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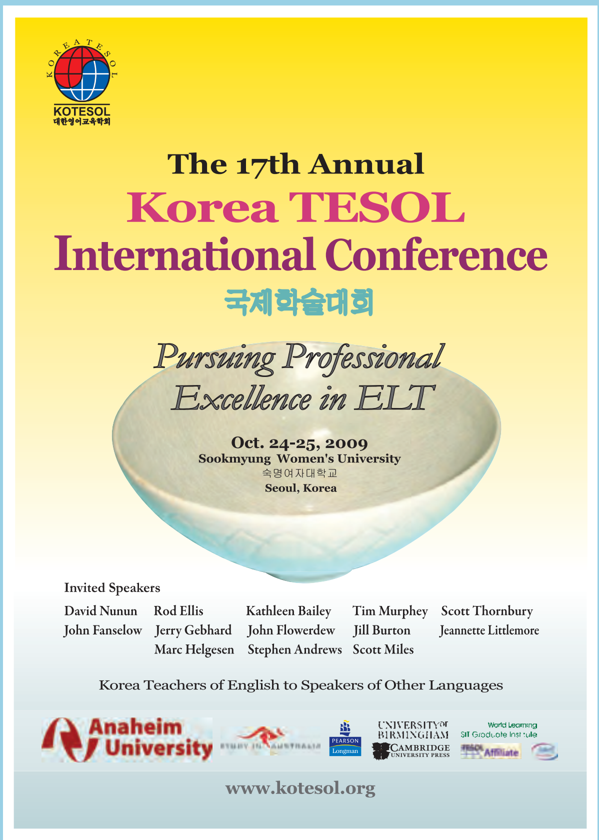
Pursuing Professional Excellence in ELT



Proceedings of the 17th Annual KOTESOL International Conference
Seoul, Korea, October 24-25, 2009

Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
(Korea TESOL / KOTESOL)

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FOREWORD

The 17th Annual Korea TESOL International Conference was held at Sookmyung Women's University on October 24-25, 2009. Nearly 1,400 international and Korea-based attendees gathered in Seoul, South Korea, for a weekend of teacher development under the conference theme of ***Pursuing Professional Excellence in ELT***. The two-day Conference offered plenary sessions by David Nunan, Rod Ellis, Kathleen Bailey, and Tim Murphey as well as nine featured speaker sessions by Scott Thornbury, John Fanselow, Jill Burton, John Flowerdew, Jerry Gebhard, Jeannette Littlemore, Stephen Andrews, Scott Miles, and Marc Helgesen. Prof. Helgesen was also the banquet speaker. In addition, the Conference included more than 170 concurrent sessions of various formats including research paper presentations, workshops, and colloquia.

This volume includes twenty-three papers, which fall into fourteen categories: classroom management, conversation/pronunciation, course/materials design, cross-cultural/intercultural communication, learning preferences/styles, multiple skills, reading/literacy, research methodology, second language acquisition, teacher development, technology-enhanced instruction, testing/evaluation, video in the classroom, and vocabulary.

Within these fourteen categories, papers range from teaching very young learners to teaching adults, from teaching low-proficiency to high-proficiency students, from teaching the unmotivated to teaching the highly motivated. There are papers that deal with honing testing instruments and others that propose test-light assessment. Papers on technology-heavy instruction deal with CALL and video, both commercials and animation. There are papers on Extensive Reading, scaffolding, and L1 use in the classroom. There are even research papers on research: on collecting and interpreting data and on analyzing Likert scale data.

The range and the depth of the papers presented in this volume of *KOTESOL Proceedings 2009* is testimony to the time and energy that EFL practitioners invest in the pursuit of professional excellence. What appears in this collection is but a sampling of the presentations that were presented at the 2009 KOTESOL International Conference, but we feel that it is a strong sampling.

It is our pleasure to present to you this volume of *KOTESOL Proceedings 2009*. We would like to thank the authors of the papers collected here for their cooperation and patience with the editing process, and of course, for making their contributions to this volume. We hope that you will enjoy reading the papers in this publication in your own pursuit of professional excellence.

Maria Pinto
David Shaffer
Supervising Editors
KOTESOL Proceedings 2009

KOTESOL Proceedings 2009

Pursuing Professional Excellence in ELT

Proceedings of the 17th Annual KOTESOL International Conference

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Finding Focus for Less-Than-Motivated Learners

John Daniel Marland and Holly-Lynn Hunsberger Marland
Konkuk University, Chungju, Korea

Though teachers like to teach highly motivated learners, we do occasionally, if not often, find ourselves with students who do not want to learn English and are only taking the class because they have to. In classes like these, we tend to find ourselves putting less energy into teaching English and more effort into answering questions such as "How can I get the students to come to class and study?" What can I do to minimize distractions and encourage students to participate?" This article describes techniques that help students achieve what the Marlands call the "3 C's": Come, Care, and aCcomplish. It also examines techniques for managing classes, improving lessons, and increasing student motivation.

After years of teaching highly motivated students, we took positions teaching mandatory English conversation classes at Konkuk University in Chungju, South Korea. We were excited to begin our new positions and to apply our combined years of knowledge and experience, but our enthusiasm was short-lived. We soon found our classes were not going well. We had made one of the worst mistakes a teacher can make: assuming that what had worked at the last school would work at the new school. Although most of our students were neither English majors nor particularly interested in learning English, we had been designing lessons on the assumption that the students were motivated and ready to do whatever we asked.

In an effort to turn things around, we decided to reexamine our situation and start from scratch. We recognized that we were teaching primarily to students with little or no interest in English, and that we could not expect them to put in a lot of time or effort outside of class. We also accepted that because the class only met once a week over a sixteen-week period, we would not be able to cover a large amount of material. Finally, we recognized that the students' primary goal would be to get good grades, not to learn English.

With these facts in mind, we began to view lesson planning in a new light and came up with what we called the 3 C's: Come, Care, and aCcomplish. In order for our students to benefit from our classes, we needed to get them to come every week, on time, and prepared. We also needed to get them to care about what we were doing in class; that is, to pay attention and participate. Once they came to class and cared about what was going on, getting them to accomplish (complete tasks, produce original work, and learn) was actually quite easy.

All of the techniques presented in this article have been used by us and have proved to be effective in getting our less-than-motivated students to come, care, and accomplish. We do not intend for this article to be a how-to manual. We recognize that every teaching context is different and that what worked for us at Konkuk may not work for you at your school. But we firmly believe that if you reexamine your teaching context and consider our techniques, you will be able to develop your own strategies for getting your students to come, care, and accomplish.

ATTRIBUTES OF MOTIVATING LESSONS

As you read about our techniques, you will find that they all include one or more of the following attributes. They:

- affect the students' grades
- involve movement
- have quantified goals
- provide immediate or quick feedback
- involve competition and/or cooperation
- build a sense of urgency and/or excitement

We have found that when activities involve one or more of these attributes, the students put forth more effort.

WEEKLY/DAILY QUIZZES

Initially, absences and tardiness were quite common. Students typically postponed studying until shortly before midterm and final exams were given. We solved this problem with a simple change. We replaced midterm and final exams with weekly quizzes. (Our classes met once a week, so they had a quiz at every class.) This simple move caused almost every student to have perfect attendance. Because the quiz was given at the beginning of each class with no chance to take it later, tardiness also became a thing of the past.

With weekly quizzes, the students had no choice but to do at least a little studying before each class. Each day, we would enter the classroom to find most, if not all, of the students already there, studying quietly. Students began asking more questions, and we began receiving email from students seeking guidance regarding the next week's quiz. In short, the students cared.

After taking each quiz, students would receive their graded quizzes from the previous week and be given time to ask questions and correct them. This meant that the students encountered the material at least three times: once when it was presented, again when they were quizzed, and finally when they corrected their quizzes. It also gave them quick feedback; they were no longer waiting eight weeks to find out how they were doing.

WEEKLY UPDATED GRADE

In addition to the quiz score, the returned quiz also had the students "updated" midterm or final exam grade. The students' midterm exam score was the average of the quizzes they had taken in the first half of the semester, and their final exam score was the average of the quizzes they had taken in the second half of the semester. Therefore, each week their midterm or final exam grades changed. By putting that updated score on the paper, the students could see how well or poorly they were doing and were made aware of the importance of each quiz.

ASSIGNED SEATING

We also found it helpful to place students in assigned seats. Each week, before handing out the graded quizzes, we would have the students stand up and go to the back of the room. Then, as their names were called, they would come forward and sit in the desk where their paper had been placed. This allowed us to put weaker students with stronger students or simply seat the weaker students in the front. We were able to move students who usually sat in back to the front and break up chatty groups that had trouble staying on task. If nothing else, it added a little variety to the class and gave the students opportunities to make new friends. (The students were never told the criteria we were using for the seating assignments, and the criteria changed from class to class.)

THE NEGOTIABLE GRADE

One of the techniques the students liked most was the negotiable grade. With more than 300 quizzes to grade each week, we were destined to make an occasional error. We told the students this and encouraged them to look for our mistakes. We also allowed students to defend their answers. Sometimes, we would read a sentence that we believed to be false, and we would mark it wrong. But if the student could give a sensible explanation, we would change the score. In addition, we gave credit to students whose answers we deemed incomplete if they could orally complete the answer. We also gave partial credit to students who gave good oral explanations or corrections clarifying what they wanted to say. In short, we rewarded students who engaged us in conversation, were tenacious, and truly cared.

YOUR HOMEWORK: COME PREPARED

Another issue we faced was students coming to class unprepared. Often students failed to bring their textbooks, paper, and pencils. We fixed this by grading preparedness. We gave the students a simple homework assignment; each week they were to bring a pencil, eraser, piece of A4 paper for taking the quiz, their "English-only notebook," (more on that below), and their textbook. They were also told to turn off their cell phones. If they did so, they got 100 for their homework that day. If they forgot just one item, they got a zero. We did not have inspections, but whenever we saw a student without one of the items, we discreetly asked him where it was. If he didn't have it, we quietly told him that his homework score was zero. Likewise, if we saw or heard a cell phone, we informed the student that he had received a zero. It was not a disciplinary action – just recordkeeping.

THE ENGLISH-ONLY NOTEBOOK

Each student was required to have a notebook that was only for English class. No Korean was to be written in it. By the end of each activity, the whiteboard would have all of the important information on it, e.g., example sentences and new vocabulary. Sometimes the teacher put it there; sometimes the students put it there. Once we had checked it for any errors, we would tell the students to take out their English-only notebooks and copy the information from the board. Once they had done this, they were ready for the next week's quiz. They had all of the grammar and vocabulary they would need. They didn't have to worry about textbook pages because everything they needed was in the notebook.

This technique made studying easier for the students, but it required some getting used to for the teacher. When making lesson plans, we had to be sure to allow ample time for the students to write in their notebooks – time when nothing else was going on. When students asked us about mistakes on their quizzes, we told them to look in their notebooks. If they did not have the notes from the previous week, it reminded them that the notebook was important. (It also meant they got a zero for homework.) If they had the notes, it showed them that they could use the notes to make corrections and teach themselves.

This process also taught us an important lesson. When helping students to correct their quizzes, we discovered that some students were making errors on the quizzes because their notebooks contained errors. We reckoned this was caused, at least in part, by students trying to quickly take notes when they should have been talking or listening. That was when we realized the importance of "controlling the desktop" and giving the students all the time they needed for copying from the board.

CONTROLLING THE DESKTOP

This technique may sound objectionable to some. However, we had great success with it, and the students seemed to benefit from it. Let's start with the problem. You tell the class, "Listen up! This is important." Looking out at the class, you see students looking in their textbooks, writing in their notebooks, drawing on their desks, talking in Korean, sending text messages, or playing with one another's hair. This is your fault. You have not controlled the desktop.

We began each lesson by telling the students to take everything off their desks. Then they were ready to listen or talk. They wouldn't take out their textbooks or notebooks until they were told to do so. When we told them to take out their notebooks to copy something from the board, we would wait until they had finished and then tell them to close their notebooks. We would not start a listening or speaking activity until all of their books were closed and they had put down their pencils. We had found that failing to control the desktop meant that students would have a desktop full of distractions, ranging from books and paper to cell phones and make up. It meant they would write in their notebooks and look in their textbooks when they should have been listening or talking. It meant they would waste valuable time writing down things that were not important. It meant they would have nothing to do when the rest of the class was writing.

During pair work, we limited the pairs to a single textbook, piece of paper, and pencil. Allowing more than one textbook, pencil, or piece of paper on the desk during pair activities meant that students would probably ignore each other instead of working together. We used similar strategies when dealing with larger groups as well. Though this technique may go against ideas of learner autonomy, it is worth recognizing that every unnecessary item on the desk is a potential distraction.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Because we met so infrequently, it was important to keep each lesson simple with a narrow focus. That meant a single topic and a narrow range of vocabulary and grammar. (With a more motivated class that meets frequently, it is fun to help the students find multiple ways of expressing the same idea, but for classes such as ours, this can overwhelm and confuse the students. Of course it is fine to answer any questions that come up, or give stronger students some individual guidance, but for the group as a whole, less is more.) Basically, we tried to have the students deal with a single question or prompt each week. One of the most useful was "Tell me about..." *Tell me about your family/neighborhood/future plans*. But we also looked at other questions. *What do you do for fun? What are your favorite foods? How's the weather? What do you have to do each week?* Anything was okay as long as it was a topic that was relevant to their lives.

These prompts and questions were used for activities and quizzes. To answer them, the students generally needed some new or polished grammar, and a slightly expanded vocabulary, but most had enough English to get started. Our goal – and the only realistic goal for a class such as ours – was to improve the English they already had and hopefully add a little more to it. We did not have the time to tackle larger tasks, and trying to do so only bored and discouraged many of the students.

TELL ME ABOUT MY HOMETOWN

We discovered one problem with the above prompts and questions: We had no way of knowing if the students were telling us the truth. We began to notice that students who sat with each other often had remarkably similar families and hometowns, while other kids liked and did the exact same things that the characters in the textbook did. This is why we came up with *Tell me about MY hometown*. We started with the usual lesson. The students brainstormed, talked with partners, read paragraphs, listened to dialogues, or whatever we deemed appropriate for that day. Then, about 30 minutes before class ended, we would tell the students, "Next week you have to tell me about MY hometown." Sometimes we had to repeat it before one of the sharper students saw the problem. Up until that point, we had told them nothing about our hometowns. This is when we would tell them that they had until the end of class to ask us questions.

We then put the students into small groups where they could work together to form questions. For the remainder of the class, we would go from group to group answering questions, in a voice that only the group asking could hear. That way more than one student would have the opportunity to ask each possible question. Putting the students into small groups is important for this activity. If you make it a whole-class activity, only a few students are going to ask questions. The others will just be content to copy down the answers that you announce to the class. It also means that one student will only ask each question. Having them in small groups also helps you keep track of who is asking questions. When you notice one student dominating their group, you can refuse to answer unless other students ask. Of course to keep the questions coming, you need to answer their questions with as little information as possible.

Student: "Where are you from?"
Teacher: "Chattanooga."

Don't tell them anything else, not even how to spell it, unless they ask. Give simple yes-and-no answers whenever possible so they have to ask more.

To pass the quiz, the students must communicate. They need to ask, listen, and understand. They can not just memorize sentences that may or may not be true. This technique turned our classes into lively places full of English conversations. And the topic possibilities are limitless. What do *my* friends and family look like? What was *I* like in high school?

MULTIPLE SHORT TASKS WITH QUANTIFIED GOALS

For our students, short attention spans were the norm. Long, open-ended activities quickly became boring and tedious. This is why we liked to use several short activities with quantified goals. When we asked students to write down their favorite foods, they typically stopped after one or two foods. Likewise, when we asked students to practice a dialogue, they would simply read it together once. But when we told students to write down five things they did on the weekends and five things their partner did on the weekends, we got much better results. When we told them to practice a dialogue four times or told them to work on an activity for three minutes, our students put forth more effort. A timer with an alarm proved to be a great way to make class more exciting.

BONUS POINTS

Another great way to get students interested in an activity is to give bonus points to the students who successfully complete it. We sometimes added competition to the mix by giving first, second, and third place prizes. The points were added to that week's quiz score. We found those students who had just bombed the quiz to be especially motivated.

THE TICKET OUT

Another way we encouraged students to accomplish a task was to present it as a "ticket out." We would tell the students that if they could accomplish the task, they could leave early. This was always a great motivator. The ticket out created a sense of urgency, but it also got the students to be thorough. In order to get out, the work had to be perfect. We would check the students' work at the door, and if there were any mistakes, the student would be sent to the back of the line. Because we were checking their work at the door, it also ensured that each student got at least a little individual attention and help from the teacher.

Virtually any task can be used as a ticket out. It can be a worksheet or textbook activity that must be filled out. It can also be a paragraph the students must write. The teacher can require the students to answer oral interview questions at the door or perform a dialogue with a partner. The only thing that we consider mandatory is that it be an activity that covers the main points of the day's lesson and prepares them for the following week's quiz.

Another reason to offer a ticket out is to help prevent stronger students from getting bored. If they can accomplish the task quickly and accurately, they are allowed to leave early. However, we found that stronger students who had completed the task successfully sometimes decided to stay and help the other students. In this respect, the ticket out helped to promote teamwork. And here is the dirty little secret: Few if any of the students actually got out early. Often we found the last student getting out ten to fifteen minutes late. But it created the illusion of getting out early, and the students were animated.

ADD A LITTLE SPICE

If you want your classes to be lively and your students to be engaged, you must remember one thing: Your students will never be more enthusiastic than you are. Set a good example for them by being upbeat and positive. Do not even think of walking into the classroom when you are in a bad mood. Take just a moment to tell yourself that today's class is going to go well. Think of yourself as an actor stepping onto a stage to play the part of an energetic, enthusiastic teacher who cannot be discouraged. Make sure you are in character before you start. Clapping at the end of each activity can help to stimulate students and build excitement. It lets them know that they have accomplished something and that you are pleased. It keeps them awake and moving. In the beginning, you will find yourself clapping alone, but it won't be long before the students join you. In fact, you may even find them clapping before you do.

Technology is another way to liven up your classes. One simple activity is to put the students in pairs and send one out of the room. The partner in the room then calls his partner on his cell phone and tells him where to go. Once there, the student will find a paragraph that he must read to his partner, who will then write it down. The teacher checks the dictated paragraph, and if there are errors, the student calls his partner again to ask him to help him find and fix the errors. This activity works because young people like to use their phones. It gets them up and moving. It gives them a goal to strive for, and if you offer bonus points, it can quickly become a competition.

Having your students follow you on Twitter, putting information online, or joining Cyworld, a social network site that our students seem to be into, are just a few possibilities for making English class fun and exciting.

BE READY TO CHANGE

All of the aforementioned techniques are simply options; they are not “the right way to teach.” They have been helpful for us and our students, and we hope you can use them as well. Of course, there are countless other ideas, and we should always be trying to find them. The most important thing is to review your teaching context frequently. Even if you stay at the same school for twenty years, the context will change. The students, the physical environment, and the demands placed on you and the students will change. In short, we have to teach this semester – not last semester. We have to be ready to abandon what we have done in the past.

If an activity, even one that has been successful in the past, is not working, stop doing it. Teachers should have no loyalty to any method or activity. It is fine to skip lesson stages or do them later in the lesson. There is nothing wrong with doing your “warm up” activity in the middle or at the end of the lesson if the students are more responsive to it at one of those times. There is also nothing wrong with just skipping it. Likewise, do not forget to reuse activities that do work. We had developed a lesson plan for our first day of class that went very well each semester. We remarked that we wished everyday could go as well as the first day. Then it occurred to us that what made the first day go so well was not the topic, but the activity we used. It further occurred to us that this was the only time we used that particular activity. While you do not want to be repetitive and overuse an activity, do not be afraid to use a successful activity more than once.

Finally, do not be afraid to try those activities that you are certain will not work in your class. At workshops and conferences, teachers can often be heard saying, “Interesting idea, but it wouldn’t work in my class.” They no doubt say the same thing about the ideas that they read about in teaching manuals and journals. But consider this: If your classes are not going well, maybe it is time to accept that you are not an expert on what works in your class. You may be surprised by what can work if you give it a chance. If nothing else, you may come up with some great new ideas by using ideas that “won’t work” instead of your ideas that don’t work.

THE AUTHORS

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Creating an Interactive Atmosphere in the Collaborative ESL/EFL Classroom with Purposeful Seating Charts

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The arrangement of the classroom is an integral part of any teachers' classroom preparation. In a collaborative classroom, seating students is a way to provide the best atmosphere for collaboration and interaction. It is the aim of this paper to discuss seating plans that are at the disposal of the class, and how utilizing a random seating plan can be advantageous and disadvantageous in an ESL/EFL setting. With the collaborative class in mind, this paper explores options in classroom seating plans; in addition, it will report student opinions on randomized seating charts gathered from a student survey.

The creation a classroom environment plays a major part of a teacher's classroom activities and classroom management plans. When creating a learning environment, the teacher, in deciding the seating arrangement needs to think about not only the organization of the room and the aim of the activity, but also the make-up and nature of the students and the teacher's own involvement in the activity (Sommer, 1967; Zifferblatt, 1972; Sommer, 1977; Becker, et al., 1973). Consideration of the physical environment of the room is for teaching and learning to be able to occur as efficiently and effectively as possible.

In an ESL/EFL classroom, to achieve the goal of encouraging, assisting, and supporting student learning, classroom seating is structured to support both teacher-to-student and student-to-student interaction. Seating arrangements can also have an outcome on the effectiveness of communication among the students themselves. From the point of view of the teacher, a factor deciding different seating plans is matching the style of teaching that best suits the instructor to the objective of the lesson. Teachers also want to consider the goal of the classroom activity and how the classroom seating can best support the activity's goal (Johnson, 1973). For example, in an ESL/EFL class, the teacher may want pair work or group collaboration with a lot of student interaction, or the teacher may want the students to do an individualized reading exercise, or the teacher may want the attention of the class directed toward the teacher. By altering the seating arrangements, the teacher can contribute to the success of the ESL/EFL student in the classroom. The teacher must look at what outcomes from the class they are striving to achieve and arrange the class to best meet these goals.

Along with the classroom arrangement, randomized seating can influence the layout of the classroom environment. This paper will look at randomized seating and offer feedback from an in-class survey suggesting that randomizing the classroom seating, or changing of the student's assigned seat, or the student's group or pair makeup will create a more interactive atmosphere. Changing with whom and where in the classroom the students sit every class or every couple of classes can be beneficial and have drawbacks for the student and teacher. The survey explored whether students, with randomized seating, felt that sitting in a new seat, meeting new people with different personalities, and being forced to leave their comfort zone, being exposed to other students' strengths and weaknesses was beneficial in the students' opinions.

A factor to consider is the personality of the class. There are a number of variables in considering the personality of the class, for example, the various levels of English, the different strengths of students, and that some students are shyer than their peers. Many class needs can best be managed with a seating chart. For example, students with special needs can be placed appropriately. Also, a student's individual needs can best be addressed by including arranged seating (Poulou, 2005). Stronger students can be placed near weaker students. This also works well for students with positive or negative classroom behavior; these positive-behavior students can be seated near others who can benefit from a good role model (Sommer, 1977). Also, students have the comfort of knowing where to sit. Shy students may be more comfortable if told where to sit instead of making that decision themselves, so the class is not inconvenienced with student preferences of where to sit and next to whom. Seating charts also provide a quick and convenient way for the teacher to take attendance and learn student names.

There are, however, some disadvantages to a seating chart. The creation of a seating chart puts the management of the class arrangement exclusively on the teacher, designating the teacher as an authority figure (Holtrop, 1999). This method is good for some teaching styles, but it is not so good for others who want to give students as much freedom in the class as possible. Students may feel empowered by the opportunity to choose their own seats. Also, providing a new seating chart to meet each class's needs makes more work for the teacher. The teacher must rethink the make-up of each class.

SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

There are many seating arrangement styles that teachers have at their disposal. When deciding on a seating arrangement, teachers should consider what will create maximum effectiveness and class control, and give students the best chance to grasp the lesson. Depending on how the instruction is being delivered or what the goal for the class is, it makes sense for the teacher to change the layout.

The organization of the class is a major element of classroom dynamics. In the ESL/EFL classroom, emphasis has recently been placed more on collaboration and interaction. Different arrangements give students different roles; different ways to participate in the class give the teacher different ways to provide instruction.

The following are a few of the more common seating arrangements used by teachers: collaborative groups, cluster groups, rows, circle, semi-circle, and pairs. The best arrangement for each class depends on the purpose of the class, the class make-up, and the teacher.

Collaborative Groups

The characteristic of a genuine collaborative classroom includes the sharing of knowledge among students and teachers, shared authority between the two, using teachers as mediators, and finally, heterogeneous groupings of students (Kulieke et al., 1990). When students divide into groups, group work can be enhanced by collaboration. Group members are able to work together on a common goal.

Collaborative groups can run efficiently by assigning group roles within the group. Typical roles in a collaborative group may include a team leader and recorder or clerk. When students utilize these roles in their collaborative groups, students develop skills in making group decisions, leading, and managing a group (Figure 1). This constructivist approach to teaching "puts the student in the driver's seat" and stresses the importance of active student engagement (Perkins, as cited in Bucks, 1997, Introduction, para. 1). All of these skills are of value for students in the future. In collaborative groups, each group member has the responsibility of contributing to the group; each member has a responsibility. Students can be active seekers and processors of information, not passive recipients (Schunk, 1986; Davis & Murrell, 1994).

Contribution and interaction between group members is vital. When students divide assignment tasks among themselves, small group work has a tendency to not work well. Groups working together, sharing information, and listening to each other promote learning and collaboration (Erickson & Strommer, 1991; McKeachie, 1986). When students discuss and work together, they have the opportunity to arrive at a better sense of understanding and understand what parts of the activity need further discussion and reflection. Groups need to regularly be assessed for the effectiveness of their communication strategies and ways need to be sought to improve group communication. Periodically, time needs to be reserved at the end of class to assess group dynamics.

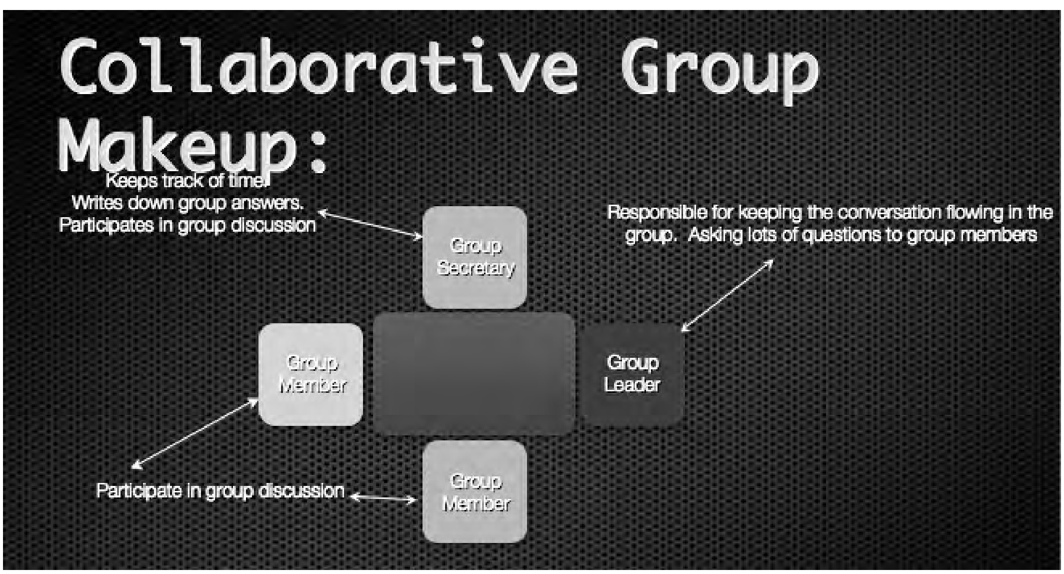

FIGURE 1. Collaborative group makeup

Cluster Groups

Collaborative groups are often arranged into cluster groups. A good way to integrate collaborative learning with ESL students is in a cluster group (Emmer & Stough, 2001). Cluster groups are often made up of three, four, or five students working together on an activity task. Students arrange their desks so that every desk is facing one another to encourage group interaction. The class is made up of scattered groups of clusters throughout the class. In the class, the teacher walks around the room and works with the cluster groups and monitors group progress. The make-up of the group needs to be thought about before class by the teacher or the student. The goal of cluster discussions is that each cluster group member shares information towards a group task and a common goal. In order for cluster groups to be effective, the students need to be able to work together and help each other learn.

There are quite a few items that need to be taken into considerations when deciding to place students in clusters. It is advantageous to have students of different levels in each group, so that they can work with others by helping each other learn. A potential problem is that they will be close to one another and can easily chitchat with friends in their native language.

Clusters also have the potential disadvantage of students who approach the assigned tasks in individualistic ways rather than focusing on including all of the members of the group. For example, rather than working together in the group, each student could work alone on a portion of the assignment and give the answers to the group without discussion. For the teacher, clusters can also be a disadvantage when addressing the class because students may not be oriented toward the teacher. Students may have their back to the teacher and not be focused to the front of the room, but instead be focused on the group.

Traditional Rows and Columns

Traditionally, the arrangement for many teachers has been a row-and-column style of seating layout. Many teachers used to favor the traditional form of row seating because it offered the teacher the ability to move around the classroom easily and allowed the students to have a clear view of what is happening in front of them. This arrangement still has its benefits for teacher-centered instruction. It is easy for the teacher to monitor all the students in the class. A rows-and-columns arrangement has all students facing the teacher and the instructional area. In an ESL classroom, this may be advantageous in listening and reading activities.

The problem with this arrangement is that some students sit in the corners and in the back of the room, making participation and interaction more difficult for those students. This arrangement is also not advantageous for group work by not allowing students to interact as well as in other arrangements.

Pair Work

Separating the rows and columns, so that the two sides are facing each other, transforms the classroom into another learning environment. This arranges students so that they face each other and encourages student interaction with pair discussions. For the teacher, the aisle is also a convenience for monitoring by the teacher and offers support to students during the lesson.

The problem with this arrangement, like rows and columns, is that there are students that are in the back of the room and in the corners. Also, it is hard for the teacher to see and monitor all the students. The students are not facing the front of the room when sitting in pairs. It is difficult to have class discussions or provide feedback to the class without moving and looking around to see who is talking. Pair work is good for classroom situations where there is little direct instruction from the teacher and student work is encouraged.

The Circle

By placing desks in one large circle students are able to support each other's learning. They can solve problems through class discussion and shared explanations. A circle of desks has the advantage of putting every student in the front row. The teacher then is centered in the lesson acting as a collaborator or facilitator. Again, the problem with this arrangement is that there are students who will be at a disadvantage during the class feedback or instruction time. Also, it may be hard for the teacher to see all the students and monitor their activities.

The Semicircle

In a semicircle seating arrangement, all the desks touch each other facing the front of the room in a semicircle shape. The teacher can easily see each student and the students can see the teacher. The teacher can use this arrangement for direct instruction or student collaboration. In this arrangement, all the students can see each other; they can have discussions amongst themselves in pairs. Also, because the students all have a clear view of the instruction area, instruction from the teacher can be conducted easily. The teacher can have full control over the students. In semi-circle formation, student interaction can be improved as students ask more questions than when sitting in other arrangements (Marx, Fuhrer, & Hartig, 1999).

The disadvantage of the semicircle seating arrangement is that the teacher might have a hard time meeting with the students individually because the seats are very close to each other. The semicircle also takes up the entire classroom, so there isn't much room for activities outside the activity area. Because students are sitting next to each other, the students can work easily together without much movement around the class, making collaborative learning possible. The teacher can take a passive role and listen to the students and let them run the class. The teacher should walk around the room and monitor student work.

No Seats

In an ESL/EFL teaching situation where conversation and class interaction is emphasized, a teacher may wish to have an even more engaging arrangement for interaction. A no-seats arrangement would be ideal for role-play activities or activities emphasizing interaction. If this is the goal of the instruction, it may be best to not use seats at all. In this arrangement, interactions become much more life-like and enable the students to use the language in the context of an actual situation. This arrangement cannot be done for the entire lesson but is well suited for a portion of the lesson. In this arrangement it is very easy to move students quickly amongst various groups, and swap partners for role-playing.

Randomized or Shuffled Seats

In cooperation with the arrangement of the class, randomized or shuffled seating can enhance the seating chart and offers benefits and drawbacks for the teacher and student in many ways. By shuffling the classroom seating arrangement, the class is refreshed. With randomized seating, the teacher chooses a seating arrangement and shuffles the seating arrangement so that students are given the opportunity to work with different students each class and are seated in different locations in the classroom. There are going to be expected issues that the students are going to have when changing from one seating arrangement to another. For example, students must check their new seat location before each class and students must get acquainted with a new group member for each class. Some students will have gotten accustomed to their seat and the people around them and may be hesitant to change to a new seat.

METHODOLOGY

To gain student opinion of a randomized seating chart, students were given a survey to express their impressions. The survey on randomized seating was given to two hundred and fifty first- and second-year students from the Science and Engineering Department at Ritsumeikan University in Japan. The students were surveyed anonymously, in class, on their opinion of the randomized seating charts which were used in the students' classes, every class for fifteen weeks. The following is a list of survey questions, results, and a sample of popular opinions that students wrote for each question of the survey that was given in class. The survey participants were given the survey in class with the following questions and were encouraged to contribute additional comments to each response.

1) Do you like changing seats every class?
2) Does changing seats help you work with other people?
3) Does changing seats help you work with different people who have different views than your own?
4) Do you prefer working with the same group members every week?
5) If you change seats, how often do you want to change seats?
6) Would you prefer big groups (6-10 students), small groups (3-4 students), or pair work (2)?
7) Why do you think changing seats is good or bad?

SURVEY QUESTION RESULTS

TABLE 1. Do you like changing seats every class?

Yes	No	No Opinion
63%	18%	19%

Common reasons given by students who responded "Yes"
- Communicate with others
- Talk with many people
- Hear various ideas
- Keeps the class fresh, more fun
- Make new friends
- Makes the class friendlier

Common reasons given by students who responded "No"
- Stress
- Not a long enough time to make friends
- It is difficult to change seats and a bother

TABLE 2. Does changing seats help you work with other people?

Yes	No	No Opinion
87%	2%	11%

Common reasons given by students who responded "Yes"
- Communication skill
- Get different ideas and opinions
- We can learn from each other
- It makes class fun
- I can make friends

Common reasons given by students who responded "No"
- I want to improve my own English

TABLE 3. Does changing seats help you work with different people who have different views than your own?

Yes	No	No Opinion
87%	2%	11%

Common reasons given by students who responded "Yes"
- Communication skill
- Communicate with different people
- Hear others' ideas and opinions
- Communicating with many people is needed in society

Common reasons given by students who responded "No"
- I can't give my opinion to new members

TABLE 4. Do you prefer working with the same group members every week?

Yes	No	No Opinion
21%	72%	8%

Common reasons given by students who responded "Yes"
- I can't communicate with others
- Makes the class interesting
- I want to make friends
- I can get other students opinions

Common reasons given by students who responded "No"
- I can get familiar with group members
- It is easier to talk to the same people

TABLE 5. If you change seats, how often do you want to change seats?

Every Class	Every 2 Weeks	Every 4 Weeks	Every 5 Weeks	No Opinion
32%	28%	15%	21%	4%

TABLE 6. Would you prefer big groups (6-10 students), small groups (3-4 students), or pair work (2)?

Small Groups	Big Groups	Pair Work
68%	12%	20%

QUESTION 7. Why do you think changing seats is good or bad?
- Communicate with many people
- Make new friends

SURVEY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the survey show that students had an overall favorable opinion of randomized seats. Many students felt that randomized seating helped them communicate in small groups. Students also expressed that randomized seating helped them communicate with a greater variety of people. Many students expressed that randomized seats liven up the class by giving the class a new atmosphere.

Some students also expressed that they would prefer to have permanent seating throughout the semester. These students expressed that they were unable to feel comfortable with a new group every week. Some students also felt that it was a bother to have to check the seating chart before class and change seats every class.

The classes in the Science and Engineering Department at Ritsumeikan University are largely collaborative, which is an excellent opportunity for randomized seating. Students overall were hesitant at first, but most soon enjoyed working with other students. Changing the class layout and shuffling the student's seats kept the class fresh. As new student groups are formed each class, students have the opportunity to take on new roles, to have a fresh start each class. Each group usually had a dominant student who emerged and lead the group in the discussion. When groups are shuffled from class to class, students have the opportunity to take on new roles and interact with students with different strengths and weaknesses. The classroom can be very successful where students are able to explore different learning roles through group interactions.

CONCLUSION

There are many options available to the teacher when planning the classroom layout. In deciding the seating arrangement, the teacher needs to consider not only the organization of the room or the aim of the activity, but also the make-up and nature of the students and the teacher's own involvement in the activity. The end goal for a teacher, when considering the physical environment of the room, is to provide an environment where teaching and learning can occur as efficiently and effectively as possible. Seating charts and randomized seating can be a valuable tool in the classroom and can be beneficial for both students and teachers.

Randomized seating and various seating arrangements all have different functions, and they are best used for different classroom purposes. No single seating arrangement should be considered as the classroom's primary arrangement, but rather as a tool from a toolbox that can be used from time to time. The important thing is to understand that the arrangement of students in the classroom can be a highly useful tool in making lessons more effective.

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Conversation / Pronunciation

Teaching English to Kindergarten Students in a Korean Kindergarten

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Teaching English to kindergarten students in Korea presents various methodological challenges, all of which can seem daunting to the new teacher, whether a local teacher or a native speaker. How does a teacher create and execute a syllabus for four-year-old children? How does she control a class of 15 to 25 four-year-olds? In this article, I will argue that the second issue, control, grows out of the first, a creative syllabus.

Teaching English to kindergarten students in Korea can seem a daunting challenge for the native speaking teacher or the local teacher. The first step in being successful is in creating a syllabus, while the second step is in teaching it.[1]

THE SYLLABUS

Oxford University Press has afforded, in their *American Get Ready 1* and *2* (Hopkins, 1990) and *Let's Chant, Let's Sing 1* and *2* (Graham, 2004), a very creative and practical way for a teacher, who is teaching English to kindergarten students (TEKS) to construct and teach a kindergarten EFL syllabus in a Korean kindergarten. In approaching the difficulties inherent in teaching kindergarten EFL, the TEKS teacher can take the initiative to create and teach a holistic syllabus from the classic TEKS song books, *American Get Ready 1* and *2*, and *Let's Chant, Let's Sing 1* and *2*. (I have coined the acronym TEKS because, to my knowledge, there is no specific designation for the pedagogical methodologies required for teaching English as a foreign language to kindergarten students.)

Creating such a syllabus has many benefits and almost no demerits.

- It is an important learning opportunity for the TEKS teacher.
- It provides extra time and focus for the TEKS teacher to create an atmosphere of playfulness and theatrics to engage the students.
- The song and chants in *American Get Ready* (*AGR*) and *Let's Chant, Let's Sing* (*LCLS*) complement each other and offer grammar structures that progress from the simple to the more complex, so the TEKS teacher does not need to worry about how to teach English grammar in incremental stages.

When such a system is adopted, the TEKS teacher learns very valuable pedagogical skills. Also, dividing the semester syllabus into weekly and daily lesson plans is a simple task.

America Get Ready, Let's Sing Let's Chant, and Syllabus Design Parameters

In general, the songs and chants in *AGR 1* and *2*, and *LCLS 1* and *2* have been written and designed in a grammatically progressive order; the songs and chants begin with simple grammatical structures that progressively become more complex. In constructing the semester syllabus, the TEKS teacher will need to identify the main grammar structure contained in each song. For example, in the first week of the first semester, the first song in *AGR 1* can be Step 1, "The Hello Song." It goes as follows:

Hello, Hello, Hello, Hello,
Hello, Hello, Hello, Hello, Hello
I am Jack, I am Sue

The main grammar structure is "I am Jack, I am Sue." It has been my experience that the songs act as a kind of 'grammar map' that, once internalized, will allow the student to recall the structure to awareness and be able to use it in conversation by telling someone, "I am Tom" or "I am Mary."

The TEKS teacher's syllabus-building job is simplified by following *AGR* and *LCLS*, as the progressive nature of the grammar usage in these books is very logical. To decide the sequence of grammar development, the teacher simply follows the chapters of these books, as each chapter tends to offer either a review of previous grammatical structures or introduce a new grammatical structure. The TEKS teacher then constructs her weekly and daily lesson plans from this semester syllabus.

A week's lesson plan, Monday through Friday, thirty to forty minutes per class period, might look like this:

AMERICAN GET READY BOOK 1 (AGR 1)
LET'S CHANT, LET'S SING BOOK 1 (LCLS 1)

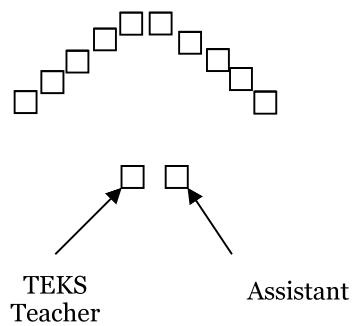
Monday-Friday: April 1-5

Goals	Main Lesson	Conversation Targets	Supportive Lesson	Conversation Targets
Do you like to + listen to the ____? What's this? It's a _____.	*AGR* 1, Step 9 Listen to the numbers	Q. Do you like to listen to the numbers? A. Yes, I like to listen to the numbers. a. bird b. cat c. giraffe d. tiger e. motorcycle f. truck	*LCLS* 1, p. 2 What's this? It's a book.	What's this? It's a _____. a. book b. bird c. giraffe d. tiger e. motorcycle f. truck

FIGURE 1: A sample one-week lesson plan for AGR and LCLS

ENACTMENT OF THE LESSON PLAN

First, a song or chant must be introduced and functionally memorized, as opposed to fully memorized, as this allows us to do exercises with the grammar map. As the students work with the song in a functionally memorized way, they come to fully memorize it. For this, the TEKS teacher utilizes the abilities of her assistant teacher, who is usually the class homeroom teacher. In this way, the TEKS teacher gradually trains the assistant teacher how to teach with this methodology a critically important development. For this, we need to have the class sitting in a half circle, either on chairs or on the floor in half-lotus position with hands together, with the TEKS teacher and assistant teacher standing or sitting next to each other and facing the class. The white board would be behind the teachers:



Take, for an example, the teaching of the song 'Listen to the Numbers,' from *AGR 1*, Step 9. First, the TEKS teacher models the singing or acting out of the song with the assistant teacher while also using body movements:

1, 2, 3 clap, clap, clap (3x), listen to the numbers
4, 5, 6 tap, tap, tap (3x) listen to the numbers
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, clap, clap, clap, tap, tap, tap
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, listen to the numbers

In starting the song, "1, 2, 3 clap, clap, clap, listen to the numbers," the TEKS teacher, while sitting on the floor, face to face with the assistant teacher, shows one, then two, then three fingers, and then claps her hands three times. The assistant teacher then copies these words and movements. This is done three times and concludes with the refrain, "Listen to the numbers." As the refrain is spoken, the TEKS teacher also rhythmically moves her head from side to side while alternatively cupping her ears from one to the other while singing this phrase; the assistant teacher then mimics this. This leads to the second verse: "4, 5, 6 tap, tap, tap, listen to the numbers." Then to the third verse: "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, clap, clap, clap, tap, tap, tap, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, listen to the numbers." Throughout all of the verses, it is important that both teachers project joyful smiles, bright eyes, and a playful, carefree manner.

Once this is done, the teachers, while sitting on the floor or children's chairs with the students, guide them to begin articulating the lyrics and body movements. The TEKS teacher will find that the students are able to pronounce many of the lyrics and follow the body movements without too much trouble. Thus, whenever the TEKS teacher introduces new material or reviews old material, she first models it with her assistant teacher. It is okay if the assistant teacher does not have advanced English abilities: it is very helpful for the students to see their homeroom teacher learn while using her English ability without being shy or afraid.

At this point the meaning of the lyrics is not addressed, as doing so would be too much information for the students to absorb at one time. After the song has been sung once or twice, with the body movements, a game can be played to de-stress the students, who have been required to sit and pay attention without much release of their energy. For this and practically all other activities, the TEKS teacher and assistant teacher work together. However student discipline is often taken care of by the assistant teacher. As most classes are thirty to forty minutes long, this is usually all that can be done in a class period. From the next lesson, the song can be sung and/or chanted several times in different ways in order to facilitate memorization. Singing or chanting can be supplemented with various games and activities. Once this has been done, the TEKS teacher, with the support of the assistant teacher, begins explaining the meaning of "listen to the numbers," which involves translating the phrase in a specific way.

Translation

Once the children are familiar with the song, but do not yet consciously know its meaning, we translate the sentence and questions that use the target structure. This translation is always kept to a very narrow focus, not allowing the students to rely on Korean. Moreover, although the structure is translated, it is only a briefly enacted method. It goes as follows:

- "Teacher Amy, how do you say 'Listen to the numbers' in Korean?"
- "Teacher Michael, I say, '_____' in Korean."
- "Oh, you say '_____' in Korean?"
- "Yes, I say '_____' in Korean."
- "Oh, very good!"

Now depending on the students' age and the amount of English that they have already acquired, we then teach them to answer the question: "Boys and girls, how do you say 'listen to the numbers' in Korean?" Then the TEKS teacher and the assistant teacher give the answer bit by bit:

Assistant teacher:	I say, "____" . . .
Students:	I say, "____" . . .
Assistant teacher:	. . . in Korean.
Students:	. . . in Korean.
Assistant teacher:	I say, "____" in Korean.
Students:	I say, "____" in Korean.

After some time, perhaps the next lesson, we can give the opposite translation structure:

"Teacher Michael, how do you say, '___' in English?"
"Teacher Amy, I say, 'Listen to the numbers' in English."

After this, the assistant teacher explains the details and the logic of this translation procedure in Korean, though keeping the English parts of the dialogue in the explanation. The goal is that the students will gradually learn how and why to ask this question. Teachers, as we can see, slowly work for functional memorization, and then full memorization, of this translation method.

Question & Answer Sessions: The Main Teaching Methodology

The first task in question-and-answer sessions is to transform the main grammar structure of the song or chant into a question and so also an answer. In the case of the song, "Listen to the Numbers," we turn the main structure, "listen to the numbers," into the question, "Do you like to listen to the numbers?' The answer will always be in the affirmative until the students have mastered it: "Yes, I like to listen to the numbers." This question-and-answer structure is first modeled with the assistant teacher: "Teacher Amy, do you like to listen to the numbers?" / "Teacher Michael, yes, I like to listen to the numbers."

The teachers go back and forth this way and once the students have been adequately exposed to this structure, the TEKS teacher and the assistant teacher briefly engage in the translation exercise: "Teacher Amy, how do you say, 'Do you like to listen to the numbers' in Korean?'" / "Teacher Michael, I say, '____' in Korean." This answer then elicits various theatrical exclamations from the TEKS teacher, who may repeat the question and the assistant teacher answers it. Of course, the TEKS teacher needs to continuously monitor the students' facial expressions and body language to see when a break is needed and a game should be played. Then, once the game is over, the students will remake the half circle while the TEKS teacher picks up where she left off, preparing to engage the students in the previously modeled question-and-answer session.

In the next step, the TEKS teacher divides the class into two groups and leads one group to ask the question and the other to answer it, then vice versa. The TEKS teach could likewise then ask the question to the whole class and then guide them to answer it, and vice versa. In this exercise, the TEKS teacher may introduce a basic pronunciation drill, giving a clear and slowly articulated pronunciation of each word in both the question and the answer. It is probably not necessary to have the class repeat at this stage, instead allowing the learning to occur at the non-conscious level. After this exercise, the teachers can play a game to de-stress the students.

After this, the TEKS teacher starts a one-to-one question-and-answer session with the first student in the half circle, asking her, "Do you like to listen to the numbers?" The teacher then guides the student to answer the question by giving the answer part by part:

Teacher: Yes, I like to . . .
Student: Yes, I like to . . .

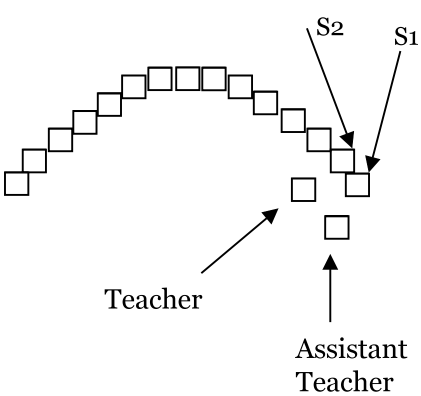
Teacher: . . . listen to the numbers.
Student: . . . listen to the numbers.

As previously mentioned, when the teacher says, "listen to the numbers," she needs to model how to rhythmically move her head from side to side while simultaneously cupping her ears from one to the other: this is mind-body wise. Once the student gives the full answer, the teacher gives positive feedback by clapping her hands, smiling and saying "Yea! very good!." From this point, she will guide the first student to ask the second student the same question with the same hand and head movements, and guide the second student to answer the first student in the same manner. This goes on until the teacher reaches the other end of the half circle and all students have asked and answered the questions.

Pronunciation

The teachers then go from student to student while sitting on student chairs, not standing and looking down at the students,[2] while the students practice the dialogue. Throughout this one-to-one session, the secondary focus is listening for mispronounced words. Needless to say, when the TEKS teacher coaches the students in their question-and-answer session, she is also modeling the correct pronunciation. It is important to mention here that while the TEKS teacher moves from student to student doing the Q & A, we can see that the students are fairly successful in mimicking the teacher's pronunciation. Regardless, when each student finishes a sentence, the teacher must give positive feedback as sincerely and emphatically as possible. In general, the sounds that are mispronounced are those that are especially difficult for people who speak Korean as their first language. The teacher needs to watch for these pronunciation errors and correct them *after* the student has said the full sentence, as the student should not be interrupted in her attempt to make a sentence. Corrections are done minimally so as not to fatigue the student. Also, the corrections are not lengthy; they are brief but frequent, consistent, as it takes time to learn the correct pronunciation.

This is a diagram of how the question-and-answer activity should proceed:



- S1 questions S2, and S2 answers.
- Next S2 questions S3, and S3 answers.
- This progresses to the end of the half circle.

The Role of the Assistant Teacher in One-to-One Question & Answer

It is valuable and worthwhile for the TEKS teacher to train her assistant teacher in these methodologies. Not least important is the one-to-one question-and-answer methodology, as it very effectively facilitates student acquisition of the target questions and answers. Once the assistant teacher is able to identify and correct grammar and pronunciation mistakes, she can then begin to facilitate the students in the one-to-one question-and-answer exercise at the opposite end of the half circle. She will go from student to student until she has reached the other end of the half circle. Of course, the TEKS teacher will facilitate the half circle from the opposite end and go all the way to the other end of the half circle, facilitating the students that the assistant teacher just finished.

Variations on the Theme

Once this part of the lesson has been completed, we then apply the grammatical structure to different nouns: "Do you like to listen to the lions/birds/cars?" / "Yes, I like to listen to the lions/birds/cars," etc. When these structures are functionally memorized, we can then increase the complexity of the dialogue. For example, if the question and answer, "What's this?" / "It's a _____," has been taught, we can then teach the class, "What's this?" / "It's a bird" / "Oh, do you like to listen to the birds?" / "Yes, I like to listen to the birds."

THEORETICAL OBSERVATIONS

My teaching methodology extends in two directions. The first is the "main lesson," the class work of learning the songs and chants in *ACR 1* and *2*, and *LCLS 1* and *2*, and practicing the question-and-answer sessions that are derived from them. Secondly, there is "Classroom English," which is supplemental but of great consequence in acquiring spoken English. Thus, I see both as being of equal importance; they are two wings of a bird, both sides require each other. The Classroom English is the mortar that holds the process of the question-and-answer sessions together, from the simple to the complex: multiple sentences that are related in sequence and logic. Without the learning of the question-and-answer structures, the Classroom English would also not hold together.

Current 1: Understanding the Linguistic Efficacy of the Main Lesson

Grammar Maps and Grammar Models

The various songs and chants that are selected for each new week's lesson plan are termed *grammar maps*. For example, the song, *AGR 1*: Step 18, "Little Girl, Little Boy":

Sue is a little girl, look at Sue.
Jack is a little boy, look at Jack.
Little girl, little girl, look at Sue.
Little boy, little boy, look at Jack.

This is termed a *grammar map* because when it is sung or recalled from memory at a later point in time, it is living example of how the grammar is used. Based on this grammar map, we can construct a question-and-answer structure, such as “Is Sue a little girl?” / “Yes, Sue is a little girl.” I have termed this a *grammar model*. This is so because it shows, based on a conscious or non-conscious recollection, the way in which a question and answer can be structured or modeled out of the grammar map. The grammar map reminds the student of the correct wording of the question and answer.

A Further Grammar Map and Model

A grammar map from *American Get Ready 1*, Step 9: “1, 2, 3 clap, clap, clap. Listen to the numbers.”

The grammar model: “Do you like to listen to the numbers?” The TEKS teacher then needs to use other techniques to support the students’ retention of “Do you like to.” These include the use of the rhythmic, dramatic recitation of this question element.

Current 2: Understanding the Linguistic Efficacy of Classroom English Teaching to the Non-conscious Mind

Classroom English is not connected or related to the main lesson, Moreover, it is used repetitively in every class, usually without explicit, verbal translation. In general, the words in the Classroom English sentences are not changed until the TEKS teacher is sure that the students know the sentence. An example is the new question, “Do you want to sing a song?” with the new answer “Yes, I want to sing a song.” This question and answer will normally be used prior to singing any song.

Through such repetitive use, the meaning of these sentences is intuited at the non-conscious, nonverbal level because predictable actions happen just after the sentence is spoken. It also helps that the sentences are repeated at different times in every class period, with the same actions occurring just after the sentence is spoken. For example, before the predictable activity, the new spoken question, “Do you want to sing a song?” is asked and answered, “Yes, I want to sing a song.” The predictable activity that occurs is that the notes of the octave are sung: “do, re, mi, so, fa, la, ti, do,” and then the song begins. Another example is “Okay, now sit on the floor,” with the teacher sitting on the floor while motioning the students to do the same. Once sitting on the floor, the teacher then says, “Cross your legs in a half lotus,” and then the teacher does it slowly and step-by-step: “Put one leg like this. . . . Now bring the other leg over and drop it. . . . Boom!” The teacher then says, “Back straight,” while straightening up her back, and then says, “Hands together,” while interlocking her fingers. The students then non-consciously associate the words with the actions and thereby grasp the meaning of the sentence and intuitively begin to integrate these linguistic structures.

Considering this, Classroom English sentences should be translated as little as possible, as their natural integration will ensure a permanent recording in the memory. However, at some point they should be translated to Korean, but only after the TEKS teacher feels that the students have grasped the meanings. It is never a waste of time to practice Classroom English question-and-answer sessions. Classroom English also shows how the grammar is used and models how, and in which situation, it can be used; it is also a grammar map.

The role of the non-conscious mind in second/foreign language acquisition has been strongly argued in Krashen's acquisition hypothesis (Schutz, 2007). What follows is based on Krashen's arguments. Second or foreign language acquisition for kindergarten children using Classroom English, as laid out in this article, is a natural non-conscious process that takes place when comprehensible input is available. Such input is supplied when new sentences are combined with body movements on a repetitive, predictable basis. Thus, kindergarten students benefit from systematic exposure to linguistic structures that are slightly beyond their current level of English competence, as this is the nature of Classroom English. To summarize, we can say that in Classroom English, comprehension of unknown sentences is achieved at the non-conscious level with the help of contextual bodily movements, or other emotive information, coming from the teacher. Therefore, in TEKS, we only translate new Classroom English from English to Korean in very special situations. However, translation should never be given immediately after the introduction of a new sentence. If translation is given at all, it should be narrow and systematic.

CONCLUSION

This article is a brief overview of how to construct and execute a creative syllabus based on the songs and chants in *American Get Ready 1* and *2* and *Let's Chant, Let's Sing 1* and *2*, and how this integrates with Classroom English. In addition, emphasis was placed on the need and benefit of training the local assistant teacher in this methodology.

Footnotes

[1] To simplify the flow of this article, I am only using the female pronouns she and her.
[2] This is done in order to maintain eye-to-eye contact with the students.

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Relationship Between Comprehensibility and Foreign Accent in EFL Speech

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The purpose of the present study is to examine the relationship between comprehensibility and foreign accent in the EFL sentences produced by Taiwanese college students. The speech samples used in the study were elicited from 60 college students in Taiwan. Six native speakers of American English who have taught EFL in Taiwan for one to three years were used as raters. Materials used were reading sentences including a list of five specially prepared sentences and a reading passage consisting of a 111-word English story. The main instruments were two types of rating scales adopted in the rating task of participants' speech samples, including the foreign accent scale and the comprehensibility scale. Results show that there was a significant positive correlation between the perceived accent ratings and the comprehensibility ratings. The study can contribute to the understanding of foreign accent and offer some implications for EFL speech instruction.

Of all aspects of human language, pronunciation seems to be the most immediately observable. A listener usually does not need much time or linguistic sophistication to detect a foreign accent. Accentedness refers to the extent to which a listener judges second language (L2) speech to differ from native speakers' norm (Derwing, Munro, & Wiebe, 1998). As indicated by Nishi (2002), many L2 learners wish to communicate as native speakers do. However, due to their foreign accent, L2 learners may be misunderstood. According to Thompson (1991), foreign accent is the pronunciation pattern that is perceived as being different from those of native speakers of the language. Those who learn a second language are often perceived to speak it with a foreign accent.

Studies of L2 phonology have identified a number of factors that influence the acquisition of a new sound system. These factors include exposure, gender, motivation, mimic ability, musical ability, modality preference, L2 speaking proficiency, extroversion, careful versus spontaneous speech, and raters. With regard to most of the factors, no consistent findings and conclusions have been proposed. For example, there has been the widely held belief that a foreign accent in adults' speech stems from a loss of flexibility of the speech organs since a critical period exists for human speech learning. However, Flege (1987) asserted that there is no conclusive empirical basis to support the critical period hypothesis because it does not take into account a variety of confounding factors. Derwing, Munro, and Wiebe (1998) further indicated that research has repeatedly shown that even heavily accented speech can be highly comprehensible. Thus, the present study aims to look into the complex links between comprehensibility and foreign accent in the EFL speech produced by Taiwanese college students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For the past decades, several studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between comprehensibility and foreign accent. For example, Munro and Derwing (1995) conducted a study to examine the interrelationships among accentedness, perceived comprehensibility, and intelligibility in the speech of L2 learners. It was suggested that although strength of foreign accent was correlated with perceived comprehensibility and intelligibility, a strong foreign accent did not necessarily reduce the comprehensibility or intelligibility of L2 speech. In addition, Munro (1995) found that untrained listeners could accurately rate native and accented speech on the basis of nonsegmental information alone, whether they are presented with material of known or of unknown content. Magen (1998) explored the contribution of various phonetic and phonological factors to the perception of global foreign accent by examining native American English speakers' accentedness judgments of the speech of two native Spanish speakers. Moreover, Munro and Derwing (2001) provided support for the hypothesis that listeners' judgments of comprehensibility and accentedness exhibit a relationship to the speakers' speaking rate. They found that accentedness and comprehensibility ratings are likely to suffer at both especially fast and especially slow rates. Derwing and Rossiter (2002) also made recommendations of teaching ESL pronunciation and communicative strategies with reference to comprehensibility and foreign accent.

Besides, there have been a number of studies conducted to examine various factors related to foreign accent with the aim of establishing the predictors of pronunciation accuracy. Purcell and Suter (1980) studied the correlations between English pronunciation accuracy scores and a battery of 20 variables for 61 nonnative speakers of English. A study by Flege (1988) used interval scaling to assess degree of perceived foreign accent in English sentences spoken by native and non-native talkers. Moreover, Thompson's study (1991) investigated factors associated with the acquisition of L2 pronunciation and methodological problems associated with the study of foreign accents. In a study by Flege and Fletcher (1992), four experiments were carried out to examine listener- and talker-related factors that may influence the degree of perceived foreign accent. Besides, Piske, MacKay, and Flege (2001) studied the factors related to the foreign accent of Italian-English bilinguals.

In addition to the research exploring the general factors on foreign accent, some studies have been conducted to explore the effects of specific variables on pronunciation accuracy. In regard to the age of language acquisition, Tahta, Wood, and Loewenthal (1981a) examined predictors of transfer of accent from L1 to L2 in a group of people whose acquisition of English as an L2 had begun at ages ranging from 6 to 15+. Tahta, Wood, and Loewenthal (1981b) conducted another study looking at the abilities of 5-to-15-year-old monolingual English schoolchildren to replicate foreign pronunciation and intonation. In terms of language attitude, Brennan and Brennan (1981) examined the relationship between degree of accent in the English of Mexican American speakers as assessed by naive raters and the evaluative judgments of the raters toward accented speakers. In regard to text type, Munro and Derwing (1994) investigated whether the utterances of L2 learners are likely to be perceived as more foreign accented when the speech material has been read or produced extemporaneously. Furthermore, Gass and Varonis (1984) investigated the effect of various types of familiarity on native speaker comprehension of nonnative speaker speech.

Based on the literature reviewed above, very few studies have been found to be directly related to the current study. Although Flege (1988) rated the foreign accent of adult native Taiwanese learners of English and Munro (1995) studied native speakers of Mandarin, the subjects were EFL learners residing in the USA and in Canada, rather than in Taiwan. Recently, there have been a number of research papers on English pronunciation of Taiwanese students, such as Chiou (1998) on English vowels, Cheng (2002) on intonation, Sun (2003) on rhythm, Chen (2003) on English liquids, and Chang (2003) on voiceless interdental fricatives. However, these studies did not look into the perceived foreign accent of Taiwanese EFL learners and most of their subjects were high school students. Thus, it is the aim of the present study to fill the gap in the research literature by examining the foreign accent of EFL college students.

METHOD

Participants

There were two groups of participants in the current study, including 60 speakers and six raters. The speech samples used in the present study were elicited from 60 college students in Taiwan. There were approximately an equal number of male and female participants. They came from two universities in northern and southern Taiwan. Among the 60 participants, 30 were English majors, and the other half were non-English majors.

For the past 40 years, most of the English textbooks in Taiwan have adopted the phonetic symbols from *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English* by John Samuel Kenyon and Thomas Albert Knott, who were known as "K.K." Therefore, in the current research, the rating criteria of foreign accent in EFL speech is mainly based on the pronunciation standards of American English. A group of six raters were included in the present study. They were native speakers of American English who have taught EFL in Taiwan for one to three years.

Materials

In the present study, the speakers were instructed to perform two tasks as follows. One was "sentence reading," which included a list of five specially prepared sentences (Appendix A). They were seeded with English sounds known to be difficult for Chinese students to pronounce and were adopted from previous research which also aimed to examine the degree of foreign accent in English sentences (Flege, 1988; Thompson, 1991; Flege & Fletcher, 1992). These sentences could best be described as phonetic mine fields designed to elicit the most heavily monitored speech sample. The other was "passage reading," which consisted of a 111-word English story, *The North Wind* (Appendix B). The text was a modified version of one appearing in *The Principles of the International Phonetic Association* and has been used by Gass and Varonis (1984) in their study investigating the comprehensibility of nonnative speech.

Instruments

Two types of rating scales were adopted for the rating task of participants' speech samples. One was the foreign accent scale with a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (no foreign accent) to 9 (very strong foreign accent), which was employed in the study by Munro and Derwing (1995). Southwood and Flege (1999) indicated that it is appropriate to use an equal-appearing interval (EAI) scale with a 9-point (or 11-point) scale to rate L2 speech samples for degrees of foreign accent. The other was the comprehensibility scale with a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (extremely easy to understand) to 9 (extremely difficult or impossible to understand), which was adopted in the study by Derwing and Munro (1997). As defined by Derwing, Munro, and Wiebe (1998), comprehensibility is the listener's judgment of the difficulty level to understand an L2 speech production.

The other instrument was a questionnaire of foreign accent perceptions. The questionnaire, which included 12 items, was mainly designed based on the instrument adopted in the studies of Anderson-Hsieh and Koehler (1988) and Bresnahan, Ohashi, Nebashi, Liu, and Shearman (2002). It was employed to examine the English native speakers' perceptions of foreign people and their accented English.

Procedure

Before the experiment began, participants were told in detail what they were required to do in the study. Individual recording sessions were held in a language lab with high-fidelity audio equipment. Participants were instructed to read at their normal rate and volume, and were allowed to look over the printed materials before reading them into the microphone. Only one attempt at recording was made. Then an individual interview was held with eight of the participants to probe their perceptions of foreign accent in EFL speech.

The rating task was conducted separately by six native-speaking raters. Global foreign accent was calculated for both EFL speech materials. Raters were asked to determine the degree of foreign accent by marking a 9-point scale of foreign accent. In addition, raters assessed their comprehensibility of the speech sample by marking a 9-point scale of comprehensibility. They were instructed to listen only to pronunciation and to ignore any other mistakes or deviations. A practice session with five speech samples randomly selected from the participants' recordings followed. Then, raters listened to the speech samples in random order in four separate sessions. Inter-rater reliability was calculated by deriving an average of all correlation coefficients. According to Thompson (1991), an interval of a week or more will make it more likely that raters will forget individual voices and the accent rating they had previously given them. As a result, the whole scoring task included four sessions and took about one month, with one session each week. A typical session lasted about 60 minutes with a rest break halfway through it. After the whole rating task was completed, the six raters answered a questionnaire of 12 items designed to assess native English speakers' attitudes toward foreign accent.

Data Analysis

In the study, data analysis involved three stages. First, Pearson's product-moment correlation was conducted between the mean scores of the accent rating and the scores of the comprehensibility rating. Next, raters' responses to the questionnaire on accent perception were analyzed, and then participants' answers to the interview were transcribed.

RESULTS

Scores on Rating Scales of Accent and Comprehensibility

In the current study, the six raters were asked to determine the degree of foreign accent and also to assess their comprehensibility of the speech sample by marking on a 9-point scale. The inter-rater reliability of the two ratings was assessed by computing intraclass correlations. The correlations were very high for both the accent ratings ($r = 0.87$, $p < 0.01$) and the comprehensibility ratings ($r = 0.86$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that the six raters tended to agree with one another on both. The scores of all raters were averaged to give each participant mean accent and comprehensibility scores. Table 1 shows the results of the accent ratings. The six raters' mean scores ranged from 4.80 to 7.57. The average rating of the 60 participants' foreign accent was 6.13. As for the results of comprehensibility ratings (Table 2), the mean ratings ranged from 4.23 to 7.67. The average comprehensibility rating was 6.05.

TABLE 1. Descriptive Statistics of Accent Ratings

Rater	N	Mean	SD	Max	Min
1	60	7.57	1.50	9	3
2	60	6.73	1.53	9	3
3	60	6.85	1.13	9	4
4	60	4.98	2.10	9	2
5	60	5.85	2.00	9	2
6	60	4.80	1.97	8	2
Average	60	6.13	1.26	8.17	3.17

Note. Accent: 1 (no foreign accent) - 9 (very strong foreign accent)

TABLE 2. Descriptive Statistics of Comprehensibility Ratings

Rater	N	Mean	SD	Max	Min
1	60	7.67	1.41	9	3
2	60	7.37	1.54	9	3
3	60	6.60	1.40	9	2
4	60	4.50	2.50	9	1
5	60	5.95	2.20	9	2
6	60	4.23	1.29	9	2
Average	60	6.05	1.45	8.17	2.50

Note. Comprehensibility: 1 (extremely easy to understand) - 9 (extremely difficult to understand)

Among the six raters, half of them (Nos. 3, 4, 6) had lower comprehensibility ratings than accent ratings, and the other half (Nos. 1, 2, 5) had lower accent ratings (Table 3). On the whole, the six raters had lower comprehensibility ratings ($M = 6.05$) than accent ratings ($M = 6.13$). Furthermore, Pearson's product-moment correlation was conducted to assess the relationship between the two sets of ratings obtained from the raters. For all six raters there was a significant positive correlation between the perceived comprehensibility ratings and the accent ratings.

TABLE 3. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Between Accent Ratings and Comprehensibility Ratings

Rater	Accent	Comprehensibility	R
1	7.57	7.67	0.836**
2	6.73	7.37	0.863**
3	6.85	6.60	0.878**
4	4.98	4.50	0.642**
5	5.85	5.95	0.913**
6	4.80	4.23	0.808**
Average	6.13	6.05	0.931**

Note. **$p<0.001$

Responses to Foreign Accent Perceptions

The results of responses to foreign accent perceptions included two parts. One was the interview held with eight participants to probe their perceptions of foreign accent in EFL speech. The other was the questionnaire of foreign accent perceptions employed to examine the English native speakers' perceptions of foreign people and their accented English. Results show that the six raters tended to agree that the Taiwanese people they have met have been pleasant (see Table 4). Moreover, they disagreed that they had difficulty understanding people who speak English with a foreign accent.

TABLE 4. Information of Foreign Accent Perception

Statement	N	Mean	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	6	3.17	0	2	1	3	0
2	6	3.83	0	0	2	3	1
3	6	3.33	1	0	3	0	2
4	6	2.17	1	4	0	1	0
5	6	3.00	1	1	2	1	1

Note. SD (1): strongly disagree; D (2): disagree; U (3): undecided; A (4): agree; SA (5): strongly agree

Statement 1: The Taiwanese students I have met are competent and bright.
Statement 2: The Taiwanese people I have met have been pleasant.
Statement 3: In Taiwan, I enjoy hearing people speak their native languages.
Statement 4: I have little difficulty understanding people who speak English with a foreign accent
Statement 5: I enjoy hearing people speak English with a foreign accent.

For one of the interview questions, “When you are speaking English, would you pay attention to whether your speech is accented or not?” five of the interviewees mentioned that they would pay attention to it. One of them would correct his/her accent by imitating foreigners’ speech, and the others would record their own speech to correct it. The remaining three said that they would pay no attention to it. For another interview question we used, “Do you think that it will affect other people’s comprehension of your message if your speech is accented?” among the eight participants, six of them believed that it affected others’ comprehension of his/her message. One of them mentioned that others are affected by either his/her pronunciation or other factors, and one of them believed that correct pronunciation improves the chances of comprehension. The remaining two participants thought that it does not affect others’ comprehension.

DISCUSSION

The current study proposed that the results would show a significant positive correlation between the perceived comprehensibility ratings and the accent ratings. Results of the questionnaire of foreign accent perceptions also reveal that the raters disagreed that they had little difficulty understanding people who speak English with a foreign accent. Moreover, based on the interview responses, most EFL college students believed that it would affect other people’s comprehension of their messages if their speech were accented. As a result, it seems that the English native speakers in the present study may have difficulty comprehending accented English. This finding is somewhat different from that of Munro and Derwing (1995) which suggested that although strength of foreign accent was correlated with perceived comprehensibility, a strong foreign accent did not necessarily reduce the comprehensibility of L2 speech. Because there were only six raters in the current study, future research may recruit more raters of English native speakers to clarify the complex link between comprehensibility and foreign accent.

As indicated by Thompson (1991), there are a number of reasons for studying foreign accent. At the theoretical level, an understanding of accent retention contributes to the continuing debate over the viability of the Critical Period Hypothesis as a physiological threshold beyond which mastery of a new phonological system is usually impossible. At the practical level, an improved understanding of factors influencing the acquisition of L2 phonology can guide curricular and pedagogical decisions on teaching pronunciation and speech. Magen (1998) also advocated that it is important to analyze the contributions of various factors to the perception of global foreign accent for an understanding of the L2 acquisition process and possibly for L2 teaching as well.

CONCLUSION

In summary, considerable research literature has been found to explore the foreign accent in L2 speech. However, very few studies have been conducted to investigate the foreign accent of EFL students in Taiwan. Thus, by providing empirical descriptions on the foreign accents of Taiwanese EFL learners, the present study is expected to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between foreign accent and comprehensibility. Furthermore, McLendon (1999) suggested that L2 teachers with a knowledge of foreign accent can help students become aware of how their speech is perceived by native speakers and thus better prepare them for productive experiences interacting with native speakers. The current study can offer some implications for EFL speech instruction by looking into the perception of foreign accent. It is hoped that Taiwanese college students can make efforts to achieve the goal of speaking more comprehensible English with less accent.

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APPENDIX A

List of Sentences

I can read this for you.
The good shoe fits Sue.
The red book was good.
The singer sang a nice song.
They lived through thick and thin together.

APPENDIX B

Text of *The North Wind* Story

The north wind and the sun were arguing one day about which of them was stronger, when a traveler came along wearing a heavy jacket. They agreed that the one who could make the traveler take his coat off would be considered stronger than the other one. Then the north wind blew as hard as he could, but the harder he blew the tighter the traveler wrapped his jacket around him and at last the north wind gave up trying. Then the sun began to shine and right away the traveler took his jacket off, and so the north wind had to admit that the sun was stronger than he was.

Course / Materials Design

Scaffolding in a Productive Skill Lesson

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Although there are two distinct definitions for the term scaffolding in use in English language teaching, most teachers-in-training are only familiar with one definition. This lack of awareness often causes confusion. In this paper, the definitions for scaffolding will be clarified by showing that the definitions vary depending on which domain of teacher action is being discussed. The paper will also provide examples of how the second definition of scaffolding relates to planning lessons. The paper will then demonstrate that there are two kinds of scaffolding at the lesson planning stage. The first kind of scaffolding relates to the lesson or target language, and the second kind of scaffolding relates to the task or activity. The paper will conclude by providing an example of when and where to use scaffolding in a model lesson plan.

The impetus for this paper comes from my experience as a teacher-trainer. The goal of this paper is to help teacher-trainers, teachers, and teachers-in-training to develop knowledge and awareness about how the term *scaffolding* is defined and used in our field. I will begin by briefly describing my teacher-training context. I will then examine the definition of scaffolding as put forward by course books in second language acquisition and course books for English language teaching methodology. Next, I will describe the prior learning my teachers-in-training need in order to do the awareness-building task that will provide the learners with a concrete example that serves as a bridge; a bridge that will connect their old understanding of scaffolding to a more refined understanding of scaffolding, I will then use this task to introduce how the definition of scaffolding differs depending on the domain of teacher action, and I will conclude the paper by discussing a lesson plan that exhibits the two kinds of scaffolding that get planned into lessons.

CURRENT TEACHER-TRAINING CONTEXT

I currently work as a teacher-trainer in a TESOL certificate program at a university in Seoul, South Korea. I teach several different courses in this program, but the two courses that I teach most frequently are Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Materials Design and Development (MD). I like to tell my students that MD is really applied SLA. The focus of MD is lesson planning and the process used to select, adapt, and create materials. Consequently, whenever I have my learners making lesson plans and selecting, adapting, or creating materials, I remind them that they are taking what they know about teaching and learning, and constructing a testable hypothesis. I want them to realize that every lesson plan and the materials that they use should reflect their beliefs about teaching and learning, and that they can test these beliefs in their classrooms by reflecting upon what helped and hindered student learning during their lessons.

Our program uses a sixteen-week semester which is followed by a two-week practicum. The sixteen week semester focuses on building learner knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitude (KASA; Freeman, 1989). There are five core courses in the program: Testing, Culture and Pragmatics, Second Language Acquisition, Materials Design and Development, and Speaking Listening Reading Writing Methodologies. The purpose of the two-week practicum is to give participants the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned, that is, participants take what they have learned and put it into practice in a classroom while being observed by their peers and a teacher-trainer. Participants are guided through the experiential learning cycle by their teacher-trainer with the hope that they will leave the program as reflective educational practitioners.

SCAFFOLDING

The Common Definition

The common definition of *scaffolding* that is presented in this paper comes from three sources; two of the sources represent textbooks we use in our program, and the third definition comes from a fairly recent paper published in *TESOL Quarterly*. The first of the three definitions is from *How Languages are Learned* by Lightbown and Spada (2006):

> Scaffolding refers to a process in which a more knowledgeable (or expert) speaker helps a less knowledgeable (or novice) learner by providing assistance . . . for example, drawing the novice's attention to the task, and simplifying or limiting the task demands (p. 131)

> Scaffolding: The language that an interlocutor uses to support the communicative success of another speaker. It may include the provision of missing vocabulary or the expansion of the speaker's incomplete sentence. (p. 204)

The second definition comes from *Learning Teaching* by Scrivener (2005):

> Scaffolding refers to the way a competent language speaker helps a less competent one to communicate by both encouraging and providing possible elements of the conversation. It is the way a primary school teacher might help a young child to communicate or how a chat-show host might draw out a guest. The listener offers support . . . to help the speaker create his own spoken structure. (p. 162)

The third definition of *scaffolding* comes from Ko, Schallert, and Walters' (2003) *TESOL Quarterly* article.

> Scaffolding . . . was introduced by Bruner (in Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) in

> describing what Vygotsky . . . meant when explaining how learning occurs as a result of the interpsychological support coming from the more knowledgeable other that leads learners to internalize what is being learned. Such scaffolding is said to be helpful only when it is appropriate to the learner's current and potential level of development (the learner's zone of proximal development [ZPD]). (p. 304)

The salient features of these three definitions are that scaffolding:

- happens in the domain of "teaching-in-action;" that is, during the craft of teaching
- happens during interaction (usually speaking)
- happens naturally
- happens spontaneously
- goes from more knowledgeable to less knowledgeable
- allows for the less knowledgeable speaker to construct and make meaning

These are the features of scaffolding that are currently recognized by SLA theorists from the interactionist, constructivist, and socio-culturist perspectives. What is important to realize about this conception of scaffolding is that it does not refer to materials or lesson planning but to interaction that happens between individuals either the teacher or other learners. Therefore, scaffolding is something that happens during interaction; it happens naturally because it is a part of the learning process, that is, during interaction between a learner and a more knowledgeable other. Consequently scaffolding is not seen as a planned activity but a necessary feature of the craft of teaching and the process of learning. It can thus be inferred that scaffolding happens spontaneously and naturally when it is appropriate to a learner's current and potential level of development or in Vygotskian terms, when the task or activity is within the learner's Zone of Proximal Development.

Vygotsky (1978) defined the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as:

> The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers . . . [Thus] the zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation. (p. 86)

Based on Vygotsky's definition of ZPD, Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) identified six types of scaffolding functions that can be used by the more knowledgeable other to help the less knowledgeable learner complete a task. These six functions (as cited in Ko, Schallert, & Walters, 2003) are:

1. recruiting the learner's interest
2. simplifying the task
3. highlighting its relevant features
4. maintaining motivation
5. controlling the learner's frustration
6. modeling

What is important to note about the features that Wood, Bruner, and Ross identified is that many of these functions can take place in either domain of teacher action: both the domain of "teaching-in-action" and the domain of "teaching-in-planning." These ideas will be developed later in this paper.

What My Learners Already Know in Relation to Task

Although the definitions discussed above are compatible and straightforward, the confusion comes when the term *scaffolding* is used in terms of materials development and lesson planning. It is confusing because lesson planning and material development happen in the domain of "teaching-in-planning" rather than the domain of "teaching-in-action." To clarify this distinction, I usually have my participants engage in a classroom task in which they plan how to teach someone to ride a bicycle.

Before I describe this task, however, it is important to review what the participants know in terms of lesson planning and the productive skills framework. This task usually comes in week 6 of the semester, when the participants are comfortable with two important ideas related to the concept of scaffolding, especially as it applies to the domain of "teaching-in-planning."

First, my participants are comfortable with the idea of student learning objectives (SLOs). They have read Fadil's (1985) article for homework and have participated in a workshop in which they have written their own learning objectives. The workshop helps them to implement the acronym SMART (Drucker, 1954), that is, the idea that any objective should be:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-Bound

They are also comfortable with the idea that in order for an objective to be measurable, they need to be able to observe some specific student behavior (Mager, 1975) and one of the criteria for acceptable performance is that the behavior being observed should be situated in a context of use that requires authentic, meaningful interaction and/or use.

In the SLO workshop, participants become confident in using the following formula: *By the end of the lesson, SWBAT (students will be able to) __(1)__ by __(2)__*. In this formula the first blank represents the target skill and/or the target language that the students are to learn and the second blank represents the authentic and meaningful task that will allow students to interact and demonstrate their ability to use the target skill and/or target language. For example, if I wanted my participants to write a student learning objective for *be going to* using this formula, I would expect an objective like this:

> By the end of the lesson, SWBAT ask and answer questions about future plans using *be going to* in the dialog "A: What are you going to do _____? B: I'm going to ___________." by making a weekend plan with their partners.

Second, the participants are familiar with an adapted version of the productive skills framework as put forward by Kurzweil and Scholl (2007). They describe something which they call the ECRIF Triangle (Figure 1). ECRIF stands for "Encounter, Clarify, Remember, Internalize, and Fluent Use." In my adapted version, I simplify the triangle into just three stages: Encounter, Internalize, and Fluency. The reason for this simplification is that clarification of the target language can come either prior to use or after use, depending on the target language/skill, age, and level of the learners.

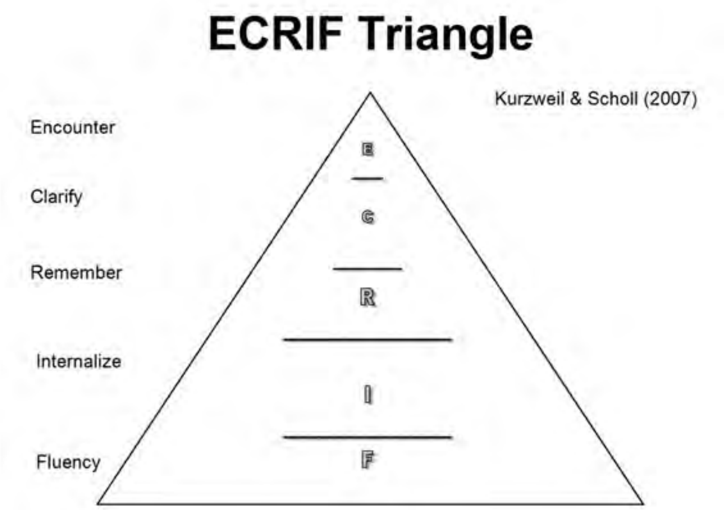

FIGURE 1. ECRIF Triangle

The EIF Triangle is similar to the ECRIF Triangle:

Encounter Stage: At this stage, schema is activated and the context of use is established by providing students with authentic exposure to the target language or skill in a context that is familiar and relevant; students meet the target language through an activity, such as a puzzle or game; student prior knowledge is assessed through brainstorming, mind mapping, or elicitation; student interest is generated by providing materials and activities that have impact; and rapport with students is built through providing students with a familiar and relevant context. In the encounter stage, students are not expected to produce the target language; the stage focuses on comprehensible input.

Internalization Stage: At this stage, the students internalize and remember the target language through activities that progress from controlled forms to less controlled forms of practice. Thus, controlled group work that uses repetition drills to focus on pronunciation will give way to pair work that will focus on accuracy, which will lead to either group or pair work that focuses on meaning and use. Whenever possible, an inductive approach is utilized to facilitate student discovery and learner self-investment.

Fluency Stage: At this stage, students demonstrate their ability to use the target language and/or skill on their own through some kind of communicative task. The task is constructed so that it provides a clear context of use for the target language or skill that the teacher is trying to assess. Successful completion of the activity or task should allow the teacher to determine whether or not they have attained their student learning objective.

USING TASKS TO REVIEW, INTRODUCE, AND CLARIFY UNDERSTANDING

The task that I will introduce in this section is designed to both review what my students already know in terms of the productive skill framework and student learning objectives as well as to help clarify the idea of scaffolding as it relates to the domain of "teaching-in-planning." The task involves having my students work in small groups to discuss how they would teach someone to ride a bicycle. As they are discussing the steps, I pass out poster paper and markers to each group. Next, I ask them to draw a large triangle on the poster paper (see Figure 2). They start by writing the first step at the top of the triangle and continue until the last step is at the bottom.

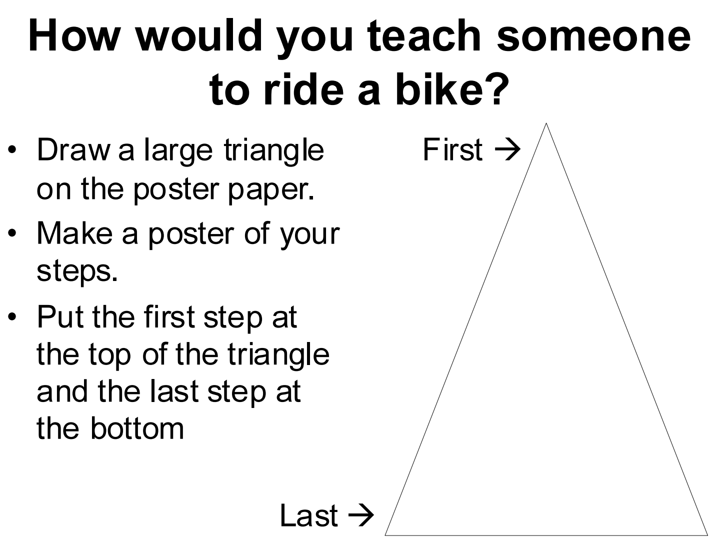

FIGURE 2. Establishing the task

I generally circle through the class occasionally asking guiding questions to help groups who may have missed or forgotten a step. When the groups have completed their poster, they should label their steps E-I-F (encounter-internalize-fluency). Again, I circle the room asking guiding questions or answering student questions. After the groups have labeled the steps, I ask them: "Did you give your learner a clear, meaningful, and authentic task in which they can demonstrate their mastery of what they have learned? Please include a clear, meaningful, and authentic task in your last step, and then write a student learning objective for your lesson. Use the formula:

By the end of the lesson, SWBAT (students will be able to) ______ by ______.

A useful activity is to get the participants to look at the posters of their peers and to give feedback and comments on what their peers have done. There are two ways to do this: First each group can be given different-colored repositionable notes on which to write their comments and questions, or each group can be given a different colored marker to write their comments directly on the posters. For this activity I use the latter method and have them write the comment or missing steps directly on the posters.

When each group gets back to their original poster, I give them a chance to look over the comments or added steps, I then elicit the steps required to teach someone to ride a bicycle and write them on the board. I also have my participants tell me how to label the steps according to E-I-F, and then I let them share their student learning objectives. The last step is to compare what they have made with the model I have made (Figure 3).

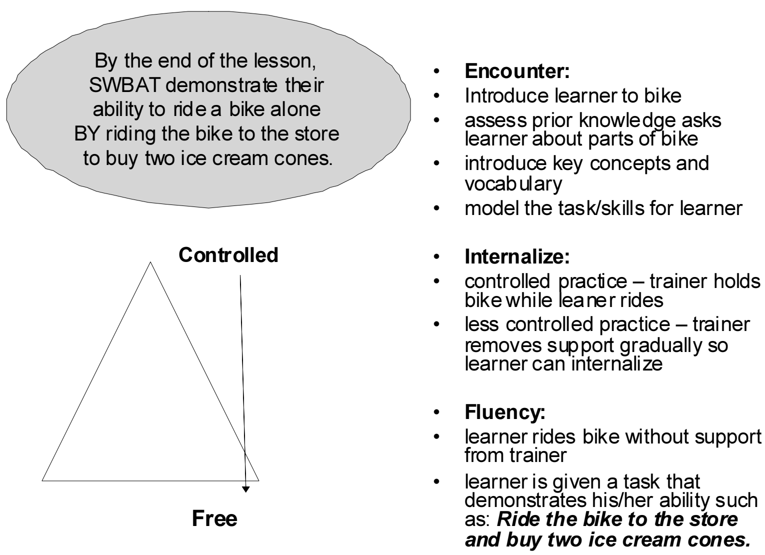

FIGURE 3. Model poster

I debrief the task by looking at the student learning object: By the end of the lesson, SWBAT demonstrate their ability to ride a bike alone by riding the bike to the store to buy two ice cream cones. I usually ask questions like: What was my assessment task? What criteria did I set for successful performance? Did the assessment task provide a clear opportunity for outcome feedback? How did it provide the learner with a clear opportunity for outcome feedback? Can you think of any other performance criteria or assessment tasks that you could use to assess student learning in this lesson?

The salient features that these questions are designed to emphasize are that (1) assessment tasks ought to be real and relevant, such as riding the bicycle to the store to buy something, (2) the criteria for success should be clear and measurable, such as alone or without assistance, and (3) the assessment activity should not only be an assessment tool that the teacher uses, but should also be a learning tool to help the students assess their own success and build the confidence they need to be real bicycle riders or speakers of English.

Next, I go over the steps in the lesson by stages. I usually ask: In the encounter stage, are the learners expected to produce the skill that they will learn? The purpose of this question is to highlight that in the encounter stage, the learner is not expected to produce anything new; it focuses on input and assessment. It is preparing the learner for what will come next.

We then look at the last two stages**.** I usually ask: What does the teacher do as he or she moves through these stages of the lesson? This question is designed to get the participants to notice that in the internalization stage we provide the students with a lot of scaffolding at the beginning of the stage, but as they move through the internalization stage, the scaffolding is gradually withdrawn, so that by the time we get to the fluency stage, our learners are able to ride a bicycle without support from the trainer, and they complete a task that demonstrates their ability such as *ride the bike to the store and buy two ice cream cones*.

A Refined Definition of *Scaffolding*

In the domain of "teaching-in-planning," scaffolding is still something that helps the learner internalize the target language, but rather than something that happens spontaneously and naturally during interaction, it is something that is planned into the lesson activities and materials. The scaffolding is provided so that students can interact by themselves without the teacher directly providing verbal support. Scaffolding which is planned into the lesson assures that the challenge level of our lesson remains in the learner's Zone of Proximal Development. Therefore, the definition of *scaffolding* as it relates to the domain of "teaching-in-planning" is: *Scaffolding denotes the language support that the teacher or material developer builds into the productive skill lesson to facilitate the successful learning and use of the target language and/or target skill.*

Based on the six functions of scaffolding that Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) identified (above), three can easily be planned into lessons or materials: recruiting the learner's interest, highlighting relevant features, and modeling.

Another thing to be aware of in terms of scaffolding is that there are two kinds of scaffolding at work within any productive skill lessons. There is lesson plan or target language/target skill scaffolding, and there is also activity/task scaffolding. Lesson plan or target language/target skill scaffolding is the scaffolding which needs to be taken away as the students move through the lesson. Activity/task scaffolding, on the other hand, is the support that you give to students so that they can successfully complete a specific activity or task.

The target skill support that was provided during the bicycle lesson is the help given as the learner rides the bicycle. As we move through the lesson, this support decreases until there is none. At the end of the lesson, the teacher gives the learner an assessment activity: *Ride the bike to the store and buy two ice cream cones*. The teacher also gives the learner some money and says, "Good luck," but the learner looks at the teacher and says, "I don't know where the store is"? The teacher draws a map, and after the learner looks at the map, she goes off on her bicycle. A few minutes later she returns with the ice cream cones.

Based on the performance criteria established in the student learning objective, the trainer cannot hold the bicycle as the learner rides to the store because that would be providing target skill or lesson support; however, the trainer can provide a map, because the map does not help the learner ride the bicycle (riding the bike, not following a map, is the skill which is being assessed in the assessment activity). Thus, holding the bicycle is lesson plan or target skill scaffolding, and the map is activity or task scaffolding.

Scaffolding in Planning: An Authentic Example

Finally, I would like to look at the features of scaffolding in the domain of "teaching-in-planning" in a language learning scenario. Let us imagine that the teacher has planned a lesson to teach prepositions of location to a class of young learners. For her less controlled practice activity, the teacher has put the students into groups of four; each group has four stuffed animals, a hat, and a box. One student takes a stuffed animal and places it somewhere, and then asks the question: *Where is the monkey?* One of the other students answers: *The monkey is in the box.*

The teacher is pleased. The students are having fun, and they are doing the task well. About halfway through the activity, as the students continue to practice, the teacher removes the visual support for the prepositions from the whiteboard (see Figure 4).

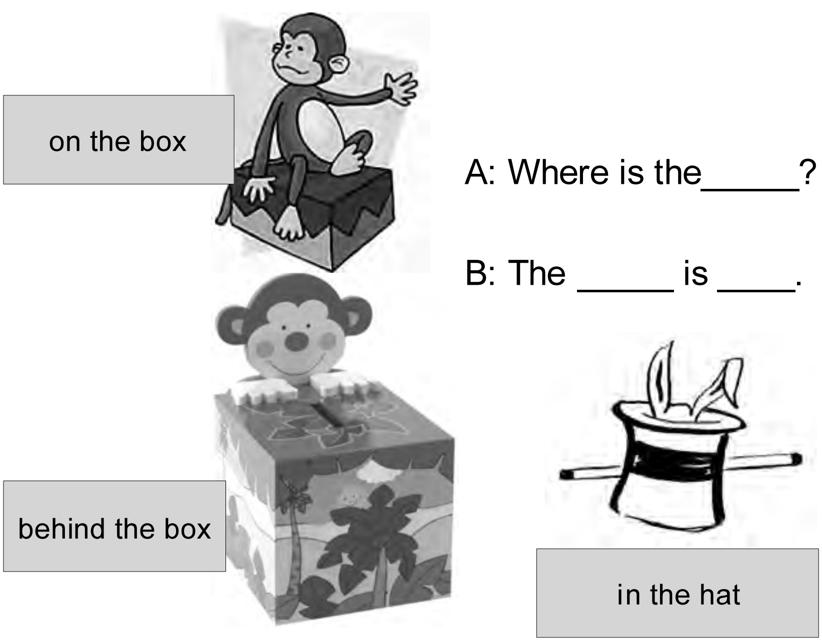

FIGURE 4. Lesson plan or target language scaffolding for practice activity

The teacher notices that interest in this activity is starting to wane so she claps her hands to get student attention so that she can set up the final learning task. The final learning task is an information gap. Student A has a picture of a room and student B has a picture of the same room but with slightly different objects (see Figure 5). Students will ask and answer questions about where different object are in the room. (For example, A: "Where is the person?" B: "The person is behind the desk.") When selecting the materials for the task, the teacher was a bit concerned. She was not sure if her students knew all the vocabulary in the information gap.

Knowing that she shouldn't provide any scaffolding if she wants to be able to assess her student learning, her solution was to adapt the activity. She provides the students with the vocabulary support they need but removes the target language or dialog support (Figure 5). The vocabulary support allows students to complete the task successfully in a way that does not interfere with the assessment of the learning outcome. The activity also provides students with outcome feedback because after they complete the task they can compare their pictures with each other and see how successful they were at communicating the information.

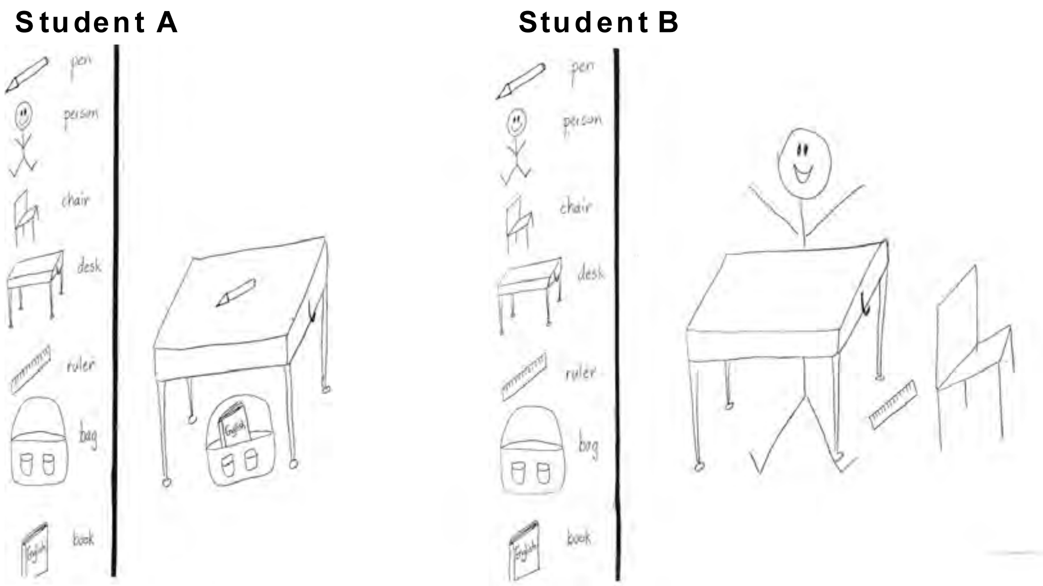

FIGURE 5. Information gap assessment activity with task scaffolding

CONCLUSION

In the domain of "teaching-in-planning," scaffolding can be defined as the language support that the teacher or material developer builds into the lesson to facilitate the successful learning and use of the target language and/or target skill. Because of the student learning objective, we can see that there are two kinds of scaffolding that we plan into our lessons: target language/target skill scaffolding and activity/task scaffolding. The first is support that enables students to achieve the SLO, whereas the latter is support that allows students to complete an activity or task successfully. Secondly, the major difference between the scaffolding that happens in the domain of "teaching-in-action" and the domain of "teaching-in-planning" is that the scaffolding in the former happens naturally and spontaneously, and it arises out of the learning process; however, scaffolding in the domain of "teaching-in-planning" assumes that content needs to be broken down into manageable parts so that the learners do not find what is being taught to be outside their zone of proximal development. By making the distinction between these two kinds of scaffolding, teachers can plan better lessons and more effectively assess the learning that is happening in their classes.

THE AUTHOR

James Brawn *has over fifteen years of teaching experience: nearly tens years of experience with curriculum and materials development, and over five years of teacher-training experience. He started as a high school English teacher in Texas, but a sense of adventure pushed him to distant shores. He currently works in the Graduate School of Education at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul, South Korea. He is also a licensed teacher-trainer with the School for International Training in Vermont, USA. His research interests include teacher-training, materials development and co-teaching. Email: jbrawn67@gmail.com*

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Creating Materials in a CALL Classroom: Students' Turn

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University CALL classes often involve students using prepackaged test preparation-oriented software created for a general audience. The artificial nature of the content and materials may not appeal to the students. This paper will demonstrate how university students can develop their own listening materials in a CALL classroom. Students are offered the opportunity to select and develop their listening and vocabulary-building materials for their peers based on short partial recordings from commercial TV channels. In the process of creating their own listening materials, a variety of listening, reading, and writing skills are exercised by the students. The learners also expand their vocabulary as a result of incidental learning. In addition, the motivational effect of allowing students to choose and develop their materials, and copyright issues are discussed. The paper will conclude by showing the results of how students have evaluated this component of the CALL course.

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) classes form an integral part of the English language curriculum in some Japanese universities. However, some of these CALL classes involve students using prepackaged test preparation-oriented software created for language learners in general. The artificial nature of the content and materials may not appeal to the students. As a result, they frequently rush through the activities without engaging the materials on a deeper level. Observation of the author's students suggests that some of them are merely mechanically clicking their way through the TOEIC preparation exercises without really becoming involved with the materials. An example of this is where students are completing a multiple-choice vocabulary exercise with feedback pop-ups if they have selected the wrong answers. In many instances, students do not pay attention to the help options. Instead, they just click on another answer in order to complete the exercise as quickly as possible. These repeated observations indicate that there is a need to modify and supplement the existing CALL activities and content to make them more appealing to the learners. Dornyei (2001) stressed the need to make our curriculum relevant to our students. Otherwise, they would not be "motivated to learn unless they regard the material that they are taught as worth learning" (p. 126). In other words, current CALL activities lack sufficient impact to engage the students' attention and motivation to allow them to process the target language on a deeper level (Tomlinson, 1998).

TEACHING CONTEXT

The College of Information Science and Engineering (CISE) has an integrated English curriculum. First-year students take three English courses each semester. One of the three courses in the first semester is a CALL English course. The first-semester CALL course focuses on developing presentation skills in English and prepares the students to take the TOEIC test later in the year. Classes are streamed according to ability, and their TOEIC scores are mainly in the 350 to 450 range. In 2009, first-year class sizes averaged around 28 to 30 students. The students are considered to be intermediate level by the English Department in the CISE.

In 2008, the department switched from an English-for-Specific-Purposes (ESP) focus to an English-for-Academic-Purposes (EAP) focus in its English courses. However, the overall departmental and institutional goal is to raise the students' TOEIC scores.

DVD PROJECT

Implementation

Given the dual needs to raise the students' TOEIC score and have more motivating learning materials with greater impact, it was decided to introduce authentic audio-visual materials and cooperative teamwork to the CALL course. The author has had considerable success in his academic reading skills classes with peer-teaching (Wong & Higgins, 2009). Based on the positive feedback in those classes, it was decided to give the learners in the CALL class an opportunity to design listening materials for their peers. According to Edgar's Cone of Learning (as cited in Jacobs, Hurley, & Unite, 2008), if learner involvement in the learning process includes both receiving information and active participation such as giving a talk or demonstrating to others, the learning will be deeper and recall will be better. Other researchers have also pointed out that the preparation and rehearsal needed to teach something to others help to make the content more salient (Johnson, Johnson, & Holec, as cited in McCafferty, 2006). By producing listening worksheets for their peers, the learners, now also material-makers, are participating in a more active learning process, which provides them with the environment to more deeply process the content of the materials. This project formed a six-week component of the first-semester CALL course and was dubbed the "DVD Project." The students selected a partial recording of a documentary, usually four to five minutes in length, and created a listening worksheet which consisted of a vocabulary-matching exercise, a multiple-choice listening exercise, a circle-the-right-answer exercise, and short answers to two questions. (See Appendix A for an example of a listening worksheet created by one group of the students.)

The schedule for this project over the six-week period in the first semester CALL class is shown in the Table 1 below.

TABLE 1. DVD Project Schedule

Week	In-class Activity	Homework
1	- Preview the DVD and select a documentary - Take notes - Cloze Exercise 1 - Start making listening worksheet (Template A)	Finish Template A
2	- Submit Template A - Cloze Exercise 2 - Finish making listening worksheet (Template B)	Finish Template B
3	- Correct mistakes in Template A - Submit Template B	
4	- Correct mistakes in Template B - Find a partner and make a combined group listening worksheet - Submit group listening worksheet	
5	- Correct mistakes in the group listening worksheet - Complete another group's listening worksheet - Peer evaluate the other group's listening worksheet	
6	- Complete a second group's listening worksheet - Peer evaluate the second group's listening worksheet - Start Self-Reflection	Finish Self-Reflection

In Week 1 of the project, all the students were issued a DVD with partial recordings of six different documentaries. These DVDs were distributed and collected each week, so they were only used in the classroom. The documentaries on the DVDs included topics from traveling (Palenque and Macchu Pichu), fine arts (Van Gogh's *The Sunflowers*), technology (computer games, surveillance), and history (Egypt's first pyramid). The students were given ten minutes to quickly preview and select the title that they wanted to watch and make a listening worksheet for. Initially, the students were asked to watch the documentary and take notes. They were instructed that they could listen to it as many times as they wanted using Windows Media Player. They were given twenty minutes to complete this first task. This first step was to offer the students an additional opportunity to practice their note-taking skills, which is one of the academic listening skills being developed in a concurrent listening and speaking course. After they completed this first task, the students were given the opportunity to compare notes with classmates who had watched the same program. When they finished comparing their notes, the students were given the first cloze listening worksheet (Appendix B) based on the first half of the recording. Students were given another twenty minutes to complete the cloze exercise and again time to compare answers with a classmate. A transcript was then distributed to each student to let them individually check their own answers. These scaffolding steps were included because as language teachers, we "have to plan interventions that develop their skill at making the input comprehensible" (Rost 2007, p. 104). Moreover, by including these initial steps in Week 1 (and also in Week 2), the opportunities for the learners to process linguistic input are significantly increased by repeated viewings. Transcripts of the documentary were made available immediately after the two cloze listening exercises because they were considered to be highly valuable in assisting in listening comprehension (Liou, 2000). Hsu (as cited in Grgurovic & Hegelheimer, 2007) also found that students consider the transcript as the most effective tool in helping them to understand spoken input when listening to a story delivered on a computer. Having the transcript enables the learner to look up unknown words and phrases, which they may be unable to find if they don't know their spelling from just hearing the acoustic form. Moreover, the repeated exposure to the text in both oral and written form can assist in expanding the learners' vocabulary. Vocabulary acquisition research has accumulated evidence to show that repetition or repeated exposure to the same word in context affects incidental vocabulary learning (Horst, Cobb, & Meara, 1998; Waring & Takaki, 2003; Webb, 2007; Brown, Waring, & Donkaewbua, 2008). The final step in the first week of this project was for the students to make the first half of their listening worksheet based on Template A, created using Microsoft Word. The teacher demonstrated what to do, and then the template was e-mailed to all the students. The students started making the worksheet in class and completed it as homework.

In the subsequent weeks, the students followed the schedule outlined in Table 1. Teacher feedback on their listening worksheets was given in Weeks 3 and 4. The students submitted both a hardcopy and a Word document in Weeks 2 and 3. The hardcopy was checked, graded, and returned. Using the feedback, the students went back to their listening worksheet and modified it in class.

In Week 5 of the project, individual students found a partner or in some cases, two partners, to make a combined listening worksheet for the group. This is based on the best elements of each student's worksheet. This introduced an element of teamwork and cooperative support. After completing this stage of the project, the students exchanged group worksheets with a classmate who had a group worksheet based on a different documentary. When the students had finished answering their classmate's worksheet, they completed a peer evaluation form. In the last ten minutes of the Week 5 class, the students worked with the person with whom they had exchanged worksheets. They then peer-checked each other's worksheets and exchanged peer evaluation forms. In Week 6, the students tried a different group's worksheet based on another documentary.

Week 1 and Week 5 lessons required the full 90 minutes of the class for the DVD project. In the other weeks, the DVD Project was combined with other activities in the CALL class.

Doing the DVD Project in a CALL classroom enables every student to use all the multimedia resources on hand to create some interesting learning materials for their peers. In a computer classroom, each student has greater access to help options which can assist them to comprehend the documentaries. Some students used online dictionaries to look up the meaning of new words while others accessed Japanese Wikipedia to get further background information on the topic featured in the documentary.

Authentic Materials and Copyright

The documentaries in English were recorded from commercial TV channels in Japan. They were reviewed and edited. Suitable short segments of around four to five minutes duration (about 10% of the program's length) were selected and recorded onto DVDs. Japanese copyright law permits a limited amount of reproduction of copyright materials if they are used in a school or a non-profit educational institution. In Article 35(1) of the Japanese Copyright Act 1970, it states “a person who teaches a lesson . . . in a school or other educational institutions . . . may, if and to the extent necessary for use in the course of the lesson, reproduce a work already made public . . .” The subsection goes on to state that it is permissible as long as the reproduction is not likely to “unreasonably prejudice the interests of the copyright holder . . .” By using only around 10% of a documentary in a university classroom, the reproduction conforms to the requirements of the Japanese Copyright Act.

Using authentic materials enables learners to get closer and interact with the real language and culture of the target language (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kilickyaka, 2004). Peacock (1997) also found that using authentic materials in class increases learner on-task behavior as well as significantly raising overall class motivation.

The transcripts were made by this author. It took between 60 to 90 minutes to produce each transcript, but subsequently, the teacher has a permanent record of them. Alternatively, the authentic materials can be selected from the Internet, where there are both an audio-visual component and transcript available, e.g., movie trailers and movie transcripts. The disadvantage of this is that both audio-visual materials and transcripts can suddenly become unavailable or deleted. Where copyright laws permit, recording, editing, and producing one’s own transcript is a more secure way to ensure the permanency of the materials required for this project.

Survey Results

At the conclusion of this project, the students were given the opportunity to evaluate the design of this project and the idea of making learning materials for their peers. The data was collected from a combination of a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire and a self-reflection worksheet. Twenty questions were asked in the questionnaire. Some of the questions focused on the mechanics of the project while other focused more on the motivational and learning aspects of the project. Incomplete questionnaires were not included. The results were analyzed by first calculating the means for each of the Likert-scale items as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Mean Scores of the 20 Five-Point Likert-Scale Questions in the Survey

Average score for each item based on a 5-point Likert scale (N=55).	
1. I could take enough notes to write four questions.	2.95
2. The cloze exercises were useful for improving my listening skills.	3.84
3. The cloze exercises were too short.	2.62
4. The cloze exercises were too difficult	3.05
5. The transcript helped me to understand the program.	3.98
6. Without the transcript, I could not make enough questions.	3.84
7. Template A was clear and helpful.	3.62
8. Template B was clear and helpful.	3.60
9. I like to be able to choose my own programs to watch in E3 (the CALL class).	4.04

10. Making my own questions helped me to learn the content of the DVD program and English more deeply.	3.64
11. Making multiple-choice questions was the most difficult.	2.75
12. Making the wh-questions was the most difficult.	3.38
13. Making circle-the-right-word questions was the most difficult.	2.40
14. Working with other students helped us to make better listening worksheets.	3.67
15. I want to do the DVD project again with different programs.	3.44
16. I like to be able to choose my own topics to study.	3.64
17. The DVD project increased my knowledge of the world and about other things.	3.85
18. I enjoy doing the DVD project.	3.87
19. I feel by doing the DVD project, I have increased my English vocabulary.	3.36
20. I feel by doing the DVD project, I have improved my listening ability in English.	3.98

Averaging the individual scores even over a relatively small sample size of 55 responses meant that some of the average scores tend towards a medium of 3 as a result of some of the diametrically opposite responses canceling each other out. In a 5-point Likert scale, this is the equivalent of being "a fence-sitter." It was decided to re-analyze the results for each item based on their actual responses of selecting one of the numbers on the scale. By separating out the undecided component, that is, a "3," in the responses, the results can show more clearly whether students agree or disagree with the items in the questionnaire. These percentage responses are shown in Table 3. The results of some the individual items, where a significant portion of students have either agreed or disagreed with the statement, will be discussed further.

TABLE 3. Percentage Response for the 20 Five-Point Likert-Scale Questions in the Survey

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	5.5	32.7	30.9	23.6	7.3
2	1.8	7.3	23.6	40.0	27.3
3	7.3	40.0	40.0	9.1	3.6
4	3.6	21.8	43.6	27.3	3.6
5	1.8	10.9	18.2	25.5	43.6
6	7.3	5.5	16.4	38.2	32.7
7	3.6	3.6	34.5	43.6	14.5
8	3.6	7.3	30.9	41.8	16.4
9	1.8	3.6	20.0	38.2	36.4
10	1.8	9.1	34.5	32.7	21.8
11	14.5	21.8	41.8	18.2	3.6
12	1.8	12.7	38.2	40.0	7.3
13	23.6	30.9	32.7	7.3	5.5
14	3.6	10.9	23.6	38.2	23.6
15	5.5	12.7	36.4	23.6	21.8
16	1.8	10.9	30.9	34.5	21.8
17	1.8	9.1	21.8	36.4	30.9
18	5.5	5.5	16.4	41.8	30.9
19	1.8	18.2	34.5	32.7	12.7
20	1.8	7.3	16.4	40.0	34.5

A very positive response to Items 2 and 20 clearly shows that the students value the extra listening practice. The majority of the students (74%) felt this activity helped them develop their listening ability in English. The learners found the transcript useful in assisting them to comprehend the content of the documentaries and make their questions on the listening materials. This is in line with the findings of Hsu (as cited in Grgurovic & Hegelheimer, 2007) and Liou (2000) mentioned earlier.

In Item 19, 45% of the learners felt that by doing the project, their vocabulary had increased. Webb (2007) found that just one encounter with a new word can lead to sizeable gains in the learner's receptive knowledge and that meeting a word ten times during reading can lead to sizeable vocabulary growth. While in this project, it is unlikely the students met an unknown word in context ten times, the repeated exposure provided by the combination of exercises and bimodal processing of the language, i.e., listen to the documentary and reading the transcript later, can help to reinforce some incidental vocabulary learning.

The motivational impact of the DVD Project can clearly be seen in the students' responses to Items 9 and 18. Over 70% enjoyed doing this component of the CALL course, and almost three-quarters of the students stated that they like having the ability to choose what they watch in the CALL class. Offering choice and appealing content are two of the ways mentioned by Tomlinson (1998) to raise the impact of the learning materials. Furthermore, the ability to select their own documentary has clearly raised the perceived enjoyment of the learning activity, which is one of the key components in determining students' motivation to learn (Chambers, 1999).

Discussion

The results of the survey have clearly indicated that the DVD Project obviously has a lot of positive learning and motivational benefits. However, further research and modification of the project is needed. Webb and Rodgers (2009) found that English learners need to know at least most of the most frequent 3,000 words before watching television may offer significant potential for incidental vocabulary learning. Whether the intermediate learners in this project have that vocabulary is something that needs to be investigated. If not, further pre-teaching of and practice activities for the first 3,000 most frequent words may be necessary before the students are ready to embark on this activity. Moreover, the transcripts of the documentaries could be examined in more detail to ascertain their vocabulary coverage and lexical density. The gains in incidental vocabulary learning as a result of doing this project could also be assessed by some pre- and post-activity measures.

The positive motivational aspect of this project could also be investigated in more detail. Is it the authenticity of the materials, the content of the programs, or the nature of the tasks that has contributed to raising the motivation to learn?

CONCLUSION

Allowing students to select their topic and create listening materials in class for their peers has both educational and motivational benefits. By completing all the tasks of the project, the learners have many opportunities to be exposed to new words in context and expand their vocabulary knowledge as a result of incidental learning. Moreover, the DVD project offers learners several modes to process the linguistic input and has a series of activities which allows the learners to utilize a range of listening, reading, and writing skills. There is certainly room for the DVD Project to be modified and refined as this is the first attempt at providing an opportunity for the author's students to create listening materials for their peers in a CALL environment.

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APPENDIX A

H. K. and R.M. Group Listening Worksheet

DVD Project Listening Exercise: The Sunflowers

1. Vocabulary Activity

Make the English words with the Japanese definitions. Write the alphabet letter next the word.

1. beeline	______	(a) 陽気な	8. banal	______	(h) 彫刻の
2. cheery	______	(b) 非対称	9. stylized	______	(i) 心酔
3. lingering	______	(c) 直面する	10. asymmetric	______	(j) 力ずくで
4. vase	______	(d) 直線	11. decay	______	(k) たるみ
5. sagging	______	(e) 平凡な	12. sculptural	______	(l) 様式化した
6. confronted	______	(f) 衰える	13. forcibly	______	(m) 花瓶
7. supernatural		(g) 長引く	14. infatuation		(n) 超自然的な

2. Listening: Multiple-Choice Questions

1. What is always stated as being in front of Van Gogh's picture?
   (A) There are a few people.
   (B) There is a crowd.
   (C) There is a crowd of young people.
   (D) There are many security guards.

2. Where is the National Gallery?
   (A) Paris
   (B) Vienna
   (C) London
   (D) Rome

3. How do we see Van Gogh's painting?
   (A) It looks like imitation of another person's painting.
   (B) It looks like spray paint.
   (C) It looks more sculptural than painting.
   (D) It looks more like engraving than paint.

4. What is not true about the supernatural glow?
   (A) shadowless
   (B) mysterious
   (C) absorbing and radiating light
   (D) unreality

3. Listening: Circle the Right Word

I think that *wall / painting / drawing / clip* is probably the most visited wall in the gallery. I think people make a beeline to see the Van Goghs, but particularly to see that picture. It's very bright and *cheer / cheery /cherry /cheerily* and it's the kind of things that you hang in a college dorm room to brighten the place up. There is always a (an) *crowded / crowd /crown / cloud* in front of the picture, always people are linger much longer it seems to me then they, er, spend in front of other pictures. It's a very emotional painting. It brings back memories of *spring / summer / autumn / winter* days. It's not like it's just a vase with all flowers coming out of it. Some of them are facing down like they're just *dying / disappointing / thinking / crying*.

How do Van Gogh's Sunflowers appear in his canvas?

____

What does The Sunflowers painting by Van Gogh look like?

____

APPENDIX B

The Private Life of a Masterpiece: The Sunflowers Cloze Worksheet 1

Christopher Riopelle: National Gallery, London
I think that _____ _____ ____________ ______ ________ _____________ wall in the gallery. I think people make a beeline to see the Van Goghs, but particularly ____ ______ _______ ____________.

Museum Visitor
It's ______ __________ and ___________. It's the kind of thing that you _________ _____a college dorm room to kind of _____________ the place up.

Christopher Riopelle: National Gallery, London
There is always __ __________ ____ ____________ ____ the picture, always people lingering much ______________ it seems to me then they ______ ______________ in front of other pictures.

Museum Visitors
It's a very ____________ _________________. It brings back memories of _____________ _______.

It's not like it's just a vase with _____ ___________ coming out of it. Some of them are facing down like they're just _____________.

The way that they are sagging makes you think that you __________ ____ ______ _________ _________ ____________ in the vase.

Christopher Riopelle: National Gallery, London
All of a sudden you are confronted with a picture that is _____________ ___________ aggressive than any _________ ___________ ____________ than we might have seen.

Narrator
______ __________ _____ _________ _____ The Sunflowers, the stranger the painting becomes. It appears to have an almost supernatural _________: shadowless yet ___________, both absorbing and radiating light. But how do these other worldly qualities emerge from a banal subject of a ________ ____ ___________? And the flowers themselves – in one way, they are ____________, stylized and __________, but they are also victims of the _____________ cycle of life. Each ___________ appears to be less than ___________, asymmetric and caught in its own particular ________ of decay yet the symmetry of the whole is ___________. Close up, it seems more sculptural than painted. The pigment is ____ ____________ in places that it's three-dimensional. Elsewhere, it's so thin you _____ _______ the __________ beneath. Yet we never think of the work as unfinished. Even the signature is ____________, precisely because it is unmissable, not hidden away in a corner, but such a ___________ ____________ of the painting that it might be emblazen on the pottery itself. Why would the artist want to____________ _______ ____________ so forcibly mid-canvas? Not that there is just one canvas. Such was the artist's infatuation with this subject that he came back to paint it __________ times.

Cross-cultural / Intercultural Communication

Combating the Hegemony of English with Democratic Praxis

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In this era, most social theorists confront the production and reproduction of power relations that operate through the production and reproduction of hegemonic culture, such as discourse and education. Macedo, Dendrinos, and Gounari (2003) talk about the hegemony of English, and how this hegemony is extended and maintained. Should we be participating in this project? The heyday of English may actually be fading. Furthermore, culture and language are somewhat resilient and resistant. The example of teaching English in Korea is given. If neo-liberal domination is not so monolithic, then English language education can be re-oriented and better planned and managed. Such would be the aspiration of teachers of conscience who pursue teaching approaches and methods in the highest interests of ethics, inclusion, and democracy. Macedo, Dendrinos, and Gounari propose exposing the neo-liberal discourse in daily institutional life and state policy, and reviewing the language of "freedom." Biesta (2006) criticizes humanism for assuming that all people are the same, a perspective that turns the stranger into a problem and that can be used to justify hegemony. He recommends that we rethink what it means to be a democratic person and proposes that teachers and students work together so as to find their own voices.

Most social theorists today are concerned with confronting the production and reproduction of power relations that operate through the production and reproduction of hegemonic culture by processes such as discourse and education. Philippson (1992) coined the term *linguistic imperialism*. Macedo, Dendrinos, and Gounari (2003) talk about the hegemony of English in the US and worldwide, and language education policies and practices in the US that maintain and extend this hegemony.

Should we be participating in this project? Is there anyway to resist the domination of English and still teach it abroad as a foreign language?

In examining these questions, I determine that there are mitigating factors impeding the domination of the English language. An anthropological approach reveals the strengths and resilience of local language and culture and the weaknesses of the imposed language and culture. This approach is especially effective if informed by political economy theory since the framework of this discussion considers the global economy and global education policy.

APPLYING A POLITICAL ECONOMY APPROACH TO CONTACT AND ACCULTURATION

Migration studies often discuss the terms assimilation and acculturation in examining what happens when peoples or communities come into contact. Gordon (2005) explores the evolving and diverging definitions of these technical terms in social science. He establishes that the general meanings still hold, however. Assimilation is the more general term of sociology, meaning absorption into another (a larger, foreign or more dominant) community or society, while acculturation is the more specific one of anthropology referring to cultural behavior, especially change, resulting from this kind of contact. Use of the latter term has retained some degree of unity, yet what assimilation specifically means has been muddled, according to Gordon.

I argue against the arriver-conqueror and conquered-receptor dichotomy, holding to the view that both (or all) parties involved are active agents and receptors of cultural knowledge. Furthermore, if this assertion about intersecting cultures is true, then the same would be true of languages that meet. Social scientific enquiry shows that the imposition of foreign languages locally does not occur as a one-way monolithic implantation of foreign culture.

Social theorists who are greatly concerned about domination ask how domination is achieved and how the subjects of domination understand their situation and respond, especially because domination often persists and resistance does not always bear success in overcoming domination. Social scientists, since Gramsci first discussed it, have come to understand that culture is an effective means of extending domination and, moreover, getting compliance. Social scientists have therefore been more and more interested in power relations and processes of communication, social identity transformation, community formation, and the like, that is to say: cultural phenomena.

From a political-economy (that is, generally Marxist) perspective, conquest must be understood as a process and the dynamics of the process brought to light. Political economic thought is aware of resistance to domination. Contemporary anthropology and sociology, guided by political economy theory, examine the structures and cultural factors involved in the process and the responses to domination globally. In this paper, I have chosen the definition of culture as defined by Roseberry (1989), which is that culture is an historical and material process.

We see occurring what Mintz (1977) called creolization. Just consider the notion of world Englishes: There are Filipino, Korean, Malaysian, Hong Kong and Indian Englishes, as there are Caribbean and African Englishes. Furthermore, cultures in the corresponding regions have adopted Anglo-cultural features and -products as they like and rejected others. Such cultures talk to each other, and Anglo-cultures succumb to linguistic and cultural mutation. All participating languages and cultures are permanently altered in the process. Indeed, one general Marxist precept is that change is constant.

To illustrate this kind of process, Mintz (1977) researched and discussed the use of food through colonization and imperialism, particularly sugar and, most recently, soy products. Out of the colonization of the Caribbean islands, sugar became a staple product affecting the daily activities and language of English and other language speakers around the world. Soy has been carving out a similar path. There are many such examples, from tea and tobacco to curry and coffee, pasta and potatoes. The movement of such products does not transfer only from the colonized to the colonizing communities; consider cheese, apples, and bread. And the movement is not only facilitated by conquest but by mere trade, too. The chili pepper, for instance, arrived in Asia through international trade. Humans always engage in trade. Cannot we say that local cultures have made use of and enjoyed the goods of foreign trade? Humans can also make use of and enjoy foreign languages.

Culture is resilient. This reality should lessen one's fears about foreign influences. Culture tends to interpret and use exposure to other languages and cultures on its own terms, welcoming and incorporating what fills a social gap, relishing what gives pleasure, filtering linguistic and cultural information, and adapting and transmuting it into the local cultural and linguistic environment. Neither assimilation nor acculturation is one-sided. Local cultures have the ability, and therefore the power, to harness and transform the visiting language and culture. The relationship is never one between an invincible and immutable parasite and a helpless, sponge-like host as stereotypes seem to assume.

Furthermore, imperialism today, that is, what is commonly labeled Anglo-American imperialism, is not the only powerful expanding interest and influence. Learning any of a range of widely spoken languages that are relatively available for learning is useful. The US is not the only big power today despite its rank as a superpower. Imperialist powers are in heightened competition with each other. The balance of power is shifting in the present stage of acute global crisis. In fact, other languages are spreading and extending their influence and practice, such as Arabic, Spanish, and Chinese.

THE ACTUAL GLOBAL STATUS OF ENGLISH

Let us assess the actual status of English language learning worldwide. Graddol's (2006, 2008) examinations of the status of English as a global or international language reveal that the heyday of English may be fading. Other languages are being taught and used globally.

The British Council commissioned David Graddol to follow up its 1997 study called "The Future of English?" (Graddol, 1997). This older study concluded that English language use was not developing straightforwardly. It also noted the complexity of the relationship between English language use and globalization, in which not only was globalization spreading English but the spread of English was also moving globalization. This latter claim is important because of its implications regarding the rising incidence of cultural and linguistic exchanges that would invite recognition and mobilization of other languages and cultures in international relations. In particular, the Graddol (1997) study charted the growth of China and India, and forecasted a great impact on the world. Also, this study appraised demographics, economics, technology, and long-term trends, determining that these are key factors driving linguistic and cultural changes.

The 1997 and 2006 studies challenged the "belief in the global triumph of English" (Graddol, 2006, p. 11). What is more, English is being challenged by transformations of English, a new global form of English alien to the English spoken in the land of its origin. True, more and more people want to speak English, but what kind of English?

Graddol (2006, p. 12) declares:

> English is now redefining national and individual identities worldwide; shifting political fault lines; creating new global patterns of wealth and social exclusion; and suggesting new notions of human rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

The native speakers of English are not in control of these developments. The dominance of Western countries where English is predominantly spoken is ending, apparently.

International business in the English language is taking a hit. Graddol (2006) pointed to world tourism. English speaking tourism has been declining, he said. For example, there were 763 million international travelers in 2004, but around three quarters of their visits involved visits of non-English speakers to non-English-speaking destinations. Wealth is spreading throughout the world and new middle classes have been sprouting up. Not only that, Graddol also reported that urbanization is a big factor in language change. However, cities tend to become segregated linguistically, he added. Furthermore, the world has been witnessing new stratifications according to age, culture, and identity.

Graddol (2006) cited other factors contributing to the decrease in the dominance of English. Global migration, internal and external, is higher than ever, and it is multilingual. As one of the consequences, and whereas English used to be the preferred language of the highly educated, international middle class, and elite, it has expanded to increasingly become the global language of work. Graddol also looked at the aging population and the relationship between language use and population age structure. He showed that younger populations were speaking and learning a variety of languages other than English.

Economic factors have been contributing to the decline in the use of English, too. Indian and China have been returning to their former positions as world economic powers (Graddol, 2006). He added that the influence of Brazil and Russia is also rising. Furthermore, the changing global economy favors outsourcing, the servicing of Canada, the European Union, the United States, and Australia by sources abroad in non-English speaking countries. For example, international sources take call orders for services including fast food. Also, India provides homework tutors to students in the United States. And, knowledge is exported and imported as a product in this day and age.

The spread of new technologies is spreading the use of other languages. Graddol (2006) looks at the distribution of language in Internet use as an example. In the year 2000, English was used in 51% of Internet communication, but in only 32% in 2005. Also, the news media is now available widely in various languages. *Al Jazeer* (Arabic) and *Telesur* (Spanish) are examples.

Graddol (2006) did not forecast the advent of a world without domination. Far from it. He described how the number of dominating languages – Mandarin, Spanish and Arabic – has been rising as the number of languages has been dwindling. In 2003, 23% of the global economy GDP was conducted in Chinese, as compared to 18% conducted in English. Another outcome, he elaborates, has been a rise in second language speakers of the biggest languages.

Graddol (2006) concludes that the demand for language learning in a variety of major languages is increasing, but the demand for English language learning in particular may be declining. Therefore, the demand and value of native speakers of English may be declining as well.

RESISTANCE TO EFL IN SOUTH KOREA

Considerations of the gap between policy or policy intentions and policy outcomes suggest that there is internal systemic resistance to English language education in South Korea. Look at some mitigating factors in the growth of English language teaching in Korea. Park (2008) suggests government expectations have been unrealistic, as implied by policy changes intended to increase English education and usage in South Korea, while she addresses pedagogical barriers to meeting the policy objectives. Park also speaks to teaching deficits, that is, pedagogical shortcomings that stymie the policies to increase and enhance TEFL in Korea.

Further evidence of resistance as played out inside institutions and their classrooms also show signs of this kind of resistance. I refer to my own experience teaching English in Korea to identify more forms of resistance to learning English in Korea. My earlier paper on this topic, Waldern (2009), holds that a range of phenomena from anti-foreigner bias and refusal to nationalism and cultural disparity also signal resistance to the intended growth of TEFL and EFL learning. She notes the passionate dedication to ethno-nationalism on the part of the Korean population as a whole that is, at times, consummated as political action, and the manifestation of an anti-foreigner bias expressed variously but pronounced openly and specifically at times in the press. In her own classrooms, she has observed the refusals of teachers to teach and use English, and the greater refusal on the part of students to learning English. Colleagues have also shared stories about such kinds of refusals in their experience. In addition, she elaborates some cultural and linguistic resistors to the acquisition and instruction of EFL.

CONCLUSION

I find that linguistic domination is neither a straightforward process nor easy to achieve. The example of Korea shows that local culture and language use can maintain some degree of control.

This paper takes the thesis of Macedo, Dendrinos, and Gounari (2003) that understands the hegemony of English as a reality in the context of the United States of America today and a product of neo-colonial structures and discourse. Though conceding that English language education state and institutional policies and practices comprise a form of neo-colonialism, this paper considers human agency in response to structures, relations, and discourses of power in the context of monopoly capitalism and processes of cultural production and reproduction. Adopting a political economy approach, informed by anthropology and a corresponding ontology that sees culture as an historic and cultural process, processes of reception to linguistic and cultural hegemony are considered, as well as processes of linguistic and cultural generation.

Perren (2009) counsels language teachers to teach culture so as to be inclusive and democratic, going much deeper than the material culture of linguistic groups. How should we go about teaching culture? Biesta (2006) would suggest that language teachers and students understand themselves as visitors visiting each other. That would presuppose an exchange between the actors in the education process, which would assume that both the teacher and students play roles as teachers and students. Biesta further recommends that we be aware that education and teaching are political; plurality and difference should be discussed, and democracy and democratic education should be well defined. We must reconfigure the democratic person. If we understand that we live in communities with few commonalities, then our task is to find our own voice. Teachers can help students (including themselves) to find and express their own voices.

This paper suggests an approach to understanding the influence of linguistic and cultural interactions on EFL education, with two assumptions. It assumes that domination is a driving factor behind global EFL and that resistance in the general and specific senses is an inherent response to the processes of transformation and displacement at play. Qualitative data from students and teachers of English in Korea and other countries could provide more incites into local responses to EFL. A simple survey could be conducted among teachers and their classes, for example. More detailed media and policy analyses would be helpful as well.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

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Learning Preferences / Styles

Style and Substance in the EFL Classroom: Bridging Student and Teacher Perspectives at Korea University

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This research investigates the similarities and differences of student and teacher perspectives on the importance of *style* and *substance* in the Academic English (AE) EFL classroom at Korea University. A total of 963 students and 29 native English speaking teachers participated in the study. Results show that students perceive *style* as something that inspires them more as a student, compared to the *substance* or content of the subject matter. Their preferences for style refer to the teacher's personality and teaching techniques. Both groups value the relevance of students' English skills and abilities in their future plans to study or travel abroad, and more importantly, in their future prospects for employment. Implications of this study will inform pedagogical considerations and necessary changes in the AE curriculum and will also provide direction in finding practical ways to bridge the gap between student and teacher perspectives.

An important part of the learning process is for students to believe that their learning is progressing and their skills are improving. In the same way, an important aspect of being an educator is feeling inspired, fulfilled, and validated by students. Studies have been done demonstrating that serious mismatches between the learning styles of students and the teaching style of the instructor can cause conflict, de-motivation, discouragement, learning failure, and loss of interest on the part of both the teacher and the learner (Reid, 1987; Felder & Silverman, 1988; Oxford, Ehrman, & Lavine, 1991; Bada & Okan, 2000; Peacock, 2001). On the other hand, motivation, performance, and achievements will improve if learning styles and appropriate teaching approaches are matched (Brown, 1994).

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Learning Styles and Teaching Styles

Kinsella (1995, p. 171) refers to a *learning style* as a person's "natural, habitual and preferred ways of absorbing, processing and retaining new information and skills which persist regardless of teaching methods or content area." Reid (1987) defined it as a learner's preferred mode or method of learning. Learning styles vary in every culture and between individuals in a given culture. Recent cross-cultural studies have been conducted to evaluate the learning styles and preferences of Asian students (Mitsis & Foley, 2005; Sharp, 2004; Peacock, 2001; Xiao, 2006; Lengkanawati, 2004; Littlewood, 2001; Park & Lee, 2006; Thompson, 2005; Lee & Oxford, 2008). Broader educational cultures and students' learning experiences within those cultures can influence learning styles. It is very important that native speaker (NS) teachers become aware of different learning styles, and the way they teach should be adapted to the way learners from a particular community learn. Some teachers struggle and feel frustrated when a gap occurs; for example, when students do not respond positively or actively to most of the communicative and interactive activities.

Teaching style refers mostly to the methods, techniques, and approaches teachers employ to achieve goals and objectives set for their classes (Felder & Henriques, 1995). Research evaluating learners' styles abounds; however, the literature on defining, discussing, and evaluating "teaching style" is scarce. Peacock (2001) admitted that there is a need to assess and refine the definition of teaching style for usefulness and validity. An important aspect of teaching style is the teacher's personality and demeanor in the classroom. Ambady and Rosenthal (1992) coined the phrase "thin slices" to refer to judgments made about an individual's personality, intentions, and other characteristics in no more than five minutes upon meeting that person. Students pick up much from the way the teacher walks into the room on the first meeting (Senior, 2006).

The Substance of Learning

Substance is what is taught. It is the content or the bank of materials used by the teacher to transmit knowledge, promote actual practice, and base the assessment of learning on. There are three main concerns about substance: (a) Is it relevant to the students? (b) Is it interesting? (c) Is it appropriate to the level, age, and life experiences of the students? Making decisions on the selection of teaching materials is one of the challenges language teachers have to face (Hutchinson, 1987). However, it seems that teacher intuition or administrative convenience most often affects materials selection rather than considerations based on needs analysis of the teaching and learning situation (Tarone & Yule, 1989; Spratt, 1999). Consequently, a possible mismatch of teacher and learner beliefs and expectations may occur.

An important factor that is related to the content of teaching is the amount of course-workload. Sperber (2005) refers to the "college lite" phenomenon, where educators compromise in lowering their standards of academic rigor due to "cultural softening" (Barone, 2004). This resulted from experiences of teachers who had difficulties in maintaining intellectual rigor while working in educational environments that did not acknowledge or support high standards and demanding workloads. Instructors who resist "college lite" are targets of low evaluations and therefore decrease their own potential for professional success (Eiszler, 2002). Greenwald and Gillmore (1997) found evidence that in order for instructors to avoid being punished by negative evaluations, they may adjust their academic rigor expectations. Moreover, Eiszler (2002) wrote that by lowering grading standards, instructors may be evaluated positively.

Motivation

Motivation in the classroom is two-way: Teachers need to feel validated and encouraged in the same way that students need to feel they have achieved something. Nevertheless, motivated teachers are needed if we want motivated students at our schools (Czikszentmihalyi, 1982; Deci & Ryan, 1982). According to Dornyei (1998), motivation is a key to learning. Brown (2007) wrote that people are motivated to do something because they seek self-recognition and approval from others. This echoes Maslow's (1970) "Hierarchy of Needs," which states that every human being has the need for self-actualization and that this need drives them to aim for higher attainment. Dornyei (1990) also states that the need for achievement and self-efficacy influences language learning motivation. This may result in learner autonomy or independence, which is one of the significant items in the "Ten Commandments" (Dornyei & Csizer, 1998) that stimulate intrinsic motivation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participants

Table 1 shows the breakdown of student participants.

TABLE 1. Demographic Information of Student Participants

Major/Department	No. of classes	Male	Female	Unidentified	Total
Liberal Arts	7	89	89	0	178
Business	3	54	25	1	80
Engineering	7	143	31	1	175
Law	2	30	28	0	58
Political Science & Economics	4	59	49	1	109
Science	8	111	69	0	180
Art & Design	2	10	20	2	32
Information & Computers	2	40	10	0	50
Education	4	29	72	0	101
TOTAL	39	565	393	5	963

The age range of the students is 18-21, and the vast majority are fresh graduates from high school. A total of 29 teachers (22 male; 7 female) participated in this study, with an average of eight years of teaching experience, ranging between two and 20 years.

Survey Questionnaire and Data Collection

The data for this study was collected through a survey questionnaire with three parts. Part 1 is a survey of 22 scale-item attitude statements using a 5-point Likert scale indicating degrees of agreement or disagreement. The statements reflect the participants' preferences regarding teaching style and the content or material taught in class. Part 2 is also a 5-point Likert scale agreement/ disagreement survey that specifically taps into the learning and teaching beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and preferences of the students and teachers. Part 3 contains open-ended questions that require more profound insights, reasons, and brief explanations of the participants' thoughts and feelings.

A Korean translation was made for the student questionnaire and was reviewed, checked, and edited by competent bilingual persons. The unique feature of this survey questionnaire is the fact that it is context-sensitive. It was designed so that the respondents would be easily and immediately able to identify with the questions, due to the KU culture references. Data was collected during a two-week period, on the thirteenth week of the 16-week spring 2008 semester. Of the 40 teachers, 31 agreed to participate and have their classes surveyed. However, only 29 questionnaires from teacher participants were returned. Students were informed of the anonymous and voluntary nature of the survey. They were also given the option of choosing to answer either the English or Korean version. Of the 1,041 students surveyed, a total of 963 responses were returned, thus yielding a response rate of 92.5%.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Student and Teacher Perceptions on Teachers' Style

This section presents the similarities and differences between student and teacher perceptions on teacher's style based on 14 attitude statements. The results show that both groups had similar perceptions on six statements and different perceptions on eight statements.

TABLE 2. Comparison of Student and Teacher Perceptions on Teacher's Style

ATTITUDE STATEMENTS	Mean	Standard Deviation	*t value*	*p value*
1. Teachers should go out with students to social activities like "*Class Hofs*," "*Sabalshik* party," and the "*Ko-Yon Jeon*" sports festival.				
STUDENTS	3.272	0.224	0.5498	0.5868
TEACHERS	3.206	0.663		
2. Teachers should hold semester-end class parties.				
STUDENTS	3.604	0.205	5.8639	0.0001
TEACHERS	2.862	0.680		
3. Teachers should engage in casual conversation with students outside of class time.				
STUDENTS	3.953	0.101	-0.9108	0.3702
TEACHERS	4.103	0.884		
4. Teachers should encourage students to visit during office hours.				
STUDENTS	3.657	0.105	-3.6770	0.0010
TEACHERS	4.275	0.905		

5. Teachers should move around in the classroom.				
STUDENTS	3.378	0.098	-9.5451	0.0001
TEACHERS	4.482	0.622		
6. Teachers are responsible for transmitting knowledge.				
STUDENTS	3.969	0.124	-1.707	0.0969
TEACHERS	4.228	0.897		
7. Teachers should laugh a lot.				
STUDENTS	3.496	0.062	1.2027	0.2391
TEACHERS	3.310	0.834		
8. Teachers should use theatrical body language and big gestures while explaining lessons.				
STUDENTS	3.122	0.091	1.4402	0.1609
TEACHERS	2.896	0.844		
9. Teachers should encourage students to ask questions, interrupt the lecture, and voice opinions even if they disagree with the teacher.				
STUDENTS	3.859	0.143	-3.2872	0.0027
TEACHERS	4.241	0.624		
10. Teachers should encourage students to initiate social conversation and to engage in longer, interactive, expanded talk before and after class.				
STUDENTS	3.949	0.074	-3.7254	0.0009
TEACHERS	4.413	0.670		
11. Teachers should be sympathetic, understanding, and forgiving when students are absent because of specific Korean practices and tradition, such as sympathy pain for a friend or family and comforting a friend before going to military service.				
STUDENTS	4.315	0.057	4.7155	0.0001
TEACHERS	3.310	1.147		
12. Teachers should be sympathetic, understanding, and forgiving when students are absent from class due to hangover.				
STUDENTS	2.339	0.118	3.5114	0.0015
TEACHERS	1.724	0.943		
13. Teachers should assign students in groups to do group work and to engage in group discussions.				
STUDENTS	3.312	0.191	-8.8386	0.0001
TEACHERS	4.413	0.670		
14. Teachers should excuse a student's absence due to club activities.				
STUDENTS	2.811	0.141	0.4978	0.6226
TEACHERS	2.714	1.030		

Similarities in Perceptions

Teachers and students had similar perceptions on six statements. Both groups recognize the importance of teachers' attendance at special social events like *Sabalshik*[1], *Class Hof*[2], and *Ko-Yeon Jeon*[3], as well as engaging in casual conversation outside of class. Students clearly do not mind having their NS teachers join them in these important social events that can help foster better interpersonal relationships and cultural understanding. In the same way, teachers positively showed that they are willing to spend time with their students outside of class.

The three statements on excused absences were an important part of the survey questionnaire, and both teachers and students gave similar answers to two situations. The first one is excused absence due to hangover. Both groups responded on the negative side. The teachers strongly disagreed ($M = 1.72$) and the students disagreed ($M = 2.34$). It is interesting that among the groups of students, those in the Engineering department responded farthest away from the strongly disagree end of the spectrum, with a mean value of 2.468. This group has the biggest number of male respondents (male = 143; female = 31). Attitude statement number 11 is also related to the issue of being absent due to hangovers. Sympathy pain for friends and family, especially comforting a friend before going to military service, involves drinking and will most likely result in more male students suffering from hangovers.

Differences in Perceptions

Teachers and students had different perceptions on eight statements. The first one is holding **semester-end parties.** Students' responses ($M = 3.604$) show that they want to end the semester with a party, while teachers are not so convinced about the idea ($M = 2.862$). Most likely, students see it as a reward for their whole semester of hard work. What makes it difficult for teachers is the fact that having parties for three or four sections of 28–30 students would be a financial burden. Even if teachers provided only some of the food and drinks, it would still involve considerable expense. There is also a small but significant difference in perception ($p = 0.0010$) between the answers of the two groups when it comes to the issue of **students visiting teachers during office hours**. Teachers agree on encouraging students to visit their offices ($M = 4.275$); however, students have a high neutral response ($M = 3.657$). This must be due to the fact that nowadays, communication is possible through email and phone text messages. However, it is undeniable that students' use of scheduled or impromptu office visits is one of the ways by which they can practice extended conversation and more profound communication with the teacher.

The style of **moving around the classroom** showed a big difference in opinion ($p = 0.0001$) with teachers' overall response indicating reasonably strong agreement ($M = 4.482$) but students having a more neutral response ($M = 3.378$). For teachers, moving around the class can be used as a way of supervising students while they are doing activities in pairs or groups, and checking that they are on task. It is also a teaching style that tends to be associated with less teacher-centered methods that dominate modern language teaching pedagogy. In relation to a less teacher-centered style, teachers agreed ($M = 4.241$) that encouraging students to **ask questions, interrupt the lecture, and voice opinions** is a good teaching style while students had a 3.859 high neutral response. The majority of the NS teachers have come from a western educational system with the belief that active question and answer interaction between teachers and students is a good learning environment.

There is also disagreement on the values of **group work, group activities, and group discussions.** Students are neutral about this ($M = 3.312$) but teachers strongly agree ($M = 4.413$). In a class of 28–30 students, putting students in pairs or groups can allow effective hands-on practice; however, students do not think it is as valuable as the teachers do.

Student and Teacher Perceptions on Substance Taught in Class

The table below shows the comparison between teacher and student perceptions on content taught in class. Both groups had five congruent answers out of eight statements.

TABLE 3. Comparison of Student and Teacher Perceptions on Substance Taught in Class

ATTITUDE STATEMENTS	Mean	Standard Deviation	*t value*	*p value*
1. Teachers should give specific and immediate feedback to students' work. STUDENTS TEACHERS	4.093 4.482	0.152 0.622	-3.3613	0.0023
2. Teachers should use magazine and newspaper articles related to students' field of study as a major reference for class material. STUDENTS TEACHERS	3.598 3.758	0.092 0.722	-1.1828	0.2468
3. Teachers should refer to the conversation textbook all the time. STUDENTS TEACHERS	2.239 2.068	0.114 0.980	0.9373	0.3566
4. Teachers should teach content that integrates knowledge and skills for students' future use (*job-related skills, writing business letters, job-interview skills, giving presentations)* STUDENTS TEACHERS	3.898 3.964	0.111 0.822	0.4215	0.6767
5. Teachers should know Korean culture and have a basic knowledge about Korean language. STUDENTS TEACHERS	3.855 4.034	0.111 0.556	-1.7328	0.0941
6. Teachers should teach students about how Korean society and culture compares to the societies and cultures of other countries. STUDENTS TEACHERS	3.820 3.758	0.089 0.726	0.4551	0.6525
7. Teachers should openly address and integrate negative aspects of Korean culture, customs, and society in class discussions. STUDENTS TEACHERS	3.794 2.620	0.110 0.887	7.1218	0.0001
8. Teachers should expose students to World Englishes by listening to different accents and learning specific vocabulary *(ex. Singaporean, Malaysian, Indian, Philippine, African, New Zealand Englishes, accents & vocabulary; American vs. British spellings, vocabularies, idiomatic expressions)* STUDENTS TEACHERS	3.409 4.241	0.240 0.677	-6.5977	0.0001

Similarities in Perceptions

Teachers and students had similar perceptions on six statements. Regarding the **use of magazines and newspaper articles as reference materials,** both groups agreed on its importance; however, neither the teachers nor the students felt that it was necessary to **refer to the conversation textbook all the time.** Moreover, **content that integrates knowledge and skills for future use** is also seen as important by both groups as it relates to students' success in their future jobs or field of expertise. In regard to **teachers knowing Korean culture and having a basic knowledge of Korean language,** both groups had similar answers. Students generally expect their teachers to be interested in their own culture, and they also want to be taught how **Korean society and culture compare to other countries.** Likewise, teachers are also keen on gaining knowledge about their host country. It is important for teachers to include cultural components in an EFL class because students are limited in their exposure to the cultures or issues of the target language. Unlike in an ESL environment where students have rich exposure to the culture outside of class, EFL students get firsthand experience from their teacher.

Differences in Perceptions

Teachers and students had different perceptions on two statements. A very interesting issue, which surprisingly yielded opposite expectations, is about **openly addressing and integrating negative aspects of Korean culture, customs, and society in class discussions.** Teachers disagree overall (M = 2.620) with the idea of discussing in class the negative aspects of Korean culture and society. Surprisingly, the students' response (M = 3.794) shows that they are more ready to talk about their country's mistakes, problems, and areas needing improvement. Teachers, on the other hand, are clearly careful not to offend their host country's beliefs and traditions. The findings here suggest that students want to see and hear objectively how foreigners view Korea, its people, and its culture.

Another difference in perception is evident in the question of **introducing students to World Englishes** (p = 0.0001). Teachers agree (M = 4.241) with the idea of exposing students to different accents and different vocabulary as a part of the globalization process. Students gave a neutral answer (M = 3.41), indicating that, as a group, they are not as strongly convinced about learning World Englishes. This may be due to the popularity of Hollywood movies and TV dramas. Students may have become used to listening to the North American accents of the US and Canada and are likely not as interested in learning about other accents or other varieties of English.

Students' Preferences Between Style and Substance

This section shows the students' responses to the question, *"What inspires you more as a student: (a) the personality and teaching style of the teacher, or (b) the subject matter of the course?"*

TABLE 4. Students' Preference Between Style and Substance

DEPARTMENT / MAJOR	STYLE	%	SUBSTANCE	%
Liberal Arts	116	67	56	33
Business	50	61	32	39
Engineering	104	63	62	37
Law	38	69	17	31
Political Science & Economics	78	70	34	30
Science	135	76	43	24
Art & Design	25	81	6	19
Information & Computers	32	64	18	36
Education	56	70	24	30

Table 4 shows that students are more concerned about the **"style of the teacher"** than the "subject matter" or "content of the course." It is interesting that among the departments, the Art and Design students rated "style" the highest. This is possibly due to their inclination for and appreciation of things in a holistically meaningful and aesthetically pleasing way. On the other hand, compared to the other groups, the Business majors voted the lowest on style (61%) and the highest on substance (37%). This may have been influenced by the KU Business School's emphasis on English level proficiency of Business majors. Effective spring 2008, KUBS required all its freshmen students to take and pass English enrichment classes in addition to the required AE course. Across all of the departments, students' responses may have been affected by their own teacher's rules, policies, course requirements, approaches to assessment, demeanor in the classroom, and personality. This is one of the limitations of this study. Most likely, students voted for "style" if their own AE teacher was fun, interesting, personable, and kind. In the same way, students who had a less than optimal rapport with their teacher also may have voted for "style" as a reflection of their desire to have a more charismatic, interesting, and personable teacher.

Motivating and De-motivating Factors

The tables below are comparative summaries of students' and teachers' top ideas on motivating (Table 5) and de-motivating (Table 6) factors. The items are ranked according to the frequency with which they were mentioned. Five of the students' ideas on motivating factors were congruent with the teachers' ideas. However, only two of the de-motivating factors that students listed were similar to the perceptions of the teachers.

TABLE 5. Comparison of Student and Teacher Perceptions on Motivation Factors

STUDENTS	Motivation / Orientation	TEACHERS	Motivation / Orientation
1. For future employment	Extrinsic / Instrumental	1. To get a good job	Extrinsic / Instrumental
2. To study or travel abroad	Extrinsic / Instrumental / Interest in Int'l Vocation / Activities	2. To get a good grade	Extrinsic / Instrumental
3. Interest in foreign cultures; to make foreign friends	Intrinsic & Extrinsic / Integrative/ Intercultural Friendship.	3. Fluency tests; to travel abroad; need to know English; to interact with foreign cultures *(all items are equal third in ranking)*	Extrinsic / Intrinsic / Instrumental / Integrative
4. Interesting, fun activities; nice teacher	Extrinsic	4. Past successes	Extrinsic
5. Praise and encouragement of teacher and friends	Extrinsic	5. Pressure to take the class; it is a required course	Extrinsic
6. To enjoy foreign movies, songs, books	Extrinsic / Integrative	6. Practical reasons; having fun and enjoyment while learning	Extrinsic
7. Sense of accomplishment	Intrinsic	7. English is their major	Extrinsic / Instrumental

TABLE 6. Comparison of Student and Teacher Perceptions on De-motivating Factors

STUDENTS	Motivation / Orientation	TEACHERS	Motivation / Orientation
1. Excessive workload (too many projects, assignments, quizzes)	Extrinsic	1. Not perceived as useful or relevant	Extrinsic
2. Lack of confidence	Intrinsic	2. Students are overloaded with other work from other classes / subjects	Extrinsic
3. Students who are much better than me because they have lived abroad	Extrinsic	3. Negative past experiences	Extrinsic
4. Boring lessons, topics & professor	Extrinsic	4. Difficult even after many years of study	Extrinsic
5. Too much focus on grammar and vocabulary memorization	Extrinsic	5. Feel it's forced upon them; Detached unimaginative teachers	Extrinsic

6. Low grade or no progress despite effort put into studying	Extrinsic	6. Boring topics and textbooks; content too difficult; they see Western culture as a threat to their own culture	Extrinsic
7. The difficulty of learning English	Extrinsic	7. Pressure from classmates; feel they already know enough English; they feel uncomfortable in the learning environment.	Extrinsic

Students and teachers have similar perceptions on the topmost motivating factor, which is "for future employment prospects." Moreover, both groups also have similar perceptions on the motivating effect of prospects of traveling or studying abroad, which is an instrumental construct and indicating interest in international activities. It is interesting to highlight two perceptions of both groups that are opposites. The first is how students feel de-motivated by "excessive workload, demanding assignments, and tests" in the AE class. Teachers also noted "excessive workload" as a de-motivating factor, but it was not from their own classes; rather, it was from students' other subjects. One clear difference in perception is the way teachers think that getting good scores in fluency tests like TOEIC or TOEFL is an important motivating factor. Surprisingly enough, students did not overwhelmingly list it as their response. This may show that students are aware that the focus of AE is not to study or review for fluency tests, and that they may have clear information that there are other classes offered by the enrichment program of the university and other private institutes that specially cater to the study of test-taking skills for the TOEIC or TOEFL tests. Besides, those classes are taught by Korean teachers who have the training to explain by translating into Korean the grammatical concepts and reading and listening comprehension skills that are necessary for the tests.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The first limitation of this study is its KU-exclusive purpose and nature. This study was designed for the Academic English program; consequently, it may not be as useful to other universities or programs that have different set-ups. The second limitation is the big difference between the number of student respondents (N = 963) and the teacher participants (N = 29). The results yielded a low standard deviation for students' responses and a high standard deviation value for teachers' results. There may also be problems with internal validity in the sense that students and teachers may not have answered the questionnaires honestly and sincerely. Students may have answered to please their teacher, and teachers may have answered to please me as the administrator and researcher. The opposite also holds true: Answers may have been reflections of negative feelings in order to get back at the teacher or the administrator. Teachers may have been concerned that they would be identifiable since the number of participants was small.

FURTHER RESEARCH

A follow-up study on teaching and learning styles should continue, employing other research methods like interviews, journal studies, or classroom observations. Teachers are encouraged to do action research and conduct studies in their own classes to record how students respond to certain techniques, activities, or requirements. This will provide information on how to apply teaching principles and how to adapt teaching styles in a local way. This will also help find out "how much is too much" when it comes to the appropriate amount of course workload. It would also help teachers find ways on how to keep high standards and still receive high student ratings.

Another interesting research would be on teachers' personalities and how they affect students' evaluations of teaching. This would be similar with the "Dr. Fox" experiment, but it would involve a culturally homogeneous audience. Further research on Korean students' "group behavior" in the classroom will help shed light on the reasons why the strong "group-orientated" culture is not that effective when it comes to class projects. Does the group-culture only work in friendships or organizations but not when competing for good grades or when results are involved?

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

There is a need for teachers to identify their own teaching style. Results of this research clearly show that there are similarities and differences in student and teacher perspectives regarding teachers' attitudes, effective teaching techniques, course workload, and what content to teach. Teachers need to evaluate their attitude toward students (Clayson & Sheffet, 2006), their beliefs in their role as an educator and in what the students should achieve. Professional development for teachers is very important to create increased awareness of learning and teaching styles (see Appendix) and to establish coordination among teachers in materials development and testing and assessment criteria. Likewise, students' learning styles should also be identified. A diagnostic "learning styles" test should be administered in the beginning of the semester. Results from this research should be taken into consideration, particularly students' less agreeable attitude toward group work and group activities, and the preference for kinesthetic and visual activities rather than those that promote receptive skills. Consequently, teachers should accommodate multiple learning styles and take into consideration students' majors when they plan lessons and activities that will allow for students to use their various skills, talents, and styles.

Footnotes

[1] *Sabalshik* is a sort of initiation rite, usually held in April, where male and female freshmen are introduced to the drinking culture of KU. It is considered a rite of passage as students drink *soju* (Korean vodka) or *makkolli* (traditional Korean rice wine) from a *sabal* (steel bowl). It is a social-bonding activity between the freshmen and their seniors.

[2] *Class Hof* is also a social-bonding activity held once every semester where a class rents and runs a pub for an evening. Students do the serving, cooking, and managing. Any amount earned goes to the class fund which will later be spent on class outings or

parties.
[3] *Ko-Yeon Jeon* is the sports festival between Korea and Yonsei Universities, usually held in September. It is a three-day sports event where the two universities hold friendly matches in five games: basketball, baseball, hockey, rugby, and soccer. A big pep rally event is held on the first day. The final day is an all-night celebration of drinking and dancing on the streets around the two universities.

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APPENDIX

Ten Tips for a “Stylish” Teacher

1. **Be what you teach.** If you are demanding of your students, also show that you are demanding of yourself. Always be the model of what you require of your students. If you require them to do homework, make sure you give them back their assignments with appropriate feedback.

2. **Get up close and personal**. Get personal with the students by revealing a bit of yourself. Koreans, in general, like to hear personal stories. Students enjoy knowing about your hometown and family, your culture, and what made you come to Korea. They also like to hear about your favorite Korean food, movie, or shopping place. For example, you can incorporate a simple Q & A game into your lesson plan, a 5-minute “Ask me a question per session” activity. Every meeting, you can assign a student to ask you a personal question. Beware of giving too much information. Politely decline to answer any question you are not comfortable with. It is a way to teach students what type of questions are out of bounds.

3. **Get to know your students’ interests**. In order to establish a common ground, try to be familiar with your students’ generation and style of music, singers, movies, and fashion. They will appreciate your interest in their “youth culture,” and it will make them appreciate your culture, too.

4. **Be clear about your policies and expectations from the beginning of the semester.** Let everyone understand what rules are important to you and how much you desire for them to learn and gain as much as possible during the one-semester period of having you as their teacher.

5. **Be understanding and kind.** Do not throw a “teacher’s fit” and show your disappointment in class when someone challenges your patience or level of tolerance. Simply say “OK” if students hand in homework late or someone is habitually late or absent. You can simply point out that score deductions will be made, as stated in your rules or policies. The key is to deliver the bad news with a nice, kind, calm voice. Say it nicely, and say it with a smile.

6. **Balance your lesson plan with “uptime” and “downtime.**” After a project or a quiz, plan for the next lesson to be something easy, fun, and entertaining, which will allow the students to de-stress. To give them another serious lesson right after a project or a test would be too demanding.

7. **Be prepared but be flexible**. Be organized but be willing to throw away your lesson plan and the textbook and improvise. Think on your feet of another activity if you sense the students have tuned out or are just not into the lesson.

8. **Use the element of surprise.** Be colorful and dramatic. It helps students tap into their imagination and creativity. Surprise them by showing a side of yourself

they have never seen before. Wear a crazy costume on Halloween; teach a dance step you learned when you were in high school or teach a song from the 1980s. Designate one day when you step out of your usual self or style, and show them a different you.

9. **Take off your "Super-teacher" cape**. Let students develop learner-independence and autonomy. Do not "teach and preach" all the time. Get out of the "chalk-and-talk" routine. Give students control; allow them to make decisions. Consult with them about your lesson plans, and organize class sessions where you take the back seat and students do the teaching.

10. **Balance is the key**.

- Balance your role in the classroom as a facilitator and the authority.
- Be "demanding," but be a "darling."
- Be strict but be sweet.
- You can lecture, but be lively.
- Challenge them, but be charismatic and charming.
- Impose, but inspire.
- Be firm, but be fabulous.
- Be picky, but be pretty.
- Teach and touch their lives.

Multiple Skills

Student Presentations in TOEIC Pedagogy

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Existing courses in TOEIC test preparation often seem daunting, de-motivating, and arguably somewhat pointless to both university students and their instructors. Although students generally acknowledge the utility of doing well in the TOEIC, learning proficiency, more often than not, depends on classroom activities. By augmenting classroom exercises with out-of-classroom preparation, specifically short presentations, we argue that English language proficiency (and commensurate TOEIC scores) can be enhanced. We will describe a course centered on short two-minute presentations to augment the more traditional test-taking strategies and practice. Results indicate that not only did learners' motivation improve, but also arguably, presentations enhanced discrete test-taking skills.

Teaching to the TOEIC can often seem de-motivating for the foreign EFL university instructor in Japan for a number of reasons: Students' communicative proficiency may be problematic, university students don't like memorizing for tests, many students prefer TOEIC instruction in Japanese, and grammar instruction can be daunting, particularly if in English. In fact, many teachers believe that classroom instruction would be better facilitated if in Japanese. Consequently, native speakers of English often utilize one, or a combination, of test strategies, listening exercises, or communicative activities to teach their students.

We designed a course that would utilize student presentations and collocations along with more typical TOEIC pedagogy. As teacher perceptions often differ from students', we decided to give the students a questionnaire covering a variety of attitudinal constructs both before, and at the conclusion of, the course to assist us in both reviewing the course, and in honing it for the future. This article will detail relevant research from the literature, outline the course methodology, and summarize findings based on the survey instruments.

Results indicated that not only did learners find the pedagogy motivating, but also arguably, presentations enhanced discrete test-taking skills. In this article, we will outline why we feel so positive about our course, and what it was that led to such positive responses by so many of our students.

TOEIC

In the contemporary world of English education, when language learners discuss English proficiency, their measurement of ability will most likely be their

TOEIC score. At least, that is the case in Japan. University students, and employees alike, strive for high TOEIC scores to improve their work opportunities. TOEIC, the Test of English for International Communication, is a test that was initially established in 1979 in Japan, and, administered by the Institute for International Business Communication (IIBC), is a nonprofit organization that runs under the auspices of the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI; Trew, 2006). During its first year, in 1979, the test was taken by 2,773 people (ibid). The test has since acquired international success, and is regularly used in 60 countries and taken by around 4.5 million learners annually; about 1.5 million of those are in Japan (Shimizu, 2006; IIBC, 2008).

TOEIC PEDAGOGY

From our perspective, very few TOEIC teaching procedures are student-centered with perhaps the exception of CALL-type programs. Clearly, the scarcity of relevant literature, or pedagogical material, suggests that there is very little room for autonomy in the TOEIC-based classroom. The traditional TOEIC-based courses typically involve teacher-centered classrooms where students are put through rigorous drilling procedures and/or learn test-taking strategies. There is a constant supply of TOEIC-based material that facilitates such teacher-centered pedagogy. Admittedly, there is a clear need for this material, as it obviously assists the motivated TOEIC test-taker. However, in curricula where students are effectively forced to take the test, a teacher-centered approach may do exactly the opposite and discourage students as they continuously obtain poor results in test-taking drills: negative washback.

Very little material suggests that giving and listening to presentations is a suitable method used to prepare students for the test, despite the fact that the approved textbook (Trew, 2007) states that presentations would be beneficial. As the TOEIC is a test designed to motivate test-takers to improve business-centered communication skills, it stands to reason that providing opportunities to students to improve such skills would be a powerful motivational tool. As students develop confidence in communicating their business-focused research, they may unconsciously start to see the value in learning English language vocabulary and pragmatic skills. Receiving approval from their peers as they repeatedly proceed through the presentation experience, can only improve their learner autonomy. Clearly, however, the teacher needs to facilitate the process if it is to be successful. The relationship between learner and teacher is interdependent.

LEARNER AUTONOMY

> *Learners bring their own beliefs, goals, attitudes and decisions to learning and these influence how they approach their learning. (Gardner & Miller, 1999, p. 37)*

Autonomous learning is increasingly being applied to English language education, which many teachers, usually of European or North American origin, strive to develop in their learners. Learner autonomy gives more responsibility to the student and their own learning, and if successful, has the potential to aid learners in their future learning careers.

Defining autonomy can be a difficult task, as meanings may be interpreted in different ways by different people. Autonomy in learning is about people taking more control over their learning in, and out of, their classrooms. Autonomy in language learning is the notion of people taking more control over the purposes for which they learn languages and the ways in which they learn them (Benson, 2001). One important principle behind "learner autonomy" is that "language learning is a lifelong endeavor" (Lee, 1998, p. 282) and that students learn more outside of class than they do in class. The process, however, of making students "autonomous" is a lengthy and complicated one. In order to promote the idea that more learning is done outside the classroom in student's own time than during classes, students must be directed in how to learn by themselves. One thing is clear: that the autonomous learner must be interested and motivated in what they are doing, thereby enabling them to become responsible for their own learning. It is the teacher's job to facilitate the step to learning independence.

LEARNER BELIEFS

Learner beliefs are ingrained in learners' minds from a young age. People will only believe what they know and may be confused or apprehensive of the unknown (Dornyei, 2001). In Japan, the majority of educational institutions use the teacher-centered approach where the teacher gives orders, students listen, and very little interaction occurs. This approach is quite different from the student-centered approach of "learner autonomy" where the learner takes more responsibility in their own learning while the teacher acts more as a facilitator, or guide, to their learning. Dornyei (2001) believes that incorrect learner beliefs can hinder the learning experience of a learner and become a real barrier in mastering the L2. Dornyei suggests that teachers should talk to their students before the introduction of a new theory. By doing this, the teacher will gain an insight into how students think, what they view as the best way to learn, and their opinions on the new approach the teacher desires to adopt.

APPLYING LEARNER AUTONOMY TO TOEIC-BASED CLASSES

The role of any teacher in education should be to motivate their students and to influence them in a way that creates enthusiasm in the subject they are trying to teach. This can be difficult in language education, particularly in Japan where all students are required to learn English for six years up through high school, and a further two years in tertiary education. English education in high schools in Japan is primarily taught in preparation for rigorous university entrance examinations and has an emphasis on grammar and translation. Once students have successfully passed exams and entered university, their purpose for studying English may be fulfilled, hence a loss of interest in studying English (Bailey, 2004; O'Donnell, 2003). Subsequently, TOEIC-based classes, despite the test's high face-validity, suffer from apathetic students who possibly feel coerced to complete required course credits. We argue that it is possible to combat this predicament by creating interest in English learning. If motivation levels are increased, and students become increasingly autonomous, proficiency will improve and test scores should naturally increase.

WHAT MOTIVATES LEARNING AT UNIVERSITY IN JAPAN?

Every teacher in a classroom has the opportunity to positively influence the minds of many young individuals. It is the job of a teacher to unleash the potential from within every student and encourage them in every way. Students in Japan have the reputation of being passive, dependent, and lacking in initiative. This makes the process necessary to succeed in autonomy (and motivation) more difficult. However, if the teacher is willing to alter their teaching style to fit the culture of their students, the innovation of change may become clearer (Sarwar, 2001). Furthermore, in promoting learner autonomy to a group for whom it may be a foreign idea, the teacher should first acquire relevant background knowledge of their students and the institution the teacher is working for.

In order to promote autonomy in the classroom teachers *could* “help students become aware of the value of independent learning, so that they acquire the habit of learning continuously, and maintain it after they have completed their formal studies” (Lee, 1998, p. 282). To attain this level, teachers need to realize the four R’s of individualization. Altman (as cited in Sarwar, 2001) states four factors (the four R's) that can aid in promoting autonomy and realizing the potential of each student as: *re-education*, *responsibility*, *relevance*, and *rapport*.

Re-education means replacing the role of the teacher as “facilitator with the learner as the active agent in the process of learning” (Sarwar, 2001, p. 128). Students must take on more responsibility for their own learning, and teachers must realize what is relevant to their students, and provide for their needs by supplying a learning experience that motivates and encourages students to learn by themselves. In order to accomplish these simple goals in class, teachers must build a rapport with their students which creates enthusiasm in class, and in turn, promotes autonomy (Sarwar, 2001; Jones, 1995).

LEARNER NEEDS

The utility of applying needs analysis in an L2 context has been well documented (Chambers, 1980; Benesch, 1996; Long, 2005; Carkin, 2005). The rationale of needs analysis is that by identifying elements of students’ L2 objectives and shortcomings, and subsequently using such knowledge as part of the instruction, the teacher can assist the learner to reach their L2 objectives. Although some may argue that needs analysis in education is an unnecessary sophistry (Gunning, 2009), it can provide an opportunity for many L2 learners to realize their own shortcomings, and begin developing a more autonomous learning approach (Sakui & Gaies, 1999). Riley (2006), using Sakui and Gaies methodology with a large sample of first-year Japanese university students and their teachers, found that that there were significant differences in student and teacher beliefs about what each thought the other thought concerning certain constructs.

TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

Although there is a growing body of research on the choices that students make when taking tests (Cohen, 2006), in Japan, the focus is on test-taking pedagogy. Teachers who teach to TOEIC, as one example, would help their students significantly more if they helped students internalize test-taking strategies rather than getting them to memorize class notes and discrete language items (Small, 2006). If so, Tokunaga (2008) argues, teachers should have experience of the test if they are to teach test-taking strategies effectively. Most TOEIC test-taking textbook guides have a significant portion of their content devoted to such strategies.

METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire

Two questionnaires were administered to 66 students that made up two separate classes: (1) at the start of the course and (2) at the conclusion of the course, prior to the concluding TOEIC test. Typically, respondents took around ten minutes to write their answers for both questionnaires.

Effort was made to minimize any misunderstandings on the part of the respondent, and consequently, to obtain genuine responses. Both questionnaires were written in English and Japanese, and they were briefly introduced at the top of the documents. Effort was made to ensure respondents realized that they would not be penalized in any way according to their answers.

The first questionnaire had a total of 80 constructs that required the respondent to indicate their attitude on a 4-point Likert scale. A fifth option was available if the respondent felt unable to give a response. The first questionnaire had two parts: English Language Needs and Opinions on TOEIC. The English Language Needs section was constructed around a series of constructs that were designed to understand student motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic. The Opinions in TOEIC section was designed, unsurprisingly, to elicit respondent opinions toward the TOEIC test. Responses were to be both compared with the first section, English Language Needs, and appropriate responses in the second questionnaire to consider student reaction to the course pedagogy.

The second questionnaire comprised a total of 90 constructs, with one open-ended question. Parts One and Two remained unchanged (to consider temporal changes), and a third part was added: Opinions Toward the Course.

Syllabus

The course comprised fifteen, 90-minute lessons (see Table 1). The course comprised five stages. In Stage I, the first questionnaire was administered, after which the basic concept of the entire course was outlined. Stages II, III, and IV all had the same components: three topic-based lessons followed by a fourth lesson, in which all students gave a two-minute presentation. Stage V comprised two phases; the first involved students completing the second questionnaire, following which the listening portion of the textbook-derived TOEIC test was administered. The second phase comprised the reading portion of the afore-mentioned TOEIC test. Students' scores were verified and recorded.

TABLE 1. Course Outline

Week 1	Questionnaire I, Introduction
Week 2	Topic One (People)
Week 3	Topic Two (Travel)
Week 4	Topic Three (Technology)
Week 5	Presentation I
Week 6	Topic Four (Media)
Week 7	Topic Five (Entertainment)
Week 8	Topic Six (Restaurants)
Week 9	Presentation II
Week 10	Topic Seven (Office)
Week 11	Topic Eight (Personnel)
Week 12	Topic Nine (Management)
Week 13	Presentation III
Week 14	Questionnaire II, TOEIC (Listening)
Week 15	TOEIC (reading), Conclusion.

Presentations

Each presentation was based on topics and vocabulary sourced from material covered in the preceding three lessons (see Table 1). Each student selected a topic to prepare, in which they had to both utilize at least five words from the relevant vocabulary list given to them, as well as give information on three "content targets." Students were informed that they would have a two-minute period within which they had to complete their presentation. Additionally, they were informed of the need to look at their classmates from time to time, speak in a clear voice, and attempt to not just "read" their speech from a sheet of paper.

The first two presentations were based on an identical 13-point rubric. Features included: eyes (1), voice (1), text (1), vocabulary (5), targets (3), props (1), and time (1). "Eyes" referred to making an effort to try looking at the audience and was scored one point if judged appropriate. "Voice" was similarly ascribed one point – for articulating themselves audibly. "Text" meant making some effort not to just read from a sheet of paper, and again, was ascribed one point.

The third presentation was based on a 26-point rubric. There was one additional feature: collocations. This was in response to the observation that students were often using the vocabulary, but inappropriately, thereby getting credit for obviously not knowing, or at least, demonstrating, how to use the said words. The scale for each feature was also extended to try and get a more sensitive description of each presentation. Each scale for each feature was detailed on the handout that each student received. Features included: eye contact (3), voice (3), text – rephrased as internalization (3), vocabulary (2), targets (4), props (4), collocations (5), and time (2). This time, the vocabulary and collocations features were worth a total of seven points, meaning that students would get less credit for using the required words, yet they would get more credit for using them appropriately. The props feature, this time, required the student to use a PowerPoint presentation. It was hoped that the PowerPoint presentation would encourage the student to internalize the monologue to a greater degree. In addition, as many students did not know how to use the software, it was considered beneficial for the students to acquire such skill. Finally, the third presentation was based on real companies: in one class, companies that had hired most of the University's graduates the previous year, while in the other class, international companies that were both based in Japan and abroad.

Classes

One class comprised all students having a TOEIC Bridge[1] score band ranging from 128-132, a score equivalent to around 335-355 on the TOEIC test (ETS, 2006). Students were all second-year Business Administration majors, and were the fourth-ranked class, based on their most recent TOEIC Bridge or TOEIC test score.

The other class comprised students with TOEIC Bridge scores typically ranging from 124-126, comparable to 320-330 points on the TOEIC test. Students were also Business Administration majors, and were the fifth-ranked class.

Other Pedagogy

Topic-based lessons were used to focus on specific vocabulary lists. Students had to consistently prepare two vocabulary-based exercises before each lesson. In class, students were frequently asked to practice either collocating words from the list (at least two per word) or writing paragraphs using the words.

Students were also taught a large number of test-taking strategies, although no more than one, or sometimes two, each class, following which they were asked to complete some exercises to internalize the concepts. Furthermore, nine times throughout the course, students completed a 20-minute mini-TOEIC test based on the relevant theme.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

One of the main reasons for this research project was to ascertain if TOEIC classes would be considered meaningful and useful by students if taught in English. This is in direct response to research that has claimed Japanese students feel increasingly disenchanted with such classes taught by foreign lecturers if taught in English (Tokunaga, 2008). Although such research does resonate positively with many university lecturers' experiences, it was felt that this may be due to the course design and student motivation, as well as the mode of communication. Therefore, one of the initial questions in both our questionnaires asked the respondents to score the construct "English should be taught in English" (Figure 1).

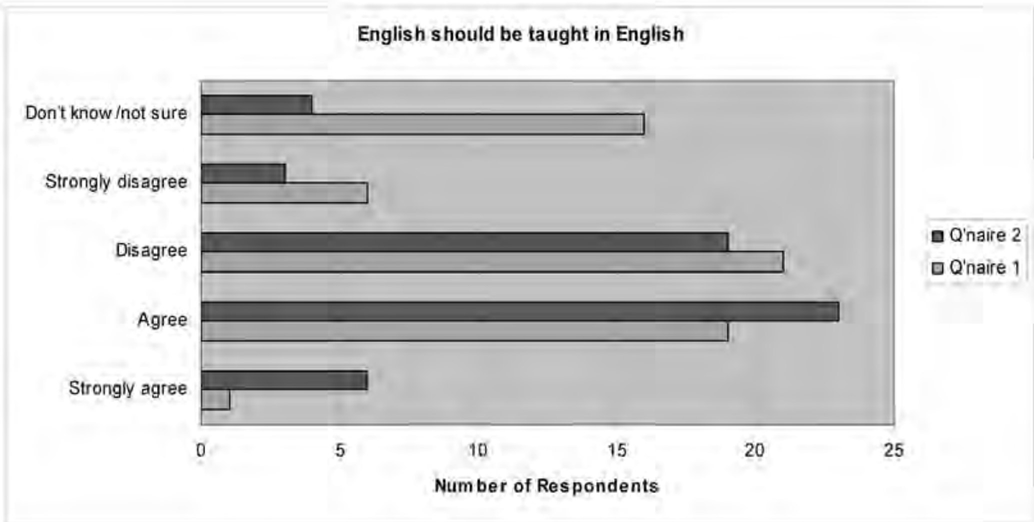

FIGURE 1. English should be taught in English (Construct 1)

When comparing student responses to both questionnaires, it becomes clear that students became much more positive toward Construct 1. In fact, there is almost a complete reversal of opinion between the two. Pleasingly, the number of students who had no opinion reduced markedly as well, perhaps due to respondents becoming more certain about their opinions regarding the pedagogy used in this course – an important determination of whether students had actually become intellectually engaged.

As one of the key pedagogical tools of the course involved student presentations, we wanted to evaluate student reactions to specific constructs that would reveal any changes in their opinions from the start to the finish of the course. For the purpose of this report, we isolated six constructs in which opinions were annotated on the same 4-point Likert scale as described earlier. The constructs are listed in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Six Presentation-Related Constructs (Constructs 2-7)

2.	I am comfortable giving presentations in class (in class)
3.	Presentations in class will improve my English (in class)
4.	I am comfortable with speech preparation (out of class)
5.	Speech preparation will improve my English skills (out of class)
6.	Giving presentations is one of the best ways to improve my English skills (in class)
	Listening to classmates presentations is one of the best ways to improve my English skills (in class)

The constructs were based on two principles: learning autonomy and attitudes to productive skills, in this case, presentations. Learning autonomy refers to the out-of-class preparation the students carried out to prepare for their presentation. Although students were given a rubric to prepare to, they were otherwise not checked nor given guidance. The fact that so many students responded positively for constructs 2-6 in the second questionnaire, despite the added workload, gave us cause to conclude that student motivation had improved, and that many had made the causal link between preparation and learning.

Although most students did not feel comfortable with giving presentations, for both questionnaires (Construct 2), they clearly learned to appreciate the gains that speaking can make in developing both fluency and language retention (Constructs 3 and 6).

The lack of any change in opinion for Construct 7 intimated that students remained unsure as to the purpose of the exercise. Perhaps we did not explain fully why listening and taking notes during the presentation would enhance their English skills. We assumed the relatively strong receptive skills, combined with learning about a large number of companies, would have ensured that they would be interested, and that the students would have realized the implicit English gain. Clearly, this was not the case, and many students did not make the connection between listening and learning in regard to peer presentations.

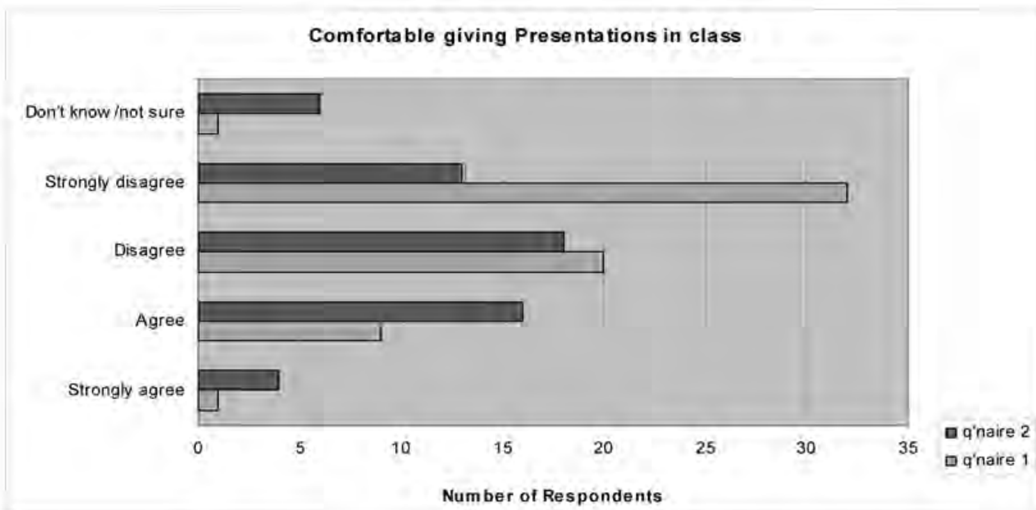

FIGURE 2. I am comfortable giving presentations in class (Construct 2)

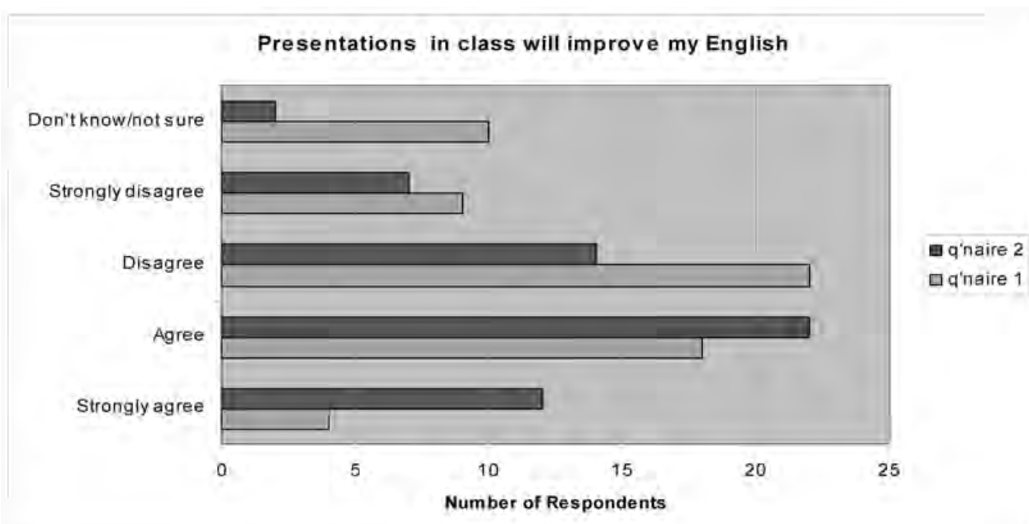

FIGURE 3. Presentations in class will improve my English (Construct 3)

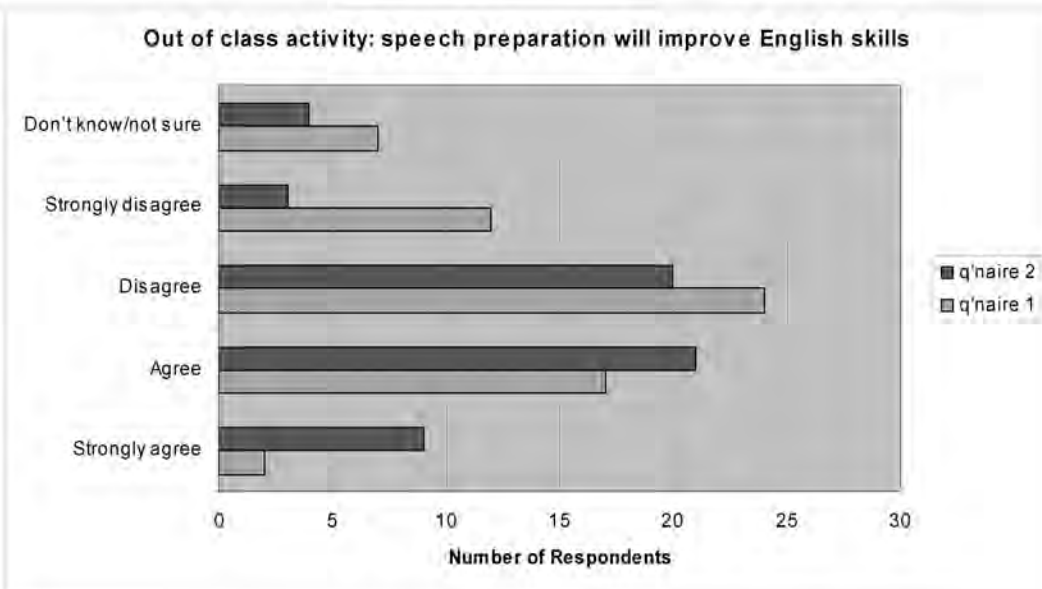

FIGURE 4. Speech preparation will improve my English skills (Construct 5)

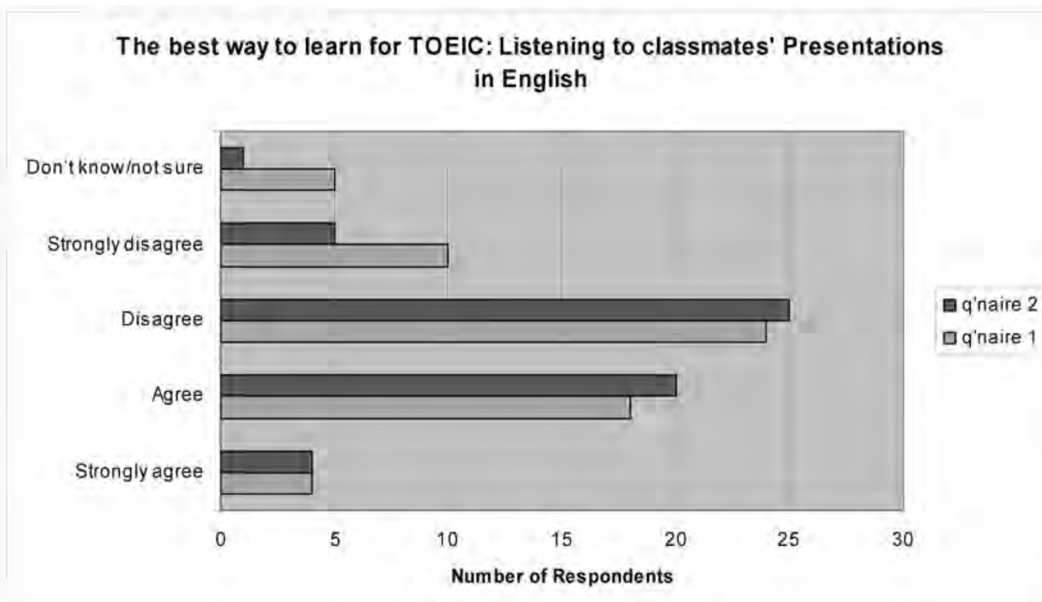

FIGURE 5. Listening to classmates presentations is one of the best ways to improve my English skills (Construct 7)

Student Attitudes on Course Elements

Analysis of the questionnaire indicated that respondents approved of the course content. This can be attributed to improved TOEIC scores across the board, and probably, the perception that the course was practical and useful for their personal goals and objectives.

The course had four key elements in its design: weekly tests, test-taking strategies, collocations, and presentations. Two elements (weekly tests and test-taking strategies) epitomize learning strategies endemic to the Japanese education system. On the 4-point Likert scale, out of a total of 55 students, 38 agreed with the construct that weekly tests were useful, while 40 thought that test-taking strategies were useful. If we break the 4-point construct into a simple 2-point positive-negative dichotomy (Table 3), we can see that this verdict remains. These findings were not surprising, and probably helped the students feel comfortable with the course in general, providing pedagogical elements that had high face validity for them.

The other two course elements (collocations and presentations) were arguably unknown to the students, so their response to the pedagogy was of significant interest. As Table 3 indicates, at first glance, the findings were positive for both, although somewhat less than for the first two elements. However, the two presentation-related constructs in Figure 1 appear mixed when using the simplistic positive-negative dichotomy.

TABLE 3. Student Attitudes to Four Elements of Course Design

Construct	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/not sure	Total of respondents	Positive	Negative
The weekly tests were useful for TOEIC preparation	3	38	11	1	3	56	41	12
The test-taking strategies were useful for TOEIC preparation	2	40	10	2	2	56	42	12
Collocations are useful for remembering vocabulary	5	25	18	2	6	56	30	20
I learned a lot giving presentations	8	27	15	4	2	56	35	19
Preparing for my presentation was motivating for me	7	18	26	4	1	56	25	30

According to the questionnaire, students had initially expressed a lack of awareness in using collocations to remember vocabulary. Nevertheless, at the completion of the course, a majority (30 out of 55) had a favorable attitude toward the construct that "collocations are useful for remembering vocabulary." Being a new language learning tool for them, it was satisfying to realize that the students recognized its utility.

Similarly, a majority of students (35 out of 55) responded with a positive attitude to the construct that "[they] learned a lot giving presentations." Although the construct did not require the respondent to elucidate what they had learned, it is not difficult to itemize a number of features that could have been at least somewhat responsible for this positive response. Firstly, they learned about their own target company – which was interesting for many of them, given that they, as second-year students, would have been starting to think about their own careers. Secondly, many of the students had not used the PowerPoint software at all, let alone to present. Therefore, many of them may have realized that it was a potentially valuable skill set to attain. Thirdly, students became increasingly familiar with a number of English language items, thereby improving their retention of such items.

This assertion is borne out by the students' response to the second presentation construct – "preparing for [their] presentation was motivating for [them]," in which a minority (25 out of 55) reacted positively. The minority of positive responses is most likely due to the simple fact that it was out-of-class preparation, i.e., something that interfered with other objectives for students – a truism that is quite normal for students around the world in a variety of situations. Despite being a minority overall, a smaller number (7 out of 55) - as with the previous construct - agreed strongly. When checking the correlation between respondents who had agreed strongly to both constructs, it was found that 4 out of the 8 students had done so. A minor point, but one that could be construed to evince respondents had not cavalierly ticked similar numbers on the Likert scale, thereby strengthening the supposition that the respondents were answering with "genuine" reactions.

Finally, for all five constructs, few respondents disagreed strongly. In summary, therefore, responses ranged from lukewarm to very positive, indicating that the course pedagogy was, at worst, somewhat appropriate and, at best, well received. Considering the course was taught in English, this should be seen as an endorsement of our course design, and a refutation of those who consider TOEIC pedagogy as the primary domain of teachers who use Japanese to convey relevant information in the classroom.

CONCLUSIONS

Students are always learning – wherever the class is taking place, whoever is teaching, whether the class is interesting and useful, or not. The only issue is whether they are learning useful skills, or learning whether they are bored. It is exactly the same with TOEIC classes. TOEIC pedagogy does not need to follow a rigid format to ensure student success. Variety in TOEIC pedagogy provides inspiration for wider segments of the class.

Although students need to acknowledge a clear link between pedagogy and practical application, they also need to become personally interested in the course work. What galvanized the students in this course was the company research component. The majority of students could present (and listen to) topics that were of potentially personal interest. English language skills became part, rather than the central focus, of the presentation: students were improving their vocabulary and test-taking skills.

This study has shown that when given the opportunity, students can learn independently in an autonomous manner, even in a test-based curriculum. If topics are chosen that are of interest and relevance to the future of your students, motivation will improve and autonomous behavior should prevail. In this case most students understood the relevance that research into companies (that they may potentially be future representatives of) has. Likewise, students learned more test-based vocabulary through the use of creating word lists as collocations in place of just word lists alone. The advantages of learning through the use of collocations showed signs of more meaningful vocabulary retention.

With time, the participants of this study began to understand the value that giving and listening to presentations has. The most influential discovery of this study was that students can motivate themselves to learn autonomously about topics which are indirectly linked to the TOEIC test. During the fifteen-week course of this study, many students showed an improvement in their final TOEIC scores.

EFL test pedagogy should not be constrained by normal methodology. Our students are relying on us, as their educators, to provide course design that will enlighten, motivate, and inspire them to learn by themselves. It is when we provide them with the opportunity to learn in a more meaningful way that students continue the learning process whenever they feel the need.

Footnote

[1]Designed to measure the emerging listening and reading English-language skills of beginning learners, as a precursor to the more extensive TOEIC listening and reading test (ETS, n.d.).

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Reading / Literacy

Children's Literature as Comprehensible Input in the University Classroom

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Children's literature is an effective and pedagogically appropriate source of comprehensible input for English language learners at the university level. By reviewing best practices for young first-language learners, young second-language learners, adult second-language learners, and adult basic literacy programs, as well as Krashen's conditions for optimal input, we can see that features of comprehensible input are inherent in children's literature. Preliminary quantitative data and student feedback confirm the suitability of children's literature as a source of interesting, relevant, and comprehensible input for adult language learners.

In selecting comprehensible input for university young adult English learners, children's literature can be an excellent, although often-overlooked, resource. Despite encountering some initial resistance, authentic children's literature has been found to be appropriate for adult learners. It can be employed for individual extensive reading, for shared reading with the instructor, or for reading in small groups. In looking at Krashen's Input Hypothesis, we can see how children's literature can provide optimal input that is comprehensible for learners. Furthermore, adult learners in a Korean university context can find motivation in reading children's literature and develop their language proficiency as a result.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE FOR ADULT LEARNERS

While children's literature is replete with examples of contextualized vocabulary and language structures, there is some controversy about whether it is appropriate for mature learners. However, on careful investigation, it appears that thoughtfully selected children's literature can indeed have a place in instruction for older learners, providing an excellent source of comprehensible input for language acquisition in the adult English language-learning classroom.

According to Smallwood (1998), children's literature is marked by its economy of words, expression of universal themes, and clear and interesting illustrations that help tell a story. Furthermore, the length of these works allows them, unlike a novel or other full-length adult piece of literature, to be read in one class period.

University student reaction to children's literature in the classroom confirms Smallwood's analysis. After a semester-long course incorporating on average 30 minutes of shared reading of children's literature per week, one student, JL, commented:

> There are lots of unique words that I've never heard before like an onomatopoeic word even if it is a book for children. And the writer use different words with same meaning to improve children's vocabulary. Also, unique words express the story realistically. That can stimulate our creativity and imagination. Especially the drawing with book makes us enjoy reading. With just story book, sometimes it looks really boring and even I don't want to try to read. Illustrated book looks interesting and makes us understand the story easily.

In addition, children's literature has built-in features that help to make it not only motivating, but also understandable and accessible to English language learners at earlier levels. (Khodabakhshi & Lagos, 1993) Children's literature incorporates universal themes that can bridge gaps between learners and the culture of the target language, and can also provide scaffolding and support to allow learners to grasp symbolism.

Through experience with children's literature, adult learners can acquire background knowledge and vocabulary that can transfer to other language tasks, (Khodabakhshi & Lagos, 1993) especially necessary in content-based English language courses.

The works of both Khodabakhshi and Lagos (1993) and Smallwood (1992) recommend that in order to provide optimal language learning conditions, children's literature titles should be selected from works that incorporate language structures slightly beyond the level of the learners. Furthermore, children's books chosen for use with adults should contain fresh and challenging vocabulary, and ideally demonstrate an example of a unique writing style.

In selecting literature for adult learners, Tomlinson and McGraw (1997) suggest selecting diverse materials from a variety of sources, and allowing learner self-choice from within a range determined by the instructor. This might include authentic children's fiction, non-fiction, and even poetry, as well as leveled readers, or content-based works that are written to a particular native speaker reading level.

Children's literature has a number of features that can make it a valuable source of comprehensible input for adult English language learners. When learners have the freedom to choose their own reading materials from within a framework established by their instructors, they can experience gains in motivation, background knowledge, and vocabulary that can transfer to other areas of language use.

PAIRED OR SHARED READING FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Children's literature can be read independently by adult English language learners, either during or outside of class time, but it can also be used for shared reading by two or more peers.

Smallwood (1998) describes shared reading of children's literature in an adult English language class. In this context, the texts were shared by the teacher reading aloud to the students. Benefits of this shared reading include the formation of powerful bonds between teacher and students, and its being a fun, inexpensive, and fairly easy instructional activity.

Reading that is shared not between teacher and students, but rather among peers, is sometimes referred to as paired reading. This activity may, however, also occur in groups with more than two participants.

Paired reading activities in an elementary school English as a Second Language (ESL) context are investigated in Li and Nes (2001). These student/student pairings, which combined skilled readers and less-skilled readers, provided increased exposure to text in a setting with reduced pressure and anxiety. Students had an opportunity to practice new language and receive feedback from a peer. This study shows improved fluency, accuracy, and motivation in reading.

Similarly, university students in Korea find that shared reading provides an opportunity for them to work together to decode meaning. Chinese student YZ commented, "Shared reading can be seen as a team work. So once an unfamiliar word or a phrase appears we work together to come to a conclusion for the meaning."

Kruidenier (2002) and McShane (2005) describe practices in the adult basic literacy classroom, including paired reading, shared reading, and dyad reading, among guided oral reading procedures. These instructional activities provide an increased amount of oral reading practice, encouraging frequent reading, and incorporating peer feedback into the reading process.

Schmidt (2007) shares key elements of an effective university extensive reading program, including the use of easy and engaging books, a reasonable reading target for non-language majors. He describes shared reading as a way to develop a reading community among learners, which can lead to rewarding interactions and a feeling that students are doing something together that actually benefits them in a meaningful way.

Students also experience socio-affective benefits of shared reading of children's literature. In informal feedback, they commented on the familiarity, intimacy, and friendships that grew among their group members, which they attributed to their shared reading experience.

For improving fluency, increasing motivation, providing contextualized peer feedback, reducing anxiety, and developing interpersonal relationships in the adult English language classroom, children's literature can be used in shared reading activities as well as individual reading.

KRASHEN'S INPUT HYPOTHESIS AND COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT

In choosing children's literature as materials for adult English language learners, it can be useful to look at Krashen's Input Hypothesis. The Input Hypothesis states that "a necessary (but not sufficient) condition to move from stage i to stage $i + 1$ is that the acquirer understand input that contains $i + 1$, where 'understand' means that the acquirer is focussed on the meaning and not the form of the message" (1982, p. 21). By applying the characteristics he outlines for activities that provide optimal input for language acquisition, we can see how shared reading of children's literature falls into this category.

One characteristic of Krashen's optimal input is that it is interesting and relevant (p. 66). Interesting content encourages learners to focus on the message and not on preselected linguistic forms. Children's literature can meet this requirement as well. Another adult learner, JH, who read children's literature in a university English language class, commented:

> I enjoy the shared reading time on Friday, because the books are not difficult, have a lot of beautiful illustrations, and the stories are interesting. Some of the stories were memorable and meant a lot to me, since I'm majoring in Education. To understand how children thinks and feels is very important to me. Reading gives me wonderful opportunities for indirect experience, like this. In addition, good books give me time to think, reflect and contemplate about others, the world, and myself. These moments will help me grow.

Krashen also indicated that in order for optimal language acquisition to take place, input should not be grammatically sequenced; rather, if meaning is negotiated with success and communication takes place, $i + 1$ will occur automatically and naturally (p. 68). Authentic children's literature also exhibits this characteristic, as structures are not carefully sequenced but rather recycled, providing built-in review of grammatical points in a natural context.described

Another characteristic of optimal input for language acquisition described by Krashen is sufficient quantity (p. 71). Input should not be artificially constrained. For example, a single paragraph is rarely sufficient to encourage language acquisition. Instructors should increase the amount of comprehensible input and make appropriate materials available to learners. All available instructional time should be spent supplying some form of comprehensible input. A large collection of children's literature can meet this requirement as well, providing a vast quantity of comprehensible input to learners. Students can recognize the value of children's literature in providing them with input of sufficient quantity. Korean university learner HK commented in a journal entry, "The merit, it is the fact that we read books. We know that we must contact lots of English to improve our English conversation skill. But actually it is very hard because we are busy or we feel bored. Considering this fact, the time of reading books on Friday is beneficial." Teachers have to make a commitment in terms of time and materials to provide input of sufficient quantity in the classroom. This is not an impossible dream, and children's literature is one way to make it happen.

Finally, optimal input, according to Krashen, is comprehensible. The learner should be able to understand the message conveyed by the material, ideally without resorting to the use of a dictionary. This is possible when the topic can be easily identified and the content is relevant, familiar, and within the range of experience of the learner. To make input comprehensible, there often exist non-linguistic resources that encourage comprehension. "Providing extra-linguistic support in the form of realia and pictures for beginning classes is not a frill, but a very important part of the tools the teacher has to encourage language acquisition" (p. 66). Children's literature contains just this kind of support for language learners: The content is familiar to adults, and pictures provide built-in support for the comprehensibility.

In considering Krashen's characteristics of optimal input to encourage language acquisition, children's literature can meet these requirements, when selected to be interesting, relevant, and comprehensible, and when provided in sufficient quantities.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE WITH UNIVERSITY LEARNERS IN KOREA

A number of investigations have been undertaken to determine whether children's literature is indeed effective in encouraging English language acquisition among adult learners, particularly in a Korean university context. Results have been found in the areas of learner motivation and vocabulary development.

Learner Motivation

As seen above, Krashen's hypothesis states that optimal input for language acquisition is language that is interesting and relevant to learners. Valentine and Repath-Martos claim "providing language learners with subject matter relevant to their real-world needs will motivate them to acquire the language associated with those needs as well." (233) they summarize several motivational factors, including interest, relevance, expectancy and satisfaction. Children's literature can be motivating for adult learners and help to meet their language-learning needs.

Tomlinson and McGraw (1997) state that children's literature can be used to generate interest in adult learners. Smallwood (1992, 1998) recommends that works be chosen that are related to curricular objectives, address social, cultural, and political topics, and contain thematic vocabulary. Tomlinson and McGraw also all that instruction should be organized around themes that have been selected to appeal to learners' interests.

An anonymous survey was conducted of 40 undergraduate students who participated in reading children's literature as part of their low-intermediate level credit-bearing English language course. The course was titled "English for Global and Social Issues" and students read children's literature on themes such as the environment, health, commerce, and human and civil rights. At the end of the course, students responded to statements using a Likert scale on which 1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree.

Students did not feel that the books they read were beyond their level, with a mean response of 2.40 to the statement, "The books were difficult." Children's literature held their interest overall, with mean scores of 3.38 given to the statement "Reading children's literature was interesting" and 3.52 to "The books were interesting for adults."

Students felt that reading children's literature gave them a context that enabled them to expand their vocabulary. They gave a mean response of 3.70 to the statement, "I learned new vocabulary and expressions from the books," and 3.98 to the statement "The context helped me understand new vocabulary."

Students agreed that there was value to the activity of reading children's literature in class and planned to continue the activity in the future, with mean responses of 4.13 to the statement " Adults can learn from reading children's literature" and 3.70 to "I would read children's literature in the future to improve my English."

Based on this data, it appears that adult English language learners in a Korean university setting find reading children's literature to be motivating: they reported that it was appropriate and interesting, assisted in their vocabulary development, and was an activity they planned to continue.

Vocabulary Development

Not only can reading literature written for younger readers help to motivate adult learners in their language learning, but it can also lead to measurable gains in their vocabulary development.

Kweon and Kim's (2008) study of 12 Korean undergraduates had them reading young adult chapter books, targeted at native speakers from the 4th grade of elementary school to 8th grade (middle school.) Over the course of five weeks, these learners read three titles, totaling 638 pages. They used a self-report of word knowledge to measure learners' vocabulary. Given a list of the content words most frequently occurring in the books they read, learners indicated whether they knew the meaning of a given word. This was administered before and after learners read the targeted titles. From the pre-test to the post-test after the reading of the young adult literature, Kweon and Kim found a 28.9% increase in reported knowledge of nouns, a 17.3% increase for verbs, and an 18.0% increase in adjective knowledge. We can see that even using the measure of self-reported knowledge of words, reading texts targeted at younger readers can lead to vocabulary development for Korean university students.

In Moser's 2009 study of 30 Korean university undergraduates, the students read instructor-selected children's literature containing anger metaphors. These books were at a level roughly equivalent to early first-grade to mid fifth-grade of elementary school for native English-speaking children. Learners read 29 titles over the course of 16 weeks. Learners' vocabulary acquisition was measured using narrative writing samples that were annotated for anger metaphors and counted using corpus linguistics techniques, both before and after they read the children's literature titles. From the pre-test to the post-test, learners in this study produced anger metaphors a mean of .44 times in twenty lines of their personal narrative, and 1.17 times in the post-test, with a difference of .72 occurrences of metaphor usage between the pre-test and post-tests. However, this growth was not statistically significant at $p < .05$. When compared to learners at a similar level who had not read the selected children's literature, there was a statistically significant difference. While learners' language development may not be significant over the course of a single semester, it does outpace that of similar cohort without exposure to this source of comprehensible input.

In 2009, Geronimo conducted a study with 30 undergraduates at a Korean university. (This was a subset of the above 40 students in the learner motivation study who completed both a pre-test and post-test.) They read assorted children's literature, self-selected from a collection of 60 titles made available by the instructor on various course topics. Learners' academic word list vocabulary was measured using a 15-item cloze test with a word bank, adapted from Elvin's 2009 *Waseda Cloze Test Series*. Each week they had on average 30 minutes of in-class reading time during which they read from one to three books. After seven weeks, learners' vocabulary went from an average raw score of 2.53 to a score of 3.90, reflecting on average growth of 1.37 academic vocabulary items. While the effectiveness of this practice in producing academic vocabulary growth could be better demonstrated with a longer study and comparison to a control group that did not read children's literature, it appears that academic vocabulary can be acquired through exposure to children's literature as comprehensible input.

From these studies conducted in Korean university contexts, we can see that even a limited exposure to children's literature as comprehensible input, for example, over a course of only five weeks, or as little as one or two titles a week, is sufficient for measurable vocabulary growth, whether it be content words, figurative language, or academic vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

Authentic children's literature can be an effective means for exposing language learners of any age to targeted language as well as cultural and content-area schemata. It provides an excellent source of authentic language in a highly supportive, comprehensible context and can be seen as enjoyable and motivating for adult language learners. This resource should not be overlooked in favor of reliance solely on course books targeted to adult learners.

Children's literature can be used for individual silent reading or for shared reading among adult learners. When learners read children's literature in small groups of their peers, they gain increased exposure to language through meaningful interactions and shared literature experiences. They have reduced anxiety and form closer relationships with their classmates. For growth in linguistic as well as socio-affective areas, shared reading of children's literature is a recommended classroom activity for adult English language learners.

The conditions for meeting Krashen's definition of optimal input is language that is interesting, relevant, not grammatically sequenced, of sufficient quantity, and above all, comprehensible. These conditions can be easily met in the language learning classroom through the regular use of carefully selected children's literature with opportunities for student self-selection of reading materials.

Children's literature can motivate adult learners. They find it a valuable and interesting source of input, useful for vocabulary development, and something they could continue to read in the future. Experimental data shows that they can acquire knowledge of content words, figurative language, and even academic vocabulary while reading literature written for children or young adults.

Professional English language educators in Korea should investigate the possibility of including children's literature in their instructional program with adult learners. This can serve as a stimulating and accessible source of comprehensible input, with resultant gains in language learning over even a relatively short period of time.

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Exploitation of IT to Enhance Students' Extensive Reading Skills: A Case Study of Fourth-Year Business English Major Students

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This action research investigated the extensive reading skills of twenty fourth-year Business English major students studying at Eastern Asia University, Pathumthani, Thailand. It aimed to (a) explore the impact of extensive reading on these students' language learning, (b) find out whether extensive reading can change their attitude toward reading, and (c) examine the benefit of extensive reading on their writing ability. The instruments used for data collection consisted of the participants' written impression on the fifth week and a questionnaire was distributed at the end of the twelfth week. The findings revealed that after five weeks, the participants were positive that extensive reading was very useful for them to develop other related skills: listening, speaking, and writing. Their responses from the questionnaire also showed that extensive reading had a positive impact on their overall language improvement. Most of the participants agreed that apart from the four skills, they had also enlarged their vocabulary and improved their grammar. Moreover, they had developed their critical thinking skills as well.

In this post global era, information about English, especially reading passages, is available on-line inclusive of exercises on grammatical structures and vocabulary as well as technical terms. Therefore, it is considerably practical for English teachers to acquaint students with the Internet and encourage them to explore reading materials on their own under their teacher's guidance. Extensive reading has been proclaimed to be an effective tool to enhance students' language competence. This action research; therefore, explores how the implementation of an extensive reading component in a Seminar on Business English Usage course offered to the fourth-year Business English major students at Eastern Asia University can develop their reading skills that will lead to the improvement of other related skills, especially writing. With reference to Barnett (1989), today we are more aware than in the past that all four skills, together with cultural awareness, are essential to language learning. Reading is central in many ways. Appropriate texts provide comprehensible input from which learners assimilate grammar and vocabulary. Closely related to writing, reading promotes analytical and cognitive skill development as readers grapple with both surface meaning and deeper understanding. Dacanay and Bowen (1967) concluded that the role of reading in making a broad education possible cannot be overstated. Education without reading, at least education as we know it, would be utterly impossible. The teacher must make reading a useful skill and must inculcate the enjoyable appreciation and love of reading that, while it is one of the intangibles of education, is probably the most important fact in determining whether our schools really educate or merely train.

Greenberg and Comprone (1994) also remarked that reading and writing are interconnected processes. More importantly, teachers expect students to write critically to use writing to demonstrate not only that they understand what they have read but that they are able to interpret, evaluate, and respond to it. Accordingly, students responded positively to their own self-study on appropriate selected materials outside the classroom as part of each lesson. This study shows that extensive reading is a very useful tool to motivate students to learn English at their own pace and to communicate with their friends effectively in class about what they have learned outside the classroom.

RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Confronted with a class of students whose individual English skills and work ethic were remarkably varied, the researcher was reassured that implementing extensive reading to this group of students would be practical in many ways as they had learned enough grammatical structures and vocabulary required to comprehend certain kinds of texts. Some of the students taking the course had reasonably high levels of reading and writing skills while others were at much lower levels, ranging from those who could express only basic survival needs in English to those able to make fairly effective use of intermediate syntax level, but with limited vocabulary. Their career goals varied, too; some wanted to get jobs in the airline services and others wanted to continue their education before entering the workforce. Viewed in this light, extensive reading would have a positive impact on students' language development in tremendous ways. According to Susser and Robb (1990), reading has been the skill most emphasized in traditional FL teaching, and even today it is the mainstay of EFL instruction in many countries. In Japan, for example, English instruction at the university level is usually the "intensive reading procedure," which implies close study of short passages, including syntactic, semantic, and lexical analyses and translation into L1 to study meaning.

Krashen (1993) stated that reading is the only way we become good readers, develop good writing style, an adequate vocabulary, advanced grammar and the only way we become good spellers. Indeed, reading is beneficial especially for students learning a foreign language. Moreover, the empirical evidence in second and foreign language settings show that extensive reading builds vocabulary and structural awareness. To Mason and Krashen (1997) the most important and impressive finding is the clear improvement in attitude shown by the experimental students. Many of the once reluctant students of EFL became eager learners. The "extensive reading procedure," on the other hand, has now attracted many researchers as an effective way to enhance learners' reading comprehension and improve their language ability. This study therefore explores the impact of extensive reading on the development of English skills of fourth-year Business English major students studying Seminar on Business English Usage to underpin students' reading problems and how they have mastered their reading barriers and improved their English. The findings of the study will greatly benefit not only the students but those involved in language teaching course syllabus design.

Extensive reading and reading in quantity can solve reading problems for Thai students. Moreover, it can be a challenge to get them to read, especially when they do not belong to a reading culture, as is the case in Thailand. Thais have poor reading habits and seldom buy books. As this study encouraged students to use the Internet to find materials related to their study, there is no extra expense, and they could do their own study at any time convenient to them.

Furthermore, study after study has shown that extensive reading had a greater impact on second language learning. Davis (1995) mentioned that the benefits of extensive reading are considerable, but difficult to quantify without longitudinal study. They do not emerge immediately in terms of straightforward examination results, though there is plenty of informal evidence. Nation (1997) also stated that the benefits of extensive reading do not come in the short term.

The "extensive reading procedure" has now attracted many researchers as an effective way to enhance learners' reading comprehension and improve their language competence. Firmly believing in the tremendous impact of extensive reading on the students' language improvement, the researcher intentionally undertook action research integrating extensive reading as part of the weekly assignments related to various Business English topics in the course syllabus, such as restaurant English, English in shops and department stores, English for airline services, English for the tourism industry, and hotel English to explore the impact of extensive reading on the development of English skills of fourth-year Business English major students studying Seminar on Business English Usage and to underpin students' reading problems and how they can master their reading barriers and improve their English.

As students do not have much opportunity to use English outside of class, extensive reading can be an ideal assignment that will increase exposure to the target language significantly, and the fact that students have to read in quantity in extensive reading means this action research is practical in many ways. Firstly, students do not have to pay for any extra books. Secondly, they are encouraged to search for the information related to their field of study according to their own interest. Therefore, there should be no problem with the level of difficulty. Thirdly, it can enhance students' general language competence. Fourthly, it increases students' exposure to language. Fifthly, it motivates students to read. Finally, the Internet is free of charge and they can spend as much time as they want to read on their own. Students with a certain level of ability in English can learn to read by extensive reading alone. As students do not spontaneously apply the skills presented in skill lessons, instruction, and activities to encourage their development and automatic use, these skills must be incorporated into daily instruction. In this study, the students were to read on their own every day, so it was believed that through twelve weeks of extensive reading, students would improve their English ability in Business English.

To enhance vocabulary development and reinforce learning, materials in the action research study move from general to more specialized topics and vocabulary, and deal with complex subjects at different points in different contexts. Students were expected to benefit from this graded progression of each assignment of material by working through the Internet systematically from beginning to end of assignments.

Flexibility, however, is a key feature of action research. Students are assigned to work on their own five days a week at their own convenience and are expected to spend at least an hour a day working on the Internet by reading extensively selected material on the given topic. They, then have a chance to select any related material according to the level of difficulty with the focus on exploring new ideas or knowledge rather than working on grammar and vocabulary. The material selected would reflect their personal interest or relevance. Either way, when the students had finished their assignments within twelve weeks, they were expected to be more confident and be acquainted with more than 100 essential business works.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to investigate the following:

1. To explore the impact of extensive reading on students' language learning.
2. To find out whether extensive reading can change students' attitude on reading.
3. To examine the benefit of extensive reading on students' writing ability.

Definition of Terms

Action Research

In this study, *action research* refers to classroom research to improve students' learning. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1981), action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationale and justice of their own social or educational practice, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out. Groups of participants can be teachers, students, principles, parents and other community members – any group with a shared concern. The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realize that action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members. In education, action research has been employed in school-based curriculum development, professional development, school improvement programs and system planning and policy development. To Rob Waring (n.d.), action research is a kind of research that emerges from a teacher's immediate concerns and problems in their classroom.

Extensive Reading

In this study, *extensive reading* refers to reading in quantity for pleasure and knowledge, and for general understanding where the reader's attention is on meaning, not the language, of the text. Broughton (1978), however, comments that extensive reading must imply a "relatively low degree of understanding."

The term "extensive reading" characterized by Powell (n.d.) generally includes the relatively fast reading of a large amount of longer, easy-to-understand material, with the reading done mostly outside of the classroom and at each student's own pace and level. There are few, if any, follow-up exercises, because the aim is for overall understanding rather than word-by-word decoding or grammar analysis. For the same reason, there is minimum use of dictionaries.

METHODS

The methodology includes participants' written impression on their extensive reading, a questionnaire for data collection, and data analysis. The research questions are:

1. In what way can extensive reading enhance students' language improvement?
2. Will students' attitudes be changed after their extensive reading?
3. How can extensive reading affect students' writing ability?

Description of Population and Procedures

This action research looked for changes in three different aspects of each individual student's work as followings: changes in the use of language and discourse, changes in activities and practices, and changes in attitudes toward reading after twelve weeks of extensive reading. It involved participants in analyzing their participation in extensive reading, their practices to become more inquisitive about circumstances, action, and consequences. In this case, they had to keep records which described what they were doing as accurately as possible reflecting their ideas about what they had learned from their materials. The participants in this study were comprised of 4 males and 16 females, aged 22 to 25. They were fourth-year Business English major students studying Seminar on Business English Usage. Participants were assigned to read their own selected materials on the Internet outside the classroom. Generally, they were recommended to select the topics related to the course requirements: restaurant English, English used in shops and department stores, English for airline services, English in the tourism industry, and hotel English. They were required to read at least an hour each day and five days a week with a copy of the selected materials to be submitted to the researcher. After reading each day, they had to write in their journal reflecting what they had learned from the selection and hand in their writing to the researcher every week. The project started on November 6, 2008, and ended on February 12, 2009. At the beginning of each lesson, the students formed groups of five for exchanging ideas on their selected materials and came up with a conclusion on their discussion to make an oral presentation in front of the class. The activities took about 90 minutes. Then there were remedial works on grammar and writing with recommendations for further reading. The researcher would converse with each student in class to explore their reaction toward the reading material and class activities, and what they enjoyed learning the most. After the activities had been implemented for a period of five weeks, the researcher requested the whole class to express their views on their readings and class activities as a midway follow-up. The questionnaires were distributed on the last week of the activity. All participants completed the questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaires were collected, analyzed, and discussed based on the researcher's judgments and impressions, with reference to related previous research cited on students' achievements.

Methods of Data Collection

The research instruments were based on the participants' short written impressions on their own progress after five weeks of extensive reading and the questionnaires were distributed in class on February 12, 2009.

Participants' Impressions Toward Extensive Reading

After five weeks (December 4, 2008) the participants submitted to the researcher their writing in a short paragraph on their impressions of their selected extensive reading materials.

Questionnaires

To obtain data for analysis, the researcher designed a total of 25 questions comprised of 15 closed questions and 10 open-ended questions. The questionnaires were divided into four parts: Part I, General information about participants; Part II, Participant's attitude toward reading; Part III, Participant's impression or feeling toward extensive readings; and Part IV, Participant's analysis of their own development.

Part I aimed at gathering data based on general information about the participants including name, sex, age, number of years studying English and the title of the course enrolled in. There were five questions in this part.

Part II examined the participants' attitudes toward reading. There were ten questions in this part covering general reading background, reading difficulties, differences between reading Thai and English, barriers to reading enjoyment, ways to solve problems, and the instructor's role.

Part III explored the participants' impressions or feelings toward extensive reading, gathering information on their feelings toward reading on their own, the topics that interested them, their need of a dictionary, and suggestions on extensive reading. There were five questions in this part.

Part IV inquired about the participants' feedback on their own extensive reading based on the role of reading in their lives, their type of preferences, their suggestions on reading materials for the course, their own reading process, and the rate of their reading ability.

Diary

The researcher kept short notes and made comments on the participants' journals every week to reflect their strengths and weaknesses. There would be no comment on grammar as the main purpose of the researcher's diary was to keep records of the participants' progress.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze both the participants' written impressions and their responses to extensive reading based on the questionnaire.

FINDINGS

Details of the findings were derived from two sources: the participants' written impressions on their extensive reading after five weeks and the questionnaires. First the written impressions of each respondent were presented for information with a discussion and conclusion about their responses. Then the data from the questionnaire was analyzed.

Discussion of the Participants' Written Impressions on Their Extensive Reading

All the participants revealed that extensive reading was very useful for them to develop many skills apart from reading: listening, speaking, and writing. Their comments were relevant to the findings of previous research on the impact of extensive reading in enlarging the participants' knowledge of vocabulary and improving their writing and other related skills. Moreover, all the participants were encouraged to read more for their own enjoyment and to improve their language skills. Extensive reading apparently can change the participants' attitudes about language learning and convince them that they can learn to improve their English by reading a lot on their own. It is also noticeable from most of the participants' written impressions on extensive reading that they were rather weak in grammar. However, they were inspired to learn how to improve themselves through reading from the Internet. Moreover, all of them were very positive about the effect of extensive reading on their language learning and its application in their daily life. Apart from extensive reading, evidence from the participants' feedback also showed that video presentations on issues related to Business English topics (e.g., restaurant English, English for shopping and finance, hotel English, and English for airline services and tourism) as well as writing journals can also become practical re-enforcement tools to develop students' English competence.

Data from the Questionnaire

Data from Part II of the questionnaire administered to the students at the end of the study appear in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Participants' Attitudes Toward Reading

Question	Number of "Yes" Responses	%	Number of "No" Responses	%
1. Do you like reading in Thai?	20	100	0	0
2. Don't you generally like reading in Thai?	20	100	0	0

3. Do you read both Thai and English books?	19	95	1	5
4. Do you think reading in Thai is more enjoyable because it's your language?	19	95	1	5
5. Do you think reading in English is difficult and boring?	7	35	13	65
6. Do you think vocabulary is important to you when reading?	20	100	0	0
7. Do you think grammar is also important to make you understand your reading?	20	100	0	0
8. What is the most difficult for you - vocabulary or grammar?				
Vocabulary	3	15	-	-
Grammar	9	45	-	-
Both vocabulary and grammar	8	40	-	-
9. Do you think by reading more, you can eliminate your reading problems?	20	100	0	0
10. Do you think the teacher has a great role to motivate you to read in English?	18	90	2	10

DISCUSSION

From the participants' responses to the questionnaire as shown in Table 1, it was observed that almost all of them normally read in Thai and in English, and enjoyed reading more in Thai as it was their native language, but one participant disagreed. It is also interesting to note that only 35% of the participants agreed that reading in English was difficult and boring. It was obvious that vocabulary and grammar were their main problems although surprisingly 15% of the participants admitted that only vocabulary was their problem. However, all the participants did agree that by reading more, they can eliminate their reading problems.

This reconfirms experts' views discussed earlier that by reading more one can develop their own reading skills. The participants' answers to question 10 also revealed that the teacher had an important role in motivating the participants to read and improve their reading skills, and all of them had positive attitudes about reading.

Part III: The Participants' Impression or Feeling Toward Extensive Reading

There were five open-ended questions on this topic. The answers to each question varied and can be illustrated as the following:

Question 1: How Do You Feel Reading on Your Own?

The participants' responses clearly revealed that most of them felt motivated by reading on their own, except for a few who felt that they had problems with vocabulary. When analyzed carefully, the researcher found that the participants were impressed by their development and felt that their reading had enhanced their knowledge. They also understood their own limitations and were positive about their improvement. All together, it is apparent that if motivated, the participants would enjoy reading on their own and improve their language competency.

Question 2: What Kind of Topic Interests You the Most?

It was not surprising to see that most of the participants were interested in the topics involved in this course, Seminar on Business English Usage. The course contents covered a wide range of topics: restaurant English, English in shops and department stores, English for airline services, English in the tourism industry, and hotel English. However, extensive reading also encouraged some of the respondents to explore other materials, such as history, health, technology, sports, entertainment, stories and superstars. In other words, extensive reading allowed the participants to read for pleasure as well.

Question 3: Do You Always Use a Dictionary When You Don't Understand?

About 85% of the participants said that they always used a dictionary when they did not understand a word. This discouraged their reading as it was not necessary to keep looking at a dictionary when coming across difficult words. However, it was interesting to observe that 15% of the participants did not use a dictionary when they did not understand the word. This helped motivate them to read more fluently. In fact, it was the right approach to develop reading skills.

Question 4: What Is the Most Valuable Experience You Have Got by Reading Extensively for 12 Weeks?

From the participants' responses to Question 4, it was apparent that extensive reading was very beneficial to their language improvement in many aspects. They could read faster and gained more understanding of the reading material, apart from developing their grammar and vocabulary. Moreover, they felt more confident about using English for their oral presentations in front of the class as well as exchanging ideas with their peers. In other words, the participants developed the four skills: reading, writings, speaking, and listening even in a short period of time.

Question 5: What Would Be Your Comments and Suggestions to Your Friends about Extensive Reading?

It was obvious that 70% of the participants were clear about the question and were able to provide sensible comments or suggestions to their friends about the impact of reading on language improvement. From their answers, it was clear that they all agreed that extensive reading helped develop their language skills and broaden their knowledge. The rest of the participants, 30%, were not clear about the question as their answers were irrelevant to the question. However, the majority of the participants' suggestions reconfirmed that extensive reading was very useful for students learning English and was a very practical skill to enhance their English competence.

Part IV: The Participants' Analysis of Their Own Development

The participants' answers showed that reading everyday made them understand the text better, it enhanced their knowledge, and they developed other skills, including pronunciation. Moreover, they were encouraged to read in some other fields apart from Business English and were convinced that reading was important for them in their daily lives. The participants obviously reconfirmed the fact that when assigned to read extensively: they chose the materials relevant to the course contents to enhance their understanding. With some exceptions, the participants also read for pleasure, such as reading about fashion, and entertainment, including comic stories that made them enjoy reading more. Interestingly, all the participants agreed that through this course, they had developed their English and were inspired to read more to broaden their experience. They felt more comfortable and confident in learning by themselves. This apparently shows that extensive reading had a good impact on this group of students. Most of the participants clearly demonstrated that they understood the reading process: skimming and scanning helped them understand the passage. However, some of them never applied these techniques. They were used to the traditional way of reading that was making sure that they understood the difficult words and grammar before reading the whole passage. All together, it was convincing that extensive reading clearly encouraged the participants to read more on their own, and they found it worthwhile reading a lot to develop their English.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The data from the participants revealed that all of them were satisfied with their language improvement. They had improved their vocabulary and felt more confident in communicating with their friends. By exploring information on the Internet, they had broadened their experience about Business English, especially in relation to the topics studied: restaurant English, English for shops and department stores, English for finance, hotel English, and English for airline services, including English for tourism. Apart from these topics, the participants also searched for other information for their own pleasure, such as entertainment, sports, and literature. They also felt that they were able to improve their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. What they liked most about extensive reading was that they could select the materials that were not difficult for them and when they had a chance to discuss what they had read among friends, they gained more communicative skills. Making presentations in front of the class made them feel more confident, and they were inspired to learn more on their own. It was obvious that extensive reading had been very useful for this group of students. They were convinced that people can learn from the Internet, which is a great source of knowledge. After the period of twelve weeks, all the participants were very sure that their reading skills had improved. They were able to read faster and could better apply the reading techniques of skimming and scanning to develop their reading skills. At the same time, they were able to improve their grammar and when reading in quantity although some of the participants still felt that grammar was their reading barrier.

It was interesting to find that after twelve weeks of extensive reading, all of the participants were satisfied with the project and agreed that it was valuable to them. These findings were relevant to other research findings on the impact of extensive reading discussed earlier. Extensive reading can help students develop their reading speed and reading comprehension. After twelve weeks of extensive reading, they had positive attitudes about it. They were motivated to read on their own. Actually, 80% of the participants were definitely confident that extensive reading was helpful to them in improving their English. The rest of the participants felt moderately convinced about extensive reading and their English improvement, as they thought reading was difficult for them. From Table 1, we see that 90% of the participants read in both Thai and English. Naturally they thought reading in Thai was more enjoyable because it is their own language. However, only 35% of the participants thought that reading in English was difficult for them. Ninety percent of all the participants agreed that vocabulary and grammar were their difficult problems. When analyzed in detail, it is interesting to see that 40% of the participants agreed that both grammar and vocabulary were difficult for them, whereas 45% of the participants agreed that grammar was difficult and 15% thought that vocabulary was difficult. It was also interesting to observe that 15% of the participants who considered vocabulary difficult for them were the ones who had improved the most. In this case, the instructor had a leading role in encouraging the students to read, as 90% of the participants agreed that the teacher had a great role motivating them to read.

The participants revealed that 60% of them were interested in reading about the topics related to their studies. Only 40% of the participants enjoyed reading more based on other topics that interested them. In this case, the language instructor should encourage students to read extensively on any topic that interests them in order to establish student reading habits and foster life-long learning. One way to motivate students to read is to broaden their understanding about reading techniques and that they do not need to use a dictionary, as 85% of the participants revealed that they always used a dictionary when they did not understand. However, it was interesting to note that 100% of the participants who answered Question 4 agreed that extensive reading was very valuable and beneficial to them. They became more confident and felt motivated to read more through reading, they gained a lot of knowledge and improved the four skills, which concurs with Kelly (1969, p. 151): "Extensive reading is not primarily concerned with the skills of reading itself, but takes in grammar, stylistics, and even translation."

Moreover, the participants also agreed that after twelve weeks of extensive reading, they read faster and better than before. Kelly (1969) also mentions that independent reading outside the classroom has always been recommended, and various means have been used to encourage, or even force, pupils to do it. Apparently, extensive reading has a good effect on students' writing ability**:** "The art of writing is neither simple nor straightforward enough to be learnt by formulas: reflection and reasoning are necessary" (Burnouf, as cited in Kelly, 1969, p. 153). The researcher found that extensive reading material can enhance the participants' writing as reflected from their journals. Although not all of the participants were able to write better, most of those with moderate ability had improved their writing. They were able to use correct tenses. The ones with good ability had improved their writing style with adaptations from their reading. In conclusion, the participants' writing developed and reflected their functional command of language, although they still made some grammatical mistakes. But this should not prevent them from becoming good communicators. Kelly (1969, p. 221) says that:

> In the century before, Prendergast had rejected grammar as an introduction to language, pointing out that many whose grammatical knowledge was excellent could not operate in the language at all.

Limitations of the Study

This action research focused on the fourth-year Business English major students who already had some background in English, so the results were supportive, and due to the fact that the group was small, the researcher could pay attention to every student's language needs. Another limitation was that the research was focused only on Business English topics as restricted by the course content, so the participants might have had limited options in searching for topics that interested them. Therefore, the researcher would strongly recommend those interested in the impact of extensive reading on students' language improvement in Thailand to undertake another similar project on other groups of students who have to take English as a compulsory subject, although they do not major in English. The findings would be useful for all parties concerned with teaching English to Thai students.

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Does Extensive Reading Always Assist TOEFL Scores?

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Along with the widespread use of standardized tests such as TOEFL and TOEIC, extensive reading (ER) is currently gaining popularity in Asian tertiary education. Evidence supporting the benefits of ER is well established, but ER is less well understood as a means to raise standardized test scores, particularly among poorly motivated students in an L1 environment. Using a sample (N = 564) of TOEFL scores from a university-level program, it was found that although repeated ER can be associated with TOEFL score gains, many non-readers performed as well as, or better than, those who read. In addition, low frequency of reading amongst those who read was a significant issue. These findings suggest that for ER to benefit a TOEFL-based program, ER administrators need to ensure that the set up, orientation, and implementation of ER resources are managed effectively and that students' needs and reading strategies are monitored.

STANDARDIZED TESTS AND EXTENSIVE READING

The use of standardized tests such as TOEFL and TOEIC is a growing trend in Asian universities. In 2008, more than 5 million students took TOEIC globally, an increase of 60% over the 2000 figure (ETS, 2009). As demographic circumstances lower the student age population, such tests can help universities to boost enrollment and sustain their English language programs; currently more than 100 Korean, and 500 Japanese universities use TOEIC as a part of their entrance examinations or as requirements for earning credits (IIBC, 2009a; IIBC, 2009b). For students, TOEIC and TOEFL scores are a key resume component providing officially recognized proof of language skills to future employers. Standardized tests, thus, now act as an important benchmark to evaluate students' language proficiency.

As standardized testing becomes more ubiquitous, universities have increasingly recognized the benefits that supplementary study can bring English programs. One such supplement, ER, has become an intrinsic part of many Japanese university curricula over the last ten years and is rapidly making inroads into Korean tertiary education (Jolly & Miles, 2009). Since ER incorporates comprehensible input with reading enjoyment, EFL professionals widely subscribe to its positive outcomes on student motivation, vocabulary, and idea development, as well as overall English proficiency (Day, Omura, & Hiramatsu, 1991; Elley, 1991; Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Krashen, 2003; Nation, 1997; Waring & Takaki, 2003). However, these benefits do not answer the question about ER's utility in raising standardized test scores.

Attempts to answer this question indicate that extracurricular or free (i.e., extensive) reading *is* a good predictor of TOEFL scores in motivated and proficient EFL learners in L2 environments (Constantino, Lee, Cho, & Krashen, 1997; Gradman & Hanania, 1991). ER is also effective with enthusiastic volunteers over short time periods in L1 environments (Ikeda 2008; Mason, 2006). However, since these studies were mostly either small-scale (both Ikeda and Mason's studies had fewer than ten students in their samples) or enlisted high achievers as respondents, they may not tell us much about whether ER can assist TOEFL scores in large groups of *poorly* motivated students studying in their own language environment (Constantino et al., 1997; Gradman & Hanania, 1991). By examining 564 students studying at a Japanese university, the current study attempts to answer this and establish whether ER assists TOEFL scores.

TOEFL AND EXTENSIVE READING AT YCU

At Yokohama City University (YCU), the general English program, Practical English (PE), combines a university-wide TOEFL ITP 500 or equivalent TOEIC 600 requirement with extensive reading.

Students take ITP TOEFL upon induction to the university in April and are streamed into high (above TOEFL 470), mid (TOEFL 441-470) or low (TOEFL 440 or less) class groups. TOEFL is retaken at the end of the semester in July, and students who achieve TOEFL 500 gain credit for general English. As access to advanced-level English classes and students' individual majors is wholly dependent on attaining a TOEFL score of 500, success in the test represents a major milestone for students. Those failing to achieve TOEFL 500 in the first semester are re-streamed for second semester PE classes and retake TOEFL the following February. Further opportunities to take TOEFL in September, November, and March are also provided. Students continue taking PE until they achieve TOEFL 500.

The PE program comprises three compulsory 90-minute classes per week (one each for grammar, reading and listening), weekly e-learning, and as an adjunct to class study, extensive reading. Over 3000 ER books, more than 400 different titles, are housed in the Practical English Center (PEC) which is staffed by PE instructors four to six hours per day. Students are taken to the PEC as part of their first class session and are expected to read a minimum of five books per semester.

DATA COLLECTION AND PROCEDURE

TOEFL ITP scores for all first-year PE students (674) were collected for the semester, which started in April 2008 and ended in July 2008, together with the number of books - and hence pages read - for each student. Since the majority of books were the same series, Penguin Readers, it was possible to calculate an average reading level (ARL) that was used in analysis. After eliminating students who had incomplete test records, the sample (N = 564) was categorized into: (a) ER students (ERS), who read 3 or more books and (b) non-ER students (NERS), who read 2 books or fewer.

Using NERS as a control group and making the assumptions that (a) readers and non-readers had similar study habits outside the program and (b) ER would give benefit to readers measurable by a TOEFL score gain, the differences between ERS (n = 359) and NERS (n = 205) were examined. The differences within ERS in the three respective class groups were also examined. Analysis based on score gains, the number of pages read, and the average reading level was made using EXCEL.

RESULTS

Frequency of Extensive Reading

Sixty-four percent of the students were classified as ERS. The frequency of ER, however, was relatively moderate with an average of 5.2 books read during the semester. According to the number of pages read, the high group read the most, 228 pages, and the low group read the least, 178 pages. Considering this together with the large number of non-readers (n = 205), it is clear that, although TOEFL 500 was required, students were poorly motivated to engage in ER as a part of TOEFL preparation.

The distribution of readers (blue) and non-readers (red) based on semester entry score is shown in Figure 1. Students most likely to engage in ER were in the TOEFL 461-490 range (76-94% participation) whilst those least likely to read had entry scores of less than 400 or above 491 (15% and 20%, respectively). Variation in ER participation within the three groups was also considerable. As Figure 1 shows, while low group participation varied from 15-70% and the high group from 20-91%, mid group students showed the best overall ER participation (48-94%).

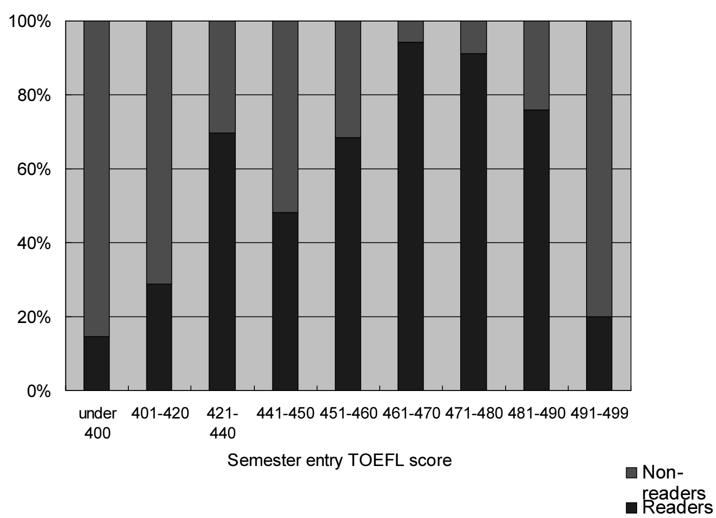

FIGURE 1. Distribution of readers and non-readers (by TOEFL entry score) N=564

As for the quantity read during the semester, Figure 2 shows that half of students (51%) classified as ERS completed less than 200 pages of ER between April and July. 32% of students completed between 200 and 299 pages, and 17% read more than 300 pages. Only 8% of the students read more than 350 pages (around ten books), a level teachers might consider more appropriate for a 15-week semester (Mason, 2006).

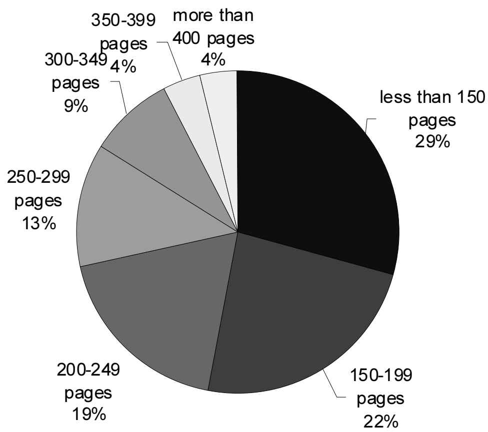

FIGURE 2. How much did readers read? N=359

Readers' and Non-readers' Mean Score Gains

Figure 3 describes the mean score gains made by ERS (blue) and NERS (red). It shows that unexpectedly, in all three groups, NERS made better score gains than ERS. In the low group, non-readers outperformed readers by five TOEFL points and the equivalent values in the mid and high groups were 4 and 2.5 points, respectively. The best score gains were in the low group with NERS recording +24.4 points (compared to +11.4 points in the high group). This may not be significant, however, as much of the difference can be accounted for by the logarithmic nature of the TOEFL ITP points scale.

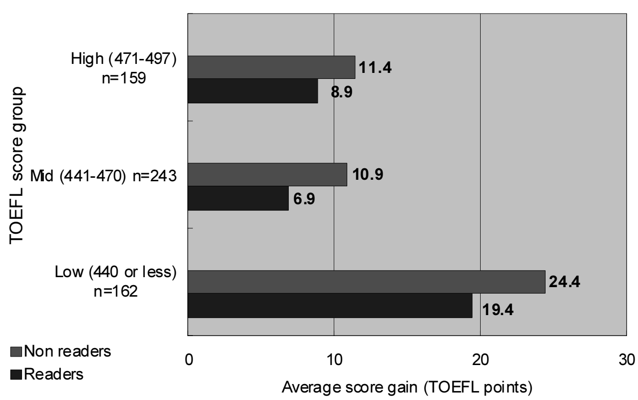

FIGURE 3. Score gains in readers and non-readers (by score groups)

These mean values do not, however, reveal detail about scores *within* the groups. For example, ERS with initial TOEFL scores of 401-420 (i.e., low group) gained eight more points on average than NERS counterparts. Thus, though average NERS score gains were better, some ERS gains were stronger than the NERS control group.

Examining Score Gains and Attrition in Readers and Non-readers

As the mean score gains in both the high and mid group were modest, meaningful analysis using mean values would have been compromised by the standard error of the mean which is 12 points for TOEFL. As a result, and following the methodology of a previous study, the standard deviation was used to highlight those score changes that were large enough to reflect proficiency improvements rather than focusing on the small gains and losses common when tests are taken repeatedly (Williams, 2009).

According to the normal distribution, in any sample, 16% of that sample should be greater than or equal to the mean (μ) + standard deviation (σ) of that distribution. Thus, if $\mu + \sigma$ (for attrition, $\mu - \sigma$) is greater than 16%, an association, or tendency, between the score change and a factor can be implied. Based on the assumptions of the current study, this means associating the presence (or absence) of ER with a large score gain (or attrition). For example, the mean score increase (μ) of the whole sample (N = 564) was +13 TOEFL points (Table 1) and the standard deviation (σ) was 29. A large score gain ($\mu + \sigma$) was thus +42 TOEFL points. Similarly, a fall of -16 (13-29) TOEFL points constituted large score *attrition*. To eliminate sample error, only values $\geqslant \pm 4\%$ of 16% were considered significant.

Score Gains

As Table 1 shows, for of all students, 13% of ERS and 17% of NERS recorded large score gains. Since these figures are close to the expected value of a normally distributed sample (16%), we can infer that the presence or absence of ER in the whole sample (N = 564) had little association to large TOEFL score gains. However, by considering the three different groups, some differences did emerge.

In the low and mid groups NERS outperformed ERS significantly during the semester, showing a strong tendency towards large score gains (20% and 24%, respectively). At the same time, ERS in these groups were closer to the normal distribution or slightly skewed towards fewer TOEFL gains (12% and 16%). In the high group there was no difference between readers and non-readers, both showing slightly fewer gains than expected (13%).

Score Attrition

Large score attrition for the group as a whole was normally distributed with 16% of ERS and 17% of NERS recording values $\geqslant \mu - \sigma$. However, on a group basis, attrition values were less than we would normally expect in NERS; the low, mid and high groups recording 12%, 14% and 9% respectively. ERS, on the other hand, were more normally distributed (19%, 15%, and 17%).

Thus, even after making the standard error correction, two weak but apparent trends appeared: non-participation in ER was associated with more large score gains in the low and mid groups, and less attrition in the low and high groups; and reading was associated with a weak trend towards fewer large score gains but normally distributed attrition.

TABLE 1. Large Score Gains and Large Score Attrition (by Groups)

	All Students Mean (μ) = +13 SD (σ) = 29		Low Group Mean (μ) = +22 SD (σ) = 29		Mid Group Mean (μ) = +8 SD (σ) = 30		High Group Mean (μ) = +10 SD (σ) = 23	
	NERS (n=205)	ERS (n=359)	NERS (n=89)	ERS (n=73)	NERS (n=71)	ERS (n=172)	NERS (n=45)	ERS (n=114)
Score Gain (⩾μ + σ)	17%	13%	**20%**	**12%**	**24%**	16%	13%	13%
Score Attrition (⩾μ - σ)	17%	16%	**12%**	19%	14%	15%	**9%***	17%

Notes. 1.*Percentage computed from 3 or fewer data points.
2. Bold typeface indicates the most significant results.

Examining Score Gains and Attrition in Readers (Pages and Reading Level)

The association between quantity of reading and student proficiency has been the subject of recent scholarly interest (Ikeda, 2008; Lee, 2007; Mason, 2006). By using the standard deviation (as above), the current research examined large score gains and attrition in readers as a function of both pages read and average reading level. In Figures 4 and 5, the normally distributed value (16%) is shown by a red line.

Score Gains

As the number of pages read during the semester increased, the number of students making large TOEFL gains increased (Figure 4). At 400+ pages (purple), 31% of students achieved gains of equal to or more than (μ)+(σ) while weaker trends were found at 350+ pages and 250+ pages (22% and 17% respectively). This 31% represents almost twice as many students as we should expect and hints at a strong association between quantity of ER and TOEFL score gains.

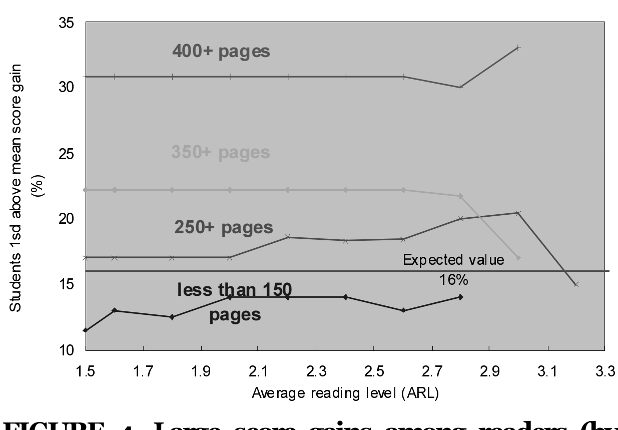

FIGURE 4. Large score gains among readers (by pages read and reading level)

Figure 4 also describes relative score loss as ARL increases. At 250+ pages for example, though more students made large score gains as the ARL increased from 2.0 to 3.0, above ARL 3.0 the number of students making such gains *decreased*. Thus, 250+ pages at ARL 3.2 had a weaker association to score gains than 250+ pages at ARL 2.8 (15% and 20% respectively). A similar tendency was also found at 350+ pages. Finally, students reading less than 150 pages made fewer TOEFL gains than normal (11~14%); this is significant as 1/3 of students classified as ERS read less than 150 pages.

Hence, though TOEFL gains were associated with reading more than 350 pages, and to some extent above 250 pages, there was no such association with reading less than 150 pages. Moreover, at elevated reading levels ER was associated with fewer score gains.

Score Attrition

Figure 5 describes the results of large TOEFL score attrition amongst readers at different reading levels. Generally, we can see that below ARL 2.6 score attrition followed the normal distribution. However, this did not extend to 250+ pages or 350+ pages *above* ARL 2.6. Instead, under these conditions, there was an increasing trend of TOEFL score attrition. At ARL 3.0, for example, 26% of students at 250+ pages and 28% at 350+ pages recorded significantly higher levels of attrition than normally expected.

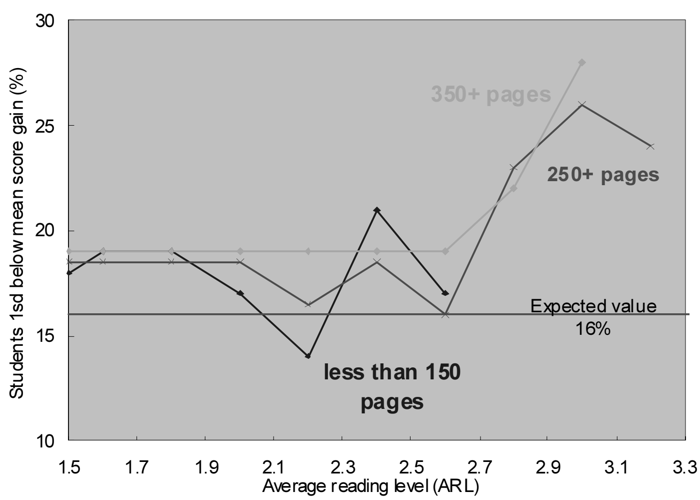

FIGURE 5. Large score attrition among readers (by pages read and reading level)

Based on this analysis, we can see two contrasting effects: first, and as we might expect, greater volume of ER, particularly at 400+ pages, generally led to larger score gains; secondly, if students read at a high reading level, both large score gains can decline and large score attrition can increase. This apparent dilemma, that ER was associated with TOEFL score gains *and* TOEFL score loss, requires examination.

DISCUSSION

Does ER assist TOEFL scores? The evidence of this research supports the suggestion that proficiency gains due to ER are "not very encouraging" (Bruton, 2002, p. 24). Even though many students who read did raise their test scores, most non-readers made greater score gains during the semester. Non-readers' mean scores were 2.5-5 TOEFL points better than readers across all three groups, and after allowing for the effects of standard error score gains, were more frequent in two of these groups. Meanwhile, readers experienced more large score attrition than expected (Table 1). These findings are at odds with the most frequently cited research into ER and test scores, which both found associations between ER and improvements in language proficiency even over one semester (Gradman & Hanania, 1991; Constantino et al., 1997). In the current research, it was only amongst students who read 350+ pages that such an association could be clearly observed (Figure 4), and at certain reading levels, even this was partially compromised (Figures 4 and 5). Small quantities of reading, which typified the majority of the sample, were no better associated with TOEFL score gains than an absence of reading. We should thus reconsider any simple calculations linking the number of pages read and the TOEFL score gain since it appears the first 200 pages or so of ER bring students little benefit.

Why should there be such a discrepancy between previous research and the current study? One of the most likely explanations is that a large sample (n = 564) will inevitably include many disinterested students (see Figure 1). Most previous studies have focused on small cohorts of volunteers, students with specific motivations to study, or even students already in L2 environments, and consequently, conclusions have been drawn from circumstances where ER was enthusiastically embraced. By contrast, in the current study, as Figure 2 shows, most students completed only the bare minimum of reading; just 8% of students read more than 350 pages during the semester. This questions the often stated assumption that ER is motivating for students, and hence rather than "virtuous circles of learning," the current research supports Holden's notion that students have a "neutral attitude" towards ER (Nuttall, 1982, p. 168; Holden, 2003, p. 145). One way to overcome this could be to encourage students to focus on pages read rather than a target number of books. This could be a simple means to raise reading quantity, particularly amongst students who simply want to fill a quota of books.

A second possible reason for the difference in findings is the level at which students read. One of the central tenets of extensive reading is that reading should be at an appropriate level. However, as Figures 4 and 5 showed, even some students who read sufficiently (more than 350 pages) experienced score loss. One possible explanation for this is the belief among many students in Japan and Korea that higher order (i.e., more intensive) reading is a more effective way to study a language. Consequently, students chose more difficult books than ER promotes. There is also anecdotal evidence that some students may have placed too much trust in ER as a means on its own to raise their TOEFL scores, and in doing so, neglected other equally important test preparation. This final point is highlighted by the average score gain of -10 TOEFL points among students who read more than 10 books, 20 points *below* the average reader gain; a possible cautionary note to advocates of courses based entirely on ER (Lee, 2007; Takase, 2008). While page count and reading level may help to explain readers' TOEFL performances, they do not go on to explain the anomalous better scores by non-readers.

In the current research, data on students learning strategies outside PE was not collected. Instead, the assumption was made that readers and non-readers would have similar study habits outside the classroom with non-readers as a control group. Although this seems a reasonable assumption, as the better non-reader score gains indicate, it is quite possible that non-readers did other test preparation that their reading counterparts did not. Moreover, as the sample was made up of first-year students, we can expect that most had little or no experience with ER. Given the importance of TOEFL at YCU, students may have felt safer and benefited more from utilizing more familiar strategies such as grammar tasks, vocabulary lists, or translation for out-of-class TOEFL preparation. These arguments notwithstanding, how might we explain the poor reader score gains? Answers to this lie with the ER resources, the program, and its set up.

At YCU, ER resources were predominantly the Penguin Readers Series. As a literature-based fiction series, it could be argued to have limited relevance to standardized tests such as TOEFL. Moreover, as fiction tends to be less appealing to males, and men and women process and apply learning differently, any application of ER-based skills in the TOEFL test would have advantaged females over males (Williams, 2009; Green & Oxford, 1995). However, gender details were not available for the current study. Thus, ER should not simply promote reading, but the right reading for the task and the learner.

As well as the resources, the way students are introduced to ER has a significant bearing on how students read. At YCU, ER orientation was conducted on a class by class basis by individual teachers. As a result, several different and conflicting ways to use resources emerged; several teachers asked students to write book summaries while others did not assess reading at all. Not only is summary writing as a part of a TOEFL-based program unpopular, it can distract students from the task of reading (Cramer, Ascough, Williams, & Loucky, 2007). Orientation thus needs to find a way to make ER more relevant to the overall program and meaningful to students. Approaches that engage students and recycle language through in-class activities are most effective. At low, mid, and high ability levels, in-class Sustained Silent Reading, unstructured in-class discussion of reading, or more structured approaches such as literature circles can all be tools to motivate students to read more (Takase, 2008; Furr, 2007). Given a rationale and opportunity for using ER in class time, students' out-of-class reading will more likely increase.

To make ER effective for TOEFL preparation – as in any ER program – means encouraging students to read the right books at the right level and requires ER administrators to manage their programs carefully. This needs to include the purchase and organization of resources, coordinated and consistent ER orientation for students, and continual monitoring and assessment of how students are using the resources. The current research thus diverges from the idea that reading should be a free voluntary activity, and instead recommends ER administrators to carefully manage ER at all levels (Krashen, 2003). The right books should be available for the students' goals, and teachers should individually supervise appropriate materials. Establishing challenging page-based reading targets, though unpopular with students, should be an integral part of any program. This should be set into the wider goals of combining ER into engaging activities that students revisit during class time.

In this large-scale study, it was hoped that any variations in data caused by error were reduced by the sample size. Using the standard deviation to observe score changes helped highlight those score gains that had occurred due to something other than chance. Even so, this measure can only act as an indicator and not inform us of any cause-and-effect relationship linking ER with TOEFL scores. To do this, more complex research that takes students' learning strategies outside the program into account would be required, and ideally, such research should take a more longitudinal approach. Finally, as the grade level on ER books is not specifically designed for TOEFL tests, the use of an average reading level should be used as a guide (rather than a definitive calibrated scale) by ER administrators to ensure students focus on level-appropriate reading.

CONCLUSION

One of the biggest problems in measuring any ER effect on TOEFL score changes seems to be the reading itself. As this research has shown, students need to be doing relatively large quantities of ER, more than 350 pages per semester is suggested here, and sometimes at particular reading levels in order to benefit TOEFL scores, but often students seem either reluctant to do so or unsure of how best to do it. To address these two issues, we need to adopt a more considered approach to ER program set-up, orientation, and management. Furthermore, instructors need to be more hands-on in monitoring students' book choices, while allowing for specific cultural factors and students' needs. Although it requires some effort, by doing this, instructors can provide an environment that motivates students to be better extensive readers, and at the same time, give them a better chance to gain test scores that provide greater future opportunities.

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Research Methodology

Making Sense of Surveys: Analyzing Likert Scale Data

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When research is conducted, surveys with Likert scale questions are ubiquitous. However, too often the value of the information gathered is undermined by an unsophisticated treatment of data that gives arbitrary results. This paper first demonstrates the problems of using simple arithmetic to analyze Likert scale data and then explains how the use of the Rasch statistical model allows the ordinal data of the Likert scale to be converted to an interval scale, providing deeper insights into the data. The Rasch analysis of this data allows not only for a more accurate depiction of the data, but also a better assessment of the survey's validity and reliability. To show the benefit of using Rasch modeling, the presenters' data, collected from two surveys, are analyzed: one that investigated the effectiveness of learning materials on a TESOL certificate course and one a self-assessment of writing.

PROBLEMS WITH COMMON METHODS OF ANALYZING LIKERT SCALES

Since their invention in 1932, Likert scales have become a common way of collecting data. They take the form of a statement, followed by options that range in sequence from negative to positive. For example, a survey on "anxiety at conferences" might have the following item:

1. I feel nervous when I talk to other conference attendees.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

The survey-taker circles the choice that best reflects their opinion. While most professionals are capable of producing a set of Likert scale questions, it is often the next steps that are problematic: How do we know if the survey is collecting meaningful data? How is the data to be analyzed?

The most straightforward method of analyzing Likert scale data is to assign values to the responses and sum the totals, as in the following:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

So, using an example from Bond and Fox (2007), let's imagine the results of three people on a survey of five Likert scale questions.

Person A chooses "Strongly Agree" on all five questions: total = 25 (5 x 5)
Person B chooses "Disagree" three times and "Neutral" twice: total = 12 (3 x 2 + 2 x 3)
Person C chooses "Strongly Disagree" on all five questions: total = 5 (5 x 1)

To summarize the results, the percentages could be used to make the following statements:
"B has **48%** the satisfaction of A"
"C has **41%** the satisfaction of B"
"C has **20%** the satisfaction of A"

Although this might seem a reasonable way to analyze the results, they depend on the arbitrarily given values that were assigned to each category. This can be demonstrated by considering the same statements if the scale had been assigned as follows:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4

Our three candidates give exactly the same responses:
Person A chooses "Strongly Agree" on all five questions: total = 20 (5 x 4)
Person B chooses "Disagree" three times and "Neutral" twice: total = 7 (3 x 1 + 2 x 2)
Person C chooses "Strongly Disagree" on all five questions: total = 0 (5 x 0)

When we work out the percentages, the results are quite different:
"B has **35%** the satisfaction of A"
"C has infinitely less satisfaction than A or B"

The differing results between these two cases come solely from a choice made by the researcher, not from the data itself. This problem occurs due to the nature of the data collected, and it affects the way it can legitimately be analyzed. Raw Likert scale data is ordinal: It is simply a ranking that shows the respondent prefers something to a greater or lesser extent. It cannot give information about the strength of this preference. Clearly, researchers need to find a non-arbitrary way to determine the value of response categories, and a Rasch statistical analysis allows this to be done.

Another problem that stems from the ordinal nature of the raw data is shown below. Consider two questions on a survey:

2. I am nervous about asking questions to presenters.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
3. I am desperately afraid of asking questions to presenters.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

A survey-taker who is merely self-conscious might respond to these items by marking number 2 "strongly agree" and number 3 "agree," whereas a neurotic survey-taker might mark "strongly agree" on both. Thus, the response of "strongly agree" on number 3 elicits a higher degree of anxiety than "strongly agree" on statement number 2. Yet, by using the classical method of assigning values to responses, these two statements have the same weight. In reality, you would expect the relationship between these two statements to be similar to that below:

Statement 2	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
	←less anxiety				**more anxiety →**	
Statement 3		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

The above scale shows that statement 3 elicits a more extreme reaction than statement 2 (Bond & Fox, 2007). One of the main advantages of using the Rasch statistical model is that it recalibrates the data so that such relationships are displayed.

This paper will next explain the Rasch model using two examples to illustrate the benefits of using it on Likert scale survey data. The first example comes from a survey of 98 students in six language testing classes on a TESOL certificate course to determine which learning resources were effective for understanding the topic. For this "effectiveness of learning resources" survey 18 factors were identified, including such activities as "studying for the midterm test," "attending class," and "studying the PowerPoints from the class" (for a full list see the key for Figure 2). The Likert scale ranged as follows: "a bit useful," "somewhat useful," "quite a bit useful," "very useful – the most that could be expected."

The second example is from a student self-assessment of writing ability. As part of a new curriculum, students in writing classes are asked to consider ten different aspects of their writing following a module of instruction. This example uses responses from 77 students in four intermediate level classes. The questionnaire consisted of "can-do" statements pertaining to such areas as organization, content, grammatical control, and mechanics with responses being "strongly disagree," "disagree," "agree," and "strongly agree." For example, the statement for Item 10 (mechanics) was "I can use correct punctuation most of the time." For a complete list, see Figure 3.

THE RASCH STATISTICAL MODEL

The Rasch model is perhaps better known for its use with multiple choice and performance tests of writing and speaking, but it is equally applicable to Likert scale data. When used for tests, the Rasch analysis works by making estimates of the difficulty of the item and the ability of the candidate, and calculating the chance of the candidate getting it correct. The difficulty estimate of the item is derived from the number of candidates that answered it correctly, and the ability estimate of the candidate from the number of items the candidate got correct. A person with an ability that equals an item's difficulty has a 50 percent likelihood of answering the item correctly. If the ability of the candidate is higher than the difficulty of the item, then it is more likely that the item will be correctly answered and vice versa. The same principle is used when dealing with Likert scale data, except that instead of "item difficulty" it is the "difficulty with which the item can be endorsed." The more "difficult" the survey item, the fewer the survey takers who can agree with it. In this way, the data of both those who took the survey and the items are put onto the same interval scale in which the distance between the items or candidates represents differences in ability, much in the same way a thermometer can tell us about differences in temperature (Bond and Fox, 2007).

Uni-dimensionality and "Fit" of Data

Rasch (1960/1980) assumes that the model outlined above exists in the data. For it to be measured in this way, it is necessary for the data to be "uni-dimensional." That is, all the questions on the survey need to be directed at the same topic. In the example of the language testing students, it is the dimension of "effectiveness of the learning resource for understanding the topic" and for the writing students it is "self perception of writing ability." If a question in the survey fails to follow the expected pattern of results, then the Rasch model will signal it as "misfitting." This is typically the first statistic to be considered since it is crucially related to the construct validity of the survey. Items that are found to not fit the model can be removed since they do not add useful information and may even distort the real situation.

Two measures of fit for both items and persons in the survey are given. "Infit" is a measure of how items close to a person's ability or an item's difficulty are conforming to the expected pattern, while "outfit" is more sensitive to outlying items, for example, low ability students getting difficult items correct. In the literature, Bond and Fox (2007) quote acceptable mean square fit figures as between 0.6 and 1.4, and Linacre (2009) states that while fit figures between 1.5 and 2.0 are not desirable, they do not drastically hinder measurement. For higher-stakes situations, a narrower range should be used. To aid interpretation of fit figures, standardized Z scores are given alongside to show the extent to which they are expected.

In the examples, the "effectiveness of learning resources" survey items were found to be comfortably within the parameters, while in the "student self-assessment of writing" uni-dimensionality was a problem for Item 10 (Mechanics), as shown in Table 1. The outfit mean square value of 1.65 for this item is somewhat high, and its standardized Z score greater than 2.0 shows that this level is not expected. In other words, this item is not measuring writing ability in the same way as the other items. Perhaps higher-level students, as indicated by the other items, are giving themselves low scores, or lower-level students may be giving themselves unusually high scores. When this item is removed and the data re-analyzed, the vocabulary item becomes marginal with an outfit mean square value of 1.53. However, the standardized value of 1.5 shows that this is not unexpected, and given that this is a relatively low-stakes survey with few persons, this item was retained.

TABLE 1. Fit for Writing Self-Assessment Survey

Item	Outfit (All Data)		Outfit (Reduced Data)	
	MNSQ	ZSTD	MNSQ	ZSTD
1 Organization	0.78	-1.30	0.83	-0.90
2 Content	0.66	-1.70	0.69	-1.40
3 Ideas	1.02	0.20	0.69	0.50
4 Cohesion	0.90	-0.60	1.03	0.20
5 Reasoning	0.73	-1.70	0.82	-1.00
6 Sociolinguistics	0.86	-0.80	0.79	-1.10
7 Grammar	0.90	-0.60	1.00	0.10
8 Conjunctions	1.06	0.40	1.39	1.70
9 Vocabulary	1.33	1.80	1.53	1.50
10 Mechanics	1.65	3.10		

In Table 1, the differing fit mean square scores (MNSQ) between "all data" and "reduced data" indicate the complexity with which all items interact in "defining" a construct. Changing or removing one item affects how all of the other items contribute to the whole. Using Rasch statistics emphasizes the necessity of having all items in the survey working together, rather than viewing items atomistically as classical methods tend to do. The effect that one poor item, mechanics, has on the others is also seen in the next section.

Item Measures and Thresholds

With Rasch measures, the "average" difficulty of each item is reported. However, each response category is associated with a particular range of ability. When only two responses are possible (agree/disagree or correct/wrong), the situation is as described above. Anyone above the item difficulty (from just-barely above to infinitely above) is likely to agree, and anyone below (from just-barely below to infinitely below) is likely to disagree. When more than two response categories are possible, as in Likert scales, the categories are associated with a particular range of ability and demarked by "item thresholds." If a person's ability level is known, it is possible to find the most likely response to a particular item. In Figure 1, the green bands and red bands at the top represent "strongly agree" and "agree," respectively, while the yellow bands and blue bands at the bottom represent "disagree" and "strongly disagree," respectively. Thus, students with an ability measure of 0 will more likely "agree" with items eight and nine, have an approximately even chance of agreeing or disagreeing with Items 4 and 5, and disagreeing with the rest. A student with an ability measure of -3 will most likely "strongly disagree" with Items 2 (Content) and 3 (Ideas) and "disagree" with the others.

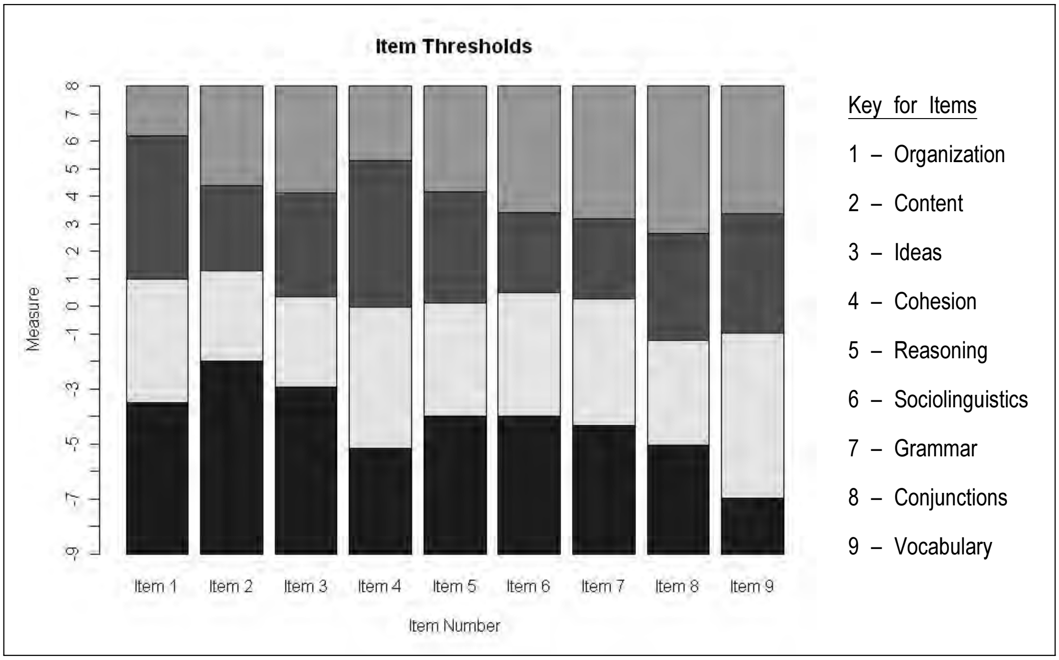

FIGURE 1. Item thresholds for writing self-assessment survey

From experience, for a well-targeted questionnaire (see Item-Person Targeting below), most estimates of ability fall between +3 and -3. With this particular self-assessment, the two middle categories dominate this range for each item, so nearly all responses should be either “agree” or “disagree.” The two extreme categories rarely overlap this range for any item, meaning that it is unlikely that the categories “strongly agree” or “strongly disagree” are chosen. The students are reluctant to use the extreme categories about themselves, perhaps due to their caution in ascribing mastery in the use of English to themselves.

Another point to note is that the size of a particular response category varies by item. The “disagree” response, the yellow band, for Item 3 (Ideas) is about half the size of the same category for Item 9 (Vocabulary). In effect, a smaller range of students is likely to choose “disagree” for Item 3 than for Item 9. For Item 7 (Grammar), the “agree” response is much smaller than its “disagree” response, so a smaller range of students will agree with this item. Classical analyses ignore this situation, assuming the intervals are all of equal sizes, which can lead to misleading conclusions being drawn from the survey. With classical statistics, a response of “agree” for one item might be considered equivalent to this same response for another item, even though the kinds of people choosing this response might be rather different. Similarly, the difference in ability between people choosing “strongly disagree” and “disagree” is likely not the same as the difference between people choosing “disagree” and “agree.”

For each person and item estimate, including item thresholds, the Rasch analysis provides standard errors which indicate how precise the estimates are. This information is not generally available in an analysis that uses classical methods such as linear regression. Taking into consideration the data available, the standard errors provide an indication of how trustable a student’s ability or item's difficulty is. When items or students are few, the standard errors can be relatively large, though how serious a problem this is depends on the specific situation. Table 2 shows the measures with the standard error for the "student self-assessment of writing" survey as ranging between 0.21 and 0.29. The relatively large size of the standard errors means that many of these items are not distinguishable from each other in difficulty. By comparison, the standard error for the "effectiveness of learning resources" ranged from 0.11 to 0.16, a more acceptable range for a survey of this type.

TABLE 2: Item Difficulties and Standard Errors for Writing Self-Assessment Survey

	All Data		Reduced Data Set	
Item	Measure	SE	Measure	SE
1 Organization	1.27	0.23	1.04	0.26
2 Content	1.24	0.21	0.93	0.23
3 Ideas	0.59	0.21	0.34	0.24
4 Cohesion	0.22	0.24	-0.06	0.28
5 Reasoning	0.24	0.22	-0.37	0.25
6 Sociolinguistics	0.11	0.21	-0.16	0.25
7 Grammar	-0.12	0.21	-1.70	0.25
8 Conjunctions	-0.93	0.22	-2.16	0.26
9 Vocabulary	-0.18	0.24	1.15	0.29
10 Mechanics	-1.44	0.24		

One issue for Rasch statistical analyses is that when there are few items (or persons), the item difficulties can change quite drastically if one is removed. For the "self-assessment of student writing," all of the item difficulties changed, some by large amounts, when Item 10 (Mechanics) was removed (see Table 2). Item 9 (Vocabulary), in particular, increased from -1.18 to 1.15, changing it from one of the easiest items to the most difficult. The lack of item stability is an indication that all the measures on this survey are suspect, and it should be improved by adding more questions. When a questionnaire contains many items, difficulty estimates will not change as much if one item is removed.

Finally, when there is missing data, an individual's ability (Rasch measure) can still be estimated from the remaining data. The standard error (precision) of this individual's measure will be larger as it is based on less information, but the important point is that an estimate of ability can still be obtained. This is not true when raw scores are used. If even one question is unanswered, the raw score for that person is not comparable to others' as the maximum possible points are different.

Item-Person Targeting

Because the Rasch model integrates the data from the items and the persons on the same scale, it allows the "targeting" of the survey to be assessed. Ideally, a survey will evenly capture the attitudes of the survey-takers from those who easily agree with an item it to those who vehemently disagree. The targeting of the "effectiveness of learning resources" survey can be seen in Figure 2 below.

```
          Persons - MAP - Items
                 <more>|<rare>
  3                    +
                       |
                    #  |
                       |
                    .  |
  2                   T+
                    #  |
                   ##  |
                    .  |T
                  .## S|
  1              ####  +  15      16
                .####  |S 06      20
              #######  |  17      18      19
                 #### M|  11
                   ##  |  07
  0               ###  +M
                .####  |  05      08
                #####  |  03
                    . S|  04      09      12
                   .#  |S 14
 -1               .##  +  13
                    #  |
                    # T|T 10
                    #  |
                       |
 -2                    +
                 <less>|<frequ>
EACH '#' IS 2.
```

Key:

3 = Review before class
4 = Classwork
5 = Exercises in class
6 = Asking questions to teacher
7 = Textbook
8 = Homework paper
9 = Reading guide
10 = Reviewing class powerpoints
11 = Reference files
12 = Mini-quizzes
13 = Studying for midterm test
14 = Corrections of midterm test
15 = Asking questions on the forum
16 = Answering questions on the forum
17 = Reading the forum
18 = Discussion with stds
19 = Study with stds for midterm
20 = Study with stds for final test

FIGURE 2. Targeting map for effectiveness of learning resources survey

In Figure 2, each hash mark (#) on the left represents two students, and the numbers 3 to 20 represent 18 elements of the Language Testing course, as identified in the key (Items 1 and 2 asked different questions). The M in the middle of each range represents the average score, and the standard deviations are marked as “S” and “T” for one and two standard deviations, respectively. On the graph, the items found on the same level as a particular student have a 50% chance of being considered useful for learning about language testing. The items below this student are more likely to be considered useful while those above are less likely. It can be seen that the most useful resource was number 10, the review of the class PowerPoint, as nearly all students are equal or higher than it. The resources found to be least useful are numbers 15 and 16, asking and answering questions on the forum, since only those students above them on the scale were more likely than not to find them useful.

In terms of targeting, the items cover the students fairly well with a gap above Items 15 and 16. When this happens, the advice would normally be to write new items to target these students. In terms of this particular survey, it would mean developing methods of understanding the topic that are felt to be less useful to most of the students!

In the item-person fit for the writing self-assessment, the items are concentrated in the middle of the range of the students (see Figure 3). About a quarter of the students fall outside the range of the items. When this situation arises, there is less information about these students and thus less confidence that their true feeling about their writing ability has been accurately measured. Because the ideal situation is when items and persons are matched across the ability continuum, the survey questions need to be written to target students who have measures above 2 and below -3 on the vertical scale. One possibility might be to change some of the can-do statements, making them seem easier or more difficult to accomplish, but these statements are related to course objectives, so they are not changeable. A different approach for this particular survey is to use the analysis to inform instructors about what aspects of writing students find most difficult, as well as what percentage of students feel especially positive or negative about being able to accomplish the course objectives. After making such changes to the curriculum, the same survey should be given to see if students have become more confident about their abilities.

```
         PERSONS - MAP - ITEMS
              <more>|<rare>
 6                 . +
 4                   T+
 3             .### S+T
 1            .####  +S  1    2    3    9
-1       ######### M+M  4    5    6    7
-2             .### S+T  8
-4                .#  +
-5                .# T+
-7                    +
-8                ##  +
              <less>|<frequ>
Each '#' IS 3
```

Item Key

1. **Organization** I can write a paragraph with clear distinction between topic sentence, supporting detail and conclusion.
2. **Content** I can include sufficient facts to keep readers interested.
3. **Idea Development** I can develop ideas from general to specific.
4. **Cohesion/Consistency** I can establish cohesion between sentences and consistency among ideas.
5. **Quality of support and reasoning** I can use proper supporting statements and examples.
6. **Sociolinguistic control** I can use expressions appropriate to the topic, fulfill situational requirements and address the audience appropriately.
7. **Grammatical control** I can use multiple-clause structures.
8. **Conjunctions/transitions/discourse markers** I can use typical conjunctions/transitions correctly.
9. **Vocabulary** I can use high-frequency vocabulary and idiomatic language most of the time.

FIGURE 3. Targeting map for writing self-assessment

Displaying the Data

After the fit has been examined and misfitting items removed from the analysis, the data can be displayed in a bar graph. For comparison, the Rasch measures (Figure 4) are shown above a bar graph of the raw data (Figure 5). In the Rasch graph, the three sections of each bar show the thresholds of those who chose each category and the number in the bar represents the average, resulting in a representation like that in the introduction between questions 2 and 3. In the Rasch graph, the difference in height between the bars represents the real difference in effectiveness of the learning resource. When comparing the Rasch graph and the raw graphs, it can be seen that there is no difference in rank order, and the graphs have a similar shape. Using the Rasch analysis will not necessarily change the results from that derived from raw scores if your survey is viable. However, the Rasch model provides tools for assessing the validity and reliability of a questionnaire, allowing the maker to have confidence that the survey does in fact represent the population that is being surveyed.

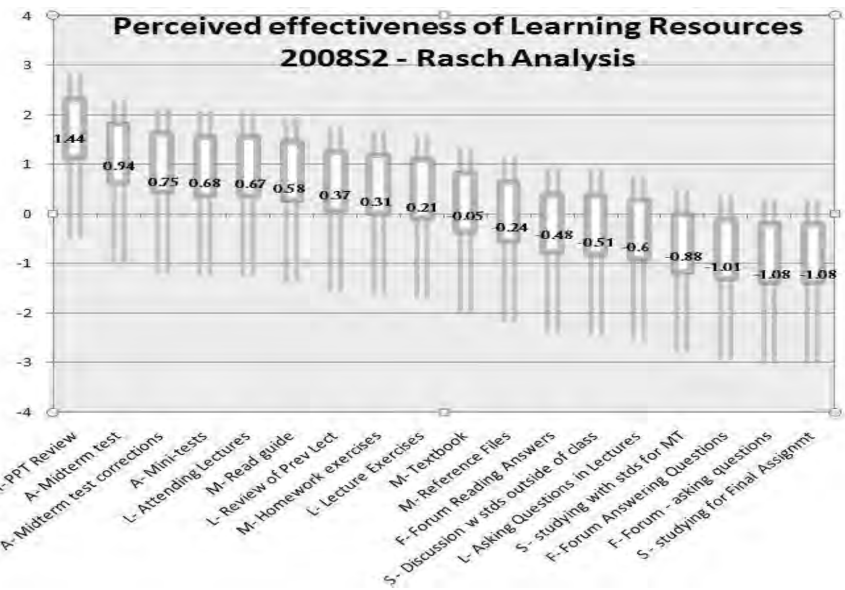

FIGURE 4. Graph of Rasch analysis of "effectiveness of learning resources" survey

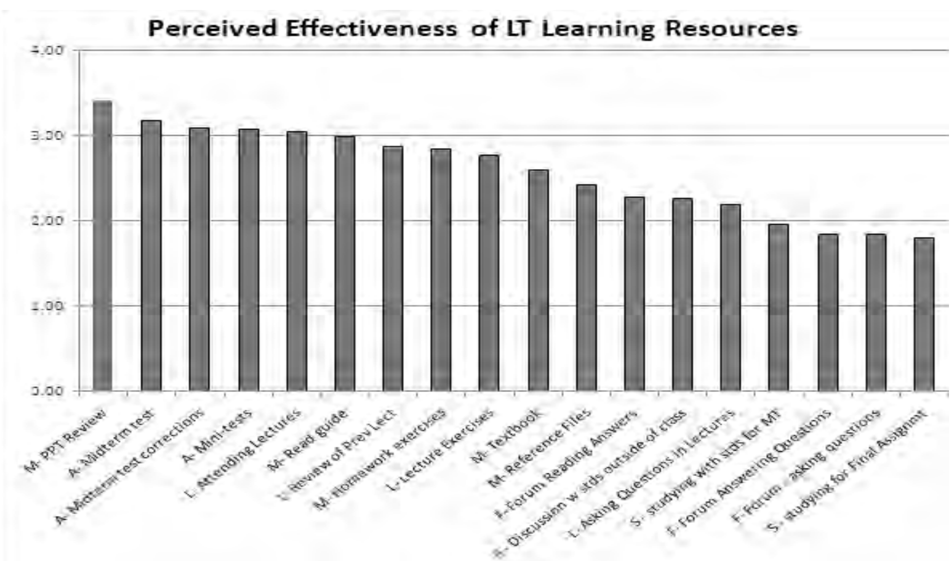

FIGURE 5. Graph of raw data of "effectiveness of learning resources" survey

CONCLUSION

Likert scales are ubiquitous in attitudinal surveys. If the surveys are based on theory, well-constructed, and properly analyzed, they provide a wealth of useful information. However, when the raw scores are analyzed with classical statistics, errors are often introduced into the results. The errors come from arbitrary scales, unequal intervals in scales, and treating all items as having equal impact. In the end, unfounded inferences and poor decisions can be made.

In contrast, Rasch fit statistics provide checks on the survey quality, informing researchers as to whether individual items, as well as the overall survey, are measuring what was intended. The targeting information also tells how well the survey items cover the range of people who answered the survey. When the survey quality has been assured, only then can meaningful statements about the data be made. Rasch statistics provide the means for obtaining usable, high quality information from Likert scales.

For anyone interested in learning more about Rasch statistics, an Internet search of "Rasch model" or "Rasch courses" will reveal a number of possibilities for finding more information.

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Data: What It Is, How It Is Used, and Potential Problems

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What is data, where does it come from, and why is it important in educational research? This paper is an in-depth analysis of the concept of data: exploring issues ranging from what data is, how it can be used, and the vast availability of data in the world today leading up to the impact it has on society. Data is an essential tool, the use of which leads to discovery. However, data is only a tool; it is the means by which questions are answered. Data is not and cannot be the answer in itself. Only through careful analysis and interpretation can data aid the process of advancing the field. Errors in data collection, data processing, and data interpretation can have a large impact on the field. This paper offers a critical examination, exploring the impact misleading data can have and its implications as it relates to the field of educational research. Examples of research with problematic data sources, analysis, and interpretation will be uncovered in order to address issues of keeping data "clean" in order to protect its validity and implications when this does not happen.

Data is everywhere, constantly being produced, collected, analyzed, and interpreted. *The Numerati* author, Stephen Baker (2008), identifies the vast amount of data produced in a few hours by an average person.

> When it comes to producing data, we're prolific. Those of us wielding cell phones, laptops, and credit cards fatten our digital dossiers every day, simply by living. Take me. As I write on this spring morning, Verizon, my cell-phone company, can pin me down within several yards of this cafe in New Jersey. Visa can testify that I'm well caffeinated, probably to overcome the effects of the Portuguese wine I bought last night at 8:19. This was just in time for watching a college basketball game, which, as TiVo might know, I turned off after the first half. Security cameras capture time-stamped images of me near every bank and convenience store. (Baker, 2008, p. 4)

Baker continues, “In a single month, Yahoo! alone gathers 110 billion pieces of data about its customers, according to a 2008 study by the research firm comScore” (p. 4). In fact, the average visitor to Yahoo’s advertising sites leaves 2,520 clues. Huge amounts of data are collected by computers each second.

However, all this data by itself is nothing. The phenomenon of data collection is far from new. Twenty thousand years ago, data was being stored by carving or painting on cave walls. Notched sticks, knotted animal hair, scribed tablets, carved bones and shells, and painted or scraped rocks were prehistoric forms of data storage. In the 1620s, Francis Bacon revolutionized the current way of thinking with his introduction of inductive reasoning and various data collection strategies. As time progresses and technology improves, we are being inundated with new forms of data every day. Even twenty-five years ago, *Megatrends* author, John Naisbitt (1982), concluded, “We are drowning in information, but starved for knowledge” (p. 24). This is even truer today, as the amount of accessible data has skyrocketed with the proliferation of the Internet. Absence of data is not the main problem, rather knowing how to effectively use existing data and to precisely gather new data is.

WHO USES DATA AND HOW?

Data is used in as many ways as there are types of data. An education researcher uses data to analyze what is happening in the classroom and develop ways to improve learning conditions. A census taker uses data to examine demographic characteristics of communities, states, and the nation. The civil engineer uses data to calculate exactly what dimension columns are needed to support the weight of the bridge. A shopkeeper uses data to determine which products have a higher profit margin and where to place them to maximize profits. A loan officer uses data to analyze what percentage of an applicant’s salary is tied up in debt repayment and assess whether the applicant is a good risk. NBA teams use data analysis programs to predict patterns in their opponents’ plays and find ways to overcome them (Larose, 2005). Even a five-year-old uses data to determine which Pokemon card has the higher power point value to assess whether a trade would be beneficial. Data is used in a variety of situations, but what is data?

PURPOSE OF DATA

In order to understand exactly what data is, let us consider the purpose of data, both what it is, and what it isn’t. The *Merriam-Webster Online* (2009) defines *data* in part as “factual information, used as a basis for reasoning.” Organizational theorist Russell Ackoff (1989, p. 4) expands his definition of *data* stating, “Data is raw. It simply exists and has no significance beyond its existence (in and of itself).” It can exist in any form, usable or not. It does not have meaning of itself” Data is described as information, but it is not the end product, merely a tool used in the process of understanding a phenomenon. A scene from Lewis Carroll’s classic, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland,* illustrates one of the common problems occurring in unstructured data collection and analysis.

> “Would you tell me please which way I ought to go from here?” said Alice.
> “That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cheshire Cat.
> “I don’t care much where,” said Alice.
> “Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the Cat. (Carroll, 1961, ch. 6).

If a researcher does not have a clear idea of why they are collecting data and what will be done with it, they may refer back to the advice the Cheshire Cat gave, as the direction is irrelevant. A researcher must initially decide why the data is being collected in order to determine how it will be used. The purpose of data is to produce informed, accurate results. On the surface, it sounds relatively simple; why then has data become such a multi-faceted and controversial issue?

PROBLEMS WITH DATA PROCESSING: OVERVIEW

Dr. John P. Ioannidis caused a global stir in his 2005 research piece titled *Why Most Published Research Findings Are False*, which argued that the majority of currently published research is false.

> There is increasing concern that in modern research, false findings may be the majority or even the vast majority of published research claims. However, this should not be surprising. It can be proven that most claimed research findings are false (Ioannidis, 2005, p. 1).

Ioannidis contends that most of the inaccurate results are not due to intentional fraud or formal misconduct, but rather stem from other issues related to miscalculations, poor study design, or self-serving data analysis (Hotz, 2005).

Though Ioannidis' controversial article was hotly disputed as opponents argued that Ioannidis' own research and published findings were in fact false, it is still an interesting point for debate. Errors in various stages of data processing that have resulted in similarly faulted conclusions will be highlighted in the following sections.

PROBLEMS WITH DATA COLLECTION

If proper methods of data collection are not followed, results are often invalid, due to being skewed in some form. From improper means of data collection to difficulty filling out the forms, reasons for data collection problems abound. These errors can have a huge impact on the world, as proved in the 2000 Presidential election when Florida voters complained they voted for the incorrect candidate because they were confused by the layout of the ballot. Additionally, the voting machines did not read the ballots in which the mark had not been completely perforated. "Voters' confusion with ballot instruction and design and voting machines appears to have changed the course of U.S. history" (Cauchon & Drinkard, 2000, para. 1).

I have personally seen data collection errors as a result of a cultural reversal of the meaning of X. A group of Koreans were asked to fill out a form on their medical history. The directions stated to place an "X" marking which diseases were part of their medical history. However, many Korean responders disregarded the directions and simply wrote as they were normally accustomed to filling out Korean forms, in which means "O" mean "yes," and "X" means "no." In doing so, their results were exactly opposite of the participants intended meaning.

PROBLEMS WITH DATA ANALYSIS

A simple human or computer error can alter the entire results of a study. A careless extra zero or wrong click of a person with the same name can cause huge, sometimes irreversible, damage, as many bankers and constituents can attest to. One problem with published research is that errors can have a much larger impact and can affect the entire field. Consider the case of Geoffrey Chang who published a study in 2001 when his team was able to separate and describe the structure of a protein called MsbA. This had never been done before and had big implications for clinical studies of drug resistance. Researchers had viewed this as a breakthrough in determining how crucial proteins function (Miller, 2006). Five years later, after being challenged by other researchers who had attempted to replicate the research, Chang realized that his data analysis computer program had mistakenly flipped two columns of data, rendering all findings invalid. At the time of discovery, Chang's article had already been cited by 364 publications, according to Google Scholar (Miller, 2006). Chang's data analysis error not only invalidated his results, but also affected those hundreds of studies which followed and related to his.

As Ioannidis claims, researchers are often expected to produce results and the hotter a topic, the more pressure there is to produce ground-breaking research in the field (Ioannidis, 2005). Stem cell research and the potential to clone human stem cells from human embryos is a hot topic, and this very hotness drove a South Korean veterinarian to fabricate some of his research (Wade & Choe, 2006). Hwang claimed the fabricated portion could be done; he just had not done it yet, and he needed to simplify that step to save time. He was heralded as a hero for years before his findings were found to have been falsified. When he was dismissed as a fraud, his prior contributions were also questioned.

PROBLEMS WITH DATA INTERPRETATION

Data can be interpreted in many different ways depending upon the person viewing it, the method of interpretation, and the data itself. People complain that the amount of money spent on campaign finance is monstrous. U.S. candidates and their supporters do, in fact, spend about $1 billion in an election period which includes campaign races for the presidency, Senate, and the House of Representatives. Most people would agree $1 billion is a considerable amount of money. However, altering the perspective and comparing it to other data, for example, to the fact that that is the same amount of money Americans spend on chewing gum each year, one may realize a different viewpoint (Levitt & Dubner, 2005).

In their 2005 hit book, *Freakonomics*, economist Stephen Levitt and journalist Stephen Dubner changed many perspectives of data interpretation and unexpected consequences. In 1996, Chicago public schools began a high-stakes testing system, where schools with low scores would be shut down, and their staff dismissed or transferred. Students were required to pass tests at their current grade level in order to be promoted. And it worked – or it seemed to. After its implementation, data scores were collected and results showed a sharp increase in test scores.

Students' scores rose up two, even three, grade levels. Students previously performing more than a year or two below grade-level were now right on par with where they should be, some even above. To the casual observer, and some school administrators, it appeared that they had succeeded, and the high-stakes testing program proved to be successful. However, astute analysts noticed the very next year, the same students' scores dropped back to two years or more below grade-level. The test-taking did indeed result in higher test scores, however not in the intended way. Researchers collected and analyzed new sets of data and found that in spite of the higher test scores, these high-stakes tests did not promote an increase in student learning. Rather, carefully analyzed data patterns were able to show that they actually promoted an increase in cheating by the teachers (Levitt & Dubner, 2005). The data collected could have been interpreted in many different ways with varied outcomes and vastly differing impacts on educational systems and policies.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, data is an essential tool capable of guiding people to discover answers. However, it is only a tool. It is the means used in attempting to solve problems and answer questions. Data in itself can not lead to the answers. Rather, answers are found through precise and well-planned data collection, unbiased interpretation, and clear, honest analysis. These three areas all work together to create validity in research. This paper examined the purpose of data and its varying interpretations in diverse situations. Examples of errors in various stages of data processing have been included in order to focus on the need for authenticity in data and the implications that occur when this does not happen.

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Second Language Acquisition

A Functional Analysis of Korean in the EFL Classroom

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This case study focuses on the functional uses of Korean (L1) in a middle school English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom by a Korean teacher. The data is from three classes which were recorded and transcribed along with data obtained from interviews with the teacher before and after the recorded classes. The study found that the functions of the L1 could be classified into three general categories: curriculum access, classroom management discourse, and interpersonal relations (Ferguson, 2003). The study concludes that in most instances, the use of the L1 appears to facilitate learning in a class that had students of mixed English proficiency and had limited-time constraints. The implications of the study are that further research is needed on the role of the L1 in the classroom, in particular on how the specific functions are perceived by the students.

The learner's first language (L1) in English language teaching tends to be absent from language teaching curricula. Language curricula in EFL contexts such as South Korea's 7th national curriculum frequently discourage the use of the L1 in favor of maximizing the use of English. In 2012, Korean elementary and secondary school English teachers will be required to teach English exclusively through English (Min, 2009, August 12). Language policies against the use of the L1 may be informed by the varied teaching approaches which either ban or ignore the L1 entirely. Approaches such as the direct method or the natural approach are based on the premise that the use of the L1 will lead to linguistic transfer and would impede learning. Communicative language teaching and task-based learning tend not to acknowledge the role of the L1 or when the L1 is acknowledged, teachers are encouraged to minimize its use (Cook, 2001). Yet, while language policies and approaches may attempt to ignore or ban the L1, they do not reflect current research recommendations or classroom realities.

Current researchers are recommending that the L1 be included in L2 education. Cook (2001) argues that teachers should incorporate the L1 into their teaching methodology as the L1 can be used to explain and check the meaning of words and grammar, give directions, and discipline and praise students. Turnbull (2001, 2006), in response to Cook (2001), acknowledges that there is a role for the L1 but that teachers should judiciously use the L1 while still maximizing the use of the target language (TL). Cummins (2007) argues for an end to monolingual teaching practices as they are based on empirically unproven assumptions. Instead, he endorses multilingual teaching practices by basing his arguments on empirically supported theoretical perspectives, namely, that students learn best when their background knowledge is activated, that there is an interdependence between languages so the knowledge that is learned in one language will transfer through adequate exposure of the other language, and that the cognitive system of multilinguals is qualitatively different than monolinguals (see Cummins, 2007). The first two theoretical perspectives are the most relevant for this study, as will be noted below.

While classroom studies show that the use of the L1 is commonplace, early studies by Duff and Polio (1990) found that teachers would use varying amounts of the L1, English, in the thirteen different foreign language (FL) classrooms they analyzed. In a follow up study, Polio and Duff (1994) found that teachers would use the L1 for a number of different functions that were typically based around course content. In the French as foreign language classes observed by Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002), the teachers would use the L1 for a number of different functions including commenting on the TL or contrasting it with the L1, for managing the class, giving feedback, or giving instructions. Gearon (2006) also investigated French as a foreign language teachers, who would use the students' L1 most often when teaching grammar. In a study reflecting post-colonial contexts, Ferguson (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of thirteen different studies that looked at the functions of code-switching in language and content classes in elementary and secondary schools. Ferguson, based on his analysis, argues that the varied functions of the L1 may be placed into three general categories: curriculum access where the first language is used to "talk around written text and in teacher's commentary on, and annotation of, the meanings of these texts" (Ferguson, 2003, p. 39); the management of classroom discourse where the L1 is used for purposes other than lesson content such as disciplining a student, giving directions, and talking about tests or exams" (p. 42); and interpersonal relations in the classroom where the L1 is used to build rapport with students and to reduce the distance between teacher and students" (p. 43). It should also be noted that the categories are not mutually exclusive; for example, the teacher may praise a student for a correct answer, which could be classified as interpersonal relations as it will help build rapport, but the praise may also be classified as curriculum access as it is also giving the student feedback on their answer.

KOREAN IN THE SOUTH KOREAN EFL CLASSROOM

Within the South Korean context, research looking at the role of the L1 in the EFL classroom is limited. Liu, Ahn, Baek, and Han (2004) looked at how high school English teachers codeswitched between English and Korean in their classes. The researchers analyzed data from thirteen teachers who each agreed to have one 50-minute class audio-recorded along with interview data from ten of the thirteen teachers and student surveys. The data revealed that the teachers would code-switch to the L1 for a number of different functions that would typically coincide with Ferguson's (2003) three categories. Examples such as explaining vocabulary or grammar would be instances of code-switching for curriculum access while managing student behavior would be an example of management of classroom discourse. The study, while significant as it provides insight into how Korean is used in Korean high school English classrooms along with the teachers' perceptions of its use, may not be reflective of the teachers' typical code-switching practices. The results are only representative of one class for each teacher and the classes were specifically chosen by the teacher, and, in one case the teacher submitted a pre-recorded model lesson for analysis. The authors note that this may have led to an observer's paradox where the teachers used much more English in the observed classes than they usually would (Liu, Ahn, Baek, & Han, 2004, p. 614). This is further reflected in a large discrepancy between the amount of English that the teachers reported they typically used and the observed use.

In a more recent longitudinal case study, Kang (2008) looked at how a Korean fifth-grade English teacher implemented the Teaching English through English (TETE) policy in her EFL classroom. The data for the study was obtained by audio-recording classes once a week for fourteen weeks and through three interviews with the teacher. While the analysis did not explicitly deal with the functional aspects of the L1, the structural patterns of language use were made explicit. These consisted of: exclusive use of the L1, exclusive use of the TL, TL immediately followed by TL equivalent, and TL immediately followed by L1 equivalents. The author notes that the different patterns would typically be used for different functions, for example, the exclusive use of the L1 for classroom management, giving instructions, and commenting on culture. He argues that teaching English solely through English in this context may not be suitable, stating that the L1 can be used for classroom management as well as to improve student comprehension.

While Kang (2008) and Liu et al. (2004) both investigated the Korean context, a gap still exists in the research. The role of Korean in the middle school classroom has yet to be reported on. The middle school classroom is significant as it marks a stage where the learners are just beginning to attend English class for four hours a week, compared to elementary school where they attended class for one to two hours a week. The English proficiency of the students is also expected to be lower than the high school students in Liu et al. (2004), and as such, the L1 is expected to play a greater role in the classroom, particularly in regard to explaining course content. Furthermore, in light of the proposed changes in 2012, the teacher's perspective is needed particularly in relation to their existing language use and the perceived consequences of changing to monolingual English language instruction.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What functions does Korean serve in a Korean first-year middle school EFL classroom?
2. Why does the teacher feel she uses Korean?
3. Is it possible for the teacher to substitute English for Korean in the identified functions?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Context

This case study focuses on "Minji" (a pseudonym used to ensure anonymity), a Korean middle school EFL teacher in South Korea. At the time the research was conducted, Minji was 29 years old and had been a full-time teacher for over three years. Minji, along with completing a bachelor's degree in education, also obtained TESOL certification in Canada. Her English language proficiency, based on her TOEFL score of over 600, is advanced, and she is able to effectively communicate in English.

At the time of the study, Minji was teaching two first-year English classes. Each class consisted of 35 to 38 students, and language proficiency varied from beginner to advanced. She met with each group of students four times a week, with the amount of Korean varying depending on the class. Twice a week, the goal of the class was to maximize the amount of English used. One of those classes was co-taught with a native English speaking teacher and was English-only and the other was a level-differentiated class where Minji taught her advanced students, focusing primarily on speaking. The remaining two classes were textbook classes, where the focus of the class was based on content from the required textbook. It was the textbook classes that were observed for this study, as the goal of these classes was for the students to learn the vocabulary and grammatical structures that would appear on their final exam. Additionally, the amount of Korean was also expected to vary since there was no overt goal to maximize the use of English.

Data

The data in this study was obtained from interviews conducted in English with Minji and audio-recorded classroom data.

Interview Data

The initial interview, approximately an hour and a half in length, was conducted to learn about the teacher's prior education and teaching background as well as to determine her perceptions on how Korean should be used in the classroom. The post-observation interview, approximately two hours, took a stimulated recall format, where Minji was asked follow-up questions after listening to portions of the recorded data. This allowed the researcher to gain further insight as to why the teacher felt she used Korean for different functions as well as give the teacher an opportunity to give any comments or share further insight into the use of Korean in her classroom.

Classroom Data

Three 45-minute classes were chosen to be recorded in the week following the initial interview. As noted above, the classes were Minji's textbook-based classes, which would be considered typical for Minji in the sense that the students' proficiencies were varied and the emphasis was on the textbook that she had been using all year. The classes were recorded using a digital voice recorder and microphone. The recordings were transferred to a computer, and all of the recordings were transcribed by the researcher with the help of a native Korean speaker. Following the transcription, all instances where Minji spoke Korean were then analyzed and coded, initially according to Ferguson's (2003) general classification categories, and then each instance was then further analyzed for specific function. After the functional analysis was complete, the teacher was consulted to provide clarification on code-switches for which the functions could not be immediately determined, and the teacher was also given the opportunity to confirm the analysis and suggest changes if necessary.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis provides a clear indication of Minji's varied uses of Korean in her EFL classroom. As can be seen in Table 1, Minji used Korean for uses that fall into all three of Ferguson's (2003) general categories although the frequency varied depending on the category. Minji would most often use Korean for curriculum access (n = 225). To a lesser extent, she would use the L1 in order to manage the classroom (n = 98), and for interpersonal relations (n = 33). Each of the three categories, along with examples and results from the interview data, will be discussed below.

TABLE 1. Frequency Table of L1 Functions from Three Middle School EFL Classes in South Korea

L1 Functions	Frequency
Curriculum Access (n = 225)	
Clarifying/elaborating	114
Eliciting response	40
Checking comprehension	39
Giving feedback	29
Highlighting important information	3
Management of Classroom Discourse (n = 98)	
Directions/instructions	63
Discipline	24
Lesson overview and scheduling	11
Interpersonal Relations (n = 33)	
Praise	6
Personal/joking	27
Total	384

Curriculum Access

In the initial interview, Minji noted that the individual English language proficiencies of her students varied. She noted that, on the one hand, a small number of her students had been attending private English language institutes throughout elementary school and their English proficiency was relatively high compared to the other students. On the other, a small group of students were at a very low level and were still learning the English alphabet. The majority of the students, however, were still relative beginners, having a basic understanding of English grammar and a limited vocabulary. Since the majority of her students were at a relatively beginner level, she felt that she would be limited with what she could explain through English. In many instances, she felt she had to switch to Korean to make certain all of her students understood the lesson content that would appear on the final exam. Perhaps as a result of her concern for her students' comprehension, the curriculum access functions were most frequently used. In particular, Minji would most often use the L1 to clarify and elaborate on lesson content, check comprehension, and elicit responses, all of which may be seen in Example 1.

Example 1

1 T: I, went to party last night, I didn't study much but today; math test . . .
2 T: 시험이 있어요. 근데 어제 밤에, party 갔어요. 맞죠, party , 그래서 공부를 . . .
There's an exam. But last night, he went to a party. *right.* party*, so he study . . .*
3 Ss: 안했어요
did not
4 T: didn't study much
5 T: 많이 하지 못했죠, 그러니, 오늘 학교 가고 싶을까? 가고 싶지 . . .
couldn't study much. Then, today do you think he wants to go to school? Want to . . .
6 Ss: 않아요
not
7: T: 그래서, 이야기한다
So, he says . . .
8 T: he doesn't want . . .
9 Ss: to go to school
10 T: to go to school, today

Example 1 comes from a lesson focusing on the affirmative and negative use of "want to" in the correct third-person singular form. In the example, the students were given the string, "he doesn't want," and were required to complete it based on the information provided in the textbook. In line 1, Minji reads the line directly from the textbook, which provides the context for the character in the book not wanting to go to school. Minji then pauses for a few seconds and then provides a translation to her students in line 2. Minji notes that the reason for the translation is that most of her students would not yet know the irregular past tense form of "go," and rather going off the topic, she opted to provide a translation. In line 5, Minji uses Korean to further build on the given context by stressing that the book character could not study for the exam and ensures that all of the students understand why the character does not want to go to school. Furthermore, she uses line 5 to switch the verb tense from the past tense when talking about the context in lines 1, 2, and 4 to the present tense, which is the tense of the grammar point being observed. What is also visible in lines 2 and 5 is that Minji uses Korean to check comprehension. In line 2, she wanted to ensure that the students understood that the character did not study for the exam, and by pausing after saying *study*, the students confirmed that they understood by providing the negative form *did not* in line 3. In line 5, she also checks to see if her students understand that the character does not want to go to school by starting the sentence in Korean and waiting for the students to complete it, which they do correctly in line 6. After the students are fully aware of the context and the correct answer in their L1, Minji uses Korean in line 7 to have the students complete the sentence which she begins in line 8, and the students correctly complete in line 9. From this example, it is clear that all of the students, regardless of proficiency, will be able to participate and focus on learning the specific grammar point.

Minji was asked if it would be possible to use English in this context instead of Korean. She answered that while it would certainly be possible, it would not be very effective. She argues that she is in a position where she has to teach all of the material that will be on the exam and class time is limited. As all of the students will be required to take the same final exam, it is crucial that all of the students have access to the course content in order to succeed on the exam. As shown in Example 1, when she has to teach a specific grammar point, she does not want to go into extraneous details that will not be tested, which would occur if she had to teach the students new vocabulary in English and would be further complicated by using vocabulary that the students may not already know. She notes that providing English explanations may be too cognitively demanding for her students and will take up valuable class time, as well. Minji also emphasized that the two textbook classes focus primarily on form whereas the remaining two classes focus on speaking, using communicative activities based on what was taught in the textbook classes and are taught primarily in English. Therefore, it appears that these classes will build on the students' prior knowledge, which will then be used in the English classes that focus on speaking. This knowledge, even though it was learned in Korean, will be transferable to English with adequate exposure to the language (Cummins, 2007).

Management of Classroom Discourse

In the pre-observation interview, Minji stated that one of her primary uses of Korean was to give instructions, which the analysis supported, as providing directions and instructions was the second most frequent function. The teacher would frequently give an instruction in English and then follow it up immediately with a Korean translation, such as when she would tell her students to listen to an audio recording, as in Example 2. In other instances, she would provide more than a literal translation such as when the students were encountering new types of instructions.

Example 2

1	T:	listen first, okay, listen first and then complete the sentence
2	T:	듣고 나서 문장을 완성하면 되겠습니다
		listen and then complete the sentence

In the follow-up interview, Minji said that she needed to use Korean when the students were given new instructions as she felt the students would not understand the explanation in English. However, she was also surprised with the number of instances where she would provide an immediate translation for very common instructions. She felt that this may have been a habit that formed from the beginning of the year when the students did not know the instructions and providing an automatic translation was easier. When she was asked if she could do the same instructions in English, she thought she could, provided that she spent time initially with her students going over classroom English at the beginning of the year.

Minji would also use Korean only when she would discipline students. In Example 3, Minji explains the consequences to her students who forgot their textbooks.

Example 3

1 T: 오늘 책이 없는 사람은 벌좀 받아야 겠다
there will be punishment for those who don't have textbooks
2 T: 점심시간에 청소해라 알았지?
you will have to clean the classroom during the lunch break. Understand?

Minji noted that that she would only discipline students in Korean so that her students would be certain to understand what the problem was and the consequence for their behavior. She noted, reflecting the lower proficiency levels of her students, that if she were to use English to discipline, the majority of her students would not understand which may have lead to further disruptions in the classroom.

Interpersonal Relations

In the pre-observation interview, Minji said that it was necessary to use Korean in order to create a warm, friendly atmosphere that reduced the perceived distance between Minji and her students. She felt this was important so that students would feel comfortable participating in class in both English and Korean. Based on the analysis, Minji would use Korean to praise and joke with her students as can be seen in Examples 4 and 5.

Example 4

1 T: good job, well done
2 T: 잘했어요.
well done

Example 5

1 T: 한쌍의 바퀴벌레, 남일이
Namil, you are part of a pair of cockroaches

Example 4 reflects a pattern in the data where Minji initially praises the class or a student in English while immediately following it up with a Korean translation. When Minji was asked about this, she reflected her belief that offering praise in Korean was warmer and led to a closer connection with her students than praising her students in English alone. Example 5 is an instance where using English would not convey the same meaning as it would in Korean. In this case, the example does not translate well, at least for those people unfamiliar with the metaphor. In this case, the teacher is teasing Namil, also a pseudonym, saying that he and his girlfriend make a cute couple. She states that in cases where she is joking with her students, the majority of them would not understand what she was talking about if she only used English since their English proficiency is quite low and in some cases, such as speaking metaphorically, the meaning may be lost entirely regardless of the students' language proficiency. Minji is quick to note that an English-only classroom would change the relationship between her and her students as they would not always understand praise and jokes that are beyond a basic level.

CONCLUSION

The study indicates that the L1, Korean, has an important place in the middle school EFL classroom, especially in those classes with students with a low English language proficiency. Although there were areas where the teacher felt she relied too much on the L1, in most instances, the L1 appears beneficial. According to Minji and the analysis, the L1 is crucial in ensuring student understanding so that they are able to succeed academically as well as to promote a warm and inviting classroom. While the study clearly indicates a role for the L1, future research should consider the students' perceptions of how the L1 is used for the different functions. It would also be fruitful to confirm Minji's hypothesis that praise in the L1 is perceived by the students as closer and more genuine than in English, and if there is a difference in this perception between higher and lower proficiency students.

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Teacher Development

Sensemaking in Higher Education

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Effectively coping with, reacting to, and understanding change is essential for teachers and learners alike. In this paper, it is argued that the process and properties of sensemaking (Weick, 1979) can be used as a tool for examining strategic change in higher education. It is also suggested that it has the potential to help us better understand what is going on in our classrooms and institutions. The paper will begin by introducing sensemaking and change research before discussing the best methods by which sensemaking in education can be researched. It concludes that conducting sensemaking research, utilizing ethnography as the most appropriate research method, has the potential to improve our understanding of change within institutions and educational settings.

This paper will discuss the potential for utilizing Weick's (1979) seven properties of sensemaking as a lens to examine strategic change within universities, and will suggest that it could also prove a useful tool for researching classroom interaction. Focusing on recent literature on institutional change and sensemaking, it will discuss appropriate research methods to examine the impact of change on faculty at higher education institutions in Asia, and will suggest that it has the potential to be used in other areas of education in a variety of educational settings.

SENSEMAKING

Studies of institutional theory and change naturally lead to an examination of research on those involved in the change; in an educational setting, the stakeholders are faculty, top and middle management, and the students. The implementation (or rejection) of change could be said to be reliant on how both individuals and the collective groups within an institution understand their institution and make sense of the phenomenon they are faced with. Sensemaking is a process that is ongoing, instrumental, subtle, swift, social, and easily taken for granted (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005, p. 409). In defining sensemaking, Sutherland and Dawson (2002, p. 52-53) state that "sensemaking is a set of ideas emanating from the fields of psychology and organization studies that seeks to reveal how individuals construct meaning, interpret their world and function within it." Consequently, Weick's (1979) framework for sensemaking in organizations (below) gives an excellent grounding for a deeper examination of what people "know" about change and the way their emotions are constructed around the change.

Weick's Seven Properties of Sensemaking

1. Grounded in Identity Construction
2. Retrospective
3. Enactive of Sensible Environments
4. Social
5. Ongoing
6. Focused and Extracted by Clues
7. Driven by Plausibility Rather Than Accuracy

Members of an organization spend a long time negotiating among themselves an acceptable version of what is going on (Weick, 1979). It is recognized in sensemaking literature that change creates interruptions which trigger sensemaking. The interruptions caused by university accreditation will be examined in this potential study. As Bartunek, Rynes, and Ireland (2006) states, there has been little work on how employees make sense of change. Thus, there is room for a potential study to examine how faculty at an institution constructs the meaning of change, and how they construct their emotions in relation to this change. The sensemaking process is driven by plausibility rather than accuracy, which, as Weick (1995) states, conflicts with the belief that the accuracies of management perceptions determine the success or failure of the outcomes. This is not necessarily the case, and more work needs to be conducted in this area.

The concept of sensemaking fills important gaps in organizational theory (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). Weick et al. discusses the three important points about the quest for meaning in organizational life. Firstly, that sensemaking occurs when the flow of organizational circumstances are turned into words. Secondly, organizing is embodied in written and spoken texts. And thirdly, reading, writing, and editing are crucial actions that serve as the media through which institutions are shaped. As Mills (2003) states, identity construction is at the root of sensemaking and "influences how other aspects, or properties, of the sensemaking process are understood" (p. 55). It is crucial to recognize this fact when conducting sensemaking research and when contemplating the uses of sensemaking as a lens for research in TEFL. "Who we think we are (identity) as organizational actors shapes what we enact and how we interpret which affects what outsiders think we are (image) and how they treat us, which stabilizes or destabilizes our identity. Who we are lies in the hands of others" (Weick et al., p. 416). This statement requires the researcher to be cautious of their position as an insider or outsider throughout the research. As this potential study would use ethnography, the researcher would be an insider. Being one of the organizational actors in this instance cannot be ignored, and one must be aware of the fact that who we are throughout the research is dynamic, contested, and socially constructed in a variety of ways.

When the same information is distributed among various parties, each party has a different impression of what is happening. It can be problematic to reconcile these various views. There are, therefore, a number of theories that suggest what can be done in the future, based on the information. In terms of university management, within the institution in question, do faculty members share meanings or do they provide equivalent, yet different, meanings of the event, and how does this impact the change process? In a classroom, how do learners make sense of the teacher's instructions?

It is recognized that sensemaking starts with chaos (Weick et al., 2005). The chaos could, theoretically, be caused by an outside body putting pressure on faculty or learners. Staff or learners, consequently, would be continually noticing and bracketing their everyday lives in relation to the change. Labeling will then begin. Labeling works through a "strategy of differentiation and simple location, identification and classification, regularizing and routinization to translate the intractable or obscure into a form that is more amenable to functional deployment" (Chia, 2000, p. 517). Are the labels they use the same? Are shared beliefs a necessary condition for organized action? And is the construct of collective belief theoretically meaningful? (Porac, Ventresca, and Mishina, 2002).

SENSEGIVING

Sensegiving is defined as "the process of attempting to influence the sensemaking and meaning construction of others toward a preferred definition of organizational reality" (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991, p. 442). Gioia and Chittipeddi's paper on sensegiving is a useful framework for examining strategic change in universities. They focused on the relationship between sensemaking and sensegiving.

The study was particularly useful for illuminating the process of the change and the influence of certain groups on each other. It is suggested that there is a symmetrical view of sensemaking and sensegiving and that they are mutually exclusive. However, I would suggest that this is not the case, and support Huzzard's (2004) view that sensegiving is undeniably linked to the power relations that are embedded in the process of disseminating information. I would be cautious of regarding sensegiving as a means of influencing someone, and would approach a potential sensemaking study with an open view as to whether sensegiving occurs or not.

The remainder of this paper will discuss how sensemaking in higher education management can be examined.

ERICSON'S CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A number of researchers have suggested approaches and frameworks for examining strategic change and institutions; for example, Hanson's (2001) paper puts forward a conceptual framework that integrates organizational memory, organizational learning, and institutional theory. He recognizes that organizations do change and details three energizing forces that can bring about organizational change. Yet, while I recognize that there are such studies, further reading has led me to consider additional frameworks that utilize the concept of sensemaking in order to understand institutional theory and change.

In 2001, Ericson developed a sensemaking perspective in order to generate a conceptual framework for increasing understanding of strategic change in organizations. In his paper, Ericson (2001) identifies four ideal types of meaning that provide the foundation for his framework. This framework can assist in identifying the kind of meaning present within an organization. Ericson claims that knowledge of strategic change can be enhanced if we focus on the ways individuals create meaning and make sense of their organizational life (Stubbart, 1989; Newton & Johnson, as cited in Ericson, 2001). Ericson's paper is theoretical and empirical, and based on a change process at a Swedish hospital, yet I believe it is possible to replicate and expand on this study in a higher education context. Essentially, what this paper illuminates is that if we wish to understand an organization, we need to examine how meaning is created and destructed, and to organize change we need to understand individuals' subjective meanings and how these meanings alter over time and through the influence of others.

Ericson (2001) identifies "between floors" as a place of special interest for inquiry. This hierarchal aspect of the investigation is particularly interesting if applied in an Asian context, yet it could be suggested that in an Asian context it would be necessary to examine all levels of the organization, not merely the middle-management levels, as this would give a greater overall picture of the organization.

The process of "sensegiving" (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991), where managers try to influence sensemaking and meaning construction of others within the organization towards a preferred redefinition of organized reality, is also intriguing, particularly in Japan as many anthropologists and *nihonjinron* (theories and discussions on the Japanese) discuss the "vertical principle in Japanese society" (Nakane, 1972, Doi, 1974). This is the belief that the Japanese are a group-orientated people, thus meaning that individuals prefer to work within a vertically hierarchical, organized group or company. The relationships within this organizational structure are based on superiors and subordinates. Psychologist Doi (1971) argued that the Japanese use of the concept "dependency," or "amae," could be seen to extend beyond childhood to adulthood and into workers' jobs and roles within a company or other organization. Since, as Marcus and Zajonc (1985) suggests, individuals' cognitive schemes are constructed from earlier experience and, as Ericson (2001) suggests, the differences in meaning among members of the institution are an effect of differences in cognitive scheme, we cannot ignore the concept of the Japanese vertical principal when researching in a Japanese context or the specific cultural elements in other Asian countries. Conversely, some researchers (Hamaguchi, 1982; Befu (1987); Dale, 1986; and Tamotsu, 1990) argue against this concept of groupism and state that instead, the theory of interpersonalism should be more thoroughly considered. As Guest (2001) advises, when discussing aspects of Japanese culture and society, we must be aware of relying on subjective sociological, anthropological, and philosophical discourses, and reverting to discussing the culture in binary categories as these can affect both the data collection and analysis. Mouer and Sugimoto (1995) and Yoshima (1992) state that researchers should be cautious of referring to *nihonjinron* to support an argument as they do not believe that they are relevant to academic discourse. This view has also been supported by others (Kubota, 1999; Susser, 1998; and McVeigh 1998) and thus, in this study, I would like to acknowledge that there are works, such as the *nihonjinron* and academic papers, which further support these ideas of reductionism and essentializing of the culture. Yet, I would be wary of accepting the reductionist views found in this literature without critical thought, as an acceptance of these dichotomies could produce false data. Based on these views, Ericson's framework would provide an extremely useful means of classifying the sensemaking within a Japanese institution.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As can be seen from the previous discussion, it appears that there are two strands of literature on sensemaking. One states that groups of people within an organization tend to see things in the same way (Brown, 1978); i.e., they have a "frame of reference" (Canteril, 1941). Organizations are stronger when organization members share values, rules of behavior, and norms that become crystallized and stabilized in organization structures (Gray, Boughton, & Donnellon, 1985). The establishment of a common understanding is important in an organization because it enables organizational activities to become routinized, and it helps organizational members achieve a level of commonality and continuity that facilitates organizational action (Greenberg, 1995). This is also sometimes referred to as *collective sensemaking*. Conversely, the opposing view states that there are differences between groups in organizations (Brown, 2000) and that "shared meaning is difficult to attain" (Weick, 1995, p. 188). In their seminal work, Berger and Luckmann (1967) stresses that organizations are social constructions. I am in agreement with Weick and Bougon, who state that organizations largely exist in the mind, and their existence takes the form of cognitive maps. Walsh and Ungson (1991) defines an organization as a network, a group of people with shared meanings that are sustained through the development and use of a common language and everyday social interaction. However, I would contest the term "shared meanings" as it is unclear whether these "shared meanings" are meanings that are the same between individuals, or meanings that are shared in the sense that individuals share their thoughts and meanings with others, each person interprets and makes sense of the situation in their own way while they share these meanings with others. The second interpretation of this term corresponds with the idea that the organization is in the mind. Based on these strands, utilizing Ericson's (2001) conceptual framework of four ideal types of meaning, I propose to examine if and how the data from this case of a higher education institution in Japan corresponds with the four types of meaning suggested by Ericson (2001), which consequently would show whether collective, disparate, enclave, or fragmentary meaning is occurring. Hora (2008) states that "many studies fail to address the degree to which group members adhere (or not) to the dominant knowledge in the organization" (p. 2), and this proposed study would go some way to examining this. In summary, I would propose utilizing ethnography and interpretative phenomenology to examine the change process associated with accreditation and how this can be understood in terms of Ericson's framework. The research would examine accreditation at a private university in Japan through the lens of Weick's seven characteristics of sensemaking.

This would therefore show whether (a) Ericson's framework can be applied to a Japanese institutional setting, (b) how the sensemaking process in this instance corresponds to the two strands of literature, and (c) the general implications of this for understanding institutional change in higher education in Japan. In this potential study, sensemaking is useful as it provides an opportunity to incorporate meaning and mind into organizational theory and allows breakdowns to be seen as occasions for learning rather than a negative threat to efficiency.

Sensemaking as a theoretical framework is useful as it looks at the emergent process aspects of change implementation (Ericson, 2001). The paper will now discuss the most appropriate methodological approach to answering the following two research questions:

RQ1: How do faculty make-sense of institutional change related to accreditation?
RQ2: How does this instance correspond with Ericson's (2001) conceptual framework for understanding strategic change?

APPROACH

Background

As a researcher, I am concerned as to how people make sense of their everyday world, and I believe that to understand human behavior, one must have first-hand contact with it. Due to these underlying beliefs, naturalistic and interpretative approaches such as ethnomethodology and phenomenology would seem to be most fitting with Berger and Luckmann’s (1967) belief that individuals socially construct the social world. Interpretivism seeks to understand the fundamental nature of the social world at the level of subjective experience. It seeks explanation within the realm of individual consciousness and subjectivity, within the frame of reference of participants as opposed to the observer of action (Burrell & Morgen, 1979). By approaching this study through interpretivism and ethnography, I aim to take a holistic, in-depth, and localized approach.

Ethnography and Interpretative Phenomenology

In order to answer Research Question 1, “How do faculty make sense of institutional change related to accreditation,” it is essential to capture the character of human behavior of those experiencing change and accreditation in the institution and to see how they “make sense” of the change and phenomenon of accreditation. Therefore, I feel that this can only be done with first-hand contact. To explain change, it is important to examine and gain an understanding of the cultural perspectives in which the participants are based. One primary issue of contention is that of participant or onlooker. In this instance, I would be a participant as I would simultaneously combine studying documentation, interviewing, and observation. It is important to not only be able to understand the experience but also to be able to describe the experience for outsiders. I suggest that as I am not a Japanese native, my position as a non-native in this situation will help me to achieve this position. Yet, how can this be done reliably?

After considering a variety of approaches, I propose combining the methodological approaches of ethnography and interpretative phenomenology in this study. Maggs-Rapport (2000) made a compelling argument for this approach to research in nursing studies, and the following sections will outline the rationale behind why this approach is most suitable in this instance and will detail how the prospective study would progress. There are various kinds of naturalistic inquiry such as case studies, ethnography, and action research.

Ethnography is concerned with the portrayal of social groups and situations in a real-life context, while in phenomenology we see how things really are and establish meanings. An example of the phenomenological approach to accreditation and strategic change would include examining the subjective experiences at the heart of the research and investigating what the experience of change and accreditation is actually “like.” In addition, an example of the ethnographic approach to accreditation and strategic change would include looking at the impact of the accreditation and studying the culture of the organization and the interactions between members of that organization whilst utilizing Weick’s sensemaking framework as a lens. Finally, as Maitlis (2005) states, observing the organization from a member’s perspective is “essential for studying sensemaking” (p. 701), and ethnography will enable this observation.

In order to answer Research Question 2, “How does this instance correspond with Ericson's (2001) conceptual framework for understanding strategic change,” we must understand that the framework contains heterogeneous and homogenous cognitive profiles; therefore, it discusses individual and collective members of a group. Phenomenological research emphasizes the individual’s subjective experience (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003), and it is the subjective experience that is at the heart of the inquiry (Mertens, 1998). Thus, phenomenological research can help us to understand the individual while ethnography can provide a greater focus on communities and cultures – and can enable us to gain a better understanding of the homogenous cognitive profiles at play. It must also be noted that “inquiry from the inside” (Evered & Louis, 1981) is not a new concept and that it has already been utilized extensively in the organizational sciences. Evered and Louis (1981) provide a useful starting point for examining the difference between inquiry from the “outside” and inquiry from the “inside.” It is from here that I will discuss the use of ethnography and action research for organizational inquiry from the “inside.”

Ethnography or Case Study Research?

Both ethnography and case study research are concerned with participant observation. However, in this instance, ethnography has been chosen as the most suitable method. Guba and Lincoln’s (2005) discussion of paradigms places case study and ethnography on opposing ends of the qualitative paradigm spectrum, and it is this distinction that enabled me to make a decision between the two approaches. I am in agreement that ethnography is part of the constructivism paradigm while case study is more post-positivist. A constructivist approach often sees the researcher as a participant, and thus ethnography is far more suitable for an investigation into individuals’ behaviors within a particular culture. However, I do recognize that there are opponents to this way of thought (Willis, 2007;

Merriam, 1988) who argue that, in fact, case studies can be utilized within an interpretivist or social constructivist framework. In this instance, I examine Goetz and LeCompte's (1984) definition of ethnography to illustrate why this method is preferable to case study. Goetz and LeCompte state that ethnographies are "analytic descriptions or reconstructions of intact cultural scenes, or groups, that recreate for the reader the shared beliefs, practices, artifacts, folk knowledge and behaviors of some group of people" (p. 2). Ethnography, essentially, analyses culture, and aims to uncover the tacit knowledge of the subjects. In the proposed study, to be able to gain this tacit knowledge of a culture different from the researcher's own, the only means by which the researcher can observe this interpersonal interaction and thus uncover the sensemaking occurring within and between these individuals is to become a "routinely functioning" (Patton, 1990, p. 74) member of the group. Case study is defined as "an interest in the individual case, not by the methods of inquiry used" (Stake, 2005, p. 443). Through this definition, the situation is within a border, a boundary, which could be restrictive. This individuality could often result in issues of generalizability, which is not so prominent an issue in ethnography. On the other hand, it is acknowledged that case study research is often more practical, less time-consuming, and can be done in a more succinct fashion. This may be the case; however, as I am the primary researcher in the proposed study, and as I am currently employed full-time at the institution in question, an ethnographic study is not confined by time or access restraints.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This paper has discussed the potential for using Weick's sensemaking as a lens for examining strategic change and the methodological considerations for such a study. It also suggests that sensemaking could be utilized in an EFL setting to examine classroom interaction and dynamics.

This proposed study is ambitious in that it will seek to utilize a sensemaking perspective alongside Ericson's (2001) framework in a Japanese higher education institution. There have been no such studies found, either proposed or conducted, on this topic, thus making this prospective study unique. It is hoped that a study of this nature would lead to investigations into the relevance of sensemaking literature in the Japanese context, ways and means of dealing with accreditation in higher education, and a deeper understanding of educational institutions as organizations undergoing strategic change.

The next phase of this study would be to conduct a pilot interview and preliminary analysis of data in order to ascertain if the interviewing techniques are appropriate. The researcher will need to take time to adjust to the techniques of narrative interviewing and ethnographic interviewing in order to decide how best to proceed in the final study. There is also the question of language to consider, and pilot interviews in both English and Japanese would be necessary to consider which language should be used in the final study. The overwhelming factor that will guide the choice of approach for this study is the researcher's position within the study. Guba and Lincoln's (2005) term of a "passionate participant" (p. 196) is how I would like to see my position as researcher in this proposed study. Sensemaking is a process that is ongoing, instrumental, subtle, swift, social, and easily taken for granted (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005, p. 409). "Smallness does not equate with insignificance, small structures and short moments can have large consequences" (p. 409). I believe that ethnography is the most appropriate method for this study as these small structures and short moments can be best observed in a naturalistic, focused setting. The researcher within the research is essential to the study of sensemaking; thus, ethnography in conjunction with interpretive phenomenology is a compelling choice of research methods to tell "the story" of sensemaking (Hammersley, 1992) and strategic change at a higher education institution.

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Technology Enhanced Instruction / CALL / CMI

Corpora: Valuable Teaching and Research Tools

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Searchable computer databases of authentic language in use can provide valuable information about how English is being used, right now, by native speakers around the English-speaking world. Now, free web-based databases, or corpora, put powerful tools in the hands of teachers looking to create exercises with authentic language examples, as well as allow more advanced students to find answers to their own questions by searching the corpora themselves. Common problems such as choosing correct prepositions, or selecting the appropriate word from several near-synonymous terms, now can be handled by doing simple searches in a web-based corpus. Corpora can also provide quantitative data to strengthen qualitative language studies, as in the case of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Here a qualitative study of texts relating to the US "war on terror" is tested by checking predictions in a large corpus.

Learning all the usage rules of a new language is difficult enough, and the seemingly arbitrary conventions of usage (why "*at* 3 p.m." and not "*on* 3 p.m.?") can easily frustrate learners struggling to find reliable rules to use in their new language. If you have an online computer and a projector in your classroom, you can show the entire class how to answer a spontaneous student question. Great example questions are when they ask: "How do we use this word?" "Can I say this?" and "What's the difference between this word and that one?" Teachers are sometimes afraid to say that they do not know the answer, but we shouldn't be. Language use is so idiosyncratic that we can not possibly be expected to know all the answers about how all English speakers worldwide use the language individually.

Languages are constantly changing, and a corpus is basically a snapshot of the state of the language in a specific place and time. Open contemporary corpora like Mark Davies' Corpus of Contemporary American English or COCA (Davies, n.d.), a 400+ million-word corpus of spoken and written American English from 1990 to present, can give teachers a free, in-class tool to answer language questions with reliable, up-to-date data on how English is actually being used right now. Importantly, corpora also reveal how usage conventions and the meanings of words and phrases themselves are changing.

CORPUS SEARCHES

The most common corpus searches generally produce two kinds of results, concordances and collocates. Concordance information presents the search word or phrase as a keyword in context. Using COCA, the search term appears as bold and underlined in a line of text, with each line coming from a different source (see Figure 1). This is a simple list search using the COCA website, which can result in thousands of lines of data. At first, these lines are in order by source. For a broader look at the search term across different sources, clicking "sample: 100 entries" gives you a randomized sample of 100 concordance lines, which is usually enough to show any significant grammar patterns.

1	2009	ACAD	GeographRev	1 and 2). # As an urban and population geographer, **I am interested** in both pattern and process in metropolitan settings. Through my work as a census
2	2008	SPOK	ABC_ThisWeek	I want to wait to hear what he has to stay. What **I am interested** in is trying to have an environment where we can discuss the region at large
3	2008	SPOK	ABC_Nightline	I want to wait to hear what he has to stay. What **I am interested** in is trying to have an environment where we can discuss the region at large
4	2008	SPOK	ABC_ThisWeek	investigation. I' m not that interested in looking back. What **I am interested** in and committed to is making sure we don' t do it again.
5	2008	FIC	Bk:BordeauxBetrayal	this lecture? " I asked. // His arm tightened. " **I am interested**. But not in some woman giving a dull talk. " // My face
6	2008	MAG	Atlantic	his assignment was a cement-research institute in his hometown of Tianjin. " **I am interested** in heat generation, this place is about cement-no match! " he tol
7	2008	MAG	TechReview	in real time. The focus of digital personalization has shifted from what **I am interested** in now to what I might be interested in next. All the choices I
8	2008	MAG	AmerArtist	Sunlight or lamplight juxtaposed with shadows add to the complexity of shapes. **I am interested** in how light can divert attention away from figures and slow d
9	2008	NEWS	SanFrancisco	in one of the institute's first classes on herbal tinctures. " **I am interested** in the concept. It can't hurt to know a few things, even
10	2008	NEWS	SanFrancisco	doesn't interest me at all,' he said." **I am interested** in whether people can vote on their own, whether people are given the freedom
11	2008	ACAD	GeographRev	women's roles seem to be changing. To address this issue, **I am interested** in how women will respond to the absence of men and whether they will assume
12	2007	FIC	BkSF:NatureJade	who I've known since I first moved to Seattle, would say **I am interested** in the boy on the screen only because he's cute. Hannah, though
13	2007	MAG	CountryLiving	4292! 1 **I am interested** to learn more about the age, value, and origin of my dresser.
14	2007	NEWS	Atlanta	draw the line somewhere. We have limited resources, too. # **I am interested** in a lot of different things from a lot of different aspects and I have
15	2007	ACAD	ArtBulletin	has always run alongside it? As a historiographer of art history, **I am interested** as much in the discipline's renunciations, displacements, fantasies, and oblivion

FIGURE 1. Concordance data in list view from COCA

The search in Figure 1 presents a lot of information, but what is key for a student searching for which preposition to use with *interested* is simply the preposition following the target phrase. Here, nearly every line shows *interested* followed by *in*, which indicates that *in* is, at least, the most common preposition following *interested*. Other terms may not prove so simple to tie to a single preposition, but the context presented with each line should help students choose which preposition is best for what they want to say. Each line is further expandable to paragraph length by clicking on the source (e.g., NPR_Science) to the left of the desired line. This is only a small example, but serves to illustrate that grammatical patterns in usage become visible when search results produce a lot of examples of a given word or phrase. For more advanced students, teachers can do inductive exercises to get the students involved. Students become researchers themselves when presented with concordance data, either in class using a computer and projector or with handouts using the concordance lines. Teachers can then ask students to discover for themselves what the usage patterns are.

Another source of information COCA provides is the frequency of the search word or phrase, expressed as number of occurrences per million words of text. COCA contains over 400 million words of text, which are comprised of five sub-corpora of spoken English from TV and radio programs, and written English from fiction, magazines, newspapers, and academic publications.

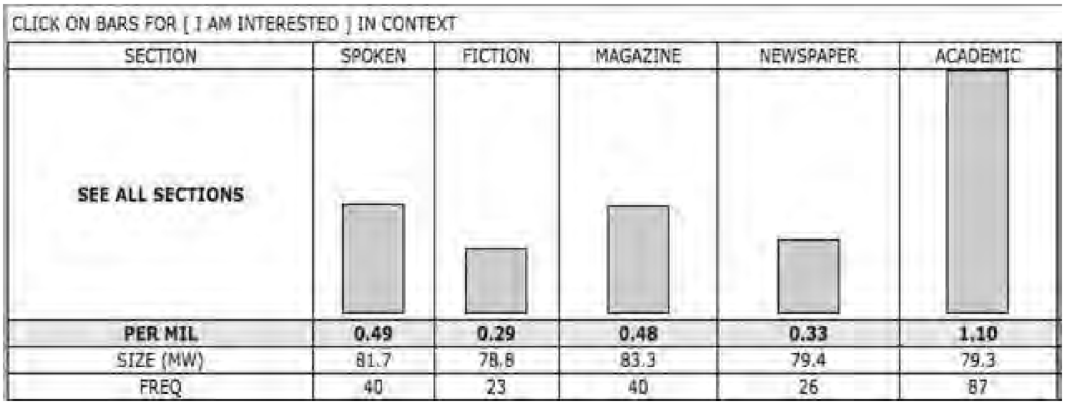

FIGURE 2. Chart view result in COCA

Each sub-corpus is around 80 million words each, making them useful for cross-genre comparisons. Figure 2 shows the results of a search for *I am interested* in chart view. Here, cropped for size, the chart on the website extends to the right, which also shows a comparison of frequency of the search term across a five-year time period.

The chart view result can quickly illuminate a very important, but often under-emphasized, point in language teaching: Spoken and written language are very different things, and certain words and phrases will be highly frequent in one area and totally absent from another. Filler words like *um*, *ah*, *y'know*, etc. are not very common in academic or newspaper writing, for example, but common in speech and in fiction. An interesting point here is to consider where the COCA texts come from. A search for *y'know* produced only four results in fiction and none in the spoken corpus. Yet certainly native speakers use this filler word daily, so why is it absent here? Part of the reason may be due to the fact that COCA doesn't recognize contractions as written with apostrophes, so a search for *I'm* has to be entered as "I m" with a space in place of the apostrophe. Another potential reason is that a spoken word corpus comprised of national news broadcasts will favor certain types of speech over others. This is a limitation to consider when working with corpora, that they provide very good data, but no corpus should be taken to be exhaustive of all examples of contemporary word usage. The advantages of these large databases, however, far outweigh their limitations. The chart view search can help language learners distinguish between the more formal *prepare* and the more casual *get ready* by showing that *get ready*, while less common overall than *prepare*, is still proportionally more common in spoken English than its more formal counterpart.

The other major type of search result is a list of collocates. Collocates are "friends" of the search term; i.e., words that tend to appear within a few words before or after the search term. A significant collocate of the term *kith* would be *kin*, for example, as *kin* nearly always appears together when *kith* is used. One simple way to find collocates listed in order of frequency is to do a compare words search on the COCA website, using two near-synonyms. This is a good way to answer student questions of "what's the difference between 'a' and 'b'?" The default span to search within is 4:4, meaning that it is a search for commonly repeated words that appear between four words before and four words after the search term. Note also that the search in Figure 3 limited the results to only the results from spoken sources (radio and TV transcripts), and that the search results can be limited by date, source type, and even specific publications or news shows.

	WORD	W1	W2	W1/W2	SCORE
1	RETURNS	394	0	788.0	105.6
2	PRIMETIME	324	0	648.0	86.9
3	CONFRONTED	152	0	304.0	40.8
4	REACT	138	0	276.0	37.0
5	COMPARE	115	0	230.0	30.8
6	1980	111	0	222.0	29.8
7	COMES	5301	25	212.0	28.4
8	OCCASIONS	92	0	184.0	24.7
9	RETIRE	92	0	184.0	24.7
10	PRESENTED	87	0	174.0	23.3
11	60S	85	0	170.0	22.8
12	ASKS	84	0	168.0	22.5
13	REMEMBERS	84	0	168.0	22.5
14	EXPLODED	83	0	166.0	22.3
15	EXCEPT	164	1	164.0	22.0
16	BLEW	79	0	158.0	21.2

	WORD	W2	W1	W2/W1	SCORE
1	WAITS	30	0	60.0	447.6
2	MAINTAINING	28	0	56.0	417.7
3	REMAINED	23	0	46.0	343.1
4	INTOXICATED	22	0	44.0	328.2
5	SIMULTANEOUSLY	22	0	44.0	328.2
6	PRESERVING	15	0	30.0	223.8
7	PENDING	14	0	28.0	208.9
8	CAPTIVITY	12	0	24.0	179.0
9	DETAINED	12	0	24.0	179.0
10	JOGGING	11	0	22.0	164.1
11	REDUCING	11	0	22.0	164.1
12	REMAINING	11	0	22.0	164.1
13	STEADY	11	0	22.0	164.1
14	ACKNOWLEDGING	10	0	20.0	149.2
15	INSISTS	10	0	20.0	149.2
16	REFUSING	10	0	20.0	149.2

FIGURE 3. Collocates of *when* and *while* in Compare Words view in COCA

The above search, comparing *when* and *while*, shows a number of verbs appearing with both words. Looking at verb tenses, the collocates show that simple past and simple present appear more often with *when*, and present and past continuous appear more often with *while*. These trends can show subtle differences in usage and meaning between two very similar terms. These results do not preclude using continuous tenses with *when*, for example, but they do show that the usage trends have simple tenses as the most common. For the student focused on finding the "correct" answer, the corpus teaches that "correctness" is often a question of convention, rather than hard and fast rules. It is reassuring, though, to be able to provide hard data to answer these types of questions rather than having to fall back on non-answers like: "You just have to listen to a lot of English, and you'll get a feel for what sounds right." (I'm happy I no longer have to give that answer myself.)

Teachers can also create handouts from corpus information, helping students discover for themselves what the usage trends are. Here is an example of an inductive exercise asking students to spot usage differences between *when* and *while*.

It was a Sunday morning	when	I found it at a flea market.
And	when	he came out, I was going down.
And	when	she came, they took me outside
my mother did the cooking	when	she came in.
And they were poor	when	they came.
David asked me to come along with him	while	he got cigarettes,
Liston says he learned tracking	while	he was growing up on a ranch.
But I've paid	while	I was at work.
Well	while	I was working there I got a phone call from the steel place
Her first was made	while	she was a student at UCLA.
He had been hiding since April of 1988		he escaped from a prison ship anchored in Manila Bay.
my mother was ninety five		she died
They got it		she was writing it on the board
and we were all chatting away		she was cracking these nuts

FIGURE 4. Corpus-derived exercise with *when* vs. *while*

Language corpora are still new to the classroom with influential, groundbreaking texts still only a few decades old (Johns, 1991). The COCA corpus described here was only released in 2008. Exciting new uses for corpora in classrooms are being made right now, and teachers now have powerful tools at their disposal, both to explore language themselves and to help educate their students as to the shifting and constantly inventive nature of real language in use.

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND CORPUS LINGUISTICS

Quantitative corpus studies are not limited to the classroom and creation of lesson materials, of course. The representative nature of large corpora can add reliable support to observations made from qualitative analyses of shorter texts. Over the past few decades, language researchers have been increasingly interested in the relationship of language to abuses of power in society and exposing subtle ideological positions implied in texts. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) formally began in 1991 with a meeting of like-minded scholars in Amsterdam (Wodak, 2001). Central to CDA studies are concerns related to how language is used to support discrimination, social inequality, and violence. In common with many CDA studies, this analysis uses the functional grammar (FG) of Australian researcher Michael Halliday (2004).

This is a study focused on physical actions of abuse, namely, the contentious issue of US treatment of prisoners in the "war on terror." In recent years, the meanings of torture and other key terms have been debated by administration officials and in the press. On one side, US officials have argued that US interrogation techniques do not constitute torture. On the other side, photos, sworn statements, and medical evidence of US abuse of prisoners have come to light resulting in a small number of convictions, demotions, and resignations, particularly of US military responsible for atrocities at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Groups and individuals including the Red Cross and former president Jimmy Carter have described US actions as torture (Scott 2008). The Red Cross report, originally a secret document, was leaked and published in Greenberg and Dratel (2005).

The key Hallidayan functional categories used here are Actors, Material Processes, and Goals. Material Processes are events that cause observable changes in the world (e.g., *go*, *run*, *kick*) and are denoted here by verbs relating to physical actions. Actors are the doers of these Processes, and Goals are the people or things which those Processes are done to. Functional grammar's terminology is complex, but for simplicity's sake Actors, Processes, and Goals may be thought of here as subjects, verbs, and objects, keeping in mind that this study focuses on Material Processes as opposed to Verbal Processes (*say*, *claim*), Mental Processes (*think*, *recall*), etc.

Researchers are beginning to use language corpora in CDA studies. Studies of large databases of natural language collected from news reports, books, and television and radio broadcasts add a quantitative element to what might otherwise be qualitative studies of small numbers of texts. Recent studies have used corpora to investigate actual usage of terms and presentation of individuals and social groups in the press (Downs, 2002; O'Grady, 2007). These studies generally derive hypotheses from corpus data rather than taking qualitiative analyses, such as the FG-based study performed here, to corpora to check the results. The results of this study indicate that combining the two approaches, and using large corpora of language in use to check qualitative conclusions, is a promising research direction that deserves further investigation.

APPROACH: COMBINING FUNCTIONAL AND CORPUS ANALYSES

Using a Hallidayan Functional Analysis from a CDA Perspective

In the full-scale study discussed here, three texts were originally studied: a US government list of approved techniques to be used in prisoner interrogations (Greenberg & Dratel, 2005), a BBC news report detailing the arrest and confinement of prisoners in the "war on terror" by US officials (BBC, 2005), and a report from Physicians for Human Rights detailing accounts of freed prisoners of their arrest and captivity, along with the corresponding medical evidence supporting their accounts of abuse (Physicians for Human Rights, 2008). Since the original research was done, more US government documents on this topic have been declassified, including CIA guidelines for interrogators and details of individual prisoners' treatment while in captivity. The new government data does not affect the bulk of the study's conclusions at all, however, and the original results presented here focus on news coverage, which is the most important of the three genres studied.

To put the question simply, in these three texts, who was doing what to whom? We can take a close look now at exactly who was doing what to whom by looking at representative Actors, Material Processes, and Goals listed in all four texts.

TABLE 1. Representative Actors, Material Processes, and Goals in All Three Texts

	Actors	Material Processes	Goals
US Government. Report	they [conditions] military police this technique	deprive create, creating adjusting introducing transfer use / are used cause/would cause requiring	detainee / the detainee him [detainee] subject [detainee] moderate discomfort sleep cycles anxiety pain or injury
BBC News Report	US agents US immigration Mr. Arar / he intelligence agents the US	could be / interrogated was arrested / seized heading / was headed held / was held / being held was / had been beaten was flown was shackled / bound was / would be tortured	Mr. Masri / he Maher Arar / he Mr. Habib / he / him terror suspects "enemy combatants"
Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) Report	US forces Amir / he the / a soldier US personnel Youssef / he	forced / was forced were deprived threw was taken was / being subjected was transferred was detained was shackled	Amir / he he and other detainees Youssef / he

Presented this way, the trends become clearer. All texts involve authorities as Actors, though they account for only a few instances in the government text and non-human Actors appear more often. The BBC text chiefly features unnamed authority figures as Actors, as does the PHR text though the PHR text presents the prisoners as actors more often. The lack of named authority figures may well be due to a lack of specific information on the part of journalists in the BBC and PHR texts, but the effect this creates in the reader is to depersonalize the Actors associated with actions in frightening and sometimes violent situations.

From a critical perspective, news writing presents a far more significant source of information due to its large scale and influence on public opinion (Fairclough, 2001; Fowler, 1991). Perhaps partly for this reason, large corpora of news writing are available in the Bank of English, a 500-million-word corpus of English from international sources. Since the treatment of torture carried out by US Actors is the chief concern here, from the data, we can derive (among other possibilities) the following two testable hypotheses:

(1) Torture is an action Americans distance themselves from, and it will seldom appear in a Material clause where US agents appear as Actors (as compared with interrogate).

(2) Torture is controversial in news reporting, and so, when it does refer to actions of the US, will most often appear framed by Verbal Processes, in both noun and verb forms (referring to physical, non-metaphoric torture).

Testing the CDA Hypotheses Against Computer Corpus Data

The first hypothesis states that *torture*, when it appears in the news, will rarely be described as the action of Americans, as compared with the less-violent, more official-sounding *interrogate*. To produce the following tables, a 100-line sample of concordance results for "torture@" was obtained from the news corpora in the Bank of English, a corpus of written and spoken texts created by the University of Birmingham, UK, and HarperCollins Publishers as part of the COBUILD project. This corpus is not publicly available, but is available for academic research. Each line was expanded to reveal the term in a five-line extract of text. Actors identifiable by nationality, and their associated Goals, are presented in Table 2. Actors and Goals identifiable in the context of the five-line sample are given in square brackets.

TABLE 2. Non-fictional Human Actors (doers) of Physical, Non-metaphorical torture Paired with Non-fictional Human Goals (those the torture is done to) in the Bank of English News Corpora, Versus Actors and Goals in Clauses Featuring interrogate

Torture Actors	Torture Goals	Interrogate Actors	Interrogate Goals
Israelis and Palestinians	[their prisoners]	The Chinese authorities	a well-known [Chinese] dissident journalist
the killer, Sydney man Richard Leatch, 20	James [his victim]	The FBI	the playboy son of a well-known Balkan millionaire, who was a suspected Nazi sympathizer
Dragan Kulundzija [a Serb camp commander]	thousands of Muslims and Croats	Germans	Poles
Yemeni police	Malik Harhra, 26 [a Briton]	South Korean intelligence officials	Miss Kim [a Korean prisoner]
SLA officers	Nadia (Ex-Prisoner)	[Czech] authorities	[eventual Czech president Vaclav] Havel
[Egyptian forces]	people [held in paramilitary camps]	the Soviets	two Treblinka guards

The results here seem to support the hypothesis: US forces do not appear as *torture* Actors in this sample. There is a further pattern in that the Actors, when appearing as *torture* authorities or government forces, tend to come from far outside the US and Western Europe. It can be argued that when "we" talk about torture ("we" being citizens of western countries), it is not something "we" do, but rather something "they" do. Americans do appear as Actors for *interrogate*, as do US allies with whom we might expect western news readers to be sympathetic.

One could argue the various effects of the two terms, but the central point is that the data does tend to support the claim that instances of Americans appearing as torturers are rare.

The second hypothesis states that torture, when it is attributed to the US, will be most often reported in the news as alleged or attributed to an individual's statement rather than as fact. An expanded search of 500 lines in the Bank of English revealed only five instances where Americans were identified as Actors of torture. Perhaps not insignificantly, none of these instances come from major US news sources. The near-total absence of instances of US actors presented as carrying out torture, despite medical evidence, supports the hypothesis taken from the qualitative analysis. This is perhaps unsurprising given the grave potential legal consequences if US personnel were convicted of torture, but the silence on the part of the mass media is disturbing given the evidence and significance of this issue.

CONCLUSION

Language corpora can be used to aid teachers and students in making observations about language use, as well as strengthening CDA studies as other researchers are demonstrating (Orpin, 2005). CDA studies do not require researchers to use functional categories, but their popularity is understandable in light of their potential to give valuable insight into real-world texts. Though qualitative functional studies and quantitative corpus studies each have their limitations, by combining some elements from both, I have attempted to address these limitations to see if they can be combined usefully. News reporting has a crucial role to play in presenting information on serious crimes of powerful states, and language plays a major role in framing that information. A combination of comparative functional and corpus analyses, such as the one presented here, can make a significant contribution to increasing awareness of the role of language in events of global importance as well as aiding teachers searching to bring English to life for their students.

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Testing / Evaluation

Comparing Teacher and Student Evaluations of Error

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The author discusses the findings of a contextualized, in-class EFL dictation quiz in which students (N = 183) and their native and non-native English speaking teachers (N = 5) were requested to evaluate sentences produced. Students were also asked to provide explanations of why they evaluated as they did. Comparisons revealed that the greatest differences between student and teacher scores occurred on questions that proved most difficult overall. Students were generally unable to make contextual or intelligibility-based decisions that reflected error severity. Teachers gave lower scores than their students on the same data, with non-native-speaking teachers (n = 2) awarding 8.3% less, and native-speaking teachers (n = 3) giving 11.6% lower scores than their respective students. Students and teachers did concur, however, in overall rankings of question difficulty as based on mean scores.

The impetus for this inquiry originates in a student's self-correction made in a conversation outside English class. He awkwardly corrected his pronunciation of "the" in the phrase "the earth" from /ðə/ to /ði/, despite having mispronounced "earth" as /æs/. Suspicions that students and teachers often differed in judgments of error gravity were confirmed after having had students correct each other's work in class, and through subsequent experiments culminating in the dictation quiz described herein.

Research in error gravity or the seriousness ascribed by language users to varieties of error has been criticized (e.g., Rifkin & Roberts, 1995; Ellis, 2008) for inconsistencies in methodologies employed and conclusions drawn. Even if one excludes problems associated with error categorization (e.g., is *The United State* a mistake in spelling or grammatical number?) as outlined in Santos (1988), the raw data collected by researchers is most often subject to editing (e.g., Piazza, 1980; Guntermann, 1978), reduction (e.g., Hughes and Lascaratou, 1982; Khalil, 1985, Sheorey, 1986), and overall context depletion, with some scholars having evaluators mark artificially produced, typical examples of learners' output (e.g., Magnan, as cited in Rifkin & Roberts, 1995; Davis, 1983).

PROJECT DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

In order to preserve data authenticity and to avoid criticisms such as those mentioned above, especially those associated with evaluating the almost parameter-less sphere of oral communication, this experiment took the form of a dictation. The dictated sentences themselves (see Appendix) consisted of a series of context-building instructions on precisely how to do the dictation, providing a situated listening event that, in at least some ways, mimics the real-life need for learners to understand brief and simple, spoken instructions from English speakers with whom they are familiar.

Participants were a convenience sample drawn from 183 Humanities and Science students of various majors, including English, of varying English levels. The teachers involved were the students' regular EFL professors from four universities and colleges in northern Japan. The three native English-speaking professors hailed from Australia, Britain, and the United States; the two Japanese professors were familiar with several varieties of English, and had each studied in the UK and the US. All students had had previous experience listening to their professors speak English in the 8 to 9 months of class time before the dictation. Each English instructor chose to incorporate the dictation into overall class evaluations as a minor quiz.

Michael Rost (2002) notes in regard to typical discourse that "a normal speaking rate has about eight words per every two- to three-second burst of speech" (p. 21). Efforts were thus made to have utterances resemble those of naturally occurring discourse, with seven sentences of five to nine words each read at natural speed. No attempt was made to employ vocabulary beyond that of everyday classroom-level English. The teachers were asked to read each dictated sentence twice, to make six-second pauses between each reading, and to pause eight seconds between each sentence. Steps were taken to render the dictation as context-rich as possible, and to include common contractions and a degree of word repetition.

After the dictation, students were told to pass their completed dictation quiz to the student behind them. They were then asked to mark each question on a scale of 0 to 5 as they felt appropriate, with the instruction "You be the teacher . . ."; their professors were informed that they should allow students to decide for themselves how to deduct points for errors. An additional request was made for students to provide an explanation (in English or their L1) of why they allotted points as they did. Most, but not all, students in this study provided comments on their marking strategies. Teachers in each class then collected the quizzes and assigned final marks on the same zero-to-five-point scale for each of the seven questions, allowing for a maximum score of 35. Comparisons were then made between the marks of students and their teachers in each of the five classes (i.e., not across different classes).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In all, teachers were found to have evaluated students 10.3% lower than students had. The three native-speaking English teachers (NSTs) marked an average of 11.6% lower than their students, and the two non-native teachers (NNSTs) similarly gave 8.3% lower grades overall. Taken individually, NSTs' average marks for the entire quiz were lower than those given by their students by 5.3% (n = 46), 11.7% (n = 80), and 17.9% (n = 4), while the NNSTs' average marks were 3.9% (n = 17) and 12.7% (n = 46) lower than those of their students. Yet while students in each class exhibited a tendency to award higher scores than their professors, both student and teacher groups of evaluators generally concurred upon which of the seven questions students fared best (Question 2, then 7) and to a lesser degree upon which they fared worst (Question 4, then either 5 or 1). Further, students and their teachers gave identical scores on individual questions 54.1% of the time.

The professors awarded fewer points on 40.1% of questions (NST at mean of 43.1%; NNSTs at 37.1%), with evaluations from teacher groups exhibiting a broader spread in standard deviation than those of their students, with the former at an observed 1.37 (NSTs: 1.46; NNSTs: 1.24), as compared with the student average of 1.01. However, there were few questions on which sets of students and teachers (i.e., evaluators *within* each class, marking the same sentences) differed with statistical significance as measured by the Mann-Whitney test. The greatest differences were observed in Questions 4 and 5, the very questions that students had the most difficulty transcribing accurately in the dictation. Teacher and student scores differed significantly in Question 4 at the 0.01 level in one NST and one NNST class, with another NST class demonstrating considerable difference. Three of the five sets of teacher-student scores for Question 5 produced great differences as well, with two classes (one NST and one NNST) being significant at the 0.05 level and one NST class very nearly significant.

While some research has claimed that non-native-speaking teachers tend to give lower scores than native-speakers on students overall (Nickel's study, as cited in Johansson, 1978; James, 1977; Davies, 1983; Sheorey, 1986; Fayer and Krasinski, 1987; and McCretton & Rider, 1993), and that NNSTs can be particularly harsh in regard to errors based on well-cautioned pitfalls (Hughes and Lascaratou, 1982; Davies, 1983), neither of the Japanese professors in this experiment demonstrated any such tendency. Nor was there evidence of Japanese teachers showing excessive tolerance of so-called typical local learners' EFL errors (Salem, 2004), such as *l* and *r* confusion. In Question 6, for example, a NNST gave the sentence "I'll correcte everyone's paper later" two marks and "I'll correct [space] every one's paper later" three, compared to student evaluator marks of five and four, respectively.

While overt signs of student sympathy toward fellow students (see Galloway, 1980) were observed in a handful of marginal notes, in comments such as "too bad!" and "I'll go easy on this one," they did not necessarily transfer into marks that differed from those given by teachers on the same questions. More importantly, it is certainly possible that any trend towards generosity among students may not have been intentional: Many may have been basing their judgments on evaluative paradigms that simply do not account for error gravity. The main problem thus seems to be that students are not equipped to judge the *intelligibility* of learner output.

Examples of students' inability to distinguish between grave and forgivable errors can be found throughout the data and were most manifest in questions in which teachers and students differed by 2 or more points out of the 5 to be awarded. For instance, a response to Question 2 of "Please like down what you are say" was given 3 points by a student and just one point from the NNST. The student evaluator noted in Japanese only that "*like* should have been *write*," and that "*are you* should have been *I am*" and appears not to have noticed the missing *-ing*. Again, the evaluator does not appear to have considered whether the phrase "like down" would be comprehensible to a prospective reader, or whether shifting the grammatical agent from *I* to *you* does not radically alter the sentence's core meaning. Another, even clearer, example of a teacher-student gap in the weighting of context-based flaws can be seen in a response to Question 1, "We'll now focus on some listening" mistakenly reproduced as "We will now forget some listening." The student evaluator explained a marking scheme in Japanese at the bottom of the page with "up to 2 errors gets 4 points" and "3-5 errors gets 3 points," and subsequently allotted the sentence four out of five points, while the NST granted just one.

Eighty-seven of the 183 students outlined general rules they employed in marking; fifty-nine students made comments on points subtracted in individual questions, and five students did both. While rigidity in some students' evaluative systems caused teacher-student gaps, a more flexible and error-gravity-sensitive approach was taken by 46 of them. For example, one student indicated in Japanese at the bottom of the page "I basically deducted one or two points according to my sense of the error's size." Another, again in Japanese, wrote "I deducted one point for spelling mistakes and just one point in sentences containing only one mistake. In cases where the student had completely misheard what was said, I deducted two points (where this dramatically altered the sentence's meaning)." This particular student, who seems to have arrived at a comparatively advanced approach to marking, gave the quiz 31/35 points overall, and the NST it gave 28/35 points.

Yet in a subsequent investigation, not all students who displayed an awareness of error gravity succeeded in making evaluative decisions that corresponded with those of their teacher. A comparison of the total scores on tests marked by these participants and their teachers, however, revealed that these students' actual sense of error gravity accorded either (a) very closely with that of their professors or (b) very little. Twenty-five of the 46 error-gravity-sensitive students seem to have fared well, differing from their teachers by just 3 out of 35 points (8.6%) or fewer in quiz score evaluations, while 11 students differed by 8 out of 35 (22.9%) or more, with only 10 falling between these extremes. Thus, in this study, the learners' application of self-determined, error-gravity-based marking schemes generally yielded either very good or very poor results, with the former tendency observed most frequently. While one cannot state with certainty whether a learner's consciousness of error gravity would help close the overall gap between teacher and student evaluative proficiencies, the data here imply that in most cases it would. Having said this, however, it must be noted that the difference in mean overall quiz scores between all students and their teachers (10.3%) was, somewhat paradoxically, less than the mean difference between students who indicated an awareness of error gravity and their teachers (12.4%).

CONCLUSION

Future studies of evaluative gaps of this kind might also include larger participant populations, as well as native-speaking and English-proficient non-native-speaking participants who are *not* teachers, and who represent the target audience to EFL learners. Additionally, while non-parametric tests were employed in data analyses here, altering the original evaluative procedure by replacing the 0-to-5-point scale with a letter-grade scale would better reflect the nature of language evaluation, a judgment more closely resembling that of (ordinal) ranking than scaled measurement.

Students and teachers need to discuss the issue of error gravity in order to focus their energies on the more important aspects of L2 communication. While students in this study were generally capable of identifying errors, their perceptions of *what* was wrong often fell short of assessing *how wrong*. A further unpacking of this data, and similar experiments of this nature in the future, will continue to reveal and describe students' interlanguage proficiencies. Yet students and teachers should remember that limiting a student's L2 output to that of written transcriptions as in this experiment cannot in itself give a full accurate picture of any student's overall proficiency; intonation, pronunciation, and body language can all serve to complement (or detract from) L2 performance, and must be considered in creating comprehensive language assessments.

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APPENDIX

1. We'll now focus on some listening.
2. Please write down what I'm saying.
3. We will do seven sentences in all.
4. After this quiz, you'll mark one another's papers.
5. Feel free to mark these as you wish.
6. I'll collect everyone's papers later.
7. This is the last sentence you need to write.

The Minimal English Test: A Revised Version

Hideki Maki[1], Sarenqimuge[1], Juri Yoshimura[1], Yuki Makino[1], Megumi Hasebe[1], Kenichi Goto[1], Takane Ito[2], Yoko Yumoto[3], Satoshi Oku[4], Michiyo Hamasaki[5], Yukiko Ueda[6], Kosuke Nagasue[7], Hironobu Kasai[7], Takashi Munakata[8], and Jessica Dunton[9]

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Maki et al. (2003) developed the Minimal English Test (MET) to measure learners' ESL proficiency. The MET is a five-minute test that requires the test taker to write a correct English word with four letters or fewer into each of the 72 blank spaces of the given sentences while listening to a CD. The Maki group has shown statistically significant correlations between the scores on the MET and the scores on the Japanese University Entrance Examination (English; UEE) 2002-2008. However, no explanation has been provided for why the target words were of four letters or fewer. To avoid this problem, we developed a new version of the MET, in which every sixth word was a target word, examined correlations between the scores on the old and new MET and the scores on the UEE 2009, and found no statistically significant difference between the two correlation coefficients, showing that the newer version of the MET is free from the problem inherent in the older version.

The organization of this paper is as follows. The next section gives an overview of the three materials in this study: the MET (MET 4), the revised version of the MET (MET 6), and the UEE 2009. This is followed by an analysis of the data. The results and conclusions conclude the paper.

MATERIALS

In this study, we used three materials to measure ESL proficiency: the Minimal English Test (MET 4), the revised version of the Minimal English Test (MET 6), and the University Entrance Examination in Japan: English Part (UEE) 2009. The MET 4, the MET 6, and the UEE 2009 are reviewed below.

The Minimal English Test (The MET 4)

The MET is a simple test, which requires the test taker to write a correct English word of four letters or fewer in each of the 72 blank spaces of the given sentences written on one piece of A4 paper, while listening to a CD that produces the sentences. The MET is based on Lessons 1 and 2 of the textbook for college freshmen by Kawana and Walker (2002) and the CD that accompanies it. The contents of the textbook are essays on modern society in the United States. The CD lasts about five minutes with a speed of 125 words per minute. The MET 4 appears in (Appendix A).

The test taker is verbally given the following three instructions in advance: (1) Write an English word of four letters or fewer in the blank spaces, while listening to the CD; (2) The CD lasts about five minutes, and (3) There is about a three-second interval between Line 18 and Line 19.

As for the reliability of the MET, Goto et al. (2008) shows that the reliability coefficient of the MET is .88 (N = 693), which indicates that the scores on the MET are moderately reliable as an ESL test.

Since the development of the MET in 2003, the Maki Group has investigated whether the MET, which is a five-minute test, actually measures ESL proficiency, and found statistically significant relatively high correlations between the scores on the MET and the scores on other widely used ESL tests such as: (1) the UEE 2002, which is a common university entrance examination in Japan (r = .68, p < .05, n = 154), (2) the Paul Nation Vocabulary Test (Nation, 2001; r = .81, p < .05, n = 160), and (3) the College Scholastic Achievement Test: English Part (CSAT) by the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE; 2007), which is the common university entrance examination in Korea (r = .61, p < .05, n = 155). Furthermore, the Maki Group has confirmed that the MET, which at first sight seems to be a listening test, measures not only listening comprehension but also reading comprehension. Therefore, the MET seems to measure the same sort of ESL proficiency (that is, both listening and reading comprehension) as the above-mentioned, widely used English tests.

The Minimal English Test: A Revised Version (The MET 6)

The text on which the Revised Version MET (MET 6) is based is the same as that of the MET 4. One crucial difference between the MET 4 and the MET 6 is that the latter has a target word in every sixth place. The MET 6 appears in (Appendix B).

The University Entrance Examination: English Part 2009 (UEE 2009)

The University Entrance Examination Center (2009) provides the summary of UEE (English Part) 2009 results shown in Tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1. The Reading Section of the UEE 2009

Observations	500,297
Full mark	200
Number of questions	50
Average score	115.02
Standard deviation	37.54
Time limit	80 minutes
Date	January 17, 2009

TABLE 2. The Listening Section of the UEE 2009

Observations	494,342
Full mark	50
Number of questions	25
Average score	24.03
Standard deviation	9.65
Time limit	30 minutes
Date	January 17, 2009

The reading section of the UEE 2009 contains questions on pronunciation, grammar, reordering of sentences, and reading comprehension, and the listening section of the UEE 2009 contains questions on listening comprehension.

DATA ANALYSIS

First, we analyzed the data (the scores on the MET 4 and 6, and the UEE 2009) using a simple regression analysis (correlation analysis). The results are shown in Tables 3 and 4.

TABLE 3. Correlation Coefficients Between the Scores on the MET 4 and the Scores on the UEE 2009

	MET 4
Reading Part	0.53
Listening Part	0.59
Total Score	0.56

TABLE 4. Correlation Coefficients Between the Scores on the MET 6 and the Scores on the UEE 2009

	MET 6
Reading Part	0.53
Listening Part	0.56
Total Score	0.57

The overall correlation coefficients between the scores on the MET 4 and MET 6, and the scores on the UEE 2009 are summarized in Table 5.

TABLE 5. The Overall Results of the Correlations Between the Scores on the MET 4 and MET 6, and the Scores on the UEE 2009

Year	Type	Observations	Correlation Coefficient(R)	Regression Line
2009	MET 4	877	.53 (Reading)	y = 1.34x + 93.19
			.59 (Listening)	y = 0.49x + 12.49
			.56 (Reading and Listening)	y = 1.83x + 105.6
2009	MET 6	518	.53 (Reading)	y = 1.66x + 98.36
			.56 (Listening)	y = 0.55x + 15.92
			.57 (Reading and Listening)	y = 2.21x + 114.28

We then examined whether there was a statistically significant difference between the two correlation coefficients for both the Reading Section and the Listening Section, and also for the sum of the Reading Section and the Listening Section, by using the Fisher *r*-to-*z* transformation provided by VassarStats: Web Site for Statistical Computation (2009). According to VassarStats, the Fisher *r*-to-*z* transformation calculates a value of *z* that can be applied to assess the significance of the difference between two correlation coefficients, r_a and r_b, found in two independent samples. The results of the analyses are shown below. First, there was no statistically significant difference between the correlation coefficients of the Reading Section (*p* two-tail = 1), as shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6. Significance of the Difference Between the Correlation Coefficients of the Reading Section

	MET 6	MET 4
Correlation Coefficient	.53	.53
Samples	518	877
z	0	
p-value	1	

Second, there was no statistically significant difference between the correlation coefficients of the Listening Section (*p* two-tail = .42), as shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7. Significance of the Difference Between the Correlation Coefficients for the Listening Section

	MET 6	MET 4
Correlation Coefficient	.56	.59
Samples	518	877
z	-.81	
p-value	.42	

Third, and finally, there was no statistically significant difference between the correlation coefficients of the sum of the Reading Section and the Listening Section (*p* two-tail = .79), as shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8. Significance of the Difference Between the Correlation Coefficients for the Sum of the Reading Section and the Listening Section

	MET 6	MET 4
Correlation Coefficient	.57	.56
Samples	518	877
z	.26	
p-value	.79	

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

We started this paper with the question as to why the target words of four letters or fewer. We then made the MET 6, which is a new version of the MET 4, and examined correlations between the scores on the MET 4 and the MET 6, and the total scores on the UEE 2009. The result was that the correlation coefficients were .56 and .57, respectively, and no statistically significant difference between the two correlation coefficients was found. This indicates that the MET 6, which is free from the above problem, could function as a tool in future ESL research.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we found that the correlation coefficients were .56 for the MET 4 and .57 for the MET 6, and no statistically significant difference between the two correlation coefficients was found by the Fisher *r*-to-*z* transformation. Therefore, the revised version of the MET (MET 6), which has the typical form of a cloze test, is free from the problem inherent in the MET 4, and thus, could function as a useful tool in future ESL research.

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APPENDIX A

The Minimal English Test (The MET 4)

Name: ______________________ Date: Month_____Day_____Year_________

Please write an English word with 4 letters or less in each blank spot, while listening to the CD.

1. The majority of people have at least one pet at ( ) time in their ( ).
2. Sometimes the relationship between a pet ( ) or cat and its owner is ( ) close
3. that ( ) begin to resemble ( ) other in their appearance and behavior.
4. On the other ( ), owners of unusual pets ( ) as tigers or snakes
5. sometimes ( ) to protect themselves ( ) their own pets.
6. Thirty years ( ) the idea of an inanimate ( ) first arose.

. . .

=. The Japanese Tamagotchi---( ) imaginary chicken ( )---
=. ( ) the precursor of ( ) virtual pets.
=. Now there ( ) an ever-increasing number of such virtual ( )
=. which mostly young people are adopting ( ) their ( ).
=. And ( ) your virtual pet ( ),
=. you ( ) reserve a permanent resting place ( ) the Internet in a virtual pet cemetery.

C. Sports are big business. Whereas Babe Ruth, the ( ) famous athlete of ( ) day,
C. was well-known ( ) earning as ( ) as the President of the United States, the average
C. salary ( ) today's professional baseball players is ( ) times that of the President.
C. ( ) a handful of sports superstars earn 100 times ( ) through their contracts
C. ( ) manufacturers of clothing, ( ), and sports equipment.
C. But every generation produces ( ) or two legendary athletes ( ) rewrite

. . .

O. Such ( ) typically practice three to ( ) hours a day,
O. ( ) weekend ( ) during their school vacations
O. in order ( ) better their chances of eventually obtaining ( ) well-paid position
O. on a professional ( ) when they grow ( ).
O. As for the ( ) young aspirants who do ( ) succeed,
O. one wonders if they ( ) regret having ( ) their childhood.

APPENDIX B

The Minimal English Test: A Revised Version (The MET 6)

Name: ________________________ Date: Month_____Day_____Year__________

Please fill an English word into each blank spot, while listening to the CD.

The (   ) of people have at least (   ) pet at some time in (   ) life. Sometimes the relationship between (   ) pet dog or cat and (   ) owner is so close that (   ) begin to resemble each other (   ) their appearance and behavior. On (   ) other hand, owners of unusual (   ) such as tigers or snakes (   ) have to protect themselves from (   ) own pets. Thirty years ago (   ) idea of

. . .

we have virtual (   ). The Japanese Tamagotchi--- the imaginary chicken (   )---was the precursor of many (   ) pets. Now there are an (   )-increasing number of such virtual (   ) which mostly young people are (   ) as their own. And if (   ) virtual pet dies, you can (   ) a permanent resting place on (   ) Internet in a virtual pet (   ).

Sports (   ) big business. Whereas Babe Ruth, the most (   ) athlete of his day, was (   )-known for earning as much (   ) the President of the United (   ), the average salary of today's (   ) baseball players is ten times (   ) of the President. And a (   ) of sports superstars earn 100 times (   ) through their contracts with manufacturers (   ) clothing, food, and sports equipment. (   ) every generation produces

. . .

Parents send their children (   ) sports training camps at an (   ) age. Such kids typically practice (   ) to four hours a day, (   ) weekend and during their school (   ) in order to better their (   ) of eventually obtaining a well-(   ) position on a professional team (   ) they grow up. As for (   ) many young aspirants who do (   ) succeed, one wonders if they (   ) regret having lost their childhood.

Video in the Classroom

Not Just a Commercial: Narrative That Demonstrates Communication Dynamics

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A commercial is not just a 30-second ad; it's a story, a scene, a cast of characters, a dialogue, an array of emotions, and often a bit of humor: the real dynamics of communication. Therefore, TV commercials provide a host of pedagogical possibilities for any language class. One 30-second commercial brings authentic linguistic and cultural content that can be integrated into various communicative activities. The technology is basic (a computer, MP4 player, and a TV monitor), but the content delivered through appropriately selected commercials will bring English to life in your class. Your students will naturally react to the situational context of the commercial by empathizing with the characters and thus experiencing an emotional, yet dynamic, side of language. Students will also improvise the content while using the specific context as a framework for modification, co-creation, and expansion.

INTRODUCTION

What

Everyone understands what a TV commercial is: those 30-second spots that disrupt our nightly news, sportscasts, game shows, or favorite television dramas. Commercials interrupt, irritate, enlighten, and entertain us. But at the end of the day, the sole purpose of a commercial is to sell you something . . . a sports drink, a medicine, an automobile, a brand of shampoo, or a type of house. Commercial ad campaigns are designed and directed by some of industry's most creative talent with the intention of marketing commercial products. In fact, a well-designed commercial is probably some of the most expensively produced TV you will ever watch, and it is these short pieces of drama and commerce that we can use effectively in the classroom.

When

These 15-second, 30-second, and one-minute commercials can be used anytime throughout your class depending on the pace of your lesson and the energy of your students. Commercials make nice transitions between activities, wake-up events, introductions or conclusions to thematic units, or wind-downs at the end of class.

Where

Commercials, as you might guess, originate on TV, but these days the best are re-recorded and uploaded to the Internet for our continued viewing pleasure. YouTube is an Internet site where thousands of these commercials can be found in almost every language. Your job will be to select a few of the most appropriate and bring them to your classroom.

Why

There are many reasons why we should consider using commercials, so let me just mention a few. Commercials bring authentic language and communication dynamics into the classroom, require multiple skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, provide entertainment with high interest value, introduce intercultural and cross-cultural themes, motivate the students, demand an emotional response, and provide a break from the monotony of normal classroom routine (Smith & Rawley, 1997).

Who

While my current teaching context is tertiary education (first through fourth-year, beginners to advanced-level students) this method need not be limited to the university context. In fact, elementary through high school, along with other forms of adult education, would benefit from this methodology provided that the commercials are appropriately selected and the activities expertly designed.

How

The “how” is primarily what this workshop report is concerned with. It will show you the basics of how to find the commercials, collect them and get them to class, and use them in a meaningful way.

How Often

Commercials can be used as an accessory to complement other elements of a regular language curriculum. In other words, they can be used occasionally, a few times a semester, or often, or one or two per class, depending on their relevance to other curricular structures such as theme, content, and skills.

Technology

Here is an overview of what you will need to collect commercials from the Internet to prepare them for showing in class. The details of the technology can quickly get complicated, but my intention is to make it as simple and accessible as possible. Here is a four-step process to capture and convert Internet-based video into a portable format: (a) Select a commercial from the Internet on a site such as YouTube. (b) Capture and download the commercial. (c) Convert to a portable format (MP4) and send to your MP4 player. (d) Show in class. See Appendix B for more details about technical resources and converting software.

TABLE 1. Equipment Necessary for Capturing and Converting

Best	Alternative
Computer with Internet connection	
Digital converting software	Paid subscription or Internet-based converter
MP4 player	Laptop computer
Cables connecting computer and MP4 player	

TABLE 2. Equipment for Classroom Viewing

Best	Alternative
Big screen TV with audio	Digital video projector with external speakers
MP4 player	Laptop computer
AV cables	

TABLE 3. Other Viewing Possibilities for the Technically Challenged

If you have the basics but not all the gadgets:
1) Use direct Internet access in the classroom.
2) Ask students to watch it on their cell phones or other wireless devices.
2) Use the computer lab with students watching individually or in groups.
3) Burn to a DVD, or go even more retro by recording on VHS.
4) Assign the viewing for homework.

SELECTION MATRIX

With your technology sorted, it is time to take a look at what kinds of commercials are appropriate for your class. Here are some basic principles that can be used when selecting commercials, for certainly they are not all are created well. The appropriateness of themes are ultimately the decision of the teacher, based on the students' age and maturity level, and how far the teacher is willing to push the students into what might be uncharted territory as it relates to what could be considered taboo subjects in a normal language classroom environment.

At times it is easy to think you have a real winner because of the humor of the commercial. However, once you carefully consider the educational aspects, the language activities that you can design, sometimes the value becomes less apparent. For example, I have been impressed by animated penguins in a *Coca Cola* ad, enthralled by Brittany Spears in a *Pepsi* ad, and mesmerized by dancing natives in a *Heineken* ad. Yet the true test is: Can my students identify with and decode the material in order to access the important language and cultural elements that make the commercial a vehicle for communicative language activities? A commercial usually has to be more than just entertaining.

Certainly this matrix is not comprehensive of all of the factors that could or even should be considered. Nevertheless, it outlines what I have found to be important after reviewing all of the most effective commercials used in my classroom. Each has all or most of these elements in common.

TABLE 4. Common Elements in Effective Commercials

Elements	Culture	Narrative	Content	Language
Music	Appropriate	Multiple scenes	Substantial	Simple
Humor	Rich	Emotional	Theme-based	Clear
Suspense	Universal	Surprising	Familiar	Accessible

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

While searching for useful commercials, it will be important to keep in mind the many types of activities that can be designed for them. Multiple skills can be targeted for stronger relevance to your current curriculum needs. Appendix A is a list of all of the commercials that were shown in the conference workshop along with the types of targeted skills and activities that could be designed as agreed upon by the participants of the workshop. For more concrete examples of activities in a textbook designed with commercials, see Aoki (2009).

TABLE 5. Activities and Skill Sets

Activities	Skills
Discussion	Conversation/Speaking
Role play	Speaking/Performance
Dictation	Listening/Writing
Response journal	Writing
Research/Presentation	Critical analysis
Application	Themes
Marketing analysis	ESP/Business English

METHODOLOGY

In this section, I will demonstrate the methodology through a step-by-step explanation of one procedure. The idea of using commercials in the classroom borrows much from the methodology for using films in language education. Like films, many commercials provide a story, a clear context for our students to maneuver in. Content is also naturally provided for the students to process while language patterns become accessible and easy for them to emulate. Communication dynamics are demonstrated through the process of expansion, co-creation, and application. As in the following example, the basic methodology follows these general steps: watch, discuss, describe, expand, and complete follow-up activities.

I Would Do Anything For Love: Egyptian McDonald's Commercial

Step 1. Prepare and Pre-teach

In preparation for this activity, it is important that the class be divided into groups of 3-5 students. Because this commercial is based on a juxtaposition of lyrics and story, it is crucial that the students "get" the meaning of the basic lyrics of the song that is used in the commercial. It is therefore necessary to pre-teach the title of the song by Meatloaf, *I Would Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)* (Steinman, 1993). Intermediate to advance students can listen to the song and try to write down the words as a short dictation exercise. More basic students may profit from the teacher writing the lyrics on the board.

Step 2. Watch

Students are now ready to watch the commercial once or even twice without any further introduction or comment from the teacher. This is the input stage: a chance for students to watch, listen, and react naturally.

Step 3. Discuss

Students are encouraged to discuss within their groups the sequence of events that occur in the commercial. First, as with all narratives, it is crucial to help the students identify with the characters in the story. To this end, the teacher should ask the students to give each character a name. In this story, a young lady and a young man who are about twenty years of age were giving the names Julia and Kobe. The teacher should write these names on the board. Because this commercial has a clear sequence of events, it is easy to divide the scenes (approximately three to seven seconds each) and assign one to each group. The groups should work together to come up with a description for each scene. Later in the activity, they will describe the scene to the entire class. Scenes from this particular commercial might be divided into these sections depending on the number of groups: Rescuing the Rose, Shopping for a Dress, Pushing the Sports Car, Arriving at McDonald's, Ordering a Combo Meal, The Fight, She Leaves, and Mr. Content.

Step 4. Groups Describe While Watching Again

Next, the class should come back together to watch the commercial again. This time, the teacher should pause at the end of each scene to ask each assigned group to describe their section of the story. Usually one person is nominated to speak first, while the other students back up the spokesperson with support and detail. What often occurs is that each group moves from mere description to a co-writing role. Because they already have the characters' names, it is simple for them to start filling in missing details and extrapolate by giving explanations for what is happening in the story. If this does not happen, it is simple for the teacher to prompt with a few queries while monitoring each group's progress. A descriptive example from scene one is: Kobe and Julia are out on a beautiful yacht in the middle of an emerald-colored sea. It looks like a very romantic moment. Julia is wearing a white dress. She accidentally drops a rose into the sea and . . .

Step 5. Teacher Support

While the students are describing the parts of the story, the teacher should be providing useful vocabulary on the board, or alternatively, taking notes in order to give students support after they finish describing their scenes. Also, the teacher may need to prompt the weaker groups with questions if the description is insufficient. Such prompting might include the questions: "What color is the car? What kind of car is it? Why is Kobe pushing the car?" For lower-level students, the teacher may need to provide vocabulary in a handout and may need to give a model for description and reporting.

Step 6. Expansion Activity

Expansion activities can be started in class and finished as homework. For this particular commercial, I merely assigned the expansion activity as homework. As the students were preparing to leave for the day, I gave them this scenario:

> It is 10:00 at night (the same night). Kobe is feeling very badly about the way he treated Julia at McDonald's today. He decides to call Julia on the telephone and try to make up with her. What does Kobe say? What does Julia say? Please write a brief dialogue of this telephone conversation.

This type of expansion activity relates to the naturally occurring pragmatics of language because an appropriate context has been established within a familiar accessible narrative. The students can now easily move on to role playing and practicing the dynamics of real communication. (See Figure 6 for a student example of this completed homework assignment.)

TABLE 6. Student Example of Telephone Conversation Expanded Activity

10:00 P.M. Telephone Conversation	
Kobe:	Good night dear.
Julia:	Sorry. Who are you?
Kobe:	Oh. My sweetheart. I'm Kobe. Your Favorite person.
Julia:	Oh, my . . . sorry, I don't know you.
Kobe:	Oh, no . . . ! I am very sorry. But I love you. I would do anything for you . . . for love.
Julia:	Shut up! You robbed me of the fries this afternoon.
Kobe:	So . . . I'm very hungry. Now, I swear, I would do anything for you. Give me an opportunity . . . please.
Julia:	I'm hungry now.
Kobe:	Let's go (to) McDonald's. You decide everything.

Note: This example is from a student in a Fundamentals of English class for first-year international students in the Economics Department whose first foreign language is Japanese. English is her second foreign language.

CONCLUSION

This workshop report demonstrates that TV commercials provide a plethora of possibilities as resources that bring authentic language into the classroom. Their brevity makes commercials easily adaptable to almost any class or curriculum. I urge you to try this methodology by utilizing the technology, selecting some appropriate commercials, designing several meaningful activities, and presenting them in your next class. Your students will be both challenged and entertained.

THE AUTHOR

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Steinman, J. (1993). I'd do anything for love (but I won't do that). [Recorded by Meat Loaf]. On *Bat out of Hell II: Back into Hell* [CD]. London: Virgin Records.

APPENDIX A

Commercials Demonstrated in This Workshop with Activities Suggested

This is a list of the commercials that were demonstrated in this workshop with their Internet web links. The workshop participants were asked this question before viewing commercials C-G: "What would you do with these commercials in your class?" An asterisk indicates some of the activities the participants agreed could be easily developed and adapted to these specific commercials.

A. *Mousetrap: Doritos Nacho Cheese Chips*
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ip1jbGCulBo)
*discussion, response journal

B. *I Would Do Anything for Love: McDonald's*
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y9ajRIgTJNA)
*response, dialogue writing

C. *Beauty Is Nothing Without Brains: Mercedes-Benz*
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHX2mvFVQMs)
*role play, application

D. *Arranged Marriage: DSTV (cable company)*
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5HLsvwLPpQ)
*discussion, response journal

E. *Do Something Manly: Snickers*
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjuXbYW6KmE)
*discussion, application)

F. *Think Different: Apple Macintosh*
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jULUGHJCCj4)
*research, presentation, marketing analysis (See McGee & Fujita (2001).

G. *Michael Jordan: Failure - Nike*
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45mMioJ5szc)
*discussion, dictation, application, marketing analysis (see McGee & Fujita, 2001).

APPENDIX B

Selected Resources and Notes on Commercial & Converting Software Sites

http://www.youtube.com/

YouTube is the source of all of the commercials I show in the classroom. Use the search word "commercial" with an adjective such as "best," "sad," or "interesting." If you are searching for a particular company, put the name of that company in the search, for example "Dove Commercial." Other search designations include "ad" and "cm."

http://tooble.tv/

Tooble is a free YouTube converting software designed (primarily for Mac users) to download and convert Internet videos in one step.

http://keepvid.com

Keepvid is an Internet-based converter that sends the file to your email address. While simple to use, it limits the number of videos you can convert in a 24-hour period.

http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/

Mozilla is a free web browser that makes capturing video files very easy.

Here is a reliable process that will make capturing and converting a simple one-step process:

1) Use Mozilla Firefox as your browser (at least for this purpose).
2) Download a plug-in such as *YouTube Video Downloader* or any of the other video download plug-ins (*https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/browse/type:7*).
3) While watching a video on-line, push the button on the plug-in to start downloading the video to your computer as an MP4 file.
4) Within seconds, you should see the new file on your desktop. Now drag it to your media player and/or your MP4 player.

Establishing Student Schemata in a Media-Based ESL/EFL Course

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The purpose of this paper is to provide an instructional alternative for providing schema for the media-based ESL/EFL classroom. Incorporating schemata into a video-supported ESL/EFL classroom can enhance student comprehension and language skills. Effective establishment of schema in a media-supported lesson is necessary to provide students with the proper background knowledge to understand the video's contents. Introducing media to a class may also have the potential of having difficulties and drawbacks. Knowing these potential difficulties and drawbacks can be advantageous for a class incorporating media that includes all the language skills in collaborative groups.

Fearing that they cannot be used effectively, some teachers have concerns about using video-based television shows in the ESL/EFL classroom. Concern may be that students will not be able to understand and connect with the material. Reasons for a lack of understanding and connection include that it would be too difficult for students: the characters would speak too fast, the content would be too complex, the vocabulary would be too difficult, and students would have a difficult time discussing the content of the materials. This assumption may be true for some TV shows but certainly not all of them. With careful video selection, establishment of schemata by teachers, student preparation, planning, and teaching techniques, video can become comprehensible, an asset to the classrooms, and an effective teaching resource to many levels of English classes. This paper will present ideas to stimulate student schemata and interest by guiding students to a better understanding of television programs in English. It will also provide insights that have been found beneficial into developing materials that provided schema for the video, and teaching methods that can be incorporated and practically implemented in the classrooms.

ANIMATION IN THE CLASSROOM

This paper will look at what aspects of the class can be stimulated and taught by using animation from the American television series *The Simpsons*, looking at the strengths and weaknesses of using such material, and what advantages and disadvantages it will give the teacher in relating to their pupils.

Objectives

The following are a list of objectives of the class:

1. Intrinsically motivate students by presenting authentic language interaction, providing an authentic look at culture.
2. Expose students, as explicitly as possible, to the nonverbal components of the language (i.e., body language) or what is technically called paralinguistic features.
3. Develop the idea of "acculturation" and the pragmatic rule of the ethnography of speaking that go hand-in-hand with the explicit verbal message a native speaker employs in language interaction.
4. Providing lessons and activities that develop students' language competence and performance.
5. Provide video schemata to students with pre-lesson activities, in-class collaborative group activities, and post-viewing activities.

The video material that was chosen to be used as the basis for the class was the American animated series *The Simpsons*. It was thought to be a valuable source of material for the ESL/EFL classroom because it could sustain the students' interest and provide them with current topics to discuss.

The Simpsons could be used in a number of ways to focus on particular language targets, language skills, or specific topics. The series includes references to illustrate American culture, pop songs, movies, and numerous other cultural markers that can give students an insight into American culture. A *Simpsons* episode "is a text that most of our students will come across and some will pursue regularly, owing to screen culture and the place of television in their lives" (Doyle, 1999, p. 3). This selection of video can be a medium of learning that most students can connect with and enjoy.

Many videos for the ESL classroom are made to teach a lesson rather than to tell a story. These videos often lack the reality and originality that spur creative discussion and inspire the imagination. Video needs to spark classroom creativity and inspire students' imagination in the classroom. Videos chosen for students should also deal with contemporary, relevant issues. The situations presented in the video should contain meaningful context that relates to the lives of students.

The video can keep students' attention, inspire imagination, and deal with relevant issues. *The Simpsons* can be used in a number of ways to focus on particular language targets or specific topics. In addition, the video can offer other unique teaching points and cultural connections such as stereotypes, culture, and voices.

Advantages

By incorporating video, students can benefit from the advantages video has to offer the classroom. The following are advantages, which served as guidelines for using video in the classroom.

1. Using video material can motivate students. They will have an experience of real feelings of accomplishment when they understand what is going on in a situation where native speakers use English. Thus, an EFL learner will realize that "with a bit of extra effort and practice, along with some help from the teacher,

"real English" is not beyond their comprehension" (Stempleski, 1987, p. 12-14).

2. In the show, everything is exaggerated, and that includes the voices. In the case of animation, the actor gives animated characters a voice and cannot rely on body language and gestures, and therefore, the voice must be sufficient on its own. This is very useful in the class when teaching English as a foreign language. The video provides authentic material that does not have the constructed feel of most videos designed for teaching.

The voice will express many valuable entities. It conveys the inflection of the language, specifically when it comes to different emotions. To make the characters stand out, there are also a wide variety of ages, social generations, and accents in cartoons. Not only are there national and regional differences, but also class structures are voiced with accents. This gives the student a broad perspective on the language and an understanding of how varied the language is, something that the teacher is unable to do.

Video also gives the students a break from the teacher and a variety of more authentic English voices to consider. There are endless variations of English, and it is important for students to be exposed to other types of English than the teacher's version. The choice of elements that are shown are often more telling about the culture that created it than that of the culture being observed (Hamilton, 2002). This can provide lively debate or discussions among students.

Video material in a non-ELT environment will more likely present real language use. The language is real in the sense that native speakers use it in real daily life interaction. Therefore, the EFL learner is exposed to language use in a communicative setting from which they can learn the real spoken discourse including sounds, utterances, and their underlying messages, which are, in many cases, conveyed through the nonverbal explanatory body language.

3. The themes of each show can be introduced and discussed in class. Viewing provides the learner with an aesthetic look at American culture. Through viewing native speakers in real language interaction, the EFL learner is exposed to the cultural aspects that accompany language use in communicative settings.

4. *The Simpsons*' use of stereotypes can be one asset of using the show in the classroom. The use of stereotypes provides a rich source of discussion topics, variation, and interest for students. *The Simpsons* uses stereotypes for each of its major characters, as well as that of particular cultures. In these cases, they often use a large variety of, and sometimes extreme, cases of stereotypes, generalizations, and major icons from each of these cultures.

5. Using videotaped material facilitates better comprehension of the intended messages. Besides this, it provides an authentic pattern to guide language acquisition. Moreover, it is obvious that visual clues clarify the meaning since the speaker is going to use language patterns both verbally and non-verbally.

The use of video aims to develop the learners' listening, comprehension, and cultural understanding. Video in the class gives students the opportunity to make a connection between culture and the teaching material. To hear and see the language in actual use takes the focus away from the technicalities of the language and puts it onto the content, in line with the present tradition of communicative language teaching. Without much exposure to reading and listening material, students who learn languages in classrooms are unlikely to make much progress. It also provides much more information than just the language, such as body language, nonverbal signals, values, traditions, clothes, food, and social-linguistics. Video can be a great tool, and offers many advantages in the class. It also offers challenges, which include keeping the class focused on the material and maintaining student understanding.

To make a schematic connection and have understanding, students need to have background information of the video to be watched. Students need to know the vocabulary discussed in the video, topic points of the video, and the cultural aspect of the theme discussed in the video. Without this information, students are unlikely to be able to understand and get the most out of the video and the lesson. Most students are used to watching TV and like it, but this also presents difficulties. The teacher must make sure the material and attitudes of the students are geared towards learning, even though they are watching a video. The students enjoy watching video, and the best learning experiences are when we are not aware that we are learning. Although it may be enjoyable, the teacher should aim at keeping the lesson focused on a learning task.

Another difficulty may be understanding the humor. *The Simpsons* uses humor of an intricate sort, like allusion, satire, and sarcasm. The teacher needs to ask whether the students will understand the humor and its relevance. There is nothing so unfunny as explaining humor in detail, and there are few things as frustrating as not understanding a joke when everybody else is laughing. First of all, the students will not understand it all. Not even longtime fans of the show get all the subversive satire and obscure references. With classes with various levels, students with a higher level of English will understand more of the humor. Consider also the satisfaction it provides to be inside the fold, so to speak. Getting the students to realize that knowledge gives them a funnier world, because they will understand more, might motivate them to ratchet their learning up a notch. The danger of a few students missing out on some points of satire must be accepted and faced. Students learn in different ways, so this way is not perfect for everybody. Even so, it has value for most of the class. Each individual class responds differently to methods of teaching; nothing can ever be taken for granted. The teacher has to study their class carefully and make decisions based on that assessment.

CURRICULUM

The video material presented in this paper was taught in two university classes in Japan. One class course title was English 1A. The class consisted of 25 first-year Japanese students. The class was a compulsory English class with equal emphasis on speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The students were International Studies majors with various levels of English, but were generally at a lower-intermediate level.

The other class was entitled English 2A. The class consisted of 23 first- and second-year Japanese students. This was an elective English class. The class also had equal emphasis on speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The students were mostly International Studies majors with various levels of English, but were generally at an intermediate level.

The classes were broken down into fifteen classes that met once a week for ninety minutes. The class grading encouraged student participation and group discussion, with the majority of the class points coming from class preparation and participation in their collaborative group. Grading for the content of the class for the entire semester was evaluated as follows:

- Thirteen in-class tasks that were worth five points each. Each class had an in-class score based on their preparation and participation in their collaborative group.
- Two quizzes worth ten points each, based on the text and material covered in class.
- One writing assignment worth ten points.
- Minus one point was taken away from students who were late to class, sleeping, had no text, no dictionary, or were chattering in Japanese.

TEACHING PROCEDURE

When planning an approach to the video lesson, a three-part lesson was kept in mind. In the lesson, students were provided with schema by incorporating previewing activities with an episode summary reading assignment and a collaborative group worksheet. During the viewing of the video, students were expected to complete viewing tasks, and after the video, to complete summary and collaborative group questions and post-viewing exercises as a collaborative group.

Milli Fanzy (1999) of Kentucky Educational Television suggested that teachers should think of using a three-part lesson, including pre-viewing, viewing, and post-viewing activities.

- Before presenting the video, engage the students' interest in what they will be doing, and prepare them to do it successfully.
- While learners view the video, the teacher should observe their reactions and what they do not understand, what they are intrigued by, and what bothers them.
- After the viewing, the teacher should review and clarify complex points, encourage discussion, and explain and assign follow-up activities.
- It is also important to ensure the suitability, length, clarity, and completeness of the videotaped material.

CREATING SCHEMATA

It is necessary to make active schemata before students watch a video (Cook, 1989). Students feel more comfortable listening to content that is familiar and that they can make predictions about. Students need to have schemata available to help them comprehend the information presented. Negotiating the content of the class in this way will ensure that interest is piqued by the time the class is presented with the material, and will ensure that the content of the class is more relevant to the learners (Nunan, 1988).

In an effort to create schema, students were assigned an episode summary reading of the video they were to watch in class. The reading was an overview of each episode for the students to read, study, and acquaint themselves with before viewing the episode (Appendix A). The materials schema was partially addressed for students in the episode reading. Research in cognitive science suggests that knowledge is organized in the form of schemata (Rumelhart, 1980). Schemata consist of stereotypical scenarios, routines, and action sequences, which are acquired in the course of an individual's life experience. A schema has also been described in terms of frames and frame systems (Minsky, 1975) and scripts (Schank & Abelson, 1977). Weaver (1994, p. 54) defines a schema as "an organized chunk of knowledge or experience, often accompanied by feelings." Schemata aid the interpretation of both linguistic and non-linguistic sensory data by providing a context in order to predict meaning and fill in missing information, and this has been amply demonstrated by research in native speaker comprehension of TV news (Bell, 1991).

For correct schema activation to occur, the reader must use the incoming data to locate possible specifics in the schema. This activates top-down processing, which searches for the appropriate schema to account for all the details in the input. Schema processing can be blocked in two ways. First, it is data-limited and depends on the reader’s ability to receive data. Therefore, factors such as a lack of vocabulary knowledge can derail it. Secondly, the processing system is resource-limited. It cannot use more resources than those available in the working memory. If both the vocabulary and the structure of the text, for example, are unfamiliar, the reader will not be able to allocate sufficient working memory resources to top-down and bottom-up processing. The reading will therefore short-circuit because the process demands of the reading exceed the resources of the learner.

Student Worksheet

To create schema for the video, the students from the episode summary reading complete a pre-viewing student worksheet. The worksheet consists of sixteen blanks for key words, three blanks for key points, and five blanks for discussion questions. From the reading, individual students fill in the student worksheet before class, filling in their own key words, key points, and discussion questions from the reading (Appendix B).

For the student worksheet, students first choose and complete the key words and key points. These key words and key points are the student’s own opinion of words and phrases that are important in the understanding of the article. The discussion questions are questions that the students think of individually and can ask in their collaborative groups to the other group members about the episode reading while in class.

In collaborative groups, the students are to discuss and negotiate the key words and key points, contributing each student’s ideas and interpretation of the episode summary. Students are then to discuss each other’s discussion questions.

Identifying Key Words

In the key words section of the student worksheet, students are to identify sixteen key words from the episode reading. These key words should be words the student feels are necessary in order to understand the episode’s meaning

(Appendix B). To familiarize the student with the episode's vocabulary, students generate a list of vocabulary, ideas, people, places, and events that are relevant to the episode in the key word section before class as homework. In class, students discuss and share key words, word meanings, and the part of speech of the word in context of the reading. Students work collaboratively, discussing and negotiating the reading's key words in groups.

Identifying Key Points

In the student worksheet, students are also to identify three key points or sentences from the reading. In this section, students are to identify key points from the reading that they feel are necessary in order to understand the reading. In their collaborative groups, students discuss and compare key points, talking about the key points and the reason that they feel the key points are vital to understand the reading. Identifying key points from the script before they watch enables students to focus on particular ideas that will be expressed in the video (Appendix B). Students are to complete the key points as homework before class. When students come to class and work in their collaborative groups, they are to discuss and compare key points that they chose from the article. Identifying key points is meant to further acquaint students with the material that they are going to view and facilitate easier and better comprehension of the video episode.

Discussion Questions

To get the students to further think about the episode's content that they will watch, students generate their own discussion questions based on the episode overview reading (Appendix B). Students complete five discussion questions from the episode summary. These questions will be asked and discussed in the students' collaborative groups. By having students ask questions in their collaborative groups, students will further acquaint themselves with the topic of the material, think more about the episode's content, get other members' opinions, and share thoughts about the episode in their group. More controversial topics can generate much discussion. Debates using the controversy in the episode can help students examine the subject in more detail.

Episode Viewing

After completing the article worksheet (Appendix B), the class begins the video viewing exercises. Students have a cloze listening exercise at the beginning of the video, and throughout the rest of the video, students have listening tasks to complete. By doing previewing exercises such as the article worksheet, students will be able to better anticipate the video content and understand the episode's meaning. They will be more comfortable with the material and be able to make connections from the previewed material and the video episode viewing.

Cloze Listening

A listening comprehension cloze exercise can be very useful. It can be used for checking of vocabulary learning, or listening for specific words in detail. For this listening cloze, the students are given a portion of the video script with some words deleted. It requires only a limited response to listening rather than an extensive response. Students listen to the skit from the episode and fill in the missing words. The Simpsons adds additional challenges and enjoyment with the characters' different accents, dialects, and slang words. The procedure can be adapted to a variety of content areas (Appendix C). After listening and completing the worksheet individually, students work in their collaborative groups sharing information.

Listening Tasks

Listening tasks are almost like a treasure hunt: The students have to search for the answers while they are listening (Ur, 1984). Students have listening tasks to complete during the listening portion of the lesson. These questions might be open or closed, content-based, or language-based (Appendix D).

This exercise helps keep the students focused during the video. It is important to have a listening task that is done during the video. Presenting the material as it is, without some kind of examination of the issues presented, does not give students a chance to think about the issues for themselves. Also, without listening tasks throughout the video, some students may not see a point in viewing the video.

SUMMARY

Video material can be a very useful resource and asset complimenting the learning process because it combines both fun and pedagogic instructions in authentic material that reflect real interaction. By employing videotaped material, teachers can always create an indefinite number of language teaching activities. The devised activities in this paper were mere examples that focus on different language skills that EFL/ESL students can acquire.

It is vitally important that we know how to provide the best setting for learning in class as we can. Providing students with schema for the video material to be studied in class may help students overcome apprehensions of video. This paper attempted to show and discuss how *The Simpsons* may be used in teaching concerning content and, to a lesser extent, specific methods. When we sneak knowledge in the back door in the disguise of entertainment, teachers can push the zone of language development. It is entertainment, but the clever teacher can make that their advantage. It is to be hoped that we can spur interest and attentiveness in weary pupils.

Author's Note On Copyright

Different countries have different laws. Some are stricter than others, so you should check on the details in your own country before using any recorded material such as movies, news media, songs, or other audio recordings. In Japan, the rule appears to be that you can use copyrighted material, as long as by doing so you are not taking money away from the original producers. The law is vague and can be interpreted in a number of ways. To be sure that you are not infringing copyright laws, you should consult a lawyer (Simons, 1995).

THE AUTHOR

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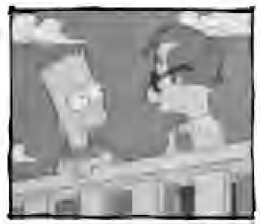
APPENDIX A

Episode Summary Reading

Spring 2009 **English**

Class 12: 22 Short Films About Springfield



*It is Important to read the dialogue before class. If you do not read the dialogue before class you will not understand the video.

*このクラスを読む前に、対話することが重要です。理解できない場合は、動画がクラスの前に、対話を読むことはありません。

*The episode is a series of short skits, each showing life in Springfield.Bart and Milhouse go to the Kwik-E-Mart. There, Apu leaves his shop for five minutes to attend a party at his brother Sanjay's house. Lisa gets gum in her hair and Marge tries to get it out by putting food on her head. Smithers gets stung by a bee while bike riding with Mr. Burns. Dr. Nick comes under criticism from the medical board for his strange medical procedures only to treat Abraham Simpson with an electric light socket, saving his career. Moe gets robbed by Snake after Barney gives him $2,000 to pay for of his bar tab. Skinner hosts dinner for Superintendent Chalmers and when his roast is burnt, he attempts to disguise food from the Krusty Burger as his own cooking. Homer traps Maggie in a newspaper box. The cops debate McDonald's Quarter Pounder vs. Krusty Burgers. Bumblebee Man's house is destroyed and his wife leaves him after a horrible day at work. Snake hits Chief Wiggum with his car and the two begin to fight. Reverend Lovejoy urges his dog to use the Flanders lawn as a toilet. Townspeople advise Marge and Lisa on how to remove the gum stuck in Lisa's hair. Cletus offers Brandine some shoes he found. Milhouse has to use the bathroom in Comic Book Guy's Android's Dungeon, but ends up leaving before he can use it. Lisa gets the gum cut out of her hair, leaving her with a different hairstyle. Nelson laughs at Lisa's new haircut, and a tall man in a small car gets out. Bart and Milhouse conclude that life is interesting in their town after all. Lastly, "The Tomfoolery of Professor John Frink" is almost seen.

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APPENDIX B

Student Worksheet

Spring 2009 **English**

Please complete the worksheet as a group

Discussion Article Worksheet

Name: __________________

Article Title: __________________

Author: __________________

Date Retrieved: __________________

Key Words (Vocabulary | Part of Speech | Meaning in Context)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.
16.

Key Points (Three points. One sentence each.)

-
-
-

Discussion Questions

1.
2.
3.
4.

English Conversation Winter 2008

5.

APPENDIX C

Listening Cloze

Spring 2009 **English**

Fill in the blanks:

Lisa: When Krusty wants to, he can still blow 'em away.

Bart: Yes. He can take a 1)________, everyday thing like eating a bicycle and make it funny.

Krusty: See you tomorrow,2)_ _________!" (but before I go, I'd just like to say --

Krusty: Ah, there's nothing better than a cigarette...unless it's a cigarette lit with a $100 bill! Put five thousand bucks on the Lakers. Hire Kenny G to play for me in the 3)____________. My house is dirty; buy me a clean one.

Bill: Krusty, as your accountant, I must warn you your spending --

Krusty: Did you send those thousand roses to Bea Arthur's grave?

Bill: Yes, but she's still --

Krusty: I don't want to hear the end of any 4)______________!

Woman: George Carlin on three.

Krusty: Yeah?...Lawsuit? Oh, come on. My "Seven Words You Can't Say on TV" bit was _entirely_ different from _your_ "Seven Words You Can't Say on TV" bit. ...So I'm a thief, am I? Well, excuuuse me! (to his accountant) Give him ten grand.

Woman: Steve Martin on four.

Krusty: Ten grand.

Tony: Krusty, with regards to the 5)_________wager you made on yesterday's horse race --

Krusty: Aw, come on. let -- how about letting me go double or nothing on the big opera tonight?

Tony: Who do you like?

Krusty: The tenor!

Tony: OK. But we're only letting the bet 6)__________because you crack us so consistently up.

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APPENDIX D

Listening Task

Spring 2009 **English**

Questions:

1. What does Lisa get in her hair?
2. What stings Smithers when he was ridding a bike?
3. Which is better A Krusty Burger or McDonalds?
4. What does Cletus offer Brandine?
5. Milhouse has to use the bathroom in Comic Book Guy's Android's ________.

1. MGU
2. EBE
3. CALNOMDDS
4. HEOSS
5. DENGOUN

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Vocabulary

Coordinating a Curriculum-wide Vocabulary Program

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This paper outlines the development of a coordinated vocabulary curriculum at a private Japanese university from 2008-2009. The pilot study sought to investigate the following areas: appropriate target vocabulary, appropriate reference materials, study skills necessary for mastery and retention, and the role of assessment. It is aimed at assisting teachers from other institutions in constructing similar programs.

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary, while clearly a fundamental aspect of learning a language, receives surprisingly little exclusive focus in ESL, and vocabulary programs and classes are relatively rare. Conventional ESL classes focus on the four skills – reading, writing, listening, and speaking – which are considered the foundations of language proficiency. Vocabulary development is often restricted to defining new words, which is necessary for the completion of exercises directed toward these skills, as a means to other ends. While grammar, the traditional basis of the majority of ESL courses and textbooks, has great importance, vocabulary can be said to be more crucial still. As Wilkins (1972) summarized it, “while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (p. 111).

IN DEFENCE OF EXPLICIT VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION

It is unlikely that the absence of vocabulary in ESL programs is the result of learners’ demands. Indeed, language learners frequently list vocabulary as their greatest challenge (Green & Meara, 1995; Meara, 1980). Simply put, vocabulary constitutes a language’s most basic element of meaning, and its importance may well supersede that of any other skill. It has consistently been demonstrated that reading comprehension is more strongly correlated with vocabulary knowledge than any other variable (Anderson & Freebody, 1981). Vocabulary is also an impressive indicator of learners’ ability to perform everyday tasks in English, such as reading newspapers and watching movies (Hu & Nation, 2000).

Why vocabulary has received so relatively little attention is unclear. One possibility is that with over 100,000 words listed in the *Oxford Dictionary of English* (2003), its study seems too daunting a task for language teachers to take on. There are, after all, a limited number of contact hours between teachers and students, and the number of words that can be learned may appear overwhelming. Another factor may be that the memorization of large amounts vocabulary is perhaps best done by learners independently, and therefore, language teachers feel that the teaching of vocabulary is outside of their scope or capabilities.

However, research has shown that while the number of words in the English language is indeed daunting, the number of words needed by L2 learners for comprehension of texts is relatively small, and therefore manageable. Nation (2001) stresses that while the overall number of words in English is high, a relatively small number of frequently occurring words cover large proportions of English text.

TABLE 1. Vocabulary Size and Text Coverage in the Brown Corpus

Vocabulary Size	Text Coverage
1000	72.0%
2000	79.7%
3000	84.0%
4000	86.8%
5000	88.7%
6000	89.9%
15,851	97.8%

(From Francis & Kucera, 1982)

Analysis of the Brown Corpus (Francis & Kucera, 1982), a corpus of over 1,000,000 words taken from over 500 diverse texts, shows that the 15,000 most frequently used words cover approximately 95% of all written text. Learners do not need to know all these words to approach this level of comprehension; the more frequent the word, the higher the text coverage. The first 1000 words alone account for the great majority of this coverage at 72%. The first 2000 approach 80% coverage.

In this light, the goal of providing learners with adequate vocabulary for text coverage suddenly seems far more manageable. Many tertiary ESL programs are spread over four years; thus, 2000 words becomes 500 a year, 250 a semester, and approximately 18 words a week over a 15-week term. This is an achievable task if vocabulary study is assigned for independent study.

How best to organize a vocabulary program? A word list based on the highest frequency words in a corpus lends itself to the creation of such a program. These words can be translated by students to their native languages using bilingual dictionaries, and studied systematically.

Such methods may raise a red flag among some ESL instructors. However, in research, lists and example sentences have been shown to provide better retention than words presented in larger texts (Folse, 2004). In a study by Laufer and Shmueli (1997), when half a list of target words was presented with definitions in the learners' L1, and half with English definitions, words presented with L1 translations were more often remembered than words presented with L2 explanations.

A common concern regarding explicit vocabulary learning is that it may run the risk of not taking syntax and context into account. Less frequent vocabulary may best be learned through extended reading or contextual readings. However, to learn through context, a minimum of basic vocabulary is required, and ultimately, mastery of a foreign language involves a degree of rote memorization. Carter (1987) has stated that while advanced learners may benefit from learning L2 words in context, beginners benefit most from direct translation pair lists.

A word list can be even more effective if students' vocabulary knowledge can be diagnosed before they enter an ESL program. The program suggested above assumes absolute beginners who would be learning even the most basic English expressions for the first time. However, students in many countries begin studying English in the seventh grade or earlier, and may well already know a sizable number of the 1000 most frequent words. Given this, achieving coverage of the highest frequency words becomes feasible.

COORDINATING VOCABULARY INTO A CURRICULUM: A CASE STUDY

Recently, the authors began work on piloting such a vocabulary program at a large private university located in southern Japan. The majority of the student population are Economics and Commerce majors, with majors in Social Sciences, Engineering, Information Sciences, International Culture, and Fine Arts comprising the remainder. Currently, an English major is not offered, and consequently, most English classes offered are compulsory English and English Conversation classes for first- and second-year students. Over 4000 students are enrolled in these classes each year. The curriculum is TOEIC-oriented, and students write either the TOEIC (for higher-level students) or TOEIC Bridge (for lower-level students) every January, with stress on annual improvement in scores. Currently, there are 21 full-time English lecturers and over 40 part-time teachers.

Students take two English classes per semester: "English," a class taught by Japanese instructors, with a focus on reading and grammatical instruction, and "English Conversation," a class taught by native English speakers, with a focus on speaking and listening skills. In 2008, native teachers began piloting the vocabulary program. Lecturers were free to determine the classes and the approach to integrate vocabulary into their classes. Classes involved with the pilot covered a broad range of classes, students, and years. This included students (n=4,000) in their first and second year of university, the four major departments, and across all three proficiency levels. Following the last class, all students in the university were administered the TOEIC test (for proficient students) and the TOEIC Bridge test (for less-proficient students) in order to gauge student progress. Implementation of the pilot raised a number of concerns, including the choice of a word list, the degree to which words should be learned, selection of learning references, and assessment.

CHOOSING A STANDARD REFERENCE

It was decided that a vocabulary program required a standardized resource for all students and teachers. Currently, the majority of bilingual dictionaries can vary greatly in quality, and higher quality dictionaries tend to employ corpus analysis in the compilation of definitions to ensure that translations reflect real-life usages. It was decided to use the *Longman English-Japanese Dictionary* (2007; henceforth, LEJ), which is compiled using a 330-million word corpus of English and a 100-million word corpus of Japanese. It provides Japanese support and illustrations for lower-level students and uses high-frequency collocations and example sentences selected from authentic texts to illustrate natural uses of words.

In the 2009 school year, the LEJ became a required supplemental text for all first-year students, despite the fact that many students already owned a dictionary. The factors behind this decision were: (a) A majority of students' existing dictionaries were either outdated, inaccurate, or lacked the granularity required for effective vocabulary study. Notebooks often contained unnatural grammar formations, archaic speech, or inaccurate collocations that originated from poor translations in bilingual dictionaries. This is understandable, as many electronic and paper English-Japanese dictionaries are based on dated, inexpensive language databases. (b) Even variation between adequate, but differing, dictionaries made it difficult for teachers to accurately predict what knowledge students could extract from their dictionaries. (c) As many students lacked the proficiency to use a monolingual dictionary, a bilingual dictionary was essential for these lower-level learners. (d) The dictionary needed to closely support our word list. This was possible because the word list was drawn directly from the dictionary itself. Using the LEJ as a standard resource proved to be helpful for assessment as well, as all students had access to the same definitions and usages used in summative and formative evaluations.

CHOOSING A WORD LIST

Perhaps the most fundamental question regarding the creation of a vocabulary curriculum is the choice of words. As stated above, the first 1000 words in English provides sizable coverage of English text. However, a variety of first 1000 word lists exists. The LEJ provides a top-1000 word list for both spoken and written English based on the extensive modern corpora used for its creation, marked by frequency in entries. Although a commonly used list, such as the General Service List (West, 1953), provides admirable coverage, the list is now over 50 years old, and it was found that the LEJ lists reflected more modern usages of English, including, for example, newly popular terms such as "kid" and references to common modern technology such as TV and television. Because of this, the LEJ lists had greater face validity with students.

Due to the low English-ability level of students in compulsory classes, it was decided to focus on overlap between the spoken and written word lists, approximately 500 words. Though many may be familiar to beginner learners, unknown words from this range can signify critical gaps in comprehension. To help parse such a large volume of material, words were split into weekly lists of 25, ten per semester. Teachers were invited to use the lists for teaching.

MAINTAINING A VOCABULARY NOTEBOOK

Research shows us that, for vocabulary to be learned and retained, words must be reviewed, not just over the course of a few hours, but over intervals of days, weeks, and months (Pimsleur, 1967). Vocabulary notebooks are essential for this long-term process because they allow learners to continue this process of review in their personal study. Whether students are learning words in context through extensive reading or just trying to learn words in a textbook, it is essential to have a log for review purposes (Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995). Vocabulary notebooks provide a systematic way to extract and study relevant information from dictionaries. They provide teachers with tangible proof of independent study and can be used as a springboard for introducing students to new study strategies (Fowle, 2002). For these reasons, the use of vocabulary notebooks became popular with many teachers and students.

ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Assessment is a necessary aspect of curriculum design. Without assessment, how can teachers evaluate students and confirm whether or not they are studying or improving? Without diagnostic measures or tests of student knowledge prior to entering the program, how do we know the words taught are appropriate or taught at a suitable depth?

Pre- and Post-tests

In curriculum assessment, it is as important to test students before beginning a program as it is to test them at completion. Without pre-tests, how do we know if students improved? An 80% average on a post-test may not be so impressive if it turns out students knew 70% of the material going in. Conversely, a post-test average of 60% on a large body of material can be quite high if student knowledge before the beginning of study and prior knowledge of the material was very low. For this reason, a voluntary pre-test was made available. At the end of each semester, post-tests were given to evaluate the effects of the program.

Test Format

Prior research had shown that students knew a sizable number of the first 1000 words though there were concerns that depth of vocabulary knowledge remained inadequate. A "depth test" was constructed to ensure that meanings beyond the most common were studied. A common issue with teaching English vocabulary in Japan is that it is rare for common translations to operate as stand-ins for all of a word's possible meanings. For example, the word *hard* can be translated to Japanese as "katai" (as in a *hard* surface) or "muzukashii" (as in something that is difficult), among other potential translations.

The tests were monolingual (all-English), and gave three example sentences of usages of the tested words from the LEJ, with the tested words deleted to create gap-fill items. Students were asked to select the word that completes all of the sentences. For example:

i)	I felt ___ sick yesterday.	***ii)***	It was a nice day, ___ we walked to school	***iii)***	Ashley's a great swimmer, and ___ is her brother.

A)	no	*B)*	never	*C)*	today	*D)*	so	*E)*	really	*F)*	along	*G)*	probably

FIGURE 1. Test of vocabulary depth

If only one example sentence were given, several different answers could be possible. However, the different example sentences reflect different usages of the same word. Between the three, only one answer is possible. In the example above, both “so” (D) and “really” (E) seem to fit the first sentence if used as intensifiers. But the third example asks for a word synonymous with “also” or “too,” making “so” (D) the only remaining possible choice. The test requires students to know a variety of usages of common words rather than just a single Japanese definition.

Formative Testing

In addition to semester pre- and post-tests, weekly formative tests were made available for teachers. A distinction should be made between *summative* testing and *formative* testing. Summative testing concerns the evaluation of content mastery and is usually found in the form of a final exam. However, beyond assignment of grades, tests can have useful *formative* properties. Small-stakes quizzes, even those with relatively small effects on final grades, can help structure study routines, give students attainable proximal goals, and keep review of material at a manageable rate.

The typical pattern of beginning to study in cram sessions prior to a final exam is simply not a feasible strategy for the study of vocabulary; the number of words is too large to effectively learn and retain in such a short period of time. Ideally, if 500 words are to be learned over the course of the year, students should engage in weekly revision of the material. In reality, it is difficult for many to maintain such a routine without external regulation. Even if little or no value is attached to the marks, weekly quizzes can encourage regular study, give students feedback and opportunities to diagnose their own learning, and serve as classroom checkpoints for independent studies. Recurring quizzes were designed that re-used words learned in prior weeks to ensure review of past material.

RESULTS

Encouragingly, since the beginning of the vocabulary program pilot, students have seen a sizable score gain on the reading section of the TOEIC Bridge test. It is possible that the “depth test,” which employs a gap-fill format similar to that used on the TOEIC Bridge, provides backwash, and the format proved appropriate for mid-level students who make up the bulk of the student population. However, despite this, post-tests indicated that the format may not have been suitable for all levels of students. Low-level students saw sizable gains in scores from pre-tests, but average post-test scores remained relatively low, hurting morale. For these lowest students, test items based on all-English example sentences proved too challenging. Higher-level students saw a ceiling effect on the post-tests, indicating that these students were prepared to study lower-frequency vocabulary. Consequently, future efforts will include leveled word lists and differing expectations for students of varying levels of proficiency.

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On the Strength of L2 Lexical Knowledge

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This study investigates how EFL learners judge the degree of their knowledge of English words in a differential representation paradigm. The participants were 209 Japanese college students. The degree of visual and semantic familiarity for 20 target words demonstrated a significant dependency on word frequency and proficiency level. Immediately after finishing the judgment tasks, the participants wrote their answers to a translation test that included the target words. The results showed a critical point in the mid-frequency range of word appearance. The students' knowledge exhibited weaknesses below the point corresponding to the highest level of cognitive processing. The lower-proficiency learners showed a larger gap between the perception ratings and the performance scores, and according to low metacognition, produced a greater understanding of the lower-frequency words. This study thus exemplified the exhibited levels of knowledge cognition in a typical EFL situation, and suggests the importance of metacognitive skills.

The teaching of English has widened its scope from traditional English literature to the various latest developments in academic and vocational fields, such as electrical engineering and information technology. Vocabulary learning is only one sub-goal of second language learning, but what has remained unchanged so far includes the importance of size and depth of vocabulary (Asai, 2008; Nation 2001). Many EFL teachers are interested in the real state of lexical knowledge of their students.

A general characteristic of memory and learning is that people are more familiar with more frequently appearing words basically because of the number of times they have come into contact with these (Coady et al., 1993; Kibby, 1977; Perkins & Brutten, 1983). Yet, the knowledge a person possesses is the principal determiner of what the individual can learn from an educational experience (Broudy, 1977; Graves et al., 1980). The relationship between a word's frequency of appearance and the recognition of the word by a reader depends largely on situations that the reader has been in. Accordingly, the state of knowledge reflects the schooling of the person, and more or less predicts what and how he or she can learn at present and in the near future. This study, thus, aimed to investigate the measurable meta-conception of L2 vocabulary knowledge by college students in East Asia.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

A series of three sessions was designed to implement the investigation into L2 vocabulary knowledge. The participants were 209 undergraduates at three Japanese universities, majoring in various fields of engineering, from mechanical to architectural engineering, and possessing a wide range of English proficiency levels. They first undertook a judgment task, which consisted of a visual familiarity rating for 20 individual words on a 5-point scale base for Session 1 with no reward and no preliminary practice, and then a semantic familiarity rating in Session 2 for the same words but in a different order. The participants were allowed to assign the ratings according to their own criteria in each session and at their own pace within a two-minute limit. Visual familiarity and semantic familiarity were defined here, respectively, as the responder's feelings of how often he or she had encountered the word in question and how well the person understood the word. For Session 3, the students took an English test and gave their translations in writing in Japanese. This 15-minute translation test in the classroom can offer insights into a student's degree of understanding of the sentences, where the 20 target words were included in 20 sentences. Five learners besides the above mentioned group worked on the same tasks in order to record their eye gazes for more detailed analysis.

Vocabulary

Regarding target word selection, the 20 words were selected mainly from the reserved words of "C," which is the most widely used computer language, in light of its availability in everyday life, in academics, and in workplaces, as listed in Table 1. The difficulty level of each word referred to its frequency of appearance in major corpora (Breland, 1996). One data source was the Freiburg-Brown Corpus of American English, or the Frown Corpus, which collected one million words in general texts of American English in 1992 (Hundt et al., 1999), under the same data collection rule as the Brown Corpus (Kucera & Francis, 1967). This small-scale finite corpus, which has been quoted in much research, is easy to handle, and the data can easily be compared with individually collected and analyzed data (Asai, 2005, 2008). The other two were the Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies, 2008) and the British National Corpus (Burnard, 2007), as large, monitor corpora.

For convenience of analysis, this study defined the normalized relative word frequency, which was firstly calculated as the ratio of a token-based appearance frequency of a certain word to that of the highest-frequency word, "the," in the data of each corpus and was finally averaged in equal weight among the data in the three corpora as shown in Table 1. As for syntactic category, the two target words most frequently appearing work as function words, i.e., prepositions and conjunctions. Four words are an adverb and adjectives, and the others were nouns and verbs. Some of the target words were definitely polysemous, but the meaning of each content word was confinable in the contexts found in Session 3. This study presumed that the differences in grammatical function and semantic scope should not seriously affect the results.

TABLE 1. Vocabulary Items and Relative Word Frequencies

	(the)	for	while	case	include	return	continue
Relative Frequency	(1)	.14935	.01089	.00766	.00519	.00368	.00355
	else	sort	main	price	function	date	enter
	.00338	.00333	.00288	.00259	.00232	.00175	.00132
	define	escape	decrease	void	static	integer	increment
	.00130	.00084	.00035	.00025	.00022	.00006	.00001

Note. “the” is the common denominator.

Behavioral Recording

The eye movement of five learners was traced in an eye mark recorder. The resolution of the eye projection position was about 0.7 mm in the experiment’s geometry and 1/30 seconds in time. Their eyes fell on the words and the scales printed in paper as shown in Figure 1. Those movements were videotaped digitally for spatiotemporal analysis. The results will be described in the discussion section.

FIGURE 1. Eye tracing setup (left picture) and head camera view (right picture)

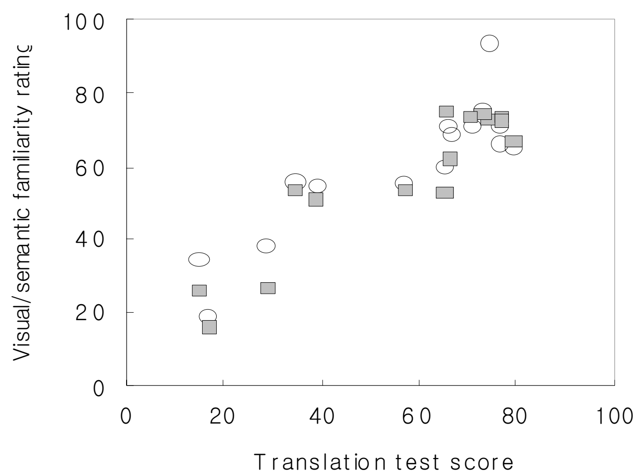
RESULTS

In Session 1, the participants’ responses yielded the judgment ratings on visual familiarity. If all the participants marked a scale of 1, which means that they thought they had seen the word very frequently on the 5-point scale, the score was 100 for this word. If half the participants marked 2 and the remaining half marked 3 for another word, the score was averaged by 75 and 50, and thus for that particular word became 62.5. In this session, the obtained mean score was 62.4, and the standard deviation, SD, was 13.1.

In Session 2, the judgment ratings on semantic familiarity were obtained in the same manner as those in Session 1. The resultant mean and SD were 60.6 and 14.0, respectively. All the participants completed the ratings within two minutes in both Sessions 1 and 2.

In Session 3, vocabulary knowledge was measured by the answers of the participants on a correct-or-incorrect basis for each target word embedded in the sentences in the translation test. A score of 50 for a word meant that half the participants wrote down the meaning of the word correctly. The average of the translation test scores marked by the author was 52.3. Their standard deviation was 29.8, which showed a much wider distribution in this test than in Sessions 1 and 2.

Figure 2 shows the relationships between the familiarity ratings and the translation test scores for the 20 target words. Both the visual and semantic familiarity ratings appearing in the vertical axis were approximately proportional to the translation test scores represented in the horizontal axis (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004; Sumby, 1963).



Note. Open circle: Visual familiarity rating; Dark square: Semantic familiarity rating.

FIGURE 2. Relationships between the familiarity ratings and the translation scores

DISCUSSION

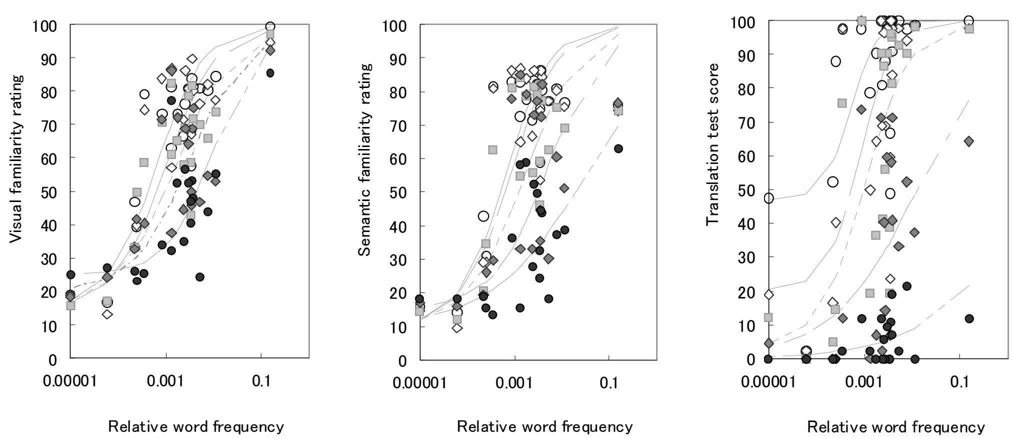
Data Examination

We begin our discussion by briefly examining the results. First, the correlation coefficients between the visual familiarity ratings and the semantic familiarity ratings and between the semantic familiarity ratings and the translation scores were .715 and .648, respectively, which demonstrated a significant dependency at a 1% risk level. The Cronback alpha coefficient in the translation score data was .959, which proved internal consistency of data. One tenet to which our attention is drawn is that in reading activities, word frequency of appearance might be in a different domain of knowledge from the semantic association and the function of use (Richards, 1976; Qian, 1999). However, high confidence judgment validity reported in the conventional studies at least partly attests to the validity of the judgment data in this study (Hintzman, 1976; Proctor, 1977). The short period of session time prevented the participants from having their attention distracted, from employing extra guessing, and from enlarging personal differences in cognitive style (Asai, 2007; Guilford, 1967).

Subgrouping

Next, the participants were divided into five groups according to the scores of the translation test in Session 3. Their word-base translation performance was assumed to mirror their English proficiency (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004). According to this grouping, 42 participants were assigned to the high-proficiency group, 42 to the mid-high, 41 to the mid, 42 to the mid-low, and 42 to the low. Figure 3 plots the average scores of the 20 target words by the five proficiency groups as a function of relative word frequency, which is indicated on the logarithmic scale on the horizontal axis. Each graph illustrates the relationship between the learners' judgment or understanding and the reported relative word frequency, depending on the proficiency level.

On the whole, there appeared to be a critical point at roughly the .001 level of relative word frequency. The scores of the words above the critical point approached full marks for the higher-proficiency group more sharply. In contrast, such distinct points did not appear in the data of the lower-proficiency groups, suggesting that the subgrouped condition could yield a high-threshold situation.



Note: (a) Session 1: Visual familiarity, (b) Session 2: Semantic familiarity, (c) Session 3: Translation test.

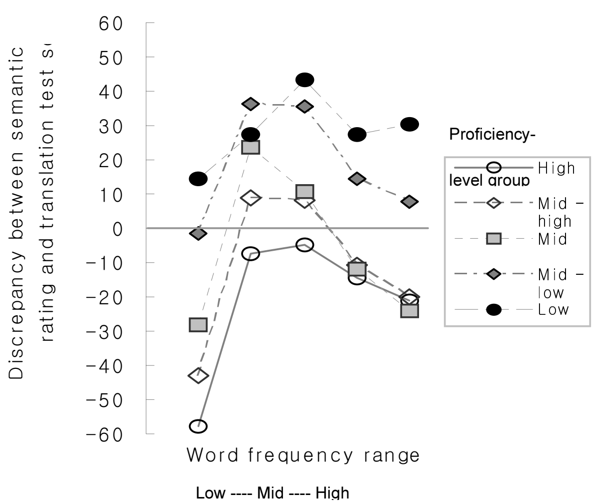
Plot types: High: Open circle, thin line; Mid-high: Open diamond, broken line; Mid: Light-gray square, dotted line; Mid-low: Dark-gray diamond, dash-dot line; Low: Closed circle, dash-dot-dot line.

FIGURE 3. Familiarity rating and translation score distributions by relative word frequency

Detailed Analysis

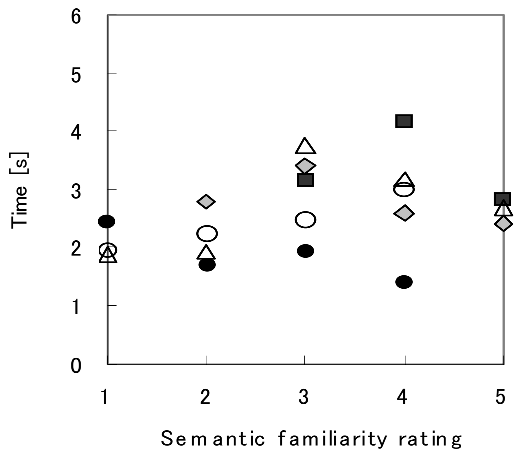
In Figure 3, panel (a), the fitted curves principally corresponded to the cumulative chances of encountering words in textbooks and other learning materials in EFL. It seems that in panel (b) the critical point of word frequency shifted to the lower frequency for the higher-proficiency group and to the higher value for the lower group. These widened inflections signal a broad range in terms of the words' difficulty levels self-judged by the participants, who, as noted above, had a wide range of English proficiency levels despite the ceiling and flooring effects in the scoring range. As common psychological behavior, the subjective judgment likely avoids both the edge scales. For another general account, the von Restorff effect is an oft-observed phenomenon as far as superior recognition memory for rare items is concerned (Garton & Allen, 1968; Gorman, 1961; McCormack & Swenson, 1972). The presentation of the words in Session 1 might activate a specific schema on vocabulary, and this priming could increase the ratings of Session 2 to a certain degree. Sessions 1 and 2, passive recognition tasks, required the knowledge of lexical entries or pieces of declarative memory (Laufer, 1998; Meara, 1990). This kind of knowledge can easily decay without ample rehearsals and elaborated strategies for internalization, especially in the case of a second language. The retrieval of imperfectly stored lexicon may induce positive judgments. On the other hand, Session 3 needed the instantiated schemata and the concrete outputs of the bindings of those pieces and related items. The realization of such less abstract knowledge representation thus led to the broad distribution of data in panel (c), which agreed with previous research (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004).

As shown in Figure 4, which integrated the 20 target words into five class ranges by relative word frequency, the lower-proficiency groups tended to exhibit optimistic judgments vis-a-vis all the frequency words and particularly the mid-frequency-class words. Those discrepancies imply low meta-conception of their own knowledge (Brown, 1975; Slife et al., 1985). Meanwhile, the high-proficiency group showed higher scores in the translation test than expected from the judgment ratings partly due to context effects in sentence translation.



Note. High: Open circle, solid line; Mid-high: Open diamond, broken line; Mid: Light-gray square, dotted line; Mid-low: Dark-gray diamond, dash-dot line; Low: Black circle, dash-dot-dot line.

FIGURE 4. Differences between familiarity ratings and translation scores by proficiency group



Note. Rating 1: Understanding very well; 2: Understanding fairly; 3: Understanding only a little; 4: Not understanding well; 5: Not understanding at all. Plots: 5 types mean 5 individuals.

FIGURE 5. Mean time for processing the semantic familiarity rating

The eye fixation durations for the mid-frequency words were longer than those for both the high- and low-frequency words. This observed tendency of selective attention corresponded to the levels of cognitive processing, which reached the highest degrees around the critical point of word frequency (Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Sternberg, 1981). Below the critical point, the lower groups spent less time in answering the judgment tasks, and this effortless behavior was caused primarily by cognitive reduction (Okamoto & Kitao, 1992). Figure 5 shows the relationship between the semantic familiarity ratings and the mean time needed for the processing by the additional five learners. The decline in time at a raw rating of 4 or 5, which corresponded to 20 or 0 in percentile notation, suggests the occurrence of cognitive reduction for the words that were perceived to be too difficult for them. A greater amount of data is needed in the future to discuss this issue more precisely.

Pedagogical Implications

The above results all showed that lexical frequency was closely related to the learners' understanding of the word and their feeling of understanding. From the language teaching viewpoint, those characteristic curves can represent the vocabulary level of students and can suggest a learning target for vocabulary in the classroom. One idea for vocabulary building is to develop the metacognitive skills of learners. The optimistic bias mentioned above often causes the omission of further learning. A low degree of self-regulation is a common issue in today's educational circles. Even if a learner feels that he or she encounters a word which is already familiar, the person should sometimes stop to think about the meaning. These reassessment opportunities help the learner not only expand and consolidate the semantic network of the word, but also develop metacognitive skills that allow the learner to monitor their state of knowledge of the words around and below the their critical difficulty level, and to find what to do next (Chi et al., 1989; Flavell, 1976, 1979). As a possibly effective example, teachers or their cooperators can create or arrange proficiency-level adaptive exercises electronically. This kind of customized formulation might implicitly and encouragingly motivate a student over a long span of learning (Asai, 2008).

CONCLUSION

A group of 209 students at three Japanese universities participated in the English vocabulary judgment tasks and translation test. The results rendered S-shaped curves for familiarity ratings and translation scores on word appearance frequency, and also revealed the existence of critical frequency. Those curves were thought to project the level of cognitive processing. Remarkably, the lower-proficiency learners showed, around the critical point of word frequency, a larger gap between the perception ratings exhibited in both the visual and semantic familiarity judgment tasks and the performance scores reflected in the translation test. As evidence of biased distributions of attention, the eye fixation durations relative to the mid-frequency words were longer than those for both the high- and low-frequency words. Furthermore, the lower-proficiency group exhibited a greater sense of knowing the lower frequency words. Those findings imply that the EFL learners paid greater attention to the words at around the critical point of word difficulty level, that their cognition of vocabulary began to wane below that characteristic point, and that it should be important, therefore, for the learners to develop their metacognitive skills.

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