is, their professional self is fragmented into identities of disparate allegiances which not only function as a series of contradictions and dilemmas but are constantly ‘juggled’ in order to cope (Stronach et al., 2002, pp.117-119). The presence of such clashing multiple identities
in relation to ELTs’ association membership was indeed something most of my informants acknowledged. However, more than half of them were not necessarily aware of the ambivalence or uncertainty membership caused them per se especially with respect to JACET membership. Despite expressing significant concerns with the latter, these interviewees still rationalised why they invoke and maintain this particular membership identity which appears to dominate and monopolise their professional self and other identities within it. Although such rationalisation may suffice for a lack of an alternative, I am more inclined to believe from my interviewees’ comments that JACET identity is something utilised as a convenient argument. That is, it is a resource these teachers ‘use to explain, justify, defend, and make sense of themselves in relation to others and to the world at large’ (MacLure, 1993, p.311) to offset the risks of non-membership in it.

Hence, JACET identity is for the sake of ‘keeping up appearances’ - professionalization rather than professionalism purposes. It dominates and directly conflicts with other private or ‘invisible’ professional identities (both membership and non-membership) most of my interviewees have and want to express but which are undermined and made subordinate as a result of being ‘managed’ and ‘put in competition’ with it. This appears to explain the ambivalence or uncertainty most of them expressed. Indeed, as my findings testify to, a particular membership identity such as that associated with JACET can become exclusively, albeit undesirably, important in the self especially in circumstances of anxiety and threat such as trying to gain employment or the fear of losing one's job. Thus, it comes to receive ‘priority above other voices on emotional grounds, moving the self in a monological direction’ (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007, p.43). This is not necessarily surprising however considering teacher identity is the ‘result of historical, political, economic, and cultural
forces specific to a society’ and fundamentally ‘determines how teachers’ successes and effectiveness will be judged’ (Welmond, 2002, pp. 43-44). Thus, by belonging and invoking JACET membership, English language teachers such as my interviewees would expect to be judged favourably by the Japanese university English language teaching community, especially in circumstances of full-time/tenured employment.

Yet, as most of my participants indicated, this by no means suggests that domination by one identity in any way deters one from having competing notions of what is successful or effective professionally. Nor does it detract from taking advantage of the merits of having a fragmented/hybrid professional self. Indeed, although belonging to ‘more than one group to which an individual feels attached makes things complex - different identities may conflict or be critical of each other’ (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007, p.52) - a fragmented/hybrid professional self can be quite helpful in ‘managing or coping with moral dilemmas’ so one can continue with his or her day-to-day work (Singh & Doherty, 2004, p.20). These may be ‘consciously chosen, deliberate efforts to put social and educational values into practice’ (Berlak & Berlak, 1981, pp.108-109). However, on other occasions, these may be ‘more implicit, the product of “sheer habit” or “formed by cultural and social experiences and forces” or internal need and desires’ (Berlak & Berlak, 1981, pp.108-109). Thus, composed of identities that are ‘oscillations between alternating political states’ (Gluckman, 1963, p. 37) and ‘sustained by and constituted of, relationships with others’ (Breen, 2007 p.1074), the professional self as ‘a site of permanent struggle’ (MacLure, 1993, p.311) stills allows enough room for the ELT practitioner to manoeuvre and ‘cross boundaries between ways of thinking and acting professionally’ (Breen, 2007, p.1074). This may explain why most of my interviewees
are able to function and get on with what they do despite being riddled with such ambivalence and uncertainty. They have perhaps, in individual and particular ways, searched for and been able to locate ‘their own sense of stability within what appears from the outside’ (Day, Kington, Stobart & Sammons, 2006, p.614) to be a fragmented/hybrid professional self such that feeling and/or being perceived as ambivalent and uncertain is by no means indicative of an inability to effectively function as the kind of English language teaching professionals they want or aspire to be.

Yet, at the same time, the development of fragmented/hybrid professional self as a result of attempts to manage their professional lives while putting them in competition with one another, points to the need for ELTs’ associations to engage their members in a fruitful discussion of what counts as ‘professionalism’. As my findings show, there are indeed concerns with membership and without a discussion grounded in member voices, it is quite difficult for Japan-based ELTs’ associations to understand why, for instance, many teachers do not feel the need to join them and perceive themselves as equally professional despite being a non-member, why some are not confident enough to join, why some prefer to be passive rather than active about membership to avoid unwanted responsibility, and/or why association membership numbers have been in decline (e.g., JACET). The only way such understanding can occur is if association leaders develop the capacity to be critically reflexive and come to terms with the realities of their oligarchic tendencies towards membership and reconcile these by taking a proactive stance towards democratising their organisations through prioritising member voice. It is apparent from my study that members have a lot of important things to say about ELTs’ association membership. However, as something only illuminated through this inquiry, ELTs’
associations like JACET have a lot of questions to answer as to why they have become and continue to behave like this.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I have briefly summarised my findings from the semi-structured interviews I carried out. Thereafter, I discussed how these suggest that ELTs’ association membership in Japan is more for professionalization rather than professionalism purposes and how this appears to be the result of distant forces in the minds of ELT professionals - a conflict between localisation and globalisation and the current political and economic climate. Subsequently, I discussed the impact of localisation on ELTs’ association membership and how managerialism has emerged as a local force that members must reckon with. I then talked about globalisation and its influence on ELTs’ association membership and how neo-liberalism has surfaced as a global force which has created an atmosphere of competition rather than camaraderie in ELTs’ associations. Finally, I examined how managerialism and neo-liberalism have impacted upon the Japanese ELT practitioner through the agent of ELTs’ association membership and how the latter has been complicit in creating a fragmented/hybrid professional self composed of clashing multiple identities which renders one ambivalent and uncertain but somehow able to cope. This professional self says much about the need for ELTs’ associations in Japan to engage in a discussion of what counts as ‘professionalism’ by raising and attending to the importance of member voice.
Chapter 7
Conclusions on ELTs’ Association Membership

In light of the discussion of my findings in Chapter 6, this chapter initially discusses limitations to my study and what my main contributions are before offering some implications for researching ELTs’ associations. Subsequently, it provides a discussion of what my findings on ELTs’ association membership mean for not only practice but also teacher professionalism. Finally, it incorporates my personal reflections on the process of doing research on ELTs’ association membership and its impact on my own professionalism.

7.1 Limitations

No matter what the study, there will always be certain limitations to an inquiry that a researcher needs to acknowledge for the sake of reflexivity and self-criticality. With respect to my research, there were notable shortcomings that warrant mentioning.

To begin with, I must concede to the bias I brought to the research process. Unquestionably my decisions and interpretations in the research process were moulded by my background (i.e. my history, culture, and beliefs, etc.) which was invariably present in the interactions I was a component of and aspired to examine and may have adversely impacted upon (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Hence, it is necessary to acknowledge this upfront, so as not to risk undermining the findings from my inquiry.

Second, in being the researcher and the interviewer in my study, I fully
acknowledge that the relationship between myself and my participants was hierarchical (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) and not one based on equal-footing and egalitarianism even though this was an ideal I strived for. Indeed, if anything, my position exemplified a clear asymmetry – a power imbalance between myself and my participants in the interview process that was ultimately biased in my favour (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Qu & Dumay, 2011).

Third, because some interviewees had limited time to be interviewed during the time I was in Japan to collect data, this may have rendered their data incomplete or prompted them to formulate insights under pressure (cf. Myers & Newman, 2007). Also, despite the possibility that the use of semi-structured interviews may have heightened access to my participants’ actual self (cf. K. Richards, 2003, p.80), it did not ensure it as there was always the potential for participants to give socially preferred answers whether they were factual or not (Brink, 1989).

Fourth, as I had never met most of my informants before interviewing them, I cannot ignore the possibility that they may have felt initially like they were in the company of a complete stranger which may have made the interview appear artificial and raised questions for them over trust (Myers & Newman, 2007). Relatedly, as my participants and I did not share the same racial or cultural background, these factors may have affected how they perceived me and answered my questions (cf. Bailey, 1987; Barriball & While, 1994; Britten, 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 2005) and there was a distinct possibility they may have responded less favourably to me than to an interviewer of the same racial and cultural background (Fielding, 1993).

Finally, as there was also no foolproof way of knowing whether or not my participants provided socially desirable, deliberate, deceitful, or partial answers other than making use of prompts and probes to lessen the risk of this occurring and trying
to build trust by establishing an early rapport, real understanding might have occasionally proved elusive (Charmaz, 1995; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Nunkoosing, 2005; Patton, 1980; Qu & Dumay, 2011). This may have especially been true in view of the fact that my participants and I communicated in English during interviews even though it was not their mother tongue. Hence, language wise, speaking English may have proven a barrier to expressing certain things they wanted to say and therefore limited my data. Moreover, it may have prevented us from sharing the same cultural meanings or the same world views since language cannot flawlessly reflect reality (Alvesson, 2003; Qu & Dumay, 2011).

7. 2 Main Contributions

This research, although small in scale, limited to Japan, and restricted by some of the drawbacks of using only semi-structured interviews, has nonetheless contributed new insights into how English language teachers construe membership of ELTs’ associations. In particular, it has illuminated how the local force of managerialism as a facet of a particular culture and tradition (i.e. Japanese) along with the current global, neo-liberal economic and political climate have come to influence ELTs’ associations in one country (i.e. Japan) and how this has resulted in the paradoxical framing of membership as something to be used to manage and/or drive competition between teachers rather than to promote collegiality and a professionalism grounded in members’ voices. Moreover, it has revealed how membership of this ilk can give rise to an ambivalence reified in the form of a fragmented/hybrid professional self composed of conflicting multiple professional identities where one membership identity can come to dominate and dictate how one is to think and act professionally because of links association leaders have to the employment sector and the risks teachers face in not publicly espousing and evoking this identity – unemployment.
and job insecurity. In fact, having an identity associated with a particular ELTs’ association can not only undermine and render invisible other identities within the professional self but can compel teachers to be so wary of being monitored for any ‘deficiencies’ that they appear to self-monitor to ensure they are ‘keeping up appearances’ in order to look (not be) professional when privately many have serious concerns and ill-feelings about such membership. Hence, this inquiry’s additional contribution comes in disclosing how major ELTs’ associations like JACET and JALT in Japan appear to use membership to dress up professionalization as professionalism despite there being issues with their membership quality.

7.3 Implications for Researching ELTs’ Association Membership

As a relatively unknown and under-researched area, this inquiry has revealed new insights into ELTs’ association membership which serve as a ‘key’ to unlocking ‘new doors’ into this practice. Although the teachers in my study were all Japanese and based in Japan, my findings nevertheless raise the serious question of whether the same kinds of issues they expressed and face exist in other ELTs’ associations around the globe and suggest there is need to investigate the prevalence of this phenomenon further through the problematisation of other association memberships. Moreover, as most of my interviewees appear to maintain their memberships as a result of feeling ‘managed’ and ‘put in competition’ with others, this has implications for exploring whether the clashing ideologies of managerialism as a local force and neo-liberalism as a global force have come to permeate the boundaries of other ELTs’ associations and are affecting teachers in similar ways. In addition, although it was beyond the aim and scope of my study to ascertain how or why Japan-based ELTs’ associations such as JACET or JALT for example have come to operate as they do, my findings at the very least indirectly suggest that more research, like that
undertaken outside the field by Hvenmark (2008) and Einarsson (2012), are needed in this area. In carrying out such work, more can be revealed about the tendencies of ELTs’ associations towards membership and the impact the latter have on ELT practitioners’ professional self. It may also shed further light on whether or not the phenomenon of the fragmented/hybrid professional self is one unique to Japanese English language teachers or pervasive throughout the field.

A final implication raised by my study relates to how some informants acknowledged having never given membership much thought until actual interviews. Although an unplanned ‘by-product’ of my inquiry rather than a finding per se, it nevertheless suggests membership is a practice teachers, notwithstanding the scarcity of documented information on it in the field, commonly engage in but take for granted. Hence, this has implications for researching why, as my findings suggest, ELTs’ association membership has become the ‘norm’ or ‘status quo’ among many if not most ELT practitioners even though we as professionals know and understand so very little about it.

7.4 Implications for Practice & Teacher Professionalism

As most interviewees discussed membership as something more for professionalization rather than professionalism purposes and despite expressing concerns and ill-feelings about certain ELTs’ associations (e.g., JACET) still maintain membership in them because of the implicit threat of unemployment and job insecurity, this raises questions over whether ELTs’ associations elsewhere are also functioning to manage members in order to ensure they adhere to their brand of sponsored professionalism (Leung, 2009) discussed in Chapter 2. In addition, as these managerial tendencies have seemingly forced collegiality within ELTs’ associations in Japan to take a back seat to rivalry, exclusion, and insecurity, one
wonders to what extent Japan-based ELTs’ associations and perhaps others elsewhere are becoming sites of struggle rather than spaces for camaraderie. Also, as most of my interviewees appear to maintain certain memberships because of ambivalence resulting from a clash between their feelings and the potential repercussions of non-compliance, this leads one to wonder if teachers are simply becoming members because they believe that, to quote Bertrand Russell, ‘it is useful and not because [they] believe it is true’ (Grand & Russell, 1959). That is, teachers see membership as pragmatic for gaining an advantage such as getting and securing a job over anything else (e.g., CPD) and for furnishing them with a visible identity that is accepted and the ‘norm’ rather than because they actually know it is good for them professionally. Whatever the case may be, this notion of membership for the sake of appearance, advantage, and security as evidenced by my study has serious implications for what counts as good practice and teacher professionalism in ELT, as it suggests how one is perceived by others (professionalization) is more important for teachers than the quality of what one does (professionalism). Thus, there are grounds to argue that in such circumstances ‘professionals are not necessarily professional’ (Noordegraaf, 2007, pp. 767-768) in truth even though ELTs’ associations would argue and like teachers to believe otherwise. Moreover, such a conception of membership raises serious questions about how many other ELT practitioners in the field are compelled and inculcated into visibly evoking and maintaining certain membership identities not because they necessarily want to but because they have to in order to avert the plausible risks of unemployment and job insecurity and to what length this management of ELT professionals extends.

There is also the issue of the ‘insider’ vs. ‘outsider’ phenomena raised by my inquiry and whether this is a prevalent issue in other ELTs’ associations and what the
implications of privileging the former over the latter are for collegiality and collaborative practice in the field. Indeed, as I have shown, instead of promoting true collegial relationships where members are united by a ‘common purpose and shared identity’ (Harris & Anthony, 2001, p. 376), ELTs’ associations like JACET appear to only use the notion of collaboration and collegiality as ‘a device to overload teachers’ (Hargreaves, 2000, p.166) with unwanted responsibility and, otherwise, do not appear willing to engage members in dialogue over alternative, grass-root notions of professionalism. As such, the lack of collegiality between members, the inclination for association leaders to manage them, and the ambivalence it subsequently causes members leads one could speculate that JACET and perhaps other ELTs’ associations in Japan are inadvertently appropriating uncertainty (Breen, 2007) through membership which, in turn, conveniently creates ‘an authority vacuum’ where demagogic or oligarchic association leaders emerge as ‘a reaction to people’s desire for certainty’ while other voices, like that of my interviewees, as possible contributors or innovators are ‘silenced or split off’ (Kinnvall, 2004 in Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007, p.33, p.39). This leads me to suspect there are likely pivotal differences between members and non-members in their practices and notions of professionalism that are well worth exploring especially considering there are non-members (as in my study) who see themselves as just as professional as members.

However, in considering these differences, the impact of local and specific cultural and traditional constructs on ELTs’ associations (e.g., the influence of Japanese culture and traditions on JACET) cannot be understated nor can the global influence of neo-liberal economics and politics at play and how, in clashing, these can effectively undermine teachers’ agency through membership. Hence, in light of what my study has illuminated, it may be in members’ and non-members’ best
interest to, at the very least, consider and question whether the practice of membership presented by ELTs’ association leaders mirrors what they say or has the potential to be a living, breathing paradox that imposes itself and infringes upon their agency as professionals. That is, it can do no harm for teachers to contemplate a ‘collegial shift towards discursiveness’ where they engage in ‘critically questioning their consensual beliefs, values and practices by explicitly confronting vernacular relativism, insularity, and mere reproduction of practices’ (Breen, 2007, pp. 1080-1081).

7.5 Reflections on the Research Process & Its Impact on My Professionalism

Reflecting on this inquiry, this research journey has opened ‘new windows’ into a practice I have had much unease about (as conveyed in Chapter 2). Unfortunately, in ‘opening’ these ‘windows’, insights emerged which have only further unsettled me. Indeed, in contemplating what my interviewees conveyed, I have been left wondering just how pervasive this uncertainty seemingly appropriated through membership is and how many other teachers in the field are being compelled to expand their professional self to make space for a dominant membership identity which conflicts with other diverse identities within it. This leaves me to speculate as an ELT practitioner that such fragmentation/hybridity of the Japanese ELT practitioner’s professional self is not just isolated to the Japanese ELT environment but perhaps symptomatic of the transnational nature of our profession. As local practices clash with the global neo-liberal economic and politic climate teachers find themselves in today, I believe the uncertainty created from this conflict has encouraged a schism in the way we think and behave professionally on visible (e.g., membership) and invisible (e.g., non-membership) levels. Indeed, there appears to be no doubt in my mind that ‘professionalism across ELT is unavoidably hybrid’ (Breen, 2007, p. 1074)
and this ‘uncertainty, complexity, instability, and uniqueness and value conflict’ we experience, has led to the ‘emergence of professional pluralism’ (Schön, 1983, p.17).

However, as evidenced in a few of my interviews in Chapter 5, I have concerns that many ELT practitioners are not necessarily cognisant of this uncertainty they feel and the role membership plays in it unless directly questioned about it. Moreover, I now query whether other ELTs’ associations around the globe are developing a tendency to frame membership for professionalization purposes as an attempt to publically account for the reality of this schism. That is, I wonder if they aspire to disassociate or distance themselves from the notion that ELT professionals ‘walk the tightrope of an uncertain being’ (Stronach et al., 2002, p. 121) by using the medium of membership to *dress up* professionalization as professionalism as an attempt to resolve rather than accept ambivalence and contradiction as a ‘norm’ of our profession. Hence, in light of my findings, I now find myself seriously reconsidering my current memberships, what they mean for me professionally, and whether they are ultimately in my best interest.

Yet, at the same, in attempting to manage the professional lives of teachers, my findings suggest to me that ELTs’ associations like JACET have by no means completely suppressed the agency of teachers. Instead, they appear to have only succeeded in encouraging the creation of a fragmented/hybrid professional self as another way for teachers to manage and sustain agency through other identities. To this end, as teachers appear able to inconspicuously compensate for attempts to control them, it seems that in an already ‘ambiguous occupational domain’ such as ELT, teacher associations like JACET would be better served associating membership with an ‘ambivalent understanding of present-day professionalism’ (Noordegraaf, 2007, p.771). In other words, a professionalism that is an
'accommodation between the actual and the ideal, the possible and the desirable’ (Stronach et al., 2002, p. 131) - teachers’ actual notions of professionalism and what associations ideally see as professional - and that endeavours to seek out ways ‘for coping with tradeoffs in economized but ambiguous times’ and searches for the means to deal with ‘complex linkages between individual treatment and collective action, between work and outside worlds, when individuals are demanding and collective action is required’ (Noordegraaf, 2007, p.778).

Summary

In this final chapter, I have initially discussed limitations to my study before presenting a summary of my main contributions to knowledge which emerged from my inquiry. The latter included a discussion of how clashing local and global forces have come to impact upon ELTs’ associations in Japan, resulting in the use of membership to manage teachers professionally while creating an environment of competition as a result of the significance membership has for employment and job security at Japanese universities. This, in turn, creates uncertainty among teachers which leads to fragmented/hybrid professional self composed of conflicting multiple identities dominated by one particular professional identity that teachers maintain for professionalization rather than professionalism purposes despite holding reservations about it. Following this, I discussed the implications of my findings for researching ELTs’ association membership and practice and teacher professionalism in the field in order to prompt others to ‘pick up the torch’ to explore, learn and understand more about this scarcely researched area that we engage in but know so little about. Finally, I concluded with some of my personal reflections on my research and its impact on my professionalism.
Appendix 1

Certificate of ethical research approval

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications and view the School’s Policy online.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND

Your name: Stuart Warrington

Your student no: 600034447

Return address for this certificate: Block C Room A, Flat 374, Northfield, New North Road, Exeter, Devon, UK, EX4 4FB

Degree/Programme of Study: EdD TESOL (Full-Time)

Project Supervisor(s): Dr. Sarah Rich (primary supervisor) / Dr. Debra Myhill (secondary supervisor)

Your email address: sdw204@exeter.ac.uk

Tel: 0786-972-2281

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my dissertation to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed: Stuart Warrington Date: May 21st 2012

NB: For Masters dissertations, which are marked blind, this first page must not be included in your work. It can be kept for your records.

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
updated: April 2012
Certificate of ethical research approval
DISSERTATION/THESIS

Your student no: 600034447

Title of your project: Exploring the Value of Membership in Professional English Language Teaching Associations for Multilingual English as a Foreign Language Teachers: A Japanese Perspective

Brief description of your research project: This research project will explore the extent Japanese English language teachers based in Japan - as one representative constituent of multilingual English as a foreign language teachers globally - value membership in professional associations in English language teaching. Taking an interpretive approach, an exploratory methodology utilising a bilingual (i.e. Japanese & English) online questionnaire will be used to get an initial overview of the extent these teachers value membership in such professional associations. Subsequently, and dependent upon responses, semi-structured interviews will be carried out either to further explore relevant themes that emerged from the questionnaire or to elicit significant themes based upon a general understanding of the extent participants value membership in these.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

Japanese English language teachers teaching at the tertiary level (i.e. university and/or college) that are based in Japan

Give details (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) regarding the ethical issues of:

a) informed consent: Where children in schools are involved this includes both headteachers and parents. Copy(ies) of your consent form(s) you will be using must accompany this document. A blank consent form can be downloaded from the GSE student access online documents:

In a bilingual (i.e. Japanese & English) introductory letter accompanying the questionnaire, participants will be informed of their rights to anonymity and confidentiality and the option to withdraw from the study at any stage of this research project. Participants will be initially asked to indicate their consent to take part in the questionnaire stage of the study by ticking a box at the end of the letter. Subsequently, participants will be asked to indicate if they would be willing to be interviewed as the next stage of the study by ticking another box at the end of the same letter. Participants who elect take part in interviews will be sent the GSE participant consent form for them to read and raise any questions prior to them. The form will then be presented to them again in person before the onset of interviews to ensure they are clear of their rights and in their understanding of how data will be handled, how subsequent findings will be publically disclosed, and to answer any further questions that may have arisen before asking each of them to sign it.

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
updated: April 2012
b) anonymity and confidentiality

The names, ages, and gender of each of the participants in this study will not be disclosed in order to protect their identities and to provide strict confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be used in the study when referring to specific participants. Moreover, the name of each of the participants’ university(ies) or college(s) they are employed at will not be disclosed to further ensure participants remain anonymous.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

Data will be collected via a bilingual (i.e. Japanese & English) online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews and analysed, dependent upon responses, either quantitatively and qualitatively, or qualitatively. In order to prevent any harm, detriment, and unreasonable stress, individual responses to the online questionnaire will be kept confidential and will not be shared in any capacity with any other participant(s) or person(s) other than those they pertain to. Interview wise, those participants who consented to and were selected for interviews will be asked to suggest a time and a place to interview them that is suitable to their needs, provides them with a comfortable, safe environment, and allows them to feel relaxed and at ease. What is more, details of the location and time of interviews with selected participants will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any other individual so as to provide further confidentiality and anonymity.

Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):

All responses to the bilingual (i.e. Japanese & English) online questionnaire will be secured through a password protected computer and website to protect the integrity and dignity of all participants. Moreover, all recorded data from the semi-structured interviews will be safely transferred from an mp3 recording device to the same password protected computer and another password protected computer programme where they will be stored and only available and accessible to me during the course of the study. As a further measure, the password for both the computer and computer programmes will be periodically changed to ensure further safety and privacy of participant information.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

There is a chance that some participants in this study may already know each other and/or be in contact with each other. What is more they may come into contact with each other inadvertently because of work, conferences, co-authorship, or by some other means beyond my control. Consequently, there is a risk that some participants may communicate and share their responses to the bilingual (i.e. Japanese & English) online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews (i.e. if they are selected as a participant for the latter) with each other and divulge information that may unwittingly be passed onto others not involved in this study. This could possibly raise political or ideological issues between themselves and/or those involved or not involved in certain professional English language teaching associations if potentially sensitive information gets into the wrong hands. However, as it is only democratic that they have and be entitled to talk to whomever they want about what they want, there is not much that can be done to prevent this without imposing upon their personal freedom.

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
updated: April 2012
This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's Research Support Office for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor.

This project has been approved for the period: June 2012 until Sept 2012.
By (above mentioned supervisor’s signature): Dr. [Signature] date: 27/5/2012

N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occur a further form is completed.

GSE unique approval reference: D 31/12/53

Signed: S Rich date: 30/5/2012
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
updated: April 2012
Appendix 2

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

..........................................................  ..........................................................
(Signature of participant)  (Date)

..........................................................
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s).................................................................

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

..........................................................

OR

..........................................................

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University’s registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.
Appendix 3

A Survey on Membership in Professional English Language Teaching Associations

Q1  Edit Question ▼ Add Question Logic Move Copy Delete

1. Introduction

My name is Stuart Warrington and I am a TESOL doctoral candidate at the University of Exeter in the UK. I am carrying out a study on the extent Japanese English language teachers in Japan working at the university and/or college level value membership in professional English language teaching associations (e.g. IATEFL, TESOL. Inc., Asia TEFL, JACET, JALT, EJTL, etc.) which I would like to invite you to participate in.

This research will involve the completion of a 9-item bilingual (Japanese & English) online questionnaire (which follows) and subsequent interviews in English with interested participants in Japan between mid-July and mid-September 2012. All responses will be kept confidential and you will be provided with complete anonymity at all times in order to protect your identity and safeguard your dignity and integrity. What is more, you may opt to withdraw from this study at any time without reason. As an incentive for your participation, a copy of the results of this study will be provided to you upon its completion. Your contribution to this research will not only provide valuable insights into this area but also give Japanese English language teachers the opportunity to have a voice on this issue. If you should have any questions or require any further information with respect to this project, please feel free to contact me at:

E-mail: sdw204@exeter.ac.uk TEL: +44-7869722281

Consequently, please kindly answer the following questions. / それは、次の質問にお答えください。

A. Do you consent to take part in the questionnaire stage of this study? / 本調査に参加することに同意しますか。
B. Would you be willing to be interviewed for this study? / 今後、本研究の面接調査への参加に同意しますか。

☐ Yes (A) / はい。(A)
☐ No (A) / いいえ。(A)
☐ Yes (B) / はい。(B)
☐ No (B) / いいえ。(B)

If you answered 'yes' to B, please kindly put your name and e-mail address. (若Bで「はい」とお答えの方は、お名前とメールアドレスの記入をお願いします。)

Q2
2. How long have you been teaching English in Japan? / 日本で英語を教えている期間はどのくらいですか。

☐ Less than 6 months / 6ヶ月未満
☐ More than 6 months but less than a year / 6ヶ月以上～1年未満
☐ 1 - 5 years / 1年以上～5年以下
☐ 6 - 10 years / 6年以上～10年以下
☐ 11 - 15 years / 11年以上～15年以下
☐ 16 - 20 years / 16年以上～20年以下
☐ More than 20 years / 20年以上

Q3
3. Do you currently belong to any professional association in the English language teaching field? / あなたは現在、英語教育に関連する学会や団体等に加入していますか。

☐ Yes, at the global level (e.g. IATEFL, TESOL, Inc., Asia TESL, etc.) / はい、グローバルレベル：例 IATEFL, TESOL, Inc., Asia TESL,等
☐ Yes, at the local level (e.g. JACET, JALT, ETJ, etc.) / はい、ローカルレベル：例 JACET, JALT, ETJ,等
☐ Yes, at both the global and local level / はい、グローバルとローカルレベルの両方
☐ No (Go to question 6) / いいえ。(質問6へ進んでください。)
☐ Prefer not to say / 答えたくない。
4. If you answered ‘yes’ to question 3, how long have you held membership in (a) professional association(s)?

☐ Less than 6 months / 6ヶ月未満
☐ More than 6 months but less than a year / 6ヶ月以上〜1年未満
☐ 1 - 5 years / 1年以上〜5年以下
☐ 6 - 10 years / 6年以上〜10年以下
☐ 11 - 15 years / 11年以上〜15年以下
☐ 16 - 20 years / 16年以上〜20年以下
☐ More than 20 years / 20年以上

5. If you answered ‘yes’ to question 3, which of the following best expresses why you joined? (* You can select one or more statements)

☐ To gain prestige / 名声を得るため
☐ To develop professionally / 業務上の発展のため
☐ Somebody paid for my membership / 誰かが私の会費を払ってくれたため
☐ To feel valued, needed, and important as a professional / 専門家として重要かつ必要とされ、求められるから
☐ To gain an advantage over others / 他人より有利な立場を得るため
☐ To learn for the sake of learning / 学びに学びたいから
☐ To access the right kind of professional resources and assets / 専門的な資源や資材にアクセスするため
☐ To have an impact upon a professional association in terms of its goals and objectives / その学会や団体の目標や目的に影響を与えるため
☐ To distinguish myself as unique and different from others / 自分を他人から差別化するため
☐ Membership is free / 会費が無料だから
☐ To meet employer demands or requirements / 用人主の要求や資格条件を満たすため
☐ To conform with my peers / 同僚が加入しているから
☐ To be part of a professional community / プロフェッショナル・コミュニティに属するため
☐ To sustain a sense of professionalism / プロフェッショナル・イメージを維持するため
☐ To give something back to my profession / 自身の専門分野に貢献するため
☐ I can afford to pay for membership / 会費が払えるから
☐ To access incentives I would otherwise not be able to / 会員ではないと得られない利益を受けるため

Other (please specify) / その他（ご記入ください。)
6. If you answered 'no' to question 3, which of the following best expresses why you haven't joined? (You can select one or more statements) / 質問3番に「いいえ」と答えた場合、加入しなかった理由に該当する項目にチェックを入れてください。 (複数回答可)

- [ ] Can access the same incentives without joining / 会員にならなくても、同じ利点に接することができるから
- [ ] Too expensive / 会費が高すぎるから
- [ ] Not enough time / 時間が足りないから
- [ ] Have other priorities / 他に優先するものがあるため
- [ ] Too much effort is required / あまりにも多くの努力が求められるから
- [ ] Do not identify with professional association goals and objectives / その学会や団体の目標や目的に同意できないから
- [ ] Too much commitment is required / あまりにも多くの責任やコミットメントが求められるから
- [ ] Do not value professional association incentives / 学会や団体の利点に価値を見出せないから

Other (please specify) / その他 (ご記入ください。)


7. If you answered 'no' to question 3, have you ever belonged to any professional association? / 質問3番に「いいえ」と答えた場合、あなたは以前、学会や団体等に加入していた経験がありますか。

- [ ] Yes, at the global level (e.g. IATEFL, TESOL Inc. Asia TEFL, etc.) / いいえ。グローバルレベル・例 (IATEFL, TESOLInc. Asia TEFL等)
- [ ] Yes, at the local level (e.g. JACET, JALT, ETJ, etc.) / いいえ。ローカルレベル・例 (JACET, JALT, ETJ等)
- [ ] Yes, at both the local and global level / いいえ。グローバルレベルとローカルレベルの両方
- [ ] No (Go to question 9) / いいえ。質問9番へ進んでください。
- [ ] Prefer not to say / 答えたくない。
Q8
8. If you answered 'yes' to question 7, which of the following best expresses why you joined? (*You can select one or more statements.*) 質問7番に「はい」と答えた場合、加入した理由として適切な項目にチェックを入れてください。（複数回答可）
- To gain prestige / 名声を得るため
- To develop professionally / 業界を深く理解するため
- Somebody paid for my membership / 誰かが私の会費を払ってくれたため
- To feel valued, needed, and important as a professional / 専門家として重要かつ必要と思われるため
- To gain an advantage over others / 他人より有利な立場を得るため
- To learn for the sake of learning / 学びを目的として学ぶため
- To access the right kind of professional resources and assets / 専門的な資源や資産にアクセスするため
- To have an impact upon a professional association in terms of its goals and objectives / その学会や団体の目標や目的に影響を与えるため
- To distinguish myself as unique and different from others / 自分を他人から差別化するため
- Membership was free / 会費が無料だったから
- To meet employer demands or requirements / 職場の要求や資格条件を満たすため
- To conform with my peers / 同僚が入っているから
- To be part of a professional community / プロフェッショナル・コミュニティに属するため
- To sustain a sense of professionalism / プロフェッショナルな意識を持つため
- To give something back to my profession / 自分の専門分野に献身するため
- I could afford to pay for membership / 会費を払えなかったから
- To access incentives I would otherwise not have been able to / 会員ではないと得られない利益に接するため
Other (please specify) / その他（ご記入ください。）

Q9
9. If you answered 'no' to question 7, which of the following best expresses why you didn’t join? (*You can select one or more statements.*) 質問7番に「いいえ」と答えた場合、加入しなかった理由に該当する項目にチェックを入れてください。（複数回答可）
- Could access the same incentives without joining / 会員にならなくても、同じ利益に接することができたから
- Too expensive / 会費が高すぎたから
- Not enough time / 時間が足りなかったから
- Had other priorities / 他に優先するものがあったから
- Too much effort was required / あまりにも多くの努力が求められたから
- Did not identify with professional association goals and objectives / その学会や団体の目標や目的に賛同できなかったから
- Too much commitment was required / あまりにも多くの責任やコミットメントが求められたから
- Did not value professional association incentives / 学会や団体の利益に価値を見出せなかったから
Other (please specify) / その他（ご記入ください。）
10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? / 以下の各文について、あなたはどの程度同意しますか。

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<td>Being a member of a professional association means to value it and its incentives more than a non-member. / 学会や団体の会員であることは、非会員よりその学会の利益を重視することを意味する。</td>
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<td>A non-member can value a professional association and its incentives but may do so differently from a member. / 非会員も学会や団体とその利益を重視できるが非会員の見方とは違うかもしれません。</td>
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<td>A non-member does not value a professional association and its incentives / 非会員は、学会や団体とその利益を重視しない。</td>
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## Appendix 4

### AUGUST 2012

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Appendix 5
Interview Questions

(1). What kind(s) of association(s) do you belong to? (members)

Pick up:

- What is a professional association for you?
- Focus (Purpose)
- Type (General / Specific)
- Kinds of members (multilingual EFL teachers, native English Teachers, both)
- Why

(1). What kind(s) of association(s) would you belong to (if you joined)? (non-members)

Pick up:

- What is a professional association for you?
- Focus (Purpose)
- Type (General / Specific)
- Kinds of members (multilingual EFL teachers, native English Teachers, both)
- Why

(2). To what extent are you aware of professional English language teaching associations?

Pick up:

- Awareness of membership
- Awareness of the benefits
(3). What does (would) being a member of a professional English language teaching association mean to you? (member / non-member)

Pick up:

- Loyalty / Commitment
- Professionalism
- Community
- Prestige / Advantage
- Learning / CPD

(4). Has your view of membership in professional English language teaching associations changed or not changed over time?

Pick up:

- + and – membership / non-membership experience
- Feelings about membership now
- Why (Reasons)

(5). What benefits do you think are provided through membership? (members / non-members)

Pick up:

- What one seeks (would seek) to establish what one values
- Why (for deeper understanding)

(6). What benefits do (would) you ideally want from membership in a professional English language teaching association? (members / non-members)

Pick up:

- What one feels is missing
- Why
Appendix 6

Example Transcription: Participant 4 (Junichi)

Q: Ok, First off, thanks for taking the time to do this. I really appreciate it.


Q: I'd like to start off by asking you, first and foremost, about professional English language teaching associations. What's the first thing that comes to your mind, when you think of professional English language teaching associations?

A: Um, something I don't want to be active with. This image comes from my experience with associations in Japan where belonging means there is lots of work to do and if you are young you have to do this work while older people just enjoy themselves. I don't like that. Younger people get stuck with administration work and I'm already busy with my work at the university and I don't want take on any extra job.

Q: So, do you currently belong to any associations?

A: Yes, but I'm trying not to. I belong to two organisations in Japan but, uh, like I said, I try not to be active in them.

Q: Are these associations you belong specific in their focus or are they more general?

A: I belong to general organisations but not any specific interest groups within them. However, like I said, I am not active in these. I started off with a certain idea or image about associations but I soon realised that once you join it is hard to get out. However, it's good to put such names on your resume so I keep these memberships. Sometimes at chapter meetings I am asked to talk about my stuff (research/ideas) which I do or I am asked to contribute something at conference. If I think I can enjoy doing things like this, I will do them. But if I think I won't, I don't. Going to meetings monthly, doing treasury work, and doing membership promotion for example, are things I try not to do.

Q: How would you describe the membership in each of these associations? Are they multi-lingual or monolingual? Multicultural or mono-cultural, for example, Japanese only?

A: JALT is more of a mixture of Japanese and non-Japanese and JACET, the majority are Japanese and some non-Japanese join but they just join to get job information. They are not active that much so I can say JACET is more Japanese oriented.

Q: Uh-huh. I see. How do you see yourself as a member of JACET compared to being a member of JALT?
A: So, to answer this question, I can use my experience to tell you what I think. I submitted a paper to JACET journal several times but I got rejected and the feedback I got was not useful and I just felt the JACET editors didn't understand my research. I even tried to present at its conference and my proposal got rejected maybe twice. So, I went to see one of its conferences and what I felt is that people come to listen to their friends presenting but I am not in that ‘village’ and I didn't enjoy that because people within this ‘village’ just chatted amongst themselves but not about anything professional or academic. I really felt that some of them want to protect themselves or keep the distance from other participants. I felt they didn’t want to interact with people. As for JALT conferences, I enjoyed talking with people, usually got good feedback and enjoyed having a nice conversation from other participants. JALT journal also published my stuff twice and asked me to review papers too.

Q: So, in regards to experience with JACET, how do you think you were perceived by this organisation?

A: As an outsider. I didn't go to Japanese universities for my graduate degrees so I don't belong to that ‘village’. But for JALT, it doesn't matter. Everybody is accepted to talk and you have liberty. But JACET, I feel everything they do is just for them – the ‘village’, not for people outside of it.

Q: So, considering these things you mentioned about JACET, why is it you maintain your membership in it if you're so unhappy?

A: Like I said, it is hard to get out once you get in. They send you the names of the people who are members in a book and I need to write the names of the associations I belong to on resumes I send and if I keep only JALT on my resume, people in Japanese colleges and universities may ask me ‘Oh, so, you only belong to JALT, huh?’ They don’t ask me anything more but they give me a kind of image of what is expected.

Q: So, what about the way you see yourself in JACET? Do you position yourself as an ‘outsider’?

A: Yeah! (Emphasis) Yeah! (Emphasis) It’s my intention. I try to keep a distance. Yeah. My purpose for being in association is to talk about research and talk about what one is interested in and I don’t think people in JACET are interested in my research area. But people from JALT gave me good feedback…So, research wise, yeah.

Q: So, please correct me if I’m wrong, but from what you describe, it sounds like in being a member of JACET, you are expected to present and do research on topics that its committee thinks are appropriate.

A: They push the research they like…teacher education for young people, linguistics kind of stuff, corpus linguistics. I see the same kind of research published there a lot. Qualitative research is not accepted or appreciated…it’s quantitative research all the time and the readers are not trained in qualitative research. So, when I read their stuff I feel like ‘Ok that’s
what they want to push.’

Q: Now turning to JALT, how do you think it positions you?

A: I don’t feel I’m treated as an outsider but rather as a contributor.

Q: And how do you position yourself in relation to JALT?

A: It depends. Hmm (thinking). I try not to position myself in any organisation but [in mentioning this idea of a ‘village’ I feel like I do belong to this (JALT) community].

Q: Do you see yourself as being treated differently in any way than other members in JALT because English is not your first language?

A: That’s a very interesting question because I don’t really see equality as a problem in this organisation. Why is that? Well, Japanese can contribute in a different way while foreigners can contribute in a different way and I guess the balance I see is good. I don’t see inequality between people. Now, a different question would be if there is a difference in the way researchers vs. non-researchers in terms of their treatment. I see some people looking down on non-researchers while non-researchers would say ‘Oh, researchers are...somewhere else’. In terms of nationality, I don’t see that but in terms of background, where one is coming from or their interests. It seems to me there is something going on there.

Q: Ok, I’d like to ask you a different question here now. Um, when did you first become aware of membership in professional English language teaching associations?

A: Um, that’s a good question. I have never thought about that. When I was a graduate student abroad I had a chance to be a member of a local association but I thought ‘Why should I have to pay?’ But I was not thinking about the benefits of joining. Therefore, I didn’t join. But when I came back to Japan, I was an outsider in my own context, so my mentor at the time asked me to join JALT which I did and I never regret joining this organisation.

Q: Was there anything more involved in joining or did you just follow your mentor’s recommendation?

A: That was a number of years ago and at the time, I wasn’t really thinking (laughs) about many things. What I was (emphasis) thinking was ‘How can I share my research?’ ‘How can I share what I’m interested in?’ ‘How can I build a network in Japan to exchange ideas?’ So, in order to do these things, you have to join an organisation. So, I didn’t really have any other agenda other than that.

Q: What about benefits? When did you become aware of the benefits of membership?

A: As soon as I joined...I was just aware of the benefits all the time. From the time I joined, I didn’t see any non-benefit side.
Q: What did you identify specifically as benefits?

A: Um, the occasion or opportunity to talk about what I’m interested in. Yeah, I mean, I want to say I am so willing to share my work and if I have an audience, I will do this. That’s totally fine with me. If I can see sparks of interest from people, then that gives me happiness. But one thing I learned in this country (Japan) as a Japanese teacher and a researcher is that people regardless of nationality never want to share their work...competition! (smiles). I can read what they wrote but if I ask them questions, they don’t answer them.

Q: Why do you think this happens?

A: Rivalry...(thinking)...insecurity. So, even though you are in an association, this happens between persons. So, I don’t think belonging to an organisation makes any difference in such circumstances. You can’t really share your work, get ideas, and develop ideas. It’s not easy.

Q: So, just to clarify, would you say that the main reason you joined JALT was to show your own work or was this not the case?

A: Yeah, when I joined I wanted to present at its conference. So, that was my primary purpose for joining. But in terms of writing articles, I direct these to associations outside of Japan and I don’t need to be a member to do so. But I still like to help an organisation like JALT financially so it can run because it helped me when I was young researcher. I was given an opportunity to speak at a chapter meeting or to do a presentation that I enjoy doing.

Q: Now you mentioned finance just. Does your university support you by paying for your memberships?

A: Yes.

Q: If it didn’t support you, would you maintain your membership?

A: Probably not. Yeah, so like I said I don’t want to belong to any organisation. But because I have a research budget, these associations help me a bit. So, it’s a fair way to use up my budget.

Q: Is the research budget sufficient to support your membership?

A: Yeah.

Q: Is there an expectation in your workplace to belong to professional English language teaching associations?

A: I don’t think so. But if you want to change jobs and apply for a new job, people will be looking at your resume for such associations. That’s important.
membership in professional associations?

A: No, but a friend of mine told me that she had a job interview once where she didn’t list any associations she belonged to on her resume because at the time she actually didn’t belong to any. However, she told me that this annoyed some of the interviewers, especially one guy who was a key member of JACET.

Q: So, in your case you listed professional associations on your CV?

A: Yes.

Q: So, do you think that benefitted you?

A: What I can understand is that having a blank is not good. Having something is good. I’m not sure if that is a benefit but I didn’t have any blank on my resume. On a balanced resume, you don’t want to have any blank space and professional associations are things that university employers look at. So, you need to put something. Joining a professional association is important to show you are professional and academic and if you don’t write them down, then you don’t look like an academic or a professional. It’s a good thing that you list what you belong to. People want to hire someone who will follow an organisation and who can belong to an organisation.

Q: So, this leads me to my next question. Do you think that belonging to JACET or JALT gives you some kind of advantage?

A: I am trying to gain success as a researcher outside of Japan so I don’t think about JACET and JALT too much in this regard.

Q: Now you mentioned you listed these on your resume. So, I have to ask, does this mean they are advantageous or is this not the case?

A: Yeah, not disadvantageous.

Q: What about prestige? How about that?

A: I don’t see it.

Q: Do you think they are some teachers or researchers who do feel prestige from belonging to JACET or JALT?

A: (laughs) I don’t want to know those kinds of people (laughs). Being a member is easy. You just have to pay, so I don’t think anyone can feel any prestige from that. But for some Japanese based professional organisations, you have to be recommended by someone and then approved by the organisation to join. But JACET and JALT are not those kinds of associations. But I have met people who take pride in what they do and they just brag about what they belong to and they say something bad about other organisations they don’t belong to. But I don’t see any sense in that.

Q: What about feelings of loyalty? Do you feel any loyalty to JALT, for example?
A: Yeah, I think so. Like I said, because I have some research budget, I want to support them financially and if they ask me to do something professionally, I would be happy to do so.

Q: So, is your membership in JALT something you think of continuing?
A: Sort of. Yeah.

Q: Is it conditional upon the financial support of your university? That is, your research budget?
A: Um... If I continue to work at my current university I will get a research budget. If I quit I won’t but I don’t see that happening.

Q: How do membership fees compare between JACET and JALT?
A: Quite the same.

Q: In terms of return on your membership, do you think they offer similar benefits?
A: JACET’s focus is definitely different from my research interests therefore I see little in terms of benefits. But in JALT, I see more.

Q: Going back to your bad experience in JACET, have you ever met someone who had a similar experience?
A: Yes, I knew a guy who wrote some chapters for a book and he told me there was an argument over who would be first author and he got really upset over having this kind of discussion. He was like I am. He was fully willing to be engaged in research if he can but not like this and I too want to avoid being in such a difficult situation like that.

Q: As a member of JALT, do you feel part of community?
A: Yeah, I think so.

Q: Was this a reason for joining it?
A: Hmm (thinking) Yeah.

Q: Did you join JALT before or after JACET?
A: I joined JALT first.

Q: Did you join JACET to feel part of a community?
A: Yeah, I also thought it would be a new challenge.

Q: When did you realise that some things about JACET were a problem for you?
A: After I tried to make a presentation and submitted my manuscripts. I actually presented at the regional meeting twice. But when I went, I didn’t enjoy the induction and presentation style.

Q: What about continuing professional development or CPD? Did you ever join for that reason?

A: Well, I want to describe myself as an autonomous learner. So, I just want to keep face. Buying books and read and if I want to talk about what I’m thinking, I will, you know, get in touch with my friends and talk. So, associations don’t really give me too many benefits personally. I’m just building my own personal network and that’s quite helpful.

Q: Are there any benefits you receive from JACET or JALT that you already receive in your workplace?
A: I don’t think. I don’t think there are any.

Q: In terms of CPD, how much do you think you have developed professionally from your membership in JALT or JACET?
A: Yeah, I can get some ideas from their conferences and journals so these help me.

Q: So, is this a reason for why you continue to belong to them?
A: Yeah.

Q: But this is conditional upon support from your university?
A: Yeah

Q: Do you think the fee you pay for your memberships is reasonable?
A: Yes, I think they are reasonable but getting the benefits in terms of cost and performance I’m not sure. But having membership in these associations is not a priority for me. I have many other things to do. In fact, I may forget to even to renew my membership.

Q: So, what takes priority over membership?
A: Membership in professional associations is only a really, really small portion of my interests. So, I don’t think that much about it.

Q: Ok, so from your viewpoint, how do you Japanese English language teachers at the university level see membership in such associations?
A: I don’t think too many people think about it. Universities just check the number of publications you have, not the memberships so people don’t think about it too much.

Q: Going back to this notion of community, if you decided you were no longer
going to continue your memberships, would you feel you were losing a friend or would you say that would be an easy thing to cut?

A: No, I don’t think I would feel anything.

Q: So, just to put the question directly to you, is it necessary to belong to a professional associations aside from putting it on your CV as a means to help you get a job?

A: 

Q: What about other professional associations? Are you open to the idea of joining other professional associations?

A: Yeah... if a good friend of mine started a professional organisation and needed membership, yeah, I would join.

Q: So, this comes down to matter of already being familiar with the people?

A: Mm. Yes.

Q: What about a situation where a new association is set up with people you don’t know? Are you then apprehensive about becoming a member of that?

A: I presented for at an English language testing association’s conference and I thought about joining it but I didn’t like the people I met in it and I didn’t have any good friends there. So, I decided not to join.

Q: So, this makes me wonder, do you have to be a certain way to fit in some associations? Do you have to sometimes change your identity in order to fit in?

A: Yeah. You have to be polite to older people and use polite language and do what they want even though you may not want to. That’s how I see it. So, I remember at the testing conference I mentioned, I had a teacher working at the same university as me who said (changes to a whiny tone), ‘Oh, I’m thinking about having a conference at our university, would you help me?’ So, I said to myself, ‘Ok, I got to get away from this association otherwise she will ask me to help it.’

Q: So, the way she asked you, is there some hidden meaning behind that?

A: Yeah, I’m younger and she’s older and she’s using this to get things she wants, which I hate.

Q: Why do you think some people do this?

A: Because they don’t want to work hard (emphasis).

Q: Do you think there are many people like this in professional associations?

A: I think there are. Some people just don’t want to put in the effort.
A: Yeah.

Q: If this is the case, then how do they manage to maintain themselves?

A: They find younger blood and give them a job to do and there are many who are willing to please their superiors. If you are from a certain teacher training or research oriented university—that is, a student from it, where there are some key people working, you are automatically in this ‘village’. In this kind of ‘village’, you get lots of work dumped on you and because you keep doing it, they keep surviving in this environment. I have seen those people. So I think there is perhaps some link between some Japan-based professional English language teaching associations and graduating from certain types of universities. If you are a graduate of a certain university, you should be in this professional association kind of thing and if you have more than one identity you will have to keep working hard and you will get out of favour. So, since I don’t belong to those circles, I can’t be dumped on.

Q: So, what you’re saying almost sounds like a rite of passage so to speak. Like something one has to go through and one’s destiny is already decided based on the university they attend. Is this what you’re saying?

A: I think I would say that.

Q: How about your view of membership? Has it changed over the years and if so, how?

A: I think it’s changed a bit. Like I said, when I was younger I was quite happy to go to conferences and talk to people but now I’m focusing more on article writing so I really don’t go to conferences anymore. However, I should make it really clear that I when I was younger I recognised that I was someone who can’t be in an ‘escalator’ system. I thought, even though I am Japanese, I can’t be in Japanese society. I wanted to find something else. That’s why I did my graduate education overseas. So, this is coming from personality too. Therefore, you know my attitude comes down to fitting. The way I am is not what these organisations are looking for. So, the experiences I have had are more or less things I expected in some ways—based on my own personality and my own understanding of what I want to do.

Q: So, it is more of an issue of where and whether you fit in?

A: Yeah. Yeah. So, you try to find a way to fit in. If you can fit in, that’s fine.

Q: Just changing the topic here, if someone senior to you from an association came up to you today and asked you to do some committee work, what would be your response to that today?

A: I would say that is work harassment. Nobody can ask me to do something outside my workplace. But younger females and older females can’t say ‘no’.

Q: Um, this kind of brings me to my last question. Thinking about membership
in professional English language teaching associations, what benefits do you ideally want from membership in such associations?

A: I don’t want to belong to any organisations personally and I’m fine that way. Your question is something I really can’t answer. It’s so abstract. Everybody has different needs and organisations can’t meet everyone’s needs even though they try very hard to meet the majority of needs. So, it’s really difficult to say.

Q: So, correct me if I’m wrong, but are you saying you’re indifferent?

A: Yeah, I am. I don’t see any value in membership in professional associations and I really don’t expect anything. But if other people do, then OK.

Q: Is it possible for someone to value a professional association without being a member?

A: Yeah, it’s possible.

Q: So this leads me to ask again, do you need them other than to apply for a job?

A: Um, No.

Q: And again, how about joining new associations?

A: I’m reluctant.

Q: Is there any pressure to join?

A: Yeah, like I said, if a close friend asked me to join his/her association, maybe I can’t say ‘no’.

Q: Have you ever felt you joined JACET to conform?

A: Conform? In order to build a resume, you need to write association names. So, to conform to the community of Japanese academics, I felt I needed to. But once you build a reputation and build a resume in terms of writing articles, making presentations, then...

Q: If a person only belonged to JALT and not to JACET, would one be viewed differently?

A: Some would.

Q: How so?

A: So, key JACET members would have some issues with that. They would ask ‘Why not JACET?’ Actually, in one job interview I had in recent years one person asked me, ‘You seem active in JALT but not in JACET. Why?’ So, I said to myself, ‘You’re a key JACET member so that’s why you are asking me this question.’ But perhaps he was just checking to see how I would answer the question.
Q: If you had only put JALT on your resume, what kind of difference do you think that would have made?

A: Hmm (thinking a long time). Hmm, having only one organisation… I don’t know. You see, they look at different sections of my resume and ask me different questions about these. Professional associations take up a small, small space on one’s resume and if you have more appealing points on your resume, they just ask you about those.

Q: Ok, well, that’s all I wanted to ask. Once again, thank you for taking the time to talk to me today.

A: It was my pleasure. Thank you.
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