KOTESOL Proceedings 2015

Transitions in Education – Transitions in ELT

Proceedings of the
23rd Annual KOTESOL International Conference
Seoul, Korea, October 10-11, 2015

Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
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Foreword

The 2015 KOTESOL International Conference was held on October 10 and 11, 2015, under the theme of *Transitions in Education − Transitions in ELT*. There were 165 presentations given over the two days, with Chuck Sandy and Robert Murphy headlining the conference as the plenary speakers. In this volume of the *Proceedings*, we offer 19 papers, from presenters working in South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Laos, Taiwan, Vietnam, the UK, and the USA.

What do we mean when we talk about “transitions” in English language teaching? Conference invited speaker Virginia Parker uses this topic to reflect on discoveries in the hard sciences that show that teenagers are not willfully disobedient, but undergoing very real developmental changes that will take them from childhood to adulthood − and then links these to classroom strategies for teachers of teenagers. From developmental transitions, to transitions in ELT!

Another much-talked-about transition nowadays is the flipped classroom, where advances in technology mean that lectures can be recorded and viewed at home (or outside scheduled face-to-face class times), thereby freeing class time for more interactive tasks. In this volume, Mik Fanguy, Holly Wang, and Matthew Baldwin give us examples of the activities they use in their flipped classroom Scientific Writing classes at KAIST. And when talking about technology, we can’t forget Facebook − a tool that has made it easier for EFL teachers to stay in touch and share their lives with family and friends back home. Well, Chia-Ling Li and Chia-Yi Li would like you to know that Facebook can also work as a learning tool to improve students’ listening comprehension.

Communicative language teaching may have been around for over 40 years, but as all EFL teachers know, it is difficult to get students to speak English in the EFL classroom. For eight of the presenters in this volume, “transitions” in ELT refers to techniques that they are using in their EFL classrooms to promote speaking and to help students learn to communicate in English. Atsushi Asai and Junko Chujo, in Japan, focus on pronunciation, while for Alexander Grevett and Michael Alpaugh, in Korea, the focus is on dogme and when to use the L1 in the classroom. Gareth Humphreys and his colleagues in Japan look at how to keep their students engaged in speaking, while for Ho Si Thang Kiet, improvements in speaking are an added bonus when using drama in the classroom to promote intercultural competence.

But the papers in this volume don’t just focus on student learning. Christopher Miller provides a look into teachers’ reflective practice groups in Korea, and Simon Thollar and Joel Rian round out this volume with a look at transitions in faculty awareness: What do we know about what our students think of us?

In talking about transitions, it would be remiss of us to not mention our own transition. This will be the final print volume of *Proceedings*. From next year onwards, KOTESOL will be publishing the *Proceedings* totally online. It is our pleasure to present to you this volume of *KOTESOL Proceedings 2015*. 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 enjoy reading the papers in this publication.

Maria Pinto & David E. Shaffer
Editors-in-Chief

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Invited Speaker

Teenagers: Why Are They Like That? What Can We Do About It?

Virginia Parker
IATEFL YLT SIG

Teen and young adult learners – from middle school to university – are often considered to be frustrating to teach. Since the 1980s, there have been numerous studies looking at how the adolescent brain develops during this critical time period, which offer clues to the reasons why teens function differently from children or adults. This article presents recent findings in adolescent neurological research and suggests practical ways in which this information can be used to enhance the teaching and learning cycle, especially as it pertains to classroom management within the international EFL context.

Introduction

Ask almost any teacher which age group they prefer to teach, and it is quite rare that "Teenagers" will be the response. Adolescent students tend to be seen, perhaps unfairly, as difficult students to manage. They can be rude, passive, moody, and antagonistic, just as often as they can be curious, motivated, interesting, and cheerful. Furthermore, EFL training does not tend to cater to this age group, meaning that teachers who may have focused on either children or adults in their TEFL training may be ill-equipped to deal with this unique age.

I have been teaching EFL since 1998, and almost all that time has been spent teaching teenagers and young adults. In order to better understand my adolescent students, I began doing my own reading into why teenagers were so different from their younger peers. This led me towards quite a few research articles on changes that are ongoing within the adolescent brain. This research made me drastically change my approach to classroom management with teenage students, which has benefitted both me and my students immensely. This article aims to demystify some of the neurological research into the teenage brain that has been occurring over the past few decades, and look at how these discoveries can have practical applications with adolescent learners.

Background

While *teenager* denotes someone who is aged 13-19, the term *adolescent* can cover ages 10-24 (Steinberg, 2016), roughly from pre-puberty until embarking on "a stable commitment to an adult role" (Sebastien et al., 2008, p. 1), representing an estimated 1.8 billion people on earth (Edwards, 2015). While both terms tend to be used interchangeably, adolescence is not simply a stage defined by age, but by physical development, social issues, hormonal changes, and an incredible amount of change at the neurological (brain) level (Packard, 2007; Public Broadcasting Service, 2002b; Steinberg, 2016; Wolfe, 2011), which is the primary focus of this article.

The human brain has been studied, both internally and externally, for over 2000 years (Chudler, 2015), often on cadavers or victims of brain-impairing accidents, or even using methods that would not be ethically accepted these days (Chudler, 2015; Wolfe, 2001). Since the 1980s non-invasive technology, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), has helped scientists see active, healthy brains, instead of waiting until a post-mortem to examine a damaged one (Spinks, 2014; WebMD, 2014). This has resulted in wider research and more knowledge about healthy neuro-development, and discoveries that challenge our assumptions about teenage behavior (Spinks, 2014), which can in turn have a positive impact on the teaching and learning cycle (Wolfe, 2011).

In the past, it was believed that most brain development happened in the first two to three years of life, meaning educational policy as well as teacher training resources tended to be predominantly geared to early childhood education, leaving teenagers to be treated (in many countries' education systems) as mini-adults. Another prevailing assumption was that the changes (and challenges) that tend to manifest during the teen years were due solely to hormonal changes (Packard, 2007; Steinberg, 2016; Wolfe, 2001). This is being challenged as neuroscientists have been able to examine changes within the teen brain that are now thought to be the cause of what we perceive as typical, difficult teen behavior (Spinks, 2014). Dr. Charles Nelson (Public Broadcasting Service, 2002a), a leading American child development researcher, states:

> The biggest jump in our knowledge over the last few years is that well into the adolescent period, through 15 or 18 years of age, there are changes going on in the front of the brain that we didn't know very much about even 10 or 15 years ago. (para. 2)

Current research points to age 25 as a more plausible end year for neurological development (Wolfe, 2011), which can impact education from middle school to university, and even into adulthood. As it takes time for this knowledge to trickle down from research to application (Atherton, 2013), many of the results of these studies have not yet been fully exploited by those who work with teens.

The implications for research into adolescent brain development are far-reaching, with the potential to assist in preventing and treating adolescent depression and drug use, or reform justice systems and education training (Packard, 2007; Wolfe, 2011). However, even the researchers themselves warn against using their research to form public educational policy until more is known, citing cases where school boards adopted faulty policy based on one or two studies (Atherton, 2013; Public Broadcasting Service, 2002a; Spinks, 2014; Wolfe, 2011).

Nevertheless, for EFL teachers who work with teens, knowledge about adolescent brain development can enable simple improvements within their own teaching practices, which can in turn foster a more supportive learning environment for their adolescent learners (Wolfe, 2001; 2011). Thus, this article seeks to present practical classroom management strategies for the individual EFL teacher, based on the results of accepted published and reviewed research on adolescent cognitive processes. Focusing on the practical, I will provide a simple overview of current research, followed by concrete EFL classroom applications.

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Emotions and the Affective Filter

Using an fMRI, Harvard University's Dr. Yurgelen-Todd and her team have been exploring reactions within adolescent brains in numerous studies over the past two decades (Packard, 2007; Public Broadcasting Service, 2002b). One study is of particular interest within the language classroom, especially when related to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis.

In this experiment, Yurgelen-Todd showed images of facial expressions to both teens and adults. In all cases, adults correctly identified the correct mood, while teenagers consistently misinterpreted certain facial expressions. *Fear*, for example, was often misinterpreted by teenagers as *anger*, *confusion*, or *sadness* (Public Broadcasting Service, 2002b). The fMRI imaging revealed that different parts of the adult and teen brain were being used, and emotional responses within the adolescent subjects correlated with their incorrect interpretation of the facial expressions. In an interview, Yurgelen-Todd posited that "when relating ... to their teachers, they may be misperceiving ... some of the feelings that we have as adults; that is, they see anger when there isn't anger" (para. 3). This helps account for the notion that adolescents are moody, or that they over-react emotionally (Packard, 2007; Wolfe, 2011).

According to Stephen Krashen, a linguist who released several hypotheses on second language acquisition in the early 1980s, being in the right frame of mind – with a low affective filter for learning – is an essential ingredient of a successful language acquisition experience because "even if [students] understand the message, the input will not reach the part of the brain responsible for language acquisition" (Krashen, 1982/2009, p. 31). During a lesson, adolescents "can perceive even a mild stressor to be threatening ... lessening the students' ability [to learn]" (Wolfe, 2001, p. 110). If that "mild stressor' is thinking that the teacher is angry, then the teen student will already be at a disadvantage for learning.

In the classroom, then, teens can – and do – misinterpret their teacher's moods, leading students to react defensively, or to put up their affective filters for learning. This can be offset in many different ways, regardless of the size of the class or the learning methodology in use. A few practical suggestions for teachers, administrators, and teacher trainers include the following:

- Starting the lesson by explicitly telling your adolescent students that you are happy to see them, while smiling.
- Becoming more aware of what your neutral expression might be, and leaving outside worries and frustrations at the door.

- Keeping in mind that the use (or threat) of corporal punishment, the impression of an overly strict or severe teacher, and advice such as "Don't smile: Let them know who is in charge" will only result in adolescents being put on the defensive, and reacting as such, which will in turn make the whole classroom situation more difficult for the teacher.

Organizing Work and Following Instructions

As mentioned before, the onset of adolescence brings on changes in the brain. Starting around age 10, millions of new synapses are created, which are then "pruned" to increase efficiency (Wolfe, 2011). White matter (myelin – the sheath that coats neurons for faster connections) increases, starting from about the age of 12, only reaching completion at the age of 25 to 30 (Packard, 2007; Wolfe, 2011). The most important transformations seem to be occurring within the front part of the brain (the frontal lobes), the home of critical processes such as planning, logical reasoning, abstract thought, and behavior (Packard, 2007; Public Broadcasting Service, 2002b; Wolfe, 2011). Amongst other functions, these developing frontal lobes are responsible for

- organization of multiple tasks,
- forming strategies,
- setting goals and priorities, and
- planning ahead. (Wolfe, 2011, p. 2)

What this means is, essentially, teens may be physically and neurologically unable to effectively follow complex instructions or organize their time efficiently.

In a student-centered cooperative and communicative classroom, language teachers often set learning tasks in motion, then circulate to monitor behavior, answer questions, and check for comprehension. The frustration that can come out of students not understanding or misunderstanding the instructions for the task, project, discussion, or activity can be enough to make teachers abandon this methodology as too difficult, and return to more traditional, teacher-fronted methods (Carless, 2007).

The issue with instructions in an EFL context is that the problem is two-fold: First, there may be blocking lexis that is beyond the students' awareness, and second, with adolescent students, the instructions may simply be too confusing for their developing frontal lobes (Packard, 2007). If the task level is appropriate, then other factors – such as neurological development – may be at play here (Carless, 2007; Packard, 2007).

Again, there are practical solutions that can be easily applied within the classroom. Here are some suggestions:

- Visualizing how instructions will be carried out, and rewriting them to their simplest forms.
- Taking time between instructions for students (especially younger teens) to actually do the task or using a handout to stage the task step-by-step. Do not give all the instructions at once, orally, and expect adolescents to be able to organize what they are supposed to do.

- Establishing a routine and/or using similar successful activities more than once. In early childhood education, the importance of setting up routines is widely accepted, but adolescent learners need some repetition as well: Not being confused is an important ingredient for self-confidence and self-reliance.
- Using structured scaffolds for writing tasks in EAP / university-level writing classes.

The Emerging Sense of "Self" and Classroom Management

It has been known for decades, since Piaget, that the start of adolescence signals a move towards abstract thinking and reasoning (Atherton, 2013). It is also accepted that peer influence becomes more important during the teen years (Packard, 2007; Spinks, 2014; Wolfe, 2001), and again, there are physical reasons why. The fluctuations in grey and white matter as mentioned above are also thought to correlate with the development of the *Self* as well as with associated social influences (i.e., peer pressure, risk taking) during the teen years (Packard, 2007; Sebastien et al., 2008).

During adolescence and into young adulthood, teens become not only self aware, but also more aware of how others may feel, which triggers a new awareness of being judged externally by the so-called *imaginary audience*, described as "the phenomenon whereby adolescents believe that others are constantly observing and evaluating them, even if this is not the case" (Sebastien et al., 2008, p. 3). This means that a seemingly simple classroom task, such as answering a question in front of everyone, can trigger "sickening unease" (Packard, 2007, p. 20).

For adolescents, while negative (i.e., embarrassing) experiences can lead to poor self-esteem, positive feedback "becomes increasingly rewarding" (Sebastien et al., 2008, p. 4). Both positive and negative feedback are internalized at this age, influencing the concept of a teen's Self. The importance of positive feedback is exemplified in the weight given to peer acceptance by this age group, with current research finding a notable increase in risky behavior when peers were nearby (Sebastien et al., 2008; Steinberg, 2016).

In the classroom, practical strategies that take these changes into consideration include these:

- Focusing on the positive, or "Catch them being good."
- Avoiding whole-class punishments for a few students' transgressions. For example, don't hold the whole class back because a few students were late.
- Arranging the classroom so that students are in pods or groups rather than rows of desks. The students who are closer to the front are immediately put into a state of anxiety as the classmates behind them take on the imaginary audience role.
- Maintaining cooperative, collaborative group work, especially for high-risk triggers such as presentations.

CONCLUSIONS

Neurological research into adolescent brain development is ongoing but also readily available in the form of journal articles, documentaries, interviews, and podcasts. And, while the caveat remains that more research is necessary (especially in the form of longitudinal studies) before any of this can be enacted at the government or school board level, knowing what is happening at the physical level to our students can be beneficial to the teaching and learning cycle within our own classrooms.

In the EFL classroom, it must not be forgotten that teenagers are neither very large children nor mini-adults. They are a unique segment of the population, with their own ways of acquiring knowledge and interacting in social situations. By looking at how adolescents' brains are changing and developing, teachers can use this information to cultivate a classroom environment that allows adolescent EFL students to flourish.

THE AUTHOR

Virginia Parker has been involved in EFL in a variety of contexts in Canada, South Korea, the UAE, Myanmar, Malaysia, and Thailand for over fifteen years. She has recently completed an MA in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching through the University of Nottingham, receiving a distinction for her dissertation on the influence of online English on Chinese-Malaysian high school students' English writing. Virginia was part of a team that represented the IATEFL Young Learners and Teens Special Interest Group at the KOTESOL Conference in Seoul in October 2015.

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Presentations

Effective Planning for Content-Driven Courses

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Content-led and content-integrated courses have dual-goal objectives in which an L2 is the means of instruction rather than its sole object, and language learning may be a concurrent or lesser goal. With a drive toward globalization in education, increasing numbers of teachers are being asked to teach subject courses in English to non-native speakers. Other teachers may wish simply to introduce their students to needs-appropriate materials rather than using mass-produced EFL textbooks. Although there are obvious educational advantages to such classes, it can be challenging for teachers and students to handle subject matter appropriately in a foreign language. Drawing on literature and the writer's experience, this paper will describe the current landscape of content teaching in ESL/EFL contexts and will introduce ideas for teachers to prepare materials more effectively for classes that emphasize content.

Introduction

Embracing a wide spectrum of programs and methodologies, content-based or content-integrated language learning is an increasingly practiced area of communicative language teaching in which learners study academic topics in the second language rather than studying the second language as an independent subject. In EFL/ESL, the usual simplification of such methodologies is that, rather than studying English, learners study something *in* English. More explicitly, instead of curriculum being ordered in a linear series of syntactical structures in the way of grammar-rich methodologies, learning is approached top-down with learners expected to take account of usage in input/output materials while pursuing parallel goals associated with lesson content (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003; Stryker & Leaver, 1997).

Recent Developments in Content-Led and Content-Integrated Programs

In recent years, content-led and content-integrated methodologies are increasingly being seen in English language curriculums adopted by institutions, districts, and ministries of education around the world. A recent report commissioned by the British Council showed that 27 countries out of 55 in the study (49 per cent) have made publicly available official statements on English as a medium of instruction (EMI; Deardon, 2015). Justifications for this boom are diverse with respondents variously describing EMI as an efficient method of language instruction with a view to increasing bilingualism and/or internationalization, as a means to attract foreign students, as a way to offer better opportunities for citizens to study abroad, or as a way to build better political relationships internationally (Deardon, 2014). Particularly, with increased focus on the globalization of university education and pressures on financial competitiveness, many universities in non-Anglophone countries are placing greater emphasis on courses taught in English to international students as a way of increasing diversity in the student body, improving the reputation of the university and attracting more international students. “The ability to teach a class of mixed nationalities means that universities can attract high fee-paying international students and produce high-quality research papers in English, helping them move up in the international rankings” (Deardon, 2014, p. 4). At the same time, in Anglophone countries, content-driven methodologies are being seen as a more efficient way of inducting non-native speakers into the regular curriculum without providing further curriculum hours for language classes.

Unfortunately, teacher’s understanding and training may not be keeping pace with the advancing popularity of allowing content rather than syntax to drive language curriculums. Some feel that the content-based curriculum is now a bandwagon trend that is inadequately understood by administrators, instructors, and politicians looking for easy solutions to complex issues (Onestopenglish, 2009). Unquestionably, a multiplicity of terminology exists in the field, with over 30 descriptors noted (Coyle, 2007) and a great deal of overlap existing between methodologies. Older, well-established fields of research, such as bilingual education (BE) and content-based instruction (CBI), have been joined by content and language integrated learning (CLIL), English as a medium of instruction (EMI), and a host of other programs, including a number of specific programs such as English across the curriculum (EAC) and bilingual integration of language and disciplines (BILD). A discussion of the differences between the many acronyms is now commonplace in presentations and papers in this area (Pinner, 2014), with teachers understandably confused about which approach might be most suitable to their context. While some distinctions are gradually being agreed upon and many differences may be largely regional, the lack of clarity has implications for research and pedagogical approaches that may be supported by studies undertaken in widely differing contexts. It is questionable to justify a curriculum based on parallels between an immersion program in bilingual Quebec to a once-a-week, theme-based English seminar in a Japanese university, for example, but the popularity of content-based teaching in Japanese universities underlines that this has indeed been the case.

Three Content-Driven Methodologies

As a rule of thumb, teachers may find the following brief discussion of the most widely used terminology instructive, though there remains little comprehensive agreement:

- CBI has been the most prominent research strand emanating from North America and is most strongly cited in work done with bilingual communities and immigrants in an ESL setting where the expectations are assimilation and sufficient fluency to participate in the curriculum within a short time.

The widely cited success of bilingual education programs, particularly in Canada, led to wide application in EFL contexts where expectations may be very different (Oxford University Press ELT, 2014). It was once commonly held that form-focus was not appropriate in CBI and "language learning may even become incidental to learning about the content" (Snow, Met, & Genesee, 1992, p. 28) but more recently a degree of focus on form has increasingly been seen as beneficial (Lightbown & Spada, 2008).

- CLIL has been used in Europe as an umbrella term to draw together the various strands of content-driven language teaching since being launched by UNICOM in 1996. It has been defined very loosely as any activity in which "a foreign language is used as a tool in the learning of a non-language subject in which both language and the subject have a joint role" (Marsh, 2002, p. 58). Adopted in many institutional settings across Europe, CLIL is seen as a European solution to a European problem, that is, to satisfy political goals for greater bilingualism where it is not easy to add further dedicated language classes to crowded curriculums. For this reason, in European secondary and tertiary contexts at least, achievement in the content-area is usually integral, where it may not be in certain forms of CBI in which language achievement is often the main goal. However, European CLIL is diverse with 216 varieties identified (Grin, cited in Coyle, 2007). The fact that CLIL is being widely embraced by schools and is supported by the European Commission suggests that it may well become a dominant field of research and give rise to greater cohesion in the future.
- EMI is, of course, limited in its English language instruction. It has arisen as a consequence of English as *lingua franca* and is largely seen as both effect and means of increasing globalization, whereby English speakers can have more flexibility in how and where they study and institutions can recruit from a larger base of potential students. In EMI courses, language achievement is more likely to be a pre-requisite of enrollment than a component of assessment, and the instructor is generally expected to be a content specialist rather than a language teacher. It should be noted that although EMI programs are expanding rapidly, in some countries, there is substantial opposition and some policies are being reversed (Deardon, 2014).

Implications for Pedagogy

Immersion education and CBI are reasonably well known in Japan and Korea. CLIL has been developing steady support among teachers and school boards for some time (Ikeda, 2013), and as successful CLIL programs in bilingual European countries attract the gaze of ministries of education in Asia, it seems reasonable that this will continue. The number of EMI programs is also booming globally, and as domestic student populations have contact with developed countries, it seems likely that the trend will develop further momentum. What then are the implications for language teachers?

The literature underlines the importance of support for teachers who are asked to teach dual-goal courses for which they require training and resources

(Deardon, 2014; Ikeda, 2013) though these may be scarce and teachers are often asked to develop very specific curriculum independently. Deardon (2014, p. 22) reflects that although EMI teachers may not be expected to take account of English learning objectives, they nevertheless require many of the skills of an EFL teacher if their students are to make sense of their classes. As Carty and Susser (2015) note, many of the students enrolled in Japanese EMI courses are domestic students for whom, presumably, language skill development remains a learning objective (given that they can easily complete their studies in Japanese). They also underline that in the Japanese context, while instructors in EMI have a degree of expertise in the subject matter, they are seldom academic specialists in the field (Carty & Susser, 2015, p. 7). Brown goes further, asserting that in Japan “the EMI programmes’ main target seems to be domestic students” (2014, p. 57) and underlining that the difficulties many universities face in finding and retaining staff with the requisite skill set and knowledge to teach challenging content to students who lack language competency that would be expected of international students in Anglophone countries (Brown & Iyobe, 2014). Given that there are clear challenges in this area of methodology and that increasing numbers of teachers in countries such as Korea and Japan may find themselves affected by these global trends toward integrated or content-led leaning, it is hoped that the concluding parts of this paper may be helpful to novice teachers in developing courses with a strong focus on content.

Developing Content-Led and Content-Integrated Courses

Institutional Requirements Regarding Language–Content Balance

It is likely that the institution will decide the extent to which language learning should feature as a component of courses, but this is not certain. Brown and Iyobe (2014) note a certain amount of frustration among teachers at a lack of communication and transparency, and how many universities put courses together with a lack of rigor in planning stages. Nonetheless, it is strongly advisable to have a clear understanding of whether direct language teaching is a required component of a content-driven course or not before planning.

Know Your Students

Level assessment, particularly in terms of vocabulary, will assist teachers in choosing or adapting materials. Many academic texts and authentic materials are overly challenging for students who may not have a strong grasp of English, even in EMI classes. Tom Cobb (2009) has adapted Paul Nation’s Vocabulary Levels Test, available free at http://www.er.uqam.ca/nobel/r21270/levels/. This test draws on the British National Corpus to give an accurate picture of vocabulary recognition. It can be applied through a reading of Nation’s work on vocabulary size (Nation, 2006).

If teachers have freedom in terms of the content taught in class, they should choose lesson material carefully in relation to the objectives, age, and background of the students in the class. It is advisable to conduct a needs analysis from the point of view of students and the institution. Teachers can sometimes be too over-ambitious, and even self-indulgent, in terms of content choice, which can lead to a loss of motivation for learners. It is critical that teachers appreciate the additional cognitive burden of dealing with challenging academic input in a second language.

Planning

Teachers should recognize that content-driven courses will require more time to plan due to the scarcity of published materials that account for the gap in language ability. It is advisable to plan in terms of courses, or multi-lesson units, rather than single lessons. Courses and units can be revised as the program evolves for more effective classes. Both content goals and language goals should be accounted for in the planning stages, if this is appropriate. In terms of content, teachers should recognize that they may need to compromise their objectives or otherwise run the risk of overwhelming the students and losing sight of language-focused activities. A big danger of dual-goal teaching is that the requirement to cover significant content in class leads to lessons becoming overly teacher-centered, even when teachers insist they are committed to interactive classes (Musumeci, 1996). Effective task design that allows for meaningful exchanges of information is far more effective than lecture-based teaching that takes little account of language goals and nullifies the advantage of having a multi-lingual group in some contexts.

Simplify Materials When Appropriate

The usual definition of an authentic text is one that has been created by native speakers for native speakers. Some teachers in content-based teaching are in favor of unmodified materials, others prefer semi-authentic materials that have been simplified to accommodate the student's level of vocabulary recognition (see Gilmore, 2007, for a comprehensive discussion). Teachers should consider the literature on this issue, but in the author's experience, manageable materials contribute to a more motivated atmosphere and are preferable. Some examples of simplifications follow:

- *Glossing*: In monolingual settings, a gloss of challenging vocabulary allows teachers to reduce cognitive overload but retain the complete text. See Azari, Faiz-Sathi, and Bee Hoon (2012) and Meihami and Meihami (2014) for some recent discussion. Vocabulary testing and the use of a vocabulary profiling tool, such as the one listed below, may allow teachers to better judge what sort of vocabulary may be prioritized for their students. A number of online tools are now available that may partially assist with this process, and native-speaking colleagues may also help when teachers are not fully bilingual. It is also advisable to consider carefully which vocabulary items the student need to be tested on. Many teachers test the most difficult words in the text without considering their frequency and their priority in their students' learning needs.
- *Cobb's Lex-tutor* software is an online tool that will automatically profile

transcribed text into frequency bands based on the British National Corpus.

- *Simplification*: Teachers may reduce the length and complexity of a text through abridging or rewriting.
- *Non-authentic texts*: Teachers create text specifically for the learner. Many dislike this term because it is value-laden.
- *Task-simplification*: Task-based learning research has illustrated a number of ways that a task can be simplified to meet the level of the learners, that is, where only partial understanding is required to complete a task (Willis & Willis, 2007). However, some learners may find this frustrating.

Schema

Schematic knowledge of a topic is highly important to dual-goal courses. Students who are overly stretched by a lack of awareness and a lack of language may become overwhelmed (Corin 1997; Stryker & Leaver, 1997.) However, in academic settings, there may well be instances where schematic awareness is low and the gap must be bridged effectively.

- *Appropriate topics*. Try to build on the knowledge students already have or may be studying in other classes in L1.
- *Homework*. Set background reading and research tasks in advance. Preparation can be done in either language. Guided web searches, short readings, and prepared background workbooks are effective to provide a basic knowledge base. Movies and TV may also provide some context.
- *Graphic organizers*. Graphic organizers are visual representations of text. They are particularly useful for conversation platforms that precede intensive readings done in class. A good graphic organizer should be stimulating and provide motivation to read as well as information about the topic. Research suggests that an effective graphic organizer has a significant effect on students' ability to understand and enjoy a challenging text (Adamson, 2010).
- *Student presentations*. Student presentations are an excellent way to foster schema development and peer teaching, and they are effective for knowledge retention. Encourage less-threatening ways for learners to share research such as poster sessions that offer greater opportunities for questions. Work with students to ensure that they do not present incorrect content.
- *Short lectures*. Do not underestimate yourself as a resource. Students need to have confidence that their teacher is an expert in the content. Just be careful that your lectures are carefully planned and do not dominate whatever language objectives you have.
- *Smartphones*. Encourage class research during group work and project sessions. Students generally respond well to being trusted to gather information in this way. In my experience, unstructured "research time" in the computer room is much more likely to be wasted.
- *Group discussions*. Group discussions are an excellent way to build knowledge, develop vocabulary, and give the students speaking practice. It is essential that students are well prepared and accountable. Discussions will

improve with practice. A model for group discussions can be seen in the Appendix.

CONCLUSIONS

Learning language by studying or working with content is hardly new. Indeed humans have been successfully learning languages in this way for centuries and the implications for TESOL are very positive. Nonetheless, for language teachers and subject specialists working with non-native speakers, the changing environments present challenges. A greater availability of resources and training will ensure that best practice is observed.

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APPENDIX

A Model for Group Discussions

1. Homework research worksheet
2. Information exchange (L1)
3. Discussion strategy planning (L1)
4. 5-minute warmup (L1)
5. 15-minute discussion (L2)
6. Group reflection (L1)
7. Group leader's report (L2)

Group Discussion Sheet: Topic ______________________________

Bring this paper to class on the group discussion day. Please fill the paper. You will get a score for your preparation as well as your participation.

My research on this issue (NOTES ONLY, please)
NEW vocabulary I found in my research
Questions I will ask other students to have an interesting discussion: **1.** **2.** **3.** **4.** **5.**

Score for this worksheet ________ /10

Using the Native Language in the English Language Classroom

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Many teachers of EFL are discouraged against allowing a students' native language in the second language classroom. This paper will attempt to explain how the use of the student's L1 can be an effective tool for promoting second language acquisition. After a discussion of the historical and theoretical reasons why L1 use in the L2 classroom has been stigmatized, this paper will briefly explore some situations where the L1 may be applicable in the EFL classroom, as well as in the Korean context, with the hope that these solutions may provide teachers with new and effective ways to help students.

Introduction

Historically, a student's first language (L1) had been considered by many to have no role to play in the second language (L2) classroom. Its use has been argued for and against for more than half a century, and continues to this day. Numerous schools and institutions around the world cling to the belief that the L1 has a negative impact on learning (Brown, 2000, p. 195). In more recent years, the mother tongue has been found to address a host of classroom issues and has become a practical way for teachers to promote the L2.

The following analysis will briefly examine second language acquisition theory, why it has caused conflict, and how it has shaped the current landscape of L1 use in the L2 classroom. It will then explain the various uses for the L1, as well as the criticisms against its use. This paper plans to defend the informed use of L1 in particular situations because of a belief that the L1 has a place within the L2 classroom for teachers and students alike.

Literature Review

To truly understand the role the L1 plays in the L2 classroom, a review of the academic research on the subject is necessary. Numerous studies, surveys, and analyses have made for a large amount of scholarship debating the usefulness of the L1 in the L2 classroom.

Second Language Acquisition Theory

Second language acquisition (SLA) theory began in the 1960s due to the failures of the "method" constructs (Oral and Grammar-Translation Approaches) that dominated the United States and Britain in the first half of the 20th century.

This led to researchers studying the implementation of methods within the classroom and the criteria that were needed for a method to be successful. SLA would then focus on natural L2 acquisition, error analysis, and order of acquisition studies until the early 1980s (Ellis, 1992).

Stephen Krashen's (1981, 1982, 1985) Monitor Model would then dominate second language acquisition theory (Escamilla & Grassi, 2000; Saville-Troike, 2006), along with a host of others: the Behavioral Approach, the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, the Nativist Approach, the Cognitive Approach, and the Social Interactionist Approach (Trawiński, 2005).

The issue of L1 use in the L2 classroom has been contentious and extensively debated (Ferrer, 2005). Howatt (1984) explains that "the monolingual principle, the unique contribution of the twentieth century to classroom language teaching, remains the bedrock notion from which the others ultimately derive" (p. 289). Furthermore, "many language teachers today were trained in a philosophy that espouses a learning environment in which the target language (L2) is to be used at all times" (Vanderheijden, 2010, p. 1). This "training" includes the Direct Method and Audio-lingual Method, which have both been found ineffective, but have still managed to discourage L1 use in the classroom for over a century (Timor, 2012).

Changing Opinions

While SLA theory increasingly took this internal focus (i.e., how teachers could use the learner's natural abilities to understand language), it ignored the feasibility of using the student's first language as a way to learn a second. In doing so, it neglected a powerful resource for learning. "When their L2 abilities fail, students should have as many tools as possible at their disposal – in the learning environment – to develop new learning" (Vanderheijden, 2010, p. 7). The use of L1 in the classroom is that tool. Modern SLA theory has moved beyond seeing the L1 as detrimental to the student. Levine (2003) claims that "scholars have staked a claim for a sanctioned role for the learner's L1 in the language classroom" (p. 344). To further explain this role, research on the subject will be examined in the next section.

Research Findings

SLA studies agree with a tactful use of the L1. Schweers (1999) found in his survey of Puerto Rican university students that 88.7% felt that Spanish should be used in his English class. Also, 86% of the respondents wanted their L1 to be used to explain difficult concepts. Krashen and Lao (1999) had similar results in Hong Kong, where "students in Chinese-medium programs appear to be more active, appear to learn more subject matter, enjoy school more, and are improving in English" (p. 2). Levine (2003) and Macaro (1997) found teachers using the L1 to explain concepts, clarify instructions, translation, grammar, and classroom management as well.

Other recent studies that concur with the pedagogical use of the L1 in the L2 classroom include Gulzar (2010), who found a limited mix of languages helpful and natural in Pakistan; Hassanzadeh and Nabifar (2011), who found in Iran that a deeper awareness of the mother tongue led to better language learning in the target language (TL), specifically in grammar; and Jingxia (2010), who shows that code-switching (i.e., when students or teachers switch between languages to better express an idea) is prevalent and plays a significant role in Chinese university education. He concludes that “it is not only impractical to exclude the L1 from the classroom, but it is also likely to deprive students of an important tool for language learning” (p. 12).

Atkinson’s (1987) concerns on the overuse of the L1 are found in research as well and cannot be overlooked. In a study of Chinese students, Peng and Zhang (2009) claim that

> For most of the teachers, the amount of TL use was not more than 60% of their talk. This may not be sufficient enough for students’ foreign language learning. Furthermore, from the viewpoint of pragmatics, teachers’ TL use was not varied enough and was often found inappropriate. The findings of the study indicate that the current use of TL in FL classes of elementary schools in observed class is far from satisfactory. (p. 212)

While Levine (2003) is undeniably correct when he states that “TL and L1 appear to serve important functions” (p. 356), studies such as Peng and Zhang’s show that an unfocused use of the L1 can lead to issues that negatively impact the learning environment. Further concerns about the use of the L1 exist and will be explained in subsequent sections, but first, we will explore the positive uses of the L1 and its possible applications.

Applications for the Use of the L1

Keeping the historical and practical issues of using the L1 in mind, this section will explore the uses of the L1 in the L2 classrooms, and how they may be applied.

Learner Anxiety

Alleviating learner anxiety is a common argument for the use of L1. A frequent problem among teachers of young learners, especially those who teach within East Asia, is that of learner anxiety and an unwillingness to speak, or at least a lack of confidence. It is important to note that Korean students have relatively more anxiety with oral performance than learners from other countries (Truitt, 1995). The vast majority of my classes are speaking-centered (conversation, speech, debate), and I therefore encounter significant student anxiety. This is an issue that could potentially cripple a student’s learning and improvement, and must be carefully considered. Quite often in Korea (especially with students who are unfamiliar with their current teacher or with interacting with foreigners), learners may be hesitant to speak in class. Meyer (2008) breaks down the sources of language anxiety into three categories:

1. Communication apprehension: students’ inability to express themselves.

2. Social evaluation: the fear of a negative social impression.
3. Tests and evaluation.

He feels that "allowing the use of the first language in the classroom will mitigate all three components" (p. 151). These assumptions are also validated by Levine (2003) in his study of 600 first- and second-year university, second-language students. His study "hypothesized that the amount of instructor and student TL use correlates positively with the students' sense of anxiety about TL use (i.e., more TL use co-occurs with greater TL-use anxiety)" (p. 346).

Young learners are extremely susceptible to the positive and negative feedback received from their peers and that manifests daily in many Korean classrooms. As mentioned previously, apprehension is also an issue that teachers must contend with. To further elaborate, Saville-Troike (2006) presents four "complex issues" that should be kept in mind with regard to anxiety:

1. Lower anxiety may facilitate language learning, and success may improve self-confidence.
2. Classroom context and oral-focused performance generate more anxiety.
3. Personality, as well as cultural differences, plays a role. (This cultural influence will be explored in greater detail later as it has a significant impact on the current author's personal teaching environment.)
4. Low anxiety and high self-confidence increase motivation outside the classroom; it is still unclear if lower anxiety directly promotes learning or higher confidence is the key.

She states that "anxiety correlates negatively with measures of L2 proficiency, including grades awarded in foreign language classes, meaning that higher anxiety tends to go with lower levels of success in L2 learning" (p. 90).

These examples show that students are more relaxed and better equipped to learn a new language when their anxiety is relieved. Experience, common sense, and anecdotal evidence have shown that a relaxed, confident student is more likely to be successful in the L2 classroom, especially when speaking is the focus. The use of the L1 can provide humor, socialization, and reassurance. Furthermore, students seeing their teachers' struggles with second language learning gives them perspective on their own learning difficulties. All of these factors contribute to the L1 lowering the anxiety of students. The L2 teacher can therefore be confident in using the L1 as a way to lower student anxiety, and in turn, increase competence and learning.

Further Uses of the L1

The L1 has numerous other functions in the L2 classroom outside of the easing of learner anxiety. Atkinson (1987) states that it has a variety of roles to play at all levels and is consistently undervalued. These roles include eliciting language, checking comprehension, complex instructions at basic levels, co-operating in groups, explaining classroom methodology, using translation to highlight a recently taught language item, checking for sense, testing, and developing circumlocution strategies (Schweers, 1999, p. 7; see Appendix).

Atkinson also gives three practical reasons for its use:

1. It is a learner-preferred strategy; students will translate without the encouragement of teachers. Equating target language to the mother tongue is natural.
2. It offers a humanistic approach, but students should be encouraged to explain in English.
3. L1 use is more time-efficient when explaining. (pp. 242-246)

This is not a call for excessive L1 use. Atkinson warns of the overuse of the L1; it leads to overdependence, crude translation, lazy interactions, and unfocused rhetoric (246). Harbord (1992) is also concerned with potential overuse. He feels L1 use should be specific, exact, and used to enhance understanding. He cites Duff (1989), who uses translation of only single words or phrases, *in context*. According to Atkinson, allowing a small amount of translation helps students to understand, while keeping the essence of the text intact, creating an environment of greater awareness and understanding.

Occasionally allowing students to use a dictionary for translation if a particular subject is difficult or new to them is a further strategy that teachers can use. It allows students to quickly understand concepts while staying on task, and it increases confidence because students do not dwell on their lack of vocabulary or inability to express themselves. Many language teachers' use of the L1 will be limited due to both lack of language and the fear of the potential issues listed above, and their use of it must be explicit and meant to help the learner.

Arguments Against the Use of the Mother Tongue

Some scholars still feel that the mother tongue has little to no place within the classroom. Arguments vary, from the subconscious way one learns to time constraints and lack of exposure. In this section, this paper will examine how using the L1 in the classroom might negatively affect a learner's ability to adopt a second language, based on research by dissenters.

Comprehensible Input

The legacy of Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1981, 1982) is one reason why L1 use is frowned upon in L2 classrooms. His hypothesis states that students acquire language through understanding new input that is above their current level (This is represented as *comprehensible input*+1 or *i*+1). Language learners may only understand part of the teacher's meaning and are gradually introduced to new concepts, which allows students to learn in a "natural" way similar to their acquisition of their mother tongue. Therefore, Krashen's theory calls only for the use of the TL, since L1 use would interfere in this natural process (1981, 1982).

These claims, while highly influential, have received a significant amount of criticism. White (1987) claims Krashen has "failed," saying that "we must either demonstrate that anything an L2 learner does incorrectly can be circumvented by some other aspect of the positive input, or we must be prepared to say that totally successful L2 acquisition is never possible on such a theory" (p. 107). Macaro's (2005) analysis of code-switching reinforces this statement. He explains that code-switching is seen as normal and often fundamental for L2 acquisition, and "flies in the face" of comprehensible input and negotiation of meaning (pp. 64–65). He asserts that "it is not surprising and entirely natural that students should codeswitch in order to achieve a task, the 'management language' of which they have not been taught. They are, after all, negotiating meaning by using a communication strategy in order to compensate for lack of linguistic knowledge" (p. 67).

Krashen's theories may not hold up in real-world use. As an example, students benefit tremendously from their ability to code-switch. It allows them to clarify meaning, participate in group activities, and fill in linguistic gaps. Students think in the L1, and find it easy to communicate to one another and prepare for a task in the mother tongue. As long as the discourse in L1 is on task, the use of the mother tongue is helpful for students to understand and progress naturally beyond what they know.

Exposure

Perhaps the best argument for the sole use of L2 in the classroom would be that of exposure, or a lack thereof. Scholars agree that it is critical for students to receive as much of the TL as possible (Peng & Zhang, 2009). However, the influence of Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis has created an environment where teachers are fearful of any L1 use because languages should be learned with the least amount of outside interference as possible, similar to how children learn their mother tongue. Swain (1985) has similar arguments, claiming that students must use the target language as much as possible in order to master it. Mayfield (2005) seems to back up these claims when she only spoke Spanish to her lowest-level classes. While her students "felt that it was more challenging" and felt "frustrated," in the end, they felt they had learned more and were more spontaneous with their language (p. 5).

The idea of maximum exposure seems to have been affirmed by studies showing positive correlations between TL use and classroom achievement (Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009). It has also inadvertently led to a "blind acceptance" that TL acquisition is only available through maximum use of the L2 (p. 3-4). Levine (2003) found that the prevailing "'recourse-to-L1' position has created a classroom dynamic in which the use of the L1 is at best discouraged, and at worst stigmatized" (p. 344).

The "virtual position" (i.e., maximum TL use) is neither practical nor beneficial to the student. "Research findings indicate that the first language may contribute to student target-language comprehension, use, and learning. Moreover, and contrary to the popular belief supported by the hegemony of the virtual position, small amounts of first language use may indeed lead to more comprehensible input and target-language production" (Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009, p. 5). This conclusion that 100% TL use is unnecessary for a successful second language classroom is also supported by Timor (2012), who found that "the sole use of the FL by the teacher is not justified theoretically or practically" (p. 9).

L1 Use in South Korea

As an example, Liu, Ahn, Baek, and Han (2004) surveyed South Korean high schools after the Ministry of Education advocated the maximum use of English. Students and teachers agreed that more TL use was necessary (32% to 50–60%), but the researchers ultimately found that "code-switching will be the norm in Korean high school English teaching for a long time" (p. 632). This conclusion may resonate particularly well with teachers in Korea. Students often have limited time with native speakers in the classroom environment (let alone outside), and should be exposed to the TL a significant amount. But as the research has shown, sanctioned L1 use can have a positive effect on learners and should not be dismissed because it disagrees with the prevailing paradigm.

The idea that exposing to students to as much English as possible, regardless of level, context, or ability is quite prevalent in South Korea. Many students in Korea are often placed in proficiency-level classes well above where they should be. This is due to their age, parents' opinions, or time they have spent at a school or at a certain level. When much of the input they receive in the L2 is beyond their comprehension, making the use of the L1 not only beneficial, but necessary. The deliberate use of the L1 in the L2 classroom allows for better time management, communication, and eventually, genuine exposure.

Conclusions

Students' mother tongues and the TL they are learning are inextricably linked. Unless a student naturally acquired a second language as a child, the L1 will always have an effect on the L2. Therefore, it is impractical to eliminate the use of the L1 from the L2 classroom. Students will always use strategies they are comfortable with, the foremost of them being their mother tongue. As shown, research and scholars agree that the mother tongue has a role in the second language classroom.

Strategically using the L1 in the Korean classroom would be an effective way to achieve results similar to the ones presented in the various studies examined above. Although many native teachers do not have the depth of language a bilingual would have at their disposal, they may be able to apply such strategies as clarifying statements, translation (dictionary), and classroom management.

Using the L1 saves time, creates a more relaxed learning environment, and allows students to contextualize vocabulary. Furthermore, a small amount of L1 use for socialization goes a long way in the classroom. L1 use is an excellent way to lower anxiety, check for understanding, and to make students laugh. When students feel at ease, they are more prepared to learn the L2.

A second language students' goal is acquisition, and they should have as many tools as possible at their disposal. While there is hardly a consensus on the issue, second language acquisition theory and research findings make it clear that the use of a student's mother tongue has a role within the classroom. Its implementation, amount of use, and effects are still debated, but it is undeniably a natural part of learning a second language that students and teachers will deal with for the foreseeable future.

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APPENDIX

Suggested Uses for the L1 in the EFL Classroom

Suggested Uses for the L1 in the EFL Classroom

1. ***Eliciting language*** "How do you say 'X' in English?"
2. ***Checking comprehension*** "How do you say 'I've been waiting for ten minutes' in Spanish?" (Also used for comprehension of a reading or listening text.)
3. ***Giving complex instructions to basic levels***
4. ***Co-operating in groups*** Learners compare and correct answers to exercises or tasks in the L1. Students at times can explain new points better than the teacher.
5. ***Explaining classroom methodology at basic levels***
6. ***Using translation to highlight a recently taught language item***
7. ***Checking for sense*** If students write or say something in the L2 that does not make sense, have them try to translate it into the L1 to realize their error.
8. ***Testing*** Translation items can be useful in testing mastery of forms and meanings.
9. ***Developing circumlocution strategies*** When students do not know how to say something in the L2, have them think of different ways to say the same thing in the L1, which may be easier to translate.

Strategy	Spanish	English
negative antonym	*vivo*	not dead
simplification/ approximate synonym	*fue vergonzoso*	it was terrible
circumlocution	*se mostró reacio*	he didn't want to do it
simplification	*el precio del viaje se compensa por lo lo barata que es la vida*	the ticket's expensive but life's cheap there
explanation	*pulpo*	it lives in the sea, it's got eight legs

ADAPTED FROM "THE MOTHER TONGUE IN THE CLASSROOM" BY DAVID ATKINSON.

TABLE 1

(Schweers, 1999, p. 7)

Phonological Rules for L1 Voicing Applied to L2 Phonetics

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The present study investigated the choice of a particular voiceless or voiced obstruent. A group of 161 EFL learners at two four-year universities in Japan participated in a paper-based survey. Their responses showed an influence of L1 phonological rules in formulating a preference in L2 for /s/ after voiced plosives in word-final position according to the Obligatory Contour Principle and for /z/ after nasals according to the Post-nasal Voicing operation. Next, the learners' answers showed a significant tendency to choose the voiceless post-alveolar fricative rather than its voiced counterpart after nasals at the onset of word-internal syllables. These characteristic tendencies disappeared in proportion to the learners' English proficiency. In fact, analyses reveal that those learners' answering patterns did not result from their feature preferences relative to phonetic variation either in L1 or in L2, but reflected a rule-based transfer between L1 phonology and L2 phonetics.

INTRODUCTION

L1 phonology may influence the learning of L2 phonetics. For instance, the coexistence of voiced obstruents within a single morpheme is avoided in Japanese (e.g., Vance, 1987). A learner of English whose first language is Japanese tends to pronounce "big bag" as *[bikku bakku]. (Note that the asterisk [*] indicates a pronunciation with a Japanese accent.) Such interferences can be widely observed in the speech of English learners; for example, "Dodgers," the name of the professional baseball team in Los Angeles, U.S.A., tends to be *[do(d)ʒa:su].

Phonological awareness is important not only in listening and speaking (Wagner & Torgesen, 1987), but also in the development of reading skills, especially for children and conceivably for learners in later years (Dickinson & McCabe 2001; Lewkowicz, 1980; Muter, Hulme, Snowling, & Taylor, 1997; Tunmer, Herriman, & Nesdale, 1988). Such awareness relates to orthographic knowledge (Port, 2010; Read, Yun-Fei, Hong-Yin, & Bao-Qing, 1986; van Orden, 1987). Also, cross-language transfers in awareness between alphabetic languages have been observed (Comeau, Cormier, Grandmaison, & Lacroix 1999; Durgunoğlu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt, 1993). When we turn to non-Roman alphabetic languages in East Asia, such as Japanese, Chinese, and Korean, we find a voice alternation or an allophonic variance on certain consonants word-internally. These sound changes involve ideolectal and/or dialectal variations or chronological shifts, and are relevant to phonological cognition. Phonological awareness often refers to the abilities or skills of phonemic or syllabic operations. We planned neither to experiment on phonological operations nor to generalize the mechanism of phonological phenomena. Instead, the present study aimed to investigate the meta-conception of L2 sounds and to take a metalinguistic perspective on phonological transfer between L1 and L2 in the EFL classroom.

METHODS

A paper-based survey was implemented to collect data on phonological and phonetic meta-conceptions. The participants were 161 undergraduate EFL learners at two Japanese universities. First, they were asked to judge whether either [s] or [z] would be suitable in English for the word-final 's' letter in each of 24 plural nouns, such as "dogs" (Baker, 1980; Berko, 1958), and whether either [ʃ] or [ʒ] would be suitable for the word-internal syllable-initial 's' letter in 16 singular nouns that end with the nominal suffix '-sion,' such as "inclusion."

Subsequently, the likelihood of a voiceless or a voiced sound in Japanese was investigated for a word-internal fricative consonant on a 4-point scale in order to determine L1 phonological cognition. Four sets of two homophones were selected as the final element of compound nouns: /sio/ "salt" or "tide," /sita/ "under, down" or "tongue," /sima/ "island" or "stripe," and /siro/ "castle, kingdom" or "necessary part, margin, rice paddy." The sound of the initial consonant principally alters between the underlying orthographic [ʃ] and its voiced cognate [ʒ] according to *rendaku*, the sequential voicing process (e.g., Martin, 1952; Vance, 1987). Japanese speakers know that some of those morphemes regularly remain voiceless, and that some others tend to receive voicing. Those biased tendencies have been thought to be lexically determined (Asai, in press). From a phonetic viewpoint, the differences in timing and extent of the glottal seizing movements and supraglottal movements primarily cause the voiceless and voiced distinctions for fricatives (Nartey, 1982; Stevens, Blumstein, Glicksman, Burton, & Kurowski, 1992). A three-mora artificial morpheme was combined as the first element with the above-mentioned eight kinds of morphemes. That word structure can control accentuation. The pitch drop of the accent is placed before the target phonemes, which is parallel to the position of primary stress, immediately before '-sion,' in the English words in question. Furthermore, the use of artificial morphemes can avoid possible semantic, syntactic, and sociolinguistic influences. The participants voluntarily judged the likelihood of voicing for 24 pseudo-words *in toto*, and their responses were partitioned into two classes: voiceless or voiced.

RESULTS

The distributions of participants divided by the percentage of those choosing [z] or [ʒ] as the target consonants in the target English words are shown in Figure 1. As seen in panels (a), (b), (c), and (d), the averages were 24%, 66%, 24%, and 53% for choosing [z] for [s], [z] for [z], [ʒ] for [ʃ], [ʒ] for [ʒ], respectively. Panel (d) demonstrates that it was relatively unlikely for the participants to choose [ʒ] for the voiced word-internal syllable-initial 's' items. In the same way, the distributions of participants divided by the percentage of the ones choosing [ʒ] as the initial consonant of the final element of the target Japanese words are presented in Figure 2. The results confirmed the wide range of preference for voicing in Japanese, and the average as predicted, which was slightly higher than one-half (Asai, 2014).

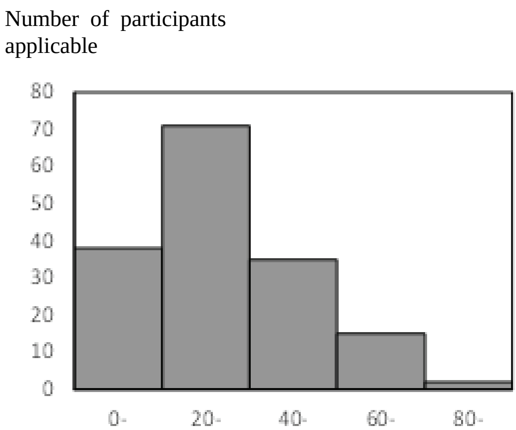

FIGURE 1a. Distributions of participants by choosing voice in English: Number of participants choosing [z] for word-final ‘s’ [s].

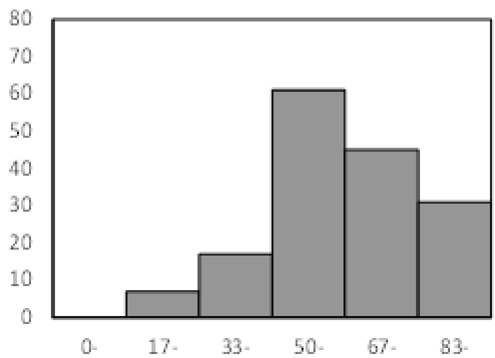

FIGURE 1b. Distributions of participants by choosing voice in English: Number of participants choosing [z] for word-final ‘s’ [z].

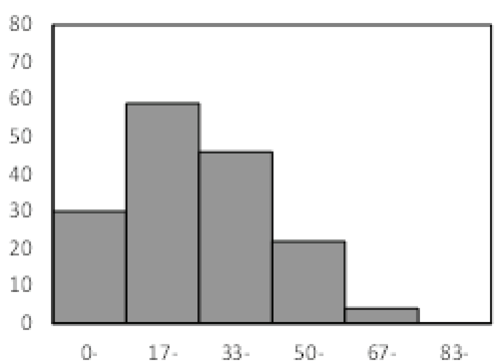

FIGURE 1c. Distributions of participants by choosing voice in English: Number of participants choosing [ʒ] for syllable-initial ‘s’ [ʃ].

Number of participants
applicable

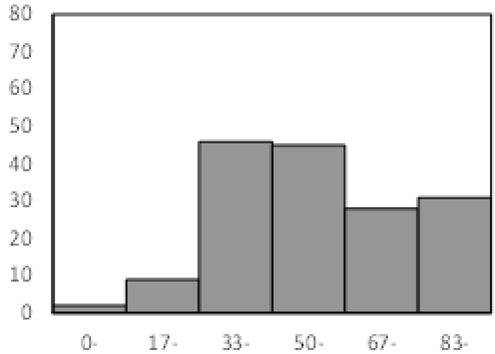

FIGURE 1d. Distributions of participants by choosing voice in English: Number of participants choosing [ʒ] for syllable-initial 's' [ʒ].

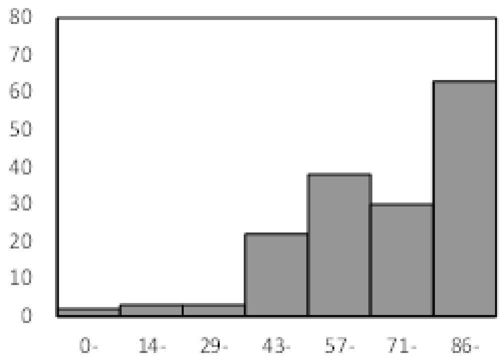

FIGURE 2a. Distribution of participants who chose voice in Japanese: Number of participants choosing [ʒ] for a *rendaku*-favored morpheme onset.

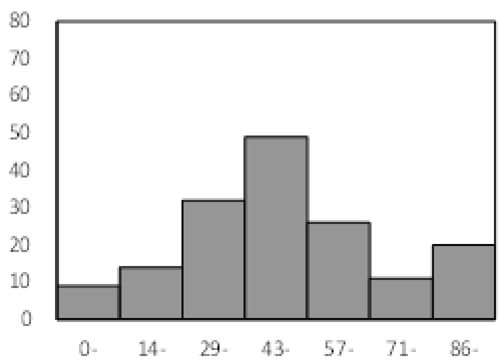

FIGURE 2b. Distribution of participants who chose voice in Japanese: Number of participants choosing [ʒ] for a *rendaku*-disfavored morpheme onset.

The correlation coefficient in English between the number of choices of [z] for the word-final 's' and that for the word-internal syllable-initial 's' was 0.29, which suggests a weak positive correlation. Next, the correlation coefficient between the number of choices of [z] for the more likely voiced morphemes, such as /sita/ “tongue,” and that for the less likely voiced ones, such as /sita/ “under, down,” in Japanese was 0.56. Such a relatively strong correlation supports the ideas that the *rendaku* choice is lexically stable (Asai, in press) and that its occurrence is psychologically real (e.g., Vance, 1980).

The relationship in cognitive property between L1 and L2 refers to the correlation coefficients as summarized in Table 1. The row indicates the coefficients concerning the number of [ʒ] choices for the final-morpheme onset ‘s’ in Japanese, and the column denotes those concerning the number of [z] or [ʒ] choices and of right responses for word-final ‘s’ or word-internal syllable-initial ‘s’ in English. In Table 1, the morphemes that are likely and unlikely to receive *rendaku* voicing are abbreviated for high and low *rendaku*, respectively.

TABLE 1. Correlations of Voicing Choice Between Japanese and English

Japanese *rendaku* Occurrences	**English Word-Final ‘s’**		**English Syllable-Initial ‘s’**	
	No. of [z] choices	No. of right responses	No. of [ʒ] choices	No. of right responses
No. of [ʒ] choices of high *rendaku*	-0.06	-0.02	0.12	0.07
No. of [ʒ] choices of low *rendaku*	-0.14	-0.03	0.09	0.09

DISCUSSION

As a whole, the small degrees of correlation shown in Table 1 suggest that L1 phonological cognition was not relevant to L2 phonemic awareness. However, we analyzed the participants’ responses by phonotactics according to the number of correct answers. Figure 3 shows the scores for answering the sound of the ‘s’ letter in 40 target English words. The horizontal axis indicates the number of the total right responses, and the vertical axis shows the percent of right responses according to the seven phonotactic groups: (1) the closed circles with dashed lines display the percentage evinced for correctly choosing [s] after the voiceless plosive /p/ or /k/; likewise, (2) [z] after the nasal /m/ or /n/; (3) [z] after the lateral /l/; (4) [s] after the voiceless fricative [f] or [q]; (5) [z] after the vowels including [ɚ] or [ər]; (6) [z] after the voiced plosive /b/ or /g/; and (7) [z] after the voiced fricative /v/. Smaller percentages were recorded in the case of the choice of [z] after /b/, /g/, or /v/ by the participants who obtained lower total scores as shown on the left-hand side of Figure 3. This result implies the avoidance of multiple voiced plosives within single words. The increase in correct answers rightward in the graph indicates a dependence on L2 proficiency. On the other hand, the tendency to choose [s] after /p/ or /k/ was not evident because the sound sequence is not constricted by the Obligatory Contour Principle (Leben, 1973; McCarthy, 1986; Yip, 1988) on a “distinctive voice” feature (Blevins, 1993; Hubers & Kooij, 1973; Rice, 1993). L1 phonology is applied to L2 phonetics under particular phonotactic conditions, and L2 learning effectively suppresses the phonological transfer.

Moreover, Figure 3 depicts the relative difficulty levels of the phonotactic groups. The curve of the [z] choices after the nasals rises at a lower total score than that of [z] after the voiced plosives. This means that the difficulty of correctly answering the sound of the 's' letter was lower for [z] after the nasals, such as "towns" and "Miami Marlins," than for [z] after the voiced plosives, such as "leaves" *[ri:busu] and "Chicago Cubs" *[kabusu], due at least partly to Post-nasal Voicing (e.g., Bailey, 1985; Rice, 2005). In addition, the answering of [z] after vowels in simple codas, such as "cities," was also a relatively easy task in English if no voiced obstruent was placed in the stem of the target word.

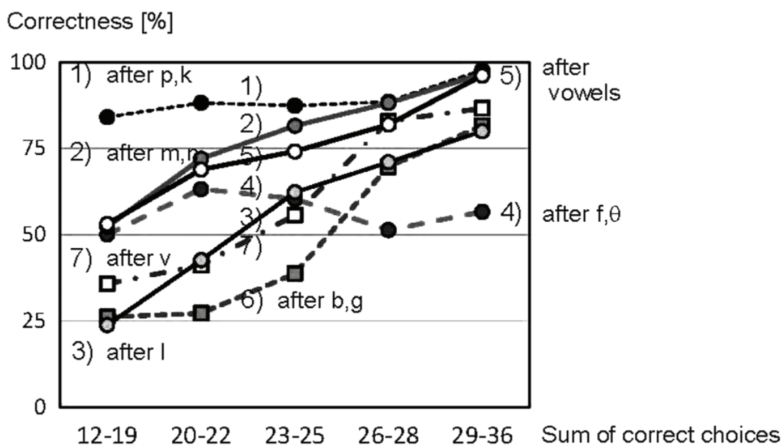

FIGURE 3. Percentages for answering correctly for the sound of English word-final 's'.

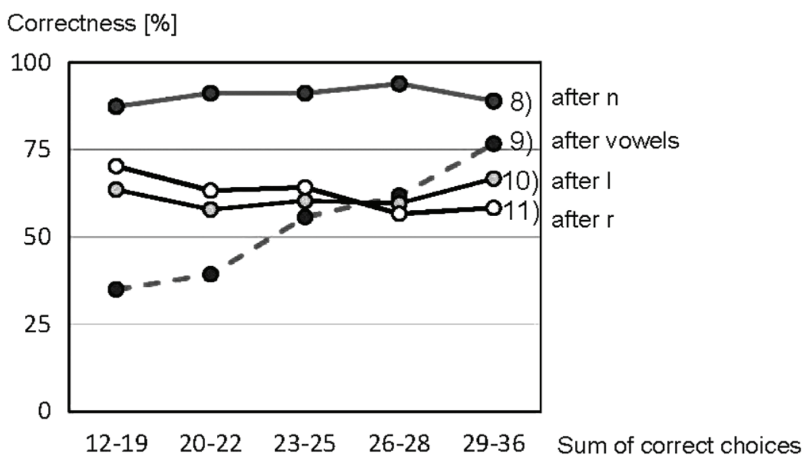

FIGURE 4. Percentages for answering correctly for the sound of English syllable-initial 's'.

Next, Figure 4 illustrates that it was relatively easy to correctly choose [ʃ] after nasals for the noun suffix '-sion' as indicated by (8), and that the choice was independent of L2 proficiency. On the other hand, phoneme-grapheme inconsistency can lead to difficulty in answering for the sound of 's' in "occasion" and "reversion." The scores for the identification of [ʃ] or [ʒ] after the vowels as indicated by (9) in Figure 4 demonstrate the greater difficulty for the learners with lower proficiency on the left-hand side of the figure. This suggests an intense application on their part of both the underlying sound cognition and L1 phonological rules to L2. In comparison with the results in Figure 3, this part of the investigation confirmed that phonological awareness tasks regarding syllabic units are easier than those regarding phonemic units (Wagner & Torgesen, 1987). Most of the identifications, except for [ʒ] after the vowels by the low-proficiency groups, scored higher than 50%.

In sum, the present study showed that L1 phonology relates to L2 phonetics. The sound structure in L1 influenced the phonetic knowledge in L2. Phonological transfer was observed under particular phonotactic conditions. The preferences for voicing are, on the other hand, independent of the internalization of underlying sounds in the speakers' mental lexicon (Aitchison, 2012; Coleman, 1998). Pedagogically, speakers of Japanese, Chinese, and Korean know the phonological alternation or positional allophones in their L1s. EFL educators can, thus, notice those linguistic characteristics of their learners, and allow the learners to become aware of the metalinguistic conceptions (Hakes, Evans, & Tunmer, 1980).

CONCLUSIONS

A group of 161 students at two Japanese universities participated in English and Japanese sound choice tasks. The characteristic phonological rules in L1 appeared in the responses in L2. First, the English learners tended to choose the voiceless alveolar fricative after voiced plosives in word-final position according to the Obligatory Contour Principle and the voiced alveolar fricative after nasals according to the Post-nasal Voicing operation. Second, they more likely chose the voiceless post-alveolar fricative over its voiced counterpart after nasals than after other phonemes at the onset of word-internal syllables in L2. Third, the dependency of answering correctly for those English sounds on learners' proficiency was obtained under particular phonotactic conditions. Finally, importantly in addition to the above confirmations, analyses reveal that those learners' answering patterns did not correlate with their preferences or psychological entrenchment for the voicing feature. L1 rules can apply to L2 to a large extent, but preferences would not transfer.

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Factors Affecting Junior High School EFL Teachers' Practice of Multiple Assessments in Taiwan

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions and practices of multiple assessments of junior high school EFL teachers in Taiwan and to explore the factors affecting their practices. The participants were 50 junior high school EFL English teachers in New Taipei City, Taiwan. The main instruments were a questionnaire consisting of 39 questions and an interview outline containing five questions. The results showed the participants had good perceptions of multiple assessments. However, there was a discrepancy between their perceptions and practices. Multiple assessments were not widely used due to several factors, such as the washback effect of entrance examinations and the time-consuming characteristic of some assessment methods. The results revealed the most frequently used assessment type was the paper-and-pencil test, followed by classroom observations. Pedagogical implications obtained from the results are discussed, and some suggestions for further studies are provided.

INTRODUCTION

Assessment and teaching are closely related. Assessment, being a must in the whole teaching process, is an ongoing process that may include different kinds of tests. Popham (1995) asserts that students' real learning can be appropriately evaluated through multiple types of evidence. Therefore, multiple assessments are necessary in order to understand students' learning results. Shohamy (1998) claims that multiple assessments are diverse ways of assessing language learning; each assessment is aimed at evaluating one of the various aspects or domains of language knowledge or skill. In addition to monitoring and documenting students' learning results objectively, assessment can help teachers adjust their teaching according to multiple sources of evidence of student learning.

Many scholars and researchers support multidimensional testing (Brady, 1997; Neuman, Copple, & Bredekamp, 2000; Shohamy, 1994, 2000). They claim that a multifaceted framework of assessment should be adopted to respond to learners' uniqueness and diversified strengths (Neuman et al., 2000; Shohamy, 2000). Shohamy (1994) asserts that "language ability is a broad and complex construct that cannot be fully measured by tests" (p. 135). Brady (1997) also declares that different forms of assessment are better suited for various aspects of learning.

Holding the same belief concerning language learning as mentioned above, the English Curriculum Guidelines of the Nine-Year Integrated Curriculum proclaim that teachers at elementary and junior high schools should use multiple assessment measures to evaluate students' learning results. Some studies have been conducted to investigate the application of multiple assessments at elementary schools (Chan, 2007; Chen, 1999, Chen & Ruan, 2001). However, little attention has been paid to the application of multiple assessments in junior high school English classrooms in Taiwan. This study will explore junior high school EFL teachers' perceptions and practices regarding multiple assessments.

The purpose of this study was four-fold: (a) to investigate junior high school EFL teachers' perceptions of multiple assessments, (b) to determine frequently used types of multiple assessments, (c) to understand the difficulties encountered, and (d) to explore the factors affecting EFL teachers' practices regarding multiple assessments. To achieve these goals, the author addressed the following research questions:

1. What are junior high school EFL teachers' perceptions of multiple assessments?
2. What are junior high school EFL teachers' practices of multiple assessment and what are the difficulties they encounter?
3. What types of multiple assessments are frequently applied by junior high school EFL teachers?
4. What are the factors affecting junior high school EFL teachers' practices regarding multiple assessments?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Assessment and Teaching

Assessment and teaching are closely related. Assessment is a contributing part of teaching. When teaching, teachers not only observe and make accommodations for students but also continually assess and reflect on students' development. Effective assessments provide both teachers and students with important information about teaching and learning. The results of assessment can reveal teachers' instructional effectiveness, help teachers find out how much their students have learned (Chen, 2001; Popham, 1995), give students some feedback on their progress, and show how teachers can best redirect their future efforts, sustain or promote class morale, and aid learning (Madsen, 1983). Therefore, assessments are necessary in the teaching process.

Problems with Traditional Exams and Demand for Multiple Assessments

There have been some problems with traditional exams in Taiwan. Wu (1998) points out three main problems in the implementation of assessment at schools in Taiwan. To begin with, the contents of the tests put too much emphasis on information memorization. In addition, traditional exams focus more on paper-and-pencil tests, whose contents put emphasis on memorization and recall of information rather than on the development of communicative language competence. Moreover, students' exam scores are often in comparison with the proficiencies of other students, which in turn forces students to compete against each other, and which might lead to the development of self-centeredness. All these criticisms point to the fact that we have to cope with and administer traditional exams with caution. Traditional exams are effective to administer in that they are not time-consuming and they can collect information from a whole class. Nevertheless, they often reveal that students have been able to perform well on the test, but they tell teachers little about students' general fluency and ability to handle the target language (Chen, 2003; Heaton, 1990). Due to the current education system, most teachers in Taiwan still work within the heavily grade-oriented system and focus on paper-and-pencil tests.

Hsu (2003) points out that the assessment of English language learning in Taiwan has been criticized for its strong emphasis on testing. Over emphasis on testing has led to a negative washback effect on language learning. To moderate the negative washback effect, the English Curriculum Guidelines of the Nine-Year Integrated Curriculum proclaim that teachers at elementary schools and junior high schools should use multiple assessment measures to evaluate students' learning. Since no single assessment is able to effectively evaluate language learning progress and achievements, multiple assessments are therefore required. By collecting multiple pieces of evidence of student learning, teachers can not only adjust their teaching but also monitor and document student learning objectively.

Related Studies on the Implementation of Multiple Assessments

Related studies on the implementation of multiple assessments have revealed that multiple assessments have become a popular concept not only in English language teaching but also in other subject domains such as science and history (Chang, 2002; Chen, 1999; Chen & Ruan, 2001; Hsieh, Lu, & Yeh, 2000; Hsu, 2007; Lu, 2004). Most of the studies have shown that teachers and researchers acknowledge the significance of multiple assessments. Nevertheless, different scholars and researchers have different opinions on multiple assessments. Chao (2001) suggested that the effects of multidimensional assessments in EFL classrooms were more beneficial to learners than traditional assessment methods. In Chen's study (2006), most of the students agreed that multiple assessment was beneficial to their learning of history. On the other hand, Chang (2002), Chen and Ruan (2001), Hsieh, Lu, and Yeh (2000), Hsu (2007), and Lu (2004) address several limitations of implementing multiple assessments, including the intensive demand of time and energy, the difficulty of setting up criteria, and large class size. Actually, these challenges are what EFL teachers might face when they apply multiple assessments in their English classes.

In Taiwan, EFL teachers encounter more obstacles than researchers have discovered because these English teachers have heavy workloads. What is more, in Taiwan, junior high EFL teachers have to pay more attention to students' grades, which will decide whether students can attend better schools or not. Because of this, junior high school EFL teachers tend to use more paper-and-pencil tests. They think tests are the most efficient way to determine student learning and help students master the test items on entrance exams. In short, junior high school EFL teachers seem to have more difficulties implementing multiple assessments than elementary school teachers do. But what is the real picture?

METHOD

To address the research questions and to provide a comprehensive picture of how junior high school EFL teachers apply multiple assessments in English teaching, this study applied a quantitative and qualitative research design involving questionnaires and interviews as the instruments for data collection and analysis.

Participants and Research Instruments

For practical reasons, the area of this study was a district in New Taipei City, a northern city in Taiwan. For convenience of sampling, the population of the study was all of the 50 EFL English teachers from four junior high schools in this district. These EFL English teachers were asked to fill out a questionnaire, and some of the teachers were asked to take part in an interview with the author. Fifty questionnaires were sent out – one to each of the English teachers – and 33 of the participants returned their questionnaires. All of the 33 returned questionnaires (100%) were valid. These 33 participants were also interviewed.

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative measurements were employed. The two research instruments are described in detail below.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire collected information on (a) the personal background of each teacher, (b) the teachers' perceptions of multiple assessments, (c) EFL teachers' assessment practices and the perceived difficulties in implementing multiple assessments, and (d) the teachers' opinions of multiple assessments. The reliability coefficient of Cronbach's α was .87, which showed that the questionnaire was reliable.

Interviews

Interviews were carried out at a time convenient to both the author and the teachers whose returned questionnaires were valid and who were willing to be interviewed. The interview aimed to elicit teachers' responses to the five questions about multiple assessments, including their perceptions about multiple assessments, the difficulties they encountered in applying multiple assessments, frequently used types of multiple assessments, the factors affecting the teachers' decisions on using multiple assessments or traditional assessments, and their opinions of the potential impacts of multiple assessment strategies on junior high EFL students' English learning performance.

Data Analysis

Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS 16.0 statistical computer software. Data from all the questionnaires were analyzed and displayed as frequency, percentage, and mean to find out how the participants responded to the questions in the questionnaire. A four-point Likert scale was adopted to calculate the scores for Q9 to Q31. All of the statements were positive and the scoring system was as follows: strongly agree = 4 points; agree = 3 points; disagree = 2 points; strongly disagree = 1 point. Additionally, the data from the participants' interviews were recorded, transcribed, and then analyzed to provide in-depth information that could not be obtained from the quantitative data from the questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices Regarding Multiple Assessments

The scores of the participants' perceptions of multiple assessments (MA) were based on 10 question items (Q9–Q18). The mean score for this group of questions was 30.61 (*SD* = 4.83) with a minimum score of 17 and a maximum score of 40. Most of the participants had good perceptions of MA. The statistics showed that 67.27% of the participants "agreed" and 21.52% of participants "strongly agreed" that they had a good understanding of the concepts of MA. Combined, they accounted for more than 88% of the total responses.

The scores of the English teachers' practices of MA were based on 13 question items (Q19–Q31). The mean score for the participants' practices of MA was 35.06 (*SD* = 5.77) with a minimum score of 23 and a maximum score of 51. Of the 33 respondents, 17 disagreed that they applied task-based assessments more than paper-and-pencil tests, while 14 agreed and 1 strongly agreed. Twenty-six (26) of the respondents reported that they integrated formative assessments as a part of their teaching activities (Q22). Eleven (11) agreed or strongly agreed that they spent a lot of time doing portfolios (Q28). Regarding the evaluator, all the respondents used teacher assessment (Q30). As to peer assessment, 19 participants did not use this kind of assessment, while 14 used it (Q29). As to student self-assessment, 16 teachers did not use it, while 17 did (Q31).

In addition, only 10 of the participants did not use a lot of classroom observation to check their students' learning. The other participants (23 respondents) used classroom observation as an assessment method. Classroom observation was carried out while teaching. It is a very important skill that every teacher should be equipped with to assess their students' learning processes (Brown, 2004; Flippo, 1997; Halliwell, 1992).

Findings and the Difficulties EFL Teachers Encountered

First, concerning the purposes of assessment practices, almost all the teachers thought the purposes of assessment practices were to understand students' learning achievement, to find out more about students' learning difficulties, and to understand students' progress. Thus, most of the teachers had multiple purposes when they used assessment. Second, regarding the application of traditional assessment (TA), multiple assessments, or a combination of the two, the statistics showed that only one participant chose TA as the main assessing method. Six of the participants applied MAs, while 26 used both TAs and MAs. Obviously, most of the teachers did not abandon traditional assessment. They preferred to use different assessment methods to assess students' English learning.

Third, in terms of type of MAs, statistics revealed that paper-and-pencil tests were still favored by many of the English teachers. This assessment type contained the largest percentage (90.9%) of responses (30). As mentioned previously, traditional assessments were not abandoned by most of the teachers. These two statistics had the same implication in assessment application. In Taiwan, where the entrance examination focuses more on literacy abilities than on the oral skills, paper-and-pencil tests still play an important role in teachers' assessment practices. It was noted that less than 50% of the participants applied portfolio assessments. Although this assessment type has been strongly encouraged (Chen, 2003; O'Malley & Pierce, 1996), it was not commonly employed by the participants. The reasons affecting teachers' lack of implementation of this assessment type would be worth studying.

Fourth, concerning the evaluator, the statistics revealed that most of the teachers employed teacher assessments (i.e., teachers themselves being the typical evaluator). In addition, 60.6% of the participants gave students the opportunity to do peer assessments, and 36.4% of the participants used students themselves as the evaluators. Self-assessments provide students with opportunities to engage in examining their own learning processes and outcomes, while peer assessments provide students with opportunities to assess other students. When employing these two methods, teachers need to take into account students' proficiency level and the content of assessment. Only when students reach the relevant ability, receive the necessary training, and have enough practice can they perform well in self-assessments and peer assessments.

Fifth, in terms of assessment time, 79% of the participants (26 respondents) used formative assessments, while 76% (25 respondents) employed summative assessments. When applying multiple assessments, English teachers will choose various types of informal assessments. In Taiwan, junior high school English teachers have to measure or summarize what their students have learned, so they use summative assessments at the end of a unit.

Sixth, to see what difficulties the participants encountered (Q37) and to understand why the participants did not like to apply multiple assessments (Q38), Q37 and Q38, each containing 12 options, requested the participants to check all the items that matched. For each option, the difficulty in Q37 was the reason in Q38. Of the 12 difficulty options, the statistics showed that the order of difficulty from the most difficult to the fourth-most difficult was "time-consuming," "too much to teach without enough time," "too many students in my classes," and "too many classes."

The key similarity in these four difficulties and reasons was related to "time." Most multiple assessments are time-consuming. Besides, the average number of students in each class in the area of the study was about 35, and there were only four to five English classes per week. Because of the limited time, the English teachers preferred not to use multiple assessments and regarded them as a big challenge.

Findings from the Interviews

All the interviewees believed that in addition to traditional paper-and-pencil tests, any methods that could help understand students' learning results belonged to multiple assessments. However, the interviewed teachers were hampered by the problems of assessment being time-consuming and of having large class sizes. The most frequently used type of assessment was paper-and-pencil tests, followed by classroom observation, assignments, questions and answers, recitation, and worksheets. As for task-based assessments, some of the interviewed teachers employed these after the midterm exam or when the students' attention was distracted. Tasks or activities were supplementary because they were time-consuming. Several factors caused the interviewed teachers to not apply MAs; these included time, class size, course schedule, and the entrance examination.

In spite of the above-mentioned difficulties in applying MAs, the interviewees also pointed out several potential effects of MAs on English learning. MAs could enhance students' interest and willingness to learn, motivate students, enhance class atmosphere, and enrich learning life. In addition, students could obtain a sense of achievement from assessment tasks. When participating in a task, students had the opportunity to think and speak in English. As a result, their listening and speaking abilities were enhanced. MAs helped students realize that they were *learning* English instead of *studying* it. Chen and Ruan (2001) claim that task-oriented assessments are time- and energy-consuming, but they enable students to regard English as a living language instead of a subject to study. Last, MAs focus on the students' whole learning process rather than on a single point of the learning process.

CONCLUSIONS

This study explored how junior high school EFL English teachers employed multiple assessments. The findings showed the participants' perceptions and practices regarding MAs, and the factors affecting their practices regarding MAs.

An overall mean score of 30.61 indicated that the English teachers participating in this study had good perceptions of multiple assessments. The order of frequency of assessments used was paper-and-pencil tests, classroom observation, assignments, questions and answers, recitation, worksheets, task-based assessments, and portfolios.

The results of this study also revealed that the participants encountered a couple of difficulties in applying MAs. These were that the assessments were time-consuming, there was too much to teach, there were too many students in their classes, and too many classes. As long as an assessment took too much of the teacher's time, it would become difficult to implement, and the main reason why teachers did not want to use it. However, multiple assessments could help teachers assess the various aspects of learning that cannot be achieved through traditional assessments.

Limitations and Suggestions

Although several important findings were revealed, there were also several limitations in the study. To begin with, the results were obtained by analyzing 33 junior high school English teachers in a single district in northern Taiwan, so the outcomes could not be generalized to all English teachers in different areas in Taiwan. It is hoped that future studies can include more junior high English teachers from different cities or areas of Taiwan. In addition, the junior high school English teachers' beliefs regarding multiple assessments were not explored in this study. It is hoped that researchers who are interested in this area will conduct studies related to this topic to explore and discuss the relationship between teacher beliefs and practices.

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Influence of Pronunciation Monitoring on Affective Variables

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Fostering and enhancing learners' affective domain holds the key to successful language instruction. This study examined whether specific self- and peer-monitoring activities, which are employable with a class size of 30 but are not currently presented in circulating Japanese university coursebooks, have a positive effect on pronunciation learning, especially in the learners' affective terms. A written, five-point Likert-type scale questionnaire was conducted to examine the effects of self- and peer-monitoring on the participants' affective variables; namely, interest, confidence, and awareness toward their own pronunciation. A paired-samples *t*-test was performed to compare the point difference between pre- and post-activity responses. The results show that the implementation of this particular monitoring activity changed the learners' affective variables significantly.

INTRODUCTION

English pronunciation skills are not the central focus in English instruction for Japanese speakers, but in the classroom among the post-adolescent age group, the conventional procedure would be first to provide explicit information about manner of articulation and then to apply the knowledge in practice, moving the articulatory organs to produce actual sounds. To emphasize the importance of English pronunciation instruction for successful international communication, and to make the pronunciation instruction process more efficient and effective for Japanese university learners of English, the author has designed and conducted classroom-based pronunciation instruction for such students (Chujo, 2010a, 2010b, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2013, 2015). Over the years of ongoing design, implementation, and revision, among hundreds of Japanese students in classrooms, the author has determined that the most important element for their successful attainment of intelligible English pronunciation in classroom-based instruction is to foster their affective domain. Particularly, learners benefit from opportunities to notice and develop awareness of the meaning and role of pronunciation instruction and practice, and to monitor their progress in performance of activities. Fostering and enhancing learners' affective domain is the key to successful language instruction. Current research shows that learners' affective domain can either help or hinder language learning, depending on whether the context in which they are learning is positive or negative (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996).

This study was conducted to determine how Japanese students might be assisted from an affective perspective to attain internationally intelligible English pronunciation, with specific focus on affective variables; namely, confidence, attitude, and awareness, in the course of classroom English pronunciation instruction. To investigate the role of these affective variables, self- and peer-monitoring activities were designed and incorporated into the pronunciation instruction curriculum in the form of a coursebook titled *Now I Got It!* The coursebook was developed for a semester-long freshman general English course at a Japanese university (Chujo, 2010). This study examined the effect of specific self- and peer-monitoring activities on pronunciation skills, in terms of affective variables. The activities were designed for use with a class size of 30 students; such activities are not currently common in Japanese university coursebooks.

The purpose of this study was two-fold. The first purpose was to introduce procedures for video-based self- and peer-monitoring pronunciation activities. The second purpose was to examine the effect of these activities on students' affect by means of a written questionnaire with five-point Likert-scale items designed to measure their levels of interest in, confidence in, and awareness of their own pronunciation.

Monitoring and Self-Correction Strategies in Pronunciation Instruction

Morley (1991) states that realistic goals for pronunciation instruction should be as follows: developing functional intelligibility, developing communicability, increasing self-confidence, and developing speech monitoring abilities and speech modification strategies for use beyond the classroom. Bailey (1999) defines the concept of *monitoring* as "learners checking what they say or write, based on rules they've already learned" (p. 126). Firth (1992) emphasizes the importance of *self-correction*, which is the ability to correct oneself when a pronunciation error has been pointed out, and of *self-monitoring*, which is the ability to listen to and recognize errors. Students ultimately take responsibility for their own ongoing improvement once they have left class; the teacher's role in the classroom is to assist them to acquire the strategies that will help them to improve on their own.

Issues arising from the large class size typical of the Japanese university English learning environment make autonomous learning of pronunciation essential; to this end, individual students should acquire self-monitoring skills. Gagné et al. (2005) identifies large-group instructional characteristics as follows:

> Large-group instruction is characterized by weak control of the effects of instructional events by the teacher. The gaining of attention, the cuing of semantic encoding, the eliciting of student performance, and the provision of corrective feedback can all be instituted as events, but their effects on the learning process are only probable [...] it is up to the students to profit from it. Students, in this view, must organize the events of instruction themselves – it is sometimes up to students to infer the objective of instruction, to remind themselves to recall prerequisite skills, to choose a method of encoding, and so on. (p. 301)

Naiman (1992) explains that, to incorporate the development of self-monitoring and self-correcting abilities into classroom pronunciation instruction, it is crucial for students to begin monitoring and correcting one another's pronunciation. As part of monitoring, students should comment on the phonological features of one another's speech. In the process, they will be communicating about pronunciation and developing a metalanguage, which will help them become more aware of their own pronunciation. Thus, for successful monitoring, students require the tools and concepts to discuss phonological features.

Schmidt (2001) states that "in order to acquire phonology, one must attend to the sounds of target language input, especially those that are contrastive in the target language, and if still one's goal is to sound like a native speaker, one must attend to sub-phonemic details as well" (p. 40). In this context, explicit knowledge is a prerequisite for the learner. Without attention to what Schmidt (2001) calls "the raw data of the input (the phonetic stream of speech)" (p. 41), in order to derive explicit knowledge from it, input will not become intake; it will simply go in one ear and out the other. Therefore, pronunciation content needs to be introduced through explicit instruction; if it is implicitly introduced, learners may not take in what has been taught. As Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) state, some learners are naturally gifted mimics and will "pick up" pronunciation by mere exposure. However, many will still need explicit explanation. As with other aspects of language, raising learners' explicit knowledge and consciousness of target linguistic items and their phonological structures makes a crucial difference in L2 pronunciation. Venkatagiri and Levis (2007) further state that metaphonological awareness can be facilitated through explicit instruction (e.g., focus-on-form activities). Metaphonological awareness entails the individual's ability to talk about and explain his or her knowledge and use of sounds.

Communication difficulties that result from negative interference of certain segmental features that differ between English and Japanese are illustrated by Hewings' (2004) example: "In a fast-food restaurant in Britain, one of my Japanese students asked for *banilla milkshake* (intending *vanilla*) and was given a banana milkshake" (p. 15). A second example is the following dialogue from Iguchi and Varnam-Atkin (2012), which illustrates the potential for miscommunication due to incorrect pronunciation, and the danger of ignorance of the possibility of miscommunication, compounding error upon error:

Student: Excuse me, Mr. Barnam.
Mr. Varnam: Oh, yes.
Student: Could you please help me?
Mr. Varnam: Sure.
Student: I want to learn how to improve my bowels.
Mr. Varnam: I don't quite understand. What's wrong with them?
Student: My bowels sound long.
Mr. Varnam: Bowels usually are long, aren't they?
Student: Anyway, they're not light!
Mr. Varnam: I'm sorry. I'm only an English teacher, I suggest you go and see a doctor!
Student: All right! (p. 11)

If learners have adequate awareness and explicit knowledge of L2 skills, along with self-monitoring and self-correction strategies, they will be able to determine, by monitoring the flow of dialogue, when and why communication has been compromised, and to make a self-repair. Kormos (2000) describes such repairs as "overt manifestations of the monitoring process. A self-initiated, self-completed correction comes about when the speaker detects that the output has been erroneous or inappropriate, halts the speech flow, and finally executes a correction" (p. 315). According to Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998), four types of repair are observed: self-initiated self-repair, other-initiated self-repair, self-initiated other-repair, and other-initiated other-repair. Even if learners cannot make a necessary repair immediately, they can still look back at the scene and retrospectively monitor their own speech. With the explicit knowledge they attain in this way, they can analyze what compromised the communication and address the issue, or better prepare their speech in the future. As a result, the possibility of frustrating a listener with communicatively problematic utterances is diminished.

Monitoring also serves to improve perceptual comprehension and to build confidence in the language one is learning. Regarding the effect of monitoring, Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) mentions the following:

> Coupled with today's focus on self-directed learning and the development of learner autonomy, monitoring is assuming a larger role than it has previously played in language teaching. As part of learners' taking responsibility for their own learning, self-monitoring is vital to learners' sense of control over their progress. (p. 349)

Firth (1992) states that "it is critical that the instructor helps to develop strategies that will allow students to self-correct and self-monitor" (p. 215). Firth further emphasizes that the development of strategies for self-monitoring and self-correcting should be actively incorporated into the syllabus to help make students independent of the pronunciation teacher. Students must be able to focus on the weak aspects of their pronunciation and to identify and correct errors.

As discussed above, monitoring plays a crucial role in pronunciation instruction. However, analysis of the various pronunciation coursebooks available for the Japanese university English teaching and learning market shows that, among hundreds of textbooks published by a number of publishers, relatively few focus on pronunciation as a central component. Among 12 major publishers surveyed, there were a total of 22 pronunciation textbooks or textbook series available for use in general education in the spring catalogues of 2013. It was concluded that monitoring activities were rarely included in the coursebooks available for the Japanese university market, and the importance of their incorporation was pointed out (Chujo 2015).

As was also mentioned above, affective variables have a substantial influence on students' learning. Therefore, it is beneficial to consider monitoring from an affective perspective. In the next section, the self- and peer-monitoring activities used in the present investigation of the affective effects of monitoring are explained.

THE SELF- AND PEER-MONITORING ACTIVITIES

Structured self- and peer-monitoring activities were developed for the instruction described here. To prepare for the monitoring activity, the first step was a recording assignment included in the preparatory unit of the coursebook (see Figure 1).

～✤Recording Assignments 1–3✤～
(Due Dates: 1.　　　　　2.　　　　　3.　　　　　)

1. **Using your own voice**, **video-record** the following script with **a computer** or **a cellular phone**.

2. Save the files and send them to the following email address **as attachment files**:

Email address:

☆The **subject of the email** and **file name** should be as follows: **day of the week**, **class period**, **name**, **English student identification number (ESIDN)**.

Ex: The **subject of the email** → **(月3平田愛美38)**
The **file name** → **(File1 月3平田愛美38)**

3. When you have sent your file successfully, you will receive **an automated notice**. If you were not successful either in recording or in sending the file, please do not worry. We can find a solution in the next class.

FIGURE 1. Recording assignment for monitoring activity from the preparatory unit of *Now I Got It!*

Three video recordings were made during the course: at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. Participants were encouraged to use their own recording devices, such as mobile phones or personal computers with video-recording capability. Thus, they were provided with a tool that could be used for self-training even after completion of the course. After the participants recorded themselves individually producing the sounds on the provided script (see Figure 2), they saved their recording and sent it to the teacher via email or the university's file-sharing service, so that the teacher could track their progress. In this study, the target pronunciation features for instruction were the consonants /l/, /r/, /w/, /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, and /ʃ/. The top of Figure 2 shows the target consonants, each occurring with the /a/ sound, and the bottom of Figure 2 shows the words with the target consonant in the initial position.

fa wa tha la sha ra va sa tha wa
(thank) (that)
za fa ra tha sa tha la va sha za
(thank) (that)

lead wood van those sip sheet light fast sink right
vase think these what zero read ship thought fan zest

FIGURE 2. Recording scripts.

The monitoring activity, completed after the recording activity described above, comprised a number of steps, using the monitoring sheet presented in Appendix A.

For the self-monitoring activity, the participants began by listening to and evaluating their own performance sound by sound. They then counted the total number of correctly pronounced sounds and compared this with the number they had achieved in the previous recording. Finally, they wrote down their impressions of their own performance. This was followed by the peer-monitoring activity, for which each participant switched sound data with a classmate. Each participant then followed the same steps as above to evaluate their classmate’s recording. After identifying sounds that their classmates needed to practice, participants provided pronunciation tips for each mispronounced sound. The monitoring activity was concluded by the participants stating their overall impressions of it. Thus, monitoring and evaluation were conducted systematically by both the participants themselves and their peers. Figure 3 shows participants working on monitoring activities.

FIGURE 3. Participants working on monitoring activities.

Evaluation of the Monitoring Activity

In this section, the results regarding the affective aspects of monitoring are examined. It was hypothesized that having the participants monitor their own pronunciation performance through an in-class activity would improve and stabilize their pronunciation performance, and lead to improvement in terms of affective variables. The monitoring activity was implemented twice: once in the middle of the course and once at the end. After each round of monitoring, participants completed a self-evaluation survey containing four items on a five-point Likert scale and one open-ended invitation to comment on the monitoring activities. Table 1 presents the results.

Table 1. Participants' Self-Evaluation of Their Monitoring Skills

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2" rowspan="2">Question Items</th><th colspan="2">Point Average
(Standard Deviation) (n = 59)</th></tr>
<tr><th>First Monitoring
(Midterm Instruction)</th><th>Second Monitoring
(Post-Instruction)</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>By monitoring your pre- and midterm/ midterm and post- pronunciation performances, were you able to fix your own pronunciation of the following ten sounds?
/l/, /r/, /w/, /f/, /v/, /Θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/
1. Unable to fix at all 2. Unable to fix some 3. Neutral 4. Able to fix some 5. Able to fix all</td><td>2.19
(0.84)</td><td>3.67
(1.20)</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>By monitoring your classmates' pre- and midterm pronunciation performances, were you able to fix your classmates' pronunciation of the following ten sounds?
/l/, /r/, /w/, /f/, /v/, /Θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/
1. Unable to fix at all 2. Unable to fix some 3. Neutral 4. Able to fix some 5. Able to fix all</td><td>2.62
(0.93)</td><td>3.62
(1.06)</td></tr>
<tr><td>3-1</td><td>Were you able to hear a change from your pre- to your midterm/midterm to post-pronunciation?
1. Not at all 2. No change 3. Neutral 4. Changed 5. Changed greatly</td><td>4.3
(0.83)</td><td>4.45
(0.58)</td></tr>
<tr><td>3-2</td><td>Was the change in the previous question positive or negative? (Choose either 1. Negative or 2. Positive.)
1. Negative 2. Positive</td><td>1: 0
2: 59</td><td>1: 0
2: 59</td></tr>
</table>

The data show that the participants felt that they were improving their monitoring skills gradually but effectively (see Table 1). After the first monitoring activity, they felt that they could monitor their classmates' pronunciation better than their own, but they also felt strongly that their own pronunciation was already improving. Their feelings in this regard stabilized, and subtle increases were detected in the post-instruction survey.

The participants' comments after the first monitoring activity reveal how the monitoring influenced their affective domain. As presented in Appendix B, participants' comments included the following: "I was very surprised to see the differences. Until now, I had given up on pronunciation. But by raising my awareness toward pronunciation, I feel that my pronunciation can be changed" and "I was very happy to see my progress. It was beyond what I thought I could accomplish. My friend's pronunciation was also becoming very good, and I was stimulated by her performance."

Many of the comments from the mid-semester evaluation show that the participants noticed their own improvement by engaging in the monitoring activity, which allowed them to examine their own performance subjectively. Thus, even at that relatively early point, participants indicated that they felt they were achieving well and were satisfied with their own performance.

Furthermore, the results of a survey that focused on the various activities incorporated in the coursebook showed that the self- and peer-monitoring activities were ranked in a combined fifth position (as "beneficial and enjoyable") among a total of 17 activities (see Table 2). This result shows that the monitoring activities had a positive effect on the participants' affective domain. Participant comments revealed their reasons for assigning the monitoring activities such a high ranking despite completing them only twice in the semester; namely, the monitoring had a positive effect, helping them greatly to achieve their objectives.

TABLE 2. Ranking of Activities in Terms of "Beneficial and Enjoyable"

Ranking	**Activities**	**Total Points** (n = 116)
1	Articulation (Presentation with pictures and drawings)	72
2	Chants	70
3	Tongue Twisters	69
4	Articulation (Explanation in Japanese)	59
5	*Self- and Peer-Monitoring*	*55*
6	Dictation of Words and Phrases	51
7	Topic Dialogue (1): Emi's Story	48
8	Reading with Dictated Words and Phrases with Background Beat	40
8	Dialogue Dictation*	40
10	Minimal-Pair Listening and Reading Aloud with Rhythm	34
11	Rhythmic Reading of Phonemes	30
12	Discussing Reasons for Communication Breakdown	29
13	Self-Pronunciation Check with Mirror	28
14	Pop Song with Finding Target Sounds*	20
15	Confusing-Sentence Dictation with Picture	14
15	Accessing Internet Sources*	14

Note. * = Take-home assignment activities.

To further explore the effect of self- and peer-monitoring on learners' affective variables, an additional investigation was conducted in another first-year English class of the same size being instructed with the same coursebook according to the same schedule. A self-evaluation questionnaire containing five-point Likert-scale items was completed before and after the first monitoring activity. The questionnaire targeted five aspects of respondents' affective domain as variables potentially affected by the instruction: (a) interest in English pronunciation, (b) confidence in one's pronunciation, (c) awareness of one's pronunciation, (d) pronunciation comprehensibility, and (e) one's pronunciation difference before and after the monitoring activity. These question items were extracted from the comments of the participants in the previous study (see Appendix B). In this investigation, a paired-samples *t*-test was performed to compare the pre- and post-activity responses; Table 3 presents the results.

TABLE 3. Respondents' Self-Evaluation Before and After the Monitoring Activity

Question Items		Pre-Monitoring Activity		Post-Monitoring Activity		*t*(22)	*p*	*r*
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
1	On a scale of one to five, how would you rate your *interest* in English pronunciation?	3.91	0.81	4.30	0.40	1.81	n.s.	*.36*
2	On a scale of one to five, how would you rate your *confidence* in your own English pronunciation?	3.00	0.72	3.39	0.33	1.99	n.s.	*.39*
3	On a scale of one to five, how would you rate your *awareness* toward your own English pronunciation?	3.52	0.71	4.00	0.36	2.71	< .05	*.50*
4	On a scale of one to five, how *comprehensible* do you think your English pronunciation is?	2.34	0.60	2.82	0.42	3.86	< .05	*.64*
5	On a scale of one to five, how would you rate your *change* in your own English pronunciation?	3.91	0.17	4.21	0.17	3.10	< .05	*.55*

Note. For the Likert-scale items, 1 = Low, 2 = Relatively low, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Relatively high, 5 = High.

Among these respondents, there was no significant change in scores for interest in pronunciation pre-instruction (M = 3.91, SD = 0.81) and post-instruction (M = 4.30, SD = 0.40, $t(22)$ = 1.81, $p < .08$, r = .36). Results for confidence similarly revealed no significant difference between pre-instruction (M = 3.00, SD = 0.72) and post-instruction (M = 3.39, SD = 0.33, $t(22)$ = 1.99, $p <$ .06, r = .39). In contrast, there was a significant difference between scores for awareness pre-instruction (M = 3.52, SD = 0.71) and post-instruction (M = 4.00, SD = 0.36, $t(22) = 2.71$, $p < .05$, $r = .50$), and for comprehensibility pre-instruction (M = 2.34, SD = 0.60) and post-instruction (M = 2.82, SD = 0.42, $t(22) = 3.86$, $p < .05$, $r = .64$). Finally, there was a significant difference between scores for change pre-instruction (M = 3.91, SD = 0.17) and post-instruction (M = 4.21, SD = 0.17, $t(22) = 3.10$, $p < .05$, $r = .55$). Thus, significant changes were seen in three of the areas assessed, namely self-perceived awareness, comprehensibility, and change in one's performance. This further illustrates the effect of self- and peer-monitoring activities on learners' affective domain and shows which specific variables were positively influenced.

Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

Monitoring sound data in isolation is difficult for learners; therefore, video recording was used for the self- and peer-monitoring activities reported here, as visual clues can serve as scaffolding. Such evaluation also allows learners to double-check their knowledge of particular articulations. As for the peer evaluation, learners need to apply this knowledge responsibly in evaluating the performance of their peers, from which they themselves can also learn.

The effect of peer- and self-monitoring on the affective domain was measured by means of self-evaluation, and the results suggested that self-monitoring activities are essential for achieving the best possible outcomes in large-group instruction. According to the post-instruction survey of the self-monitoring activity, all 58 participants indicated that their own pronunciation had changed for the better. Furthermore, the degree of change was considered high. Significant differences between pre- and post-instruction scores were also found for three of the aspects assessed; namely, self-perceived awareness, comprehensibility, and change in performance. A paired-samples *t*-test was performed to compare the pre- and post-activity differences. The results showed that the implementation of this particular monitoring activity changed the learners' affective variables significantly. It may be concluded that this type of activity can have a positive impact on pronunciation learning, as well as on learners' affective domain.

The Author

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APPENDIX A

Monitoring Sheet

～モニター活動１～

氏名　　　　　　　　　　EIDN

１．自分の動画「初回」File 1 を使用し１０の音素の発音を評価します。
できている音に〇をつけてください。

1	/l/		6	/θ/	
2	/r/		7	/ð/	
3	/w/		8	/s/	
4	/f/		9	/z/	
5	/v/		10	/ʃ/	

２．自分の動画「中間」File 1 を使用し１０の音素の発音を評価します。
できている音に〇をつけてください。

1	/l/		6	/θ/	
2	/r/		7	/ð/	
3	/w/		8	/s/	
4	/f/		9	/z/	
5	/v/		10	/ʃ/	

＊＊＊

初回（　　月　　日）　できていた音（＿＿音/１０音中）
中間（　　月　　日）　できていた音（＿＿音/１０音中）

＊＊＊

３．初回の発音と中間発音は比較してどうでしたか？
気づいたことや感想など自由に記入しましょう。

４．クラスメートに動画「事前」File１とこの評価表を渡し、１０の発音を評価してもらいましょう。

1	/l/		6	/θ/	
2	/r/		7	/ð/	
3	/w/		8	/s/	
4	/f/		9	/z/	
5	/v/		10	/ʃ/	

５．クラスメートに動画「中間」File１とこの評価表を渡し１０の発音を評価してもらいましょう。

☑いいね！　□練習すればできる！
（空欄にアドバイスを記入）

＜例＞

1	/w/	✓	
2	/θ/		舌先の位置は前から見えているのでいいと思います。ただ、舌先と歯の間で摩擦を起こさず、はじいているようなので、無声音の"tha"が「タ」のように有声音のように聞こえる。舌と前歯ではじかず、舌先と歯の間に息を通し、摩擦を起こすようにするといいと思います。

1	/l/		
2	/r/		
3	/w/		
4	/f/		
5	/v/		
6	/θ/		
7	/ð/		
8	/s/		
9	/z/		
10	/ʃ/		

～評価者からのコメント～

評価者名＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

～今日の活動を終えての感想～

＜来週までの課題＞

今日の活動で見つけた練習の必要な音を練習し、来週の日曜の夜までに、中間録音用の動画の再提出をお願いします。（今回は改善の必要な音のみでかまいません。）提出先やファイル名は「中間再」(例. 4-2-1 中間再)でお願いします。

Appendix B

Students' Comments on the Monitoring Activity

- I listened to my recording on my own. There are sounds that I have not mastered even though I thought I was able to make them. I need to practice more.

- My high school English class did not go into pronunciation. Watching my friends' video[s], I felt that pronunciation can be changed with this little amount of practice. I want to practice more to try and keep up with my friends.

- More than anything, I was very surprised to see my pronunciation improving. At the same time, I am full of happiness with my progress. I felt a little shy listening and evaluating each other's performances, but it was a good chance to find the points that I need to improve more!
  I think I have progressed greatly! But I found there are still detailed points that I need to modify. Next time, I will practice them and do them

correctly.

- Obviously my lip movement was better and I can hear the differences much clearer. I feel I was able to pronounce with confidence and I can see the progress. I can tell that my pronunciation is still improving through this class, so I am very happy.

- By evaluating my pronunciation, I was happy to see that my pronunciation is improving. I can see the differences very well. I have almost never learned how to pronounce English, so I was able to notice the importance of pronunciation.

- When I compared the first and midterm videos, I found out that the way I was moving my mouth made a big difference in the sound. I realized that [if I did not know] how to move my mouth, the correct sound was not produced.

- I was shy in the beginning, but having another person evaluate was an interesting activity. I was surprised to see that my mouth was not moving and pronouncing with the same mouth shape. Also, I was not pronouncing one sound but pronouncing the next sound. In the midterm, I was paying attention to correctly and carefully pronouncing each sound. I feel that compared to the first time, my pronunciation sounds more like English.

- I was very happy to see my progress. It was beyond what I thought I could accomplish. My friend's pronunciation was also becoming very good and I was stimulated by her performance. I was motivated to watch my friend's pronunciation. I should try harder. But my pronunciation is also better compared to the first recording. I will try harder in the next class.

- It is good to be checked by my friend. Reviewing my performance after my friend's evaluation, I had to agree and I also discovered something new. I felt that knowing how to pronounce a sound and giving it attention made a big difference. There were clear differences between the beginning and the midterm. I felt assured that my pronunciation had improved. But at the same time, I still have room for improvement. I will work on that part from now on.

Portfolio-Based Assessment of Speaking

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In most educational contexts, testing and evaluating their students' abilities is a significant part of a teacher's role. However, this is often a far-from-easy procedure, and coming up with testing formats that are both fair and effective can be a taxing and time-consuming task. Although testing any of the language skills generates specific problems, it is when testing speaking that the teacher faces the greatest challenges. This paper reports on a way in which a teacher with limited knowledge of technology implemented mobile-assisted language learning to create portfolios of spoken language, thereby minimizing the impact of the problems associated with testing speaking and offering learners a more active role in their own evaluation.

Introduction: The Nature of Speaking

The ability to speak – to convey complex information orally – is one of the defining features of humans as a species. Needless to say, speech has been a part of our daily lives for a considerably greater time than has writing, and is far more fundamental to human life. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that in modern society the written word often seems to carry a legal and social weight that the spoken word does not, and that in educational contexts written language has generally been given primacy over spoken (Biber, 1988). Before considering how speaking is taught and assessed in EFL contexts, it is instructive to first outline some fundamental features of speech as a channel of communication, as these features impact greatly on how we teach and evaluate our students' speech.

Hughes (2011) identifies five key aspects of the production of spoken discourse in comparison to written discourse: the former being characterized as (a) context dependent, (b) unplanned, (c) transient, (d) oral/aural, and (e) dynamic. Of course, as Hughes points out, the distinction between spoken and written language is an arbitrary one, and in reality labels such as "planned" and "unplanned" represent end-points on a continuum rather than binary choices. However, although individual speech acts may exhibit characteristics more commonly associated with writing, when considering a wide range of language it is clear that spoken communication as a whole tends to gravitate towards one end of this continuum.

The description of speaking as being unplanned serves to illustrate this point. It is easy to think of speech acts that are, in fact, meticulously planned. A major political speech, for example, may be written and revised by a team of specialist professionals over a period of months. It will then be practiced, rehearsed, and possibly memorized by the politician due to deliver it. He or she may well be recorded during this process, and feedback will likely be provided by party colleagues, voice coaches, and a variety of analysts and advisors. Further revisions to both the text and the delivery style will probably follow. At the other end of the spectrum, the expletives that pour forth when someone stubs a toe or scalds themselves with hot coffee are probably as unplanned as any language can ever claim to be – in fact, it has even been postulated that these exclamations have more in common with the grunts and squeals emitted by all animals than they do to the rest of what we recognize as human speech (Pinker, 1994). Between these extremes, however, it is fair to say that communication through the spoken channel is more likely to be found towards the unplanned end of the spectrum than is communication through the written channel. Given that most speech acts take place in real time, there is simply no opportunity to plan to the same degree as when communicating via writing. This point, as well as the other characteristics identified by Hughes, has implications both for how we teach speaking and how we evaluate it.

TEACHING SPEAKING

A popular misconception among English teachers in Japan (perhaps reinforced by negative views of the English conversation school industry) seems to be that speaking-focused classes are in some way a “lightweight” option, requiring less effort from both teacher and student. In reality, however, teaching speaking is at least as complex as teaching any other skill, and to provide effective speaking classes, teachers must attend to a variety of concerns.

Firstly, lessons must be planned so as to take account of learners’ grammatical and lexical knowledge, providing input and opportunities for output at an appropriate level. Moreover, an explicit focus on the grammar of spoken English may also be useful, given that much of students’ previous grammar instruction may have been based on written forms of the language, which are often quite different. Attention must also be paid to pronunciation and prosody, whether this is overtly taught or achieved through awareness-raising activities and the provision of feedback.

Beyond these features of the language itself, to become a proficient speaker, learners must also consider the context of a given speech act, the sociocultural rules that may apply within this context, and the need to adjust their speech accordingly. Teachers thus need to provide classroom activities that enable students to become familiar with different genres and registers of speech, and help them both to understand and produce situationally appropriate discourse.

Finally, while an understanding of classroom dynamics is useful whatever the focus of the lesson, it is more critically important in speaking-focused classes. Speaking in a foreign language is an inherently face-threatening act for many learners, especially those at lower levels, and it is thus incumbent on the teacher to create a secure and safe environment in which students are willing to speak out, to push the boundaries of what they can do in their second language. A key element of a successful speaking class is building its members’ confidence to use the L2, and by doing so, move towards the automaticity without which it is difficult to achieve any degree of fluency (Thornbury, 2005).

Assessing Speaking

Evaluation of language ability is never a simple process. There is no such thing as a perfect test, as all forms of assessment, however well designed, will inevitably favor certain students over others: some will respond better to traditional one-off tests, while others will benefit from some form of continual assessment. Moreover, when focusing on spoken language, teachers must deal with particular challenges; fairly and accurately evaluating students' speaking poses substantial problems, both conceptual and logistic, which are quite distinct from those that arise when testing other language skills.

Speaking as a Real-Time Interaction

As noted above, speaking is generally an act of communication that occurs in real time. In most contexts, speakers have a relatively short time in which to plan what they are going to say and how they are going to say it – so little time in fact, that it can be hard to distinguish the act of planning from the act of speaking, as the two often occur virtually simultaneously.

Because speaking generally takes place as a real-time interaction, this also tends to be the way in which it is assessed. In most forms of evaluation, the teacher or evaluator listens to a student produce speech and at the same time grades that speech. This format offers little opportunity for reflection, with the teacher required to make an instant judgement. Unlike when grading writing, there is no opportunity for a second look, no chance to reappraise the initial evaluation and adjust the grade accordingly. Even for experienced teachers, producing an accurate and objective assessment in these conditions is no mean feat. Furthermore, this means that the logistics of the process can exert an even greater impact upon the evaluation. Whatever method is used, however carefully designed the employed rubric may be, it is inevitable that factors such as the order of test-takers will impact upon the scores given. A mediocre speaker may appear far more competent and fluent when performing immediately after several poorer candidates and thus be awarded a higher score than his or her performance objectively merits. While the order in which a teacher grades essays may similarly impact upon the scores awarded, at least in this case it is relatively easy to correct this potential bias by returning to the texts and checking initial evaluations. However, as speech is perceived as a real-time interaction, it is also far more likely to be evaluated as such.

Power Relations and the Interview

Oral testing frequently takes the form of an interaction between an examiner/interviewer and a student/interviewee, a set-up that generates multiple issues worthy of consideration. An interview, even in the real world, is an inherently lopsided interaction, with one participant asking questions and the other answering. This is not representative of how the vast majority of oral communication actually takes place. In most spoken interactions, participants display a far higher degree of reciprocity: They co-construct meaning, negotiate misunderstandings, and share question-answer roles more evenly. The mechanics of an interview do not resemble the mechanics of a conversation, and assessing how well someone can answer a question is not the same as assessing how well they can speak a language. Yet despite the fact that in our daily lives the interview is an infrequent context for communication, it remains the default scenario when testing speaking. Over and above the unreality of this situation, the power imbalance inherent in an interview can also distort its effectiveness as an assessment tool. A situation in which an interviewer, who is often also the test-taker's teacher, is asking questions, evaluating answers, and determining a score or grade is clearly a stressful one for most people, and is not necessarily conducive to an interviewee producing spoken language of a quality they may be able to produce in a different, less stressful environment.

Influence of the Interlocutor

Although common, the teacher-student interview is far from the only means of oral assessment. Oral tests in which two test-takers carry out a task as a pair and are evaluated by a non-participant examiner offer the significant advantage of enabling a peer-to-peer interaction, thus reducing or eliminating the power imbalance (Hawkes, 2012). Other difficulties, however, remain. In all spoken interactions, be they in a test, a classroom, or "real" life, the speech produced by one participant is influenced by that produced (and also not produced) by the other. We all know people who dominate conversations, people who are unable to stick to a point, others who are prone to misunderstanding, and those who tend to communicate monosyllabically. Communication with such interlocutors is a part of life, and in most situations we simply do our best to deal with it. When attempting to accurately and fairly assess students' speaking ability, however, it is clearly problematic for a candidate's performance to be negatively affected by that of their partner. While the student-teacher format may be intimidating for some students, a teacher (or professional examiner) is at least likely to be a more consistent and cooperative interlocutor. Thus, while pairing test-takers may partially deal with one issue, it simply raises another in its place.

Assessing speaking, then, is complex, with the above discussion only scratching the surface of the issues involved. Indeed, according to Luoma (2004), "Speaking is the most difficult language skill to assess reliably." Ideally, evaluation should incorporate a variety of assessment formats to allow learners with different strengths and preferences to perform to the best of their abilities. Speaking is commonly assessed through presentations, planned speeches, unscripted roleplays, paired student-student interviews, and of course one-on-one teacher-student interviews. While these forms of assessment offer different benefits and present different challenges, they all have one point in common: they are one-off "display" tests in which students perform a set task at a set time explicitly for the purpose of evaluating their ability to produce spoken English. Whatever the details of the task, and regardless of whether the test-taker's interlocutor is a teacher, another student, or independent third party, this is invariably a high-pressure situation in which many learners find it difficult to perform to the best of their ability: In such cases, not only does the test fail to provide an accurate representation of students' true language level, it may also serve as a demotivator and hinder future progress in their language learning.

Portfolio Assessment

In writing classes, portfolio assessment has long been utilized as a means by which to balance out the potential pitfalls of "one-shot" testing. When submitting a portfolio, students are actively involved in the assessment process and have the opportunity to showcase the best of their language ability, not simply that which they are able to produce in a highly pressured and artificial testing situation. However, while creating a portfolio of written work has always been a relatively simple task, until recently the idea of large numbers of students recording sufficient amounts of speech to create portfolios of their own spoken English would have been logistically challenging.

Now, however, with the widespread uptake of smartphone technology, most university students come to class with a high quality voice recorder in their pocket. White and Mills (2012) found that 99.5% of over 400 Japanese students they surveyed owned a cell phone, and of the 300-plus students I have taught over the past two years, everyone has had a cell phone, and all but one of these have been smartphones. Thus, the conditions exist for a form of mobile-assisted language learning to enable alternative methods of speaking assessment in language classes.

Portfolio Assessment of Speaking: Procedure

Over the course of a semester, speaking portfolios were introduced as a method of assessment in six second-year Oral Communication classes at a Japanese university. Classes varied in size from 16 to 21, and all students were non-English majors.

In order to create their portfolios, students recorded themselves performing a variety of in-class speaking tasks. These tasks varied from five to ten minutes in length and were either taken from the textbook, *English Firsthand 1*, or based on themes from this book. In order to maximize individual speaking time, tasks were carried out in pairs, or as threes when numbers necessitated it.

Students then listened to their recordings as homework, completed a self-reflection task, and created a log detailing each week's recording. Recordings were made in ten of the 15 classes, and at the end of the semester, students were required to select and submit two three-minute samples of their spoken discourse, comprising 20% of the course evaluation.

Portfolio Assessment of Speaking: Benefits

The use of speaking portfolios as one element of a balanced overall assessment offers several benefits. Firstly, it goes some way towards ameliorating several of the problems outlined above. All the speaking tasks were carried out in the normal classroom environment, with between six and ten pairs of learners simultaneously conversing in English. This is clearly less stressful than many other evaluation methods, with students more likely to feel comfortable and more likely to produce English representative of their true ability. This in turn may reduce negative feelings towards the evaluation process itself. Moreover, as with portfolios of written work, students were given the opportunity to select samples of their best output over the course of a semester. Nothing is more frustrating, for teachers and learners alike, than the knowledge that a capable student has "blown" a one-shot test. Of course, as teachers, we would ideally prefer to assess students on their best performance, not simply what they were capable of on one specific day and with one specific task. The use of portfolio assessment enables this.

A further benefit of speaking portfolios is that they enable teachers to evaluate students participating in a more realistic spoken interaction. Making a presentation, reading a text aloud, and responding to interviewers' questions are all types of speech acts that we may occasionally experience in the real world. They are, however, uncommon and highly unrepresentative of the vast majority of spoken communication that takes place outside the classroom. Although most classroom discourse is contrived to an extent, if what the language students learn is to be of real use to them, then teachers must strive to minimize the disconnect between what we do in class and what happens in the world outside. And when evaluation is based on forms of discourse that are rarely encountered in real life, then this inevitably has a washback effect on how we plan and organize our speaking classes. However, by using portfolios, assessment can be based on students carrying out unrehearsed two-way conversations more representative of the type of oral communications that we engage in outside the language classroom. While the ability to answer an interviewer's questions is a useful skill, it is far from the only one that our students will need, and as such should certainly not be the only one on which we evaluate them.

When thinking about implementing portfolio-based assessment, the advantages outlined above were foremost in my mind. During the course of the semester, however, an additional and unforeseen benefit became apparent. When teaching the same oral communication course to the same six classes in the previous semester, I had often struggled to get students to remain in English during speaking tasks: At any small sign of communication breakdown, the default response usually seemed to be to revert to L1 to deal with this. In a fairly low-level class with multiple conversations going on simultaneously, there is a limit to how much can be done to keep all learners on task and in English – the teacher cannot be everywhere. However, the presence of a microphone in front of them, and perhaps the knowledge that I may be listening to and evaluating the current conversation, seemed to transform students' attitudes towards our regular in-class speaking activities. Students who, during the first semester, had frequently slipped into Japanese within a minute or two of an activity beginning were now conversing fully in the target language for up to ten-minute periods. Across all six classes, it became a rarity for me to hear any Japanese during the parts of the lesson that students were recording – an unanticipated but very welcome benefit of the portfolio project.

Lastly, the portfolio-creation process enables learners to reflect on and evaluate their own spoken English. Each week, students were asked to listen to their recordings and complete a self-reflection task. At the end of the semester, they were then able to choose which samples of their speech should be submitted for evaluation. Although the teacher remains in control of the overall evaluation process, this serves to transfer an element of responsibility to the learners, offering them greater agency in their own assessment. It also goes some way towards democratizing the evaluation process: Rather than the teacher alone deciding the make-up of the assessment, learners are allowed a degree of choice as to the spoken interactions on which they are evaluated. Furthermore, this process may also function as an effective awareness-raising activity. Especially at low levels of proficiency, producing speech in a second language is cognitively demanding, and the pressure of real-time interaction makes it unlikely that learners will be able to notice or analyze aspects of the language they produce. While it is usual to read back and reflect upon something we have written, it is less common to do so with spoken language. Thus, the implementation of speaking portfolios can generate a rare and valuable opportunity for students to carefully reflect upon their own use of spoken English.

Portfolio Assessment of Speaking: Problems

Despite offering the advantages discussed above, the use of speaking portfolios was not without its problems. The difficulties encountered fell into one of two categories: firstly, issues with making and submitting the recordings, and secondly issues with evaluating them.

In terms of making the recordings, the most serious potential problem was the possibility of students being unable to actually make a recording of a particular task. In reality, however, this was not an issue. In the rare cases that a student either forgot his or her phone, or that the battery had run out, a recording was still being made by that student’s partner, and this recording could be shared by email after class. A more difficult issue to resolve was that of sound quality. With several conversations going on at the same time, the level of background noise was at times quite high, and this sometimes interfered with the recorded conversation, despite having a fairly small number of students in a reasonably sized classroom. Different smartphones and different audio recording apps also seemed to affect the quality of the recordings. Nevertheless, given that students were only asked to submit a total of six minutes’ worth of recorded conversation from a total of over sixty minutes, most managed to choose samples in which the conversation could be clearly made out despite the background noise.

At the end of the semester, I gave students two options as to how to submit their recordings: either email them to me directly or upload them to a Facebook account I had set up explicitly for this purpose and with privacy settings set accordingly. Those students with iPhones (the majority), were able to successfully send their sound files by email. However, for some with other types of smartphones this was not possible. Although some of these students managed to upload their files to Facebook, others found this difficult, and we thus had to seek alternative methods by which they could get their recordings to me. As a last resort, two people even had to play back their sound file and simultaneously record it onto my iPad, leaving me with a recording of a recording – a cumbersome method, but one that was sufficiently effective nevertheless.

When it came to evaluation of students' recordings, the main challenge was to design a rubric that was sufficiently generic so as to be applicable to all the different types of tasks that students carried out during the course of the semester. In order to do so, I decided to grade submissions on four criteria: the *amount* of output, the *appropriateness* of responses in relation to the interlocutor's utterances, the *comprehensibility* of utterances (in terms of both pronunciation and grammar), and the *relevance* of utterances in relation to the specific task. Each criterion was assessed on a five-point scale, generating a mark out of twenty. By looking at these broad features of learners' speech, it was possible to rate their portfolio submissions in the same way regardless of the task being undertaken.

Conclusions

The use of portfolio-based assessment as described in this paper is clearly not a panacea for the multiple problems associated with the assessment of second language speaking. Without doubt, interview tests, presentations, and other forms of evaluation all have their merits and should not be discarded. However, by supplementing these more common forms of assessment with a spoken portfolio, teachers may be able to balance out some of the problems of each method, and create an overall evaluation that more fairly reflects the true ability of their students.

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Flipping the Classroom in the Context of Blended Learning Initiatives

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In 2011, KAIST began an initiative called Edu 3.0 in order to create personalized learning experiences for KAIST students through a flipped classroom environment. At the university's request, the authors created and implemented a flipped version of the Scientific Writing course. Herein, we provide an overview of the motivations for and general philosophy of the Scientific Writing Edu 3.0 course. We also describe lesson plans and classroom activities, showing what content is offered and the methods of delivery. As such blended learning initiatives are increasing at the university level, this article will be useful to educators wishing to incorporate a flipped approach into their own teaching contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Blended learning initiatives are becoming increasingly common in higher education as a means to move class time away from the traditional lecture focus towards a more group-oriented, student-centered format. University instructors often find themselves being asked to create flipped versions of traditional classes, and doing so, especially without prior experience, can be a daunting task. Therefore, the authors wish to share their experiences with converting a traditional Scientific Writing class into a flipped version in the hopes of providing a helpful resource for instructors who participate in blended learning initiatives.

BACKGROUND

Scientific Writing is one of the most popular courses in the EFL department at KAIST. It is a graduate course with class sizes around the 20-student mark. Participants come from a variety of departments and fields – biochemists sit side-by-side with computer scientists and are at different stages of their academic careers – from first semester MA students to those about to complete their PhDs. One of the graduation requirements at KAIST is that students have to publish in an SCI journal. Consequently, the Scientific Writing course is designed to guide students through the process of writing about their research, the objectives being that participants:

1. Understand the grammar and methods of writing scientific articles.
2. Write a scientific article that is suitable for publication.

The Issues

With our Scientific Writing classes, we were faced with four main problems:

1. English ability – We teach a wide range of students, some who are nearly fluent; others who are around the lower-intermediate level.
2. Resistance to class time requirements – Graduate students at KAIST are expected to spend the majority of their time in their laboratories and often have other commitments such as conferences to attend. The standard Scientific Writing class would typically meet twice a week for three hours in total.
3. Limited knowledge of classmates' fields – This stems from the fact that students often come from divergent fields, as mentioned earlier.
4. The participants are at different stages of their academic careers. Some have already been published in academic journals; others are in the first semester of their master's course.

In short, classes are a diverse mix involving different levels and types of students.

Edu 3.0 Initiative

In the spring of 2013, faculty members at KAIST received a request asking them to participate in a new program called Edu 3.0 – essentially a blended learning approach. As the invitation suggested a student-centered, self-directed approach based on collaboration and task-based learning, the proposal seemed an exciting and attractive one. While the Edu 3.0. initiative was a school recommendation and eventually a department request – essentially a top-down directive – my colleagues and I were already looking to address the aforementioned problems. There seemed a high possibility that Edu 3.0 could be the solution to these issues.

Traditional vs. Blended / Flipped

In a traditional classroom setting, the teacher instructs, students take notes, and there is homework for the latter to complete afterward. Blended learning is that which takes place online and also in a brick-and-mortar location (Bonk & Graham, 2006). In our context, flipped learning is a form of blended learning whereby students first watch online lectures then apply what they have learned in a workshop session (Sparks, 2011). Flipped classrooms tend to have the following defining components:

1. The lecture is no longer in the classroom and is replaced by video lectures that students view through electronic means.
2. A learning management system (LMS) is used to host the lectures and other materials.
3. Practical application assignments, formerly homework, take place in the classroom (Alvarez, 2011).

In a typical week, students enrolled in the Edu 3.0 Scientific Writing class watch up to five video lectures and take a quiz that tests their understanding of the content. This information is hosted on the LMS. Class time essentially becomes a workshop where students inquire about lecture content, test what they have learnt in the video lectures, and work together on task-based activities. It is the instructor's role to function as a facilitator during such sessions in order to encourage learners to engage in individual inquiry and collaborative effort (Baker, 2000).

APPROACH

Flipping the Classroom

In order to implement our new approach, we first divided up the lecture content into module form under the following subcategories:

- Section-specific information ("section" here refers to sections of a scientific paper: introduction, methodology, etc.)
- Grammatical elements
- Miscellaneous (e.g., plagiarism)

Fifty-four video lectures were made in total, averaging 18 per collaborator; each of the videos was around the 10-minute mark in length. The technology used to create the video lectures was Camtasia, a software suite that enables the creation of video tutorials using a Microsoft PowerPoint plug-in. The lectures were hosted on a learning management system (LMS).

Outcome

Those who taught Scientific Writing in its "traditional" form were faced with four main issues: varied student English ability, student resistance to class-time requirements, limited knowledge of classmates' fields, and participants being at very different stages of their academic careers.

The newly created video lectures addressed the first problem as they allowed students more time to process information. Said students also had the option to re-watch/rewind lectures if they so wished. This had the added advantage of ensuring that the task, rather than the language used in the lecture, could be focused upon during class time. Scientific Writing had previously been a twice-a-week class – 3 hours long in total. However, with the lecture content shifted to video form, the class was reduced to 90 minutes a week in-class. This afforded students more flexibility. Furthermore, the classroom activities proved to be a great leveler. Students brought different skills (language, knowledge, and experience) to the table and worked to their strengths to produce a final product. These activities therefore minimized problems caused by students having limited knowledge of their classmates' fields and the fact that participants were at different stages of their academic careers.

Course Activity Examples

Scope Diagram

Since these Scientific Writing courses were reduced to one 90-minute-per-week class rather than two meetings per week, it was important to find the right activities to use in class. Students had to be active in class. It was also necessary for students to participate in activities that were general enough that students from a wide variety of backgrounds could take part. Finally, the activities had to be seen as engaging or fun as the course's goals were to learn the language. If the activities were not engaging, then learning would not occur because of affective filters (Dulay & Burt, 1977), which consist of motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety (Krashen, 1982). If learning did not occur, this could mean that students lacked motivation and self-confidence, and had high anxiety. Therefore, it was crucial to find the right activities to motivate students while increasing self-confidence and lowering anxiety.

One activity that this course has at the beginning is something called a scope diagram. Figure 1a shows a modified version of a mind map that students use for brainstorming. In this activity, students put their topic or title of their paper in the middle, and they draw connecting circles and discuss ideas related to their topic. In our context, we asked students to consider and write down five ideas related to their writing. These can be seen in Figure 1a: audience, scope, type of paper, limitations, and value. For example, when they discuss scope, students need to consider what ideas are included in their papers. The opposite of this is limitations, which discusses what is not included in their papers. As they fill out this diagram, students get a better idea of their papers and it becomes more fleshed out. Then, students explain their papers to other students in the class as can be seen in Figure 1b.

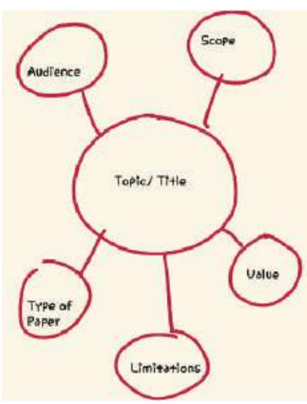

Figure 1a. Example of scope diagram used in class.

Figure 1b. Students use scope diagrams to explain their papers to other students.

Even though this is a relatively simple activity, students benefit in several ways. The activity itself is interactive. Students are given a chance not only to consider important ideas in their planning stage but also given time to talk to other students about their research. This also allows other students to ask questions about areas that may not be clear in the explanation.

Another benefit is that it gives students a chance to talk to students who are not in their labs or their fields. The good part about this is that students must explain their research to someone who has a general knowledge of the topic. This can show the researching student where he or she is lacking in explanation or is unclear. This will also help them simplify their language and explain the topic clearly. In other words, this activity is interactive and gives students a real chance to explain their ideas to other people who are not in their respective fields.

Blocks Activity

Another activity that we use in our course is the blocks activity. There are two parts to this activity, which students do in groups of three or four. After getting into groups, in Part A, students are given a bag of blocks to build one structure with their group members. When they finish building it, they take a picture. Then, students write directions using words only to build their group's structure step by step. Afterwards, they disassemble the build structure and put it back in the plastic bag with the directions.

Then in Part B, groups exchange their bag of blocks and directions with another group and build the other group's structure following only the directions. When the group finishes building the other group's structure, they take a picture of the attempted structure. At this point, groups can compare their original and attempted structures, an example of which can be seen in Figure 2.

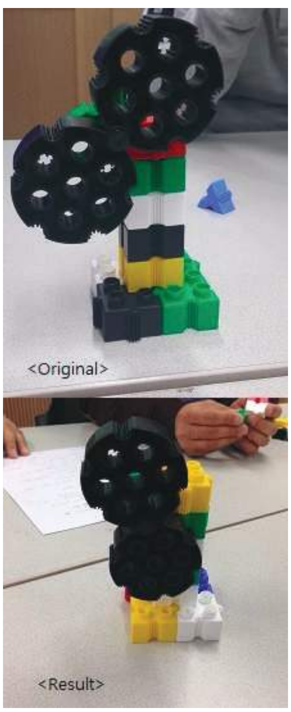

FIGURE 2. Students compare the original and attempted structures.

After the activity finishes, students naturally discuss where they had difficulty in both writing directions and building the structures. This is a great starting point for further analysis and deeper discussion. Students discuss the following questions with each other:

1. How did you feel doing this activity? Was it easy?
2. Why did this activity work?
3. What is the discrepancy between the original and the resulting structure?

These questions help students reflect not only on the process but also on what they could do to improve their writing to make it clearer to their audience.

To answer the questions above, this activity works well because it is easy and simple. Students are not intimidated but have fun because of its approachability. In regards to discrepancy between the structures, students only think about writing from their perspective. They do not think about the audience. Therefore, this type of discrepancy is apparent. Lastly, this activity helps in writing a paper because students have to think about the audience and about the audience's perspective.

Characteristics of Effective Activities

We believe that activities in this course should be easy in order to make them inviting to students. Because these activities are easy and have the goals of explaining ideas or writing directions, they easily lend themselves to being communicative. Students must talk to each other in order to explain the overall topic of their papers or build the structure and write the directions. As a result, this type of course allows students to understand the value of cooperation in learning (Strayer, 2012). Lastly, the activity should be tactile. This is because, for most of our students, it is refreshing to do an activity where they get away from the abstract. This has been shown to be effective in our course.

In addition, students' anxiety is lowered because these activities are easy. They become more confident as they perceive these types of activities to be approachable. Students become motivated because of the engaging nature of the activities. In language teaching, making an activity easy, communicative, and tactile can lower the affective filter.

OBSTACLES TO BLENDED LEARNING

Developing a Community of Inquiry

While we believe that the flipped classroom presents some amazing benefits for university undergraduate and graduate students, traditional brick-and-mortar classrooms have some important advantages over online and flipped classrooms as well. For example, in the authors' experiences, students in our traditional classes tend to more readily ask questions than in flipped classrooms, even though the content being covered is the same and the students in each group are masters and PhD students at KAIST. We aspire, in our flipped classrooms, to foster a “community of inquiry,” a concept applied to online learning contexts by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000), where students build a sense of trust and community, and begin to find inspiration and new lines of thinking from listening and responding to the thoughts and questions of class members. However, by nature, flipped courses in KAIST meet 50% less frequently than traditional classes (i.e., once a week rather than twice a week), and there is always a concern that this difference in the time spent together may, in fact, make it more difficult to achieve this sense of community among the students.

We consider student questions about the material covered in our course to be a very important type of “help-seeking behavior,” one of the five self-regulatory attributes identified by Lynch and Dembo (2004) as increasing the likelihood of student success in blended courses.

We have considered several ways in which we could deal with the problem of students asking fewer questions in flipped classrooms. One such approach would be to make questions mandatory and grade students on the quantity and quality of their questions; however, we do not feel very comfortable with this approach because doing so would make the question-and-answer process seem like merely a part of the course grading process rather than a useful way to learn about the subject matter.

Another more realistic approach may be to post questions to the students from the instructor for them to think about and respond to. If the students are hesitant to ask questions on the course website, maybe they will be more willing to participate in answering questions posed by the instructor, and maybe this engagement will lead them to ask their own questions about the content.

We do not feel that, thus far, we have inspired a satisfactory level of inquiry about the subject matter from the students, even though their learning outcomes remain high and their evaluations of the flipped classes are, on average, somewhat higher than those of the traditional classes. While it initially seems daunting to build a sense of trust and belonging among students with less face-to-face time, we note that Rovai and Jordan (2004) found that blended classrooms provided students with a stronger sense of community than did traditional or fully online classrooms. With this in mind, in upcoming semesters, we will continue to look for ways to increase student inquiry regarding the course material.

Emphasizing Attendance

Since our flipped courses meet only half as often as our traditional courses, we meet our students only 13 or 14 times during the term. While this schedule is quite convenient for the graduate students who take Scientific Writing, it is also clear that absences are even more problematic in flipped courses. Missing two class meetings in a flipped course is basically equivalent to missing two whole weeks of instruction (i.e., four class meetings) in a traditional class. For this reason, we have adopted a “three strikes, and you’re out” attendance policy, in which the third absence, for any reason, leads to failure in the course. Since graduate students have some situations in which absences are unavoidable (i.e., job interviews, academic conferences, mandatory seminars, medical emergencies), failing the course due to absences is quite possible. However, we feel that the once-weekly class meetings are integral to understanding the concepts we cover, as students have the opportunity to collaborate with one another and to demonstrate and practice the learning that they have done through watching the online videos we provide.

Ensuring Online Participation

If we assume that flipped classrooms can be a successful means of teaching university students, we are inherently assuming that the students are actively watching the videos that we post online. If not, then students are missing out on a huge portion of the instructional content of the class. But then, how can we be certain that students are watching the videos? The web learning management system that we use in our courses does allow us to see which videos students have watched and what percentage of these they have viewed. However, it is certainly possible that the students have just clicked on the play button of the video and then simply browsed other websites or started chat sessions with their friends.

To make sure that students have viewed the contents of the course, we developed six online quizzes that students must take during the term. Each quiz presents the student with five questions selected randomly by the learning management site from a pool of 20-30 questions. The students are given five minutes to complete the quiz so that they will not have enough time to re-watch an entire video to get the answers. Since the quizzes are online, students can take them whenever they want, but there is a deadline for each quiz, which is 10 a.m. on the day of the class meeting. This deadline exists because students will need to have watched and understood the videos covered in the quiz in order to successfully participate in the group activities planned for that class period.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

University-wide Poster Symposium

We feel that the Scientific Writing course should not only prepare students to publish scientific and engineering articles in SCI journals, but should also prepare them to communicate in a variety of situations that they will encounter as professionals in their fields. For example, the final assignment of the course is a conference poster session, where students create and print out a conference poster and present their work to their classmates. This classroom experience is meant to prepare students for the academic conferences that they will participate in throughout their careers in science and engineering.

However, as there are only 20 posters and 20 student presenters in the room at one time, the session is rather small and, the group is already quite familiar with each student’s work due to the numerous collaborative activities that they have participated in during the term. To create a more realistic experience, we plan to create a huge poster symposium for all of the over 200 students taking Scientific Writing at KAIST. We feel that such an event at the end of the term would allow students to experience talking to unfamiliar people who know very little about their topics. Such an experience could create a sense of urgency in the students to become better communicators and to create posters that are clearer and more interesting. By using a larger public venue on campus with high foot traffic, we can also attract people who are unaffiliated with the course to come and view the posters and talk to the presenters. Doing so will give the activity more value in preparing students for conference experiences.

Applying the Flipped Classroom Model to Other Courses

The authors have recently created and offered an Edu 3.0 version of Presentation and Discussion, a required course for undergraduate students. Figure 3 shows a screenshot from a video lecture from the Presentation and Discussion Edu 3.0 course. In addition, the authors are currently developing Edu 3.0 versions of Graduate English Writing and Advanced Reading, both of which will be offered in the upcoming Spring 2016 semester.

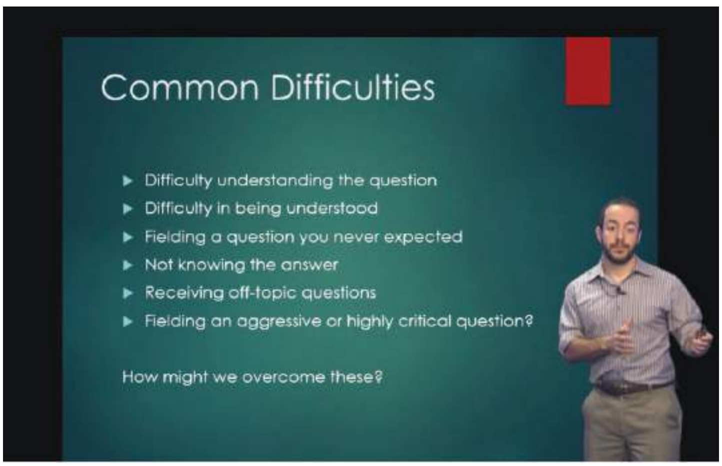

FIGURE 3. Screenshot of Mik Fanguy presenting a lecture from the new Presentation and Discussion Edu 3.0 course.

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Academic Discourse Socialization of Multilingual Undergraduates in a Research Seminar Course

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This study investigates how multilingual undergraduates in a research seminar class at a Japanese university become socialized into academic discourse to develop their disciplinary knowledge. Data collected in this research were seven research participants' reflective journals, final narratives, individual interviews, and a focus group interview. The data analysis employed the categorization of the participants' written texts in three phases: the careful reading of all sentences in their reflective journals, the development of the temporary coding system, and the evaluation of the reliability of the coding system. The findings of this study show that socializing with peers influenced the development of academic literacy. Especially, mutual interactions with peers inside and outside the classroom contributed to a deeper understanding of the disciplinary discourse and facilitated active participation in the discourse community. Based on the findings of this research, the author provides research implications for discourse socialization in various learning contexts.

INTRODUCTION

The current focal point of academic literacy is identified as academic literacy socialization or discourse socialization: the process of learners' engagement in promoting active interactions, sharing knowledge, and conducting collaborative work with more capable members in disciplinary communities (Duff, 2014; Seloni, 2012).

Many studies of academic literacy have examined how students understand the disciplinary discourse and construct their professional knowledge through socializing with peers rather than developing their academic linguistic proficiencies such as reading and writing (Duff, 2014; Duff & Hornberger, 2010; Seloni, 2012). Exploring discourse socialization clearly explains the rationale for the development of academic literacy, which is deeply involved in interactions with others within a particular disciplinary community. Thus, research on academic literacy focuses more on the way learners secure progress in academic literacy, facilitating more dynamic interactions with knowledgeable members.

Although issues of discourse socialization have been widely investigated, many of these have been conducted in English-speaking countries (e.g., the U.S. and Canada) targeting for L2 graduate or undergraduate students. Academic literacy covering multilingual learners in different contexts has yet to be fully examined (Fujieda, 2015). Further inquiries are necessary to discuss how English learners, especially newcomers to the academic community in a specific learning setting, become socialized into academic discourse and communities to develop their academic literacy. Research on academic literacy highlighting discourse socialization has a profound significance on the exploration and interpretation of how novice learners go through the related processes and practices in situated learning contexts (Duff, 2014).

This paper presents a case study of the academic discourse socialization of seven multilingual learners in a research seminar course in a Japanese EFL context. First, it briefly reviews the historical research on academic literacy. Secondly, it provides snapshots of the case study, which highlights academic literacy socialization of the multilingual students. The main purpose of this current study was to understand and interpret how the learners went through the processes of becoming members of the disciplinary community and faced challenges during their academic literacy socialization in the situated learning contexts. In so doing, this paper provides an opportunity to promote further discussions on studies of academic literacy in diverse learning settings.

Perspectives on Community of Practice

Current studies in academic literacy indicate that learners actually socialize into a specific discourse community and promote a further sense of socialization through literacy practices with various members of the community. Lave and Wenger (1991) view the process as community of practice (CoP). Such concepts of the socialization process contribute greatly to the development of academic literacy. The theoretical perspective of CoP is essential as a way to delve into the relationship between development and participation in a specific context (Duff, 2014; Leki, 2007; Watson-Gegeo, 2004). For instance, it is significant to critically analyze the way dynamic participation facilitates further development of the disciplinary knowledge and increases participants' degrees of self-awareness. Therefore, research on the socialization processes of language learners from the perspective of a CoP provides a powerful underpinning for academic literacy socialization.

The conception of a CoP creates an environment conducive to facilitating the progress of academic literacy when learners become involved in interactions with other more capable community members. Lave and Wenger (1991) characterized an initial participatory form of CoP as legitimate peripheral participation (LPP). In this phase, learners, especially newcomers, contribute greatly to the maintenance of participation in the disciplinary community by playing various roles, interacting with others in the same community, and fulfilling simple tasks over time. They move from being peripheral to possibly becoming experts, acquiring more professional skills. As Watson-Gegeo (2004) argues, LPP is a part of the social activity of CoP, to shift from "beginning as a legitimate (recognized) participation on the edges (periphery) of the activity, and moving through a series of increasingly expert roles as learners' skills develop" (p. 341). Therefore, the sociocultural perspective of CoP provides an essential framework for studies of academic literacy.

Many researchers have used a sociocultural perspective to discuss the development of academic literacy, from issues of language socialization and socialization into discourse communities (Duff, 2010, 2014; Duff & Hornberger, 2010; Watson-Gegeo, 2004). To obtain a better understanding of practices of academic literacy in academic discourse, such inquiries necessitate a naturalistic approach such as case study or ethnography due to learner complexities (Fujieda, 2015). Watson-Gegeo (2004) suggests "thick explanation" as an explanatory analysis that contextualizes learners' backgrounds and "takes into account all relevant and theoretically salient micro- and macro-contextual influences that stand in a systematic relationship to the behavior or events" (as cited in Watson-Gegeo, 2004). Furthermore, Duff (2014) stresses a micro-level analysis of academic socialization as a way to look for relationships between academic socialization and learners' sociocultural aspects. Thus, the concepts of academic literacy have shifted from the vision of the development of academic linguistic skills to a closer analysis of socialization into the academic discourse community.

Studies on Academic Literacy

Research in academic literacy underscores the necessity for a broader range of investigations that emphasize the multiple and complex views of learners (Casanave & Li, 2008; Leki, 2007; Seloni, 2012). Leki (2007) stresses that L2 learners try to be initiated into their disciplinary communities through writing practices. Casanave and Li (2008) present the academic socialization of L2 graduate students and their relationships with faculty members in various learning settings. This collection of studies identifies the difficulties, practices, and experiences of L2 graduate students in relation to how they were socialized into their discourse communities. Casanave and Li underscore the importance of further exploring the learners' process of enculturation into the professional environment from multiple perspectives of the individual students.

Kobayashi (2003) investigated the way undergraduate-level Japanese learners in Canada became involved in discourse socialization in out-of-class settings to achieve success in classroom oral presentations. Their strategies for the classroom tasks had valuable effects on the development of academic competence. Besides, Morita (2004) sought to explore how new graduate-level Japanese students in an MA program in Canada were socialized into their academic communities. The findings revealed that most of the learners viewed themselves as incompetent learners at the initial stage of classroom discussions; however, the participants came to cultivate their sense of agency and shape their participation through interaction with others.

Studies of academic literacy have been widely conducted in English-speaking contexts, especially the U.S.A. and Canada. There is a dearth of research on discourse socialization that highlights multilingual learners in various learning contexts. Therefore, this study emphasizes academic discourse socialization of undergraduate multilingual students participating in a required research seminar course in Japan. English is a foreign language in Japan, and learners who have multicultural backgrounds have been enrolling in universities and colleges. Gottlieb (2012) indicates that multilingualization and internationalization need to be considered at the tertiary level because the population of foreigners in Japanese society is increasing. As such, more discussions on academic literacy need to focus on how multilingual learners become socialized into the disciplinary discourse community, illustrating learners' vivid descriptions of their process, experiences, and practices. Morita and Kobayashi (2010) argue that "very few studies have provided explicit illustration as to what L2 students were able to do as a result of their socialization or what kind of development – including linguistic acquisition – occurred over time" (p. 250). Thus, this present study was based on the following research question:

> How do undergraduate multilinguals in a research seminar course negotiate and become socialized into their academic discourse using various English scholarly articles?

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study research method and drew on perspectives of sociocultural theory and communities of practice (CoP) to provide a theoretical framework for academic literacy and socialization. Central to sociocultural theory is the socialization process found in CoP proposed by Wenger (1998). CoP are a group of people who help novices facilitate a collaborative process, sharing disciplinary knowledge in a mutual field (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Based on the idea that CoP play a significant role in facilitating learners' socialization into the discourse community, this study focused on how CoP have a significant influence on the research students' academic literacy socialization.

Participants

Participants in this present study were seven multilingual undergraduate students (three male: Jonghyun, Kenta, and Taisei, and four female: Akiko, Chiaki, Miho, and Sayaka), who registered in a Research Seminar course at a four-year private university in Japan. Six of them were majoring in English, and one student was in the Child Education Program. The research participants were all juniors and had studied English for more than eight years, since they were in elementary school or junior high school. Their English learning at the secondary school level focused on grammar translation and rote memorization of vocabulary and grammar to pass the national entrance examinations for high school and universities/colleges. When they were enrolled in the university, the participants first studied basic skill-oriented practices of English (e.g., speaking or listening). Then, most participants took more specialized subjects such as Introduction to Linguistics, American Literature, Applied Linguistics, and Second Language Acquisition.

Data Collection

Data were collected in September 2012, after the first semester grades (Spring semester, April–July 2012) had been distributed. In September, each participant was asked to volunteer for the present study. When the students agreed, they signed a consent form after receiving their grades. To deeply understand the students' actual experiences and practices of academic literacy socialization inside and outside the classroom, the following data sources were collected: (a) weekly reflection journals, (b) a final narrative of the research seminar course, (c) in-depth individual interviews, and (d) a focus group interview.

Data Analysis

To analyze the four data sources, the participants' documents (weekly journals and final narratives), when written in Japanese, and personal interviews were translated into English in chronological order. After this process, the author did member checks (informant feedback) to confirm whether or not the translations and interpretations were clear. Then, the data were coded and categorized for standardization. When the transcripts and data were available, the author carefully analyzed the data in an inductive way since qualitative methods require that one collect and analyze the data at the same time.

To begin the data analysis, three phases were followed. First, all of the interview transcriptions and written documents were reviewed. Second, the data were divided into thematic categories that came from the data (Yin, 2003). These were multiplicity of academic literacy practices and construction of disciplinary knowledge through CoP. The final step was to review the data to classify the thematic categories identified in the second phase.

RESULTS

The seven participants revealed multifocal processes and practices of developing their academic literacy throughout the rich data (i.e., students' weekly journals, final narratives, individual interviews, and a focus group interview). By analyzing the rich data sources, three major themes emerged: (a) using a traditional approach, (b) collaborating as practice, and (c) participating in the discourse community. This section provides several snapshots of the participants' processes of discourse socialization. All participants' names shown in each snapshot are pseudonyms.

Using a Traditional Approach

Most participants tried to seek for strategies for understanding the academic discourse and interpreting the meanings of the texts before being involved in discourse socialization. The students had difficulty in understanding the terminology in the articles. At the beginning of the semester, looking up the full meaning of the jargon with a dictionary was important for the participants rather than guessing the meaning from the context of the articles.

- When I found difficult words, I checked the dictionary. (Chiaki's interview)
- There were many academic words in the article, and one sentence was too long. So, it was so difficult for me. In addition, sometimes one word has many different meanings. (Miho's final narrative)

- What I did to understand the meanings of the texts first was to refer to a dictionary. Because many unfamiliar words in the articles were beyond my understanding, I used a dictionary. (Kenta's final narrative)

Moreover, some students followed a traditional learning approach, grammar translation, to understand the meaning of the articles. There are controversies over the ramifications of teaching English employing the translation approach; however, the strategy is embedded in the students' mentality as a habitual practice in learning English. In the following snapshots, the participants illustrated how they dealt with the academic discourse in the scholarly articles.

- I examined the articles with the feelings. But, this process did not work well, so I had no choice but to engage in translation of the texts. (Chiaki's interview)
- I mainly checked the meaning of unknown words. After reviewing the words, I read the articles with translation. (Kenta's weekly journal #2)
- There were many academic words in the article, and one sentence was too long. So, it was so difficult for me. In addition, sometimes one word has many different meanings. (Miho's final narrative)
- It took many hours to read the articles…I always worried as to my work, if my interpretation was correct or not. (Sayaka's interview)

Collaborating as a Practice

Although the students followed a traditional learning technique, some participants shifted to collaborative learning. For instance, Akiko, Chiaki, and Miho met every week to read the reading assignment of the academic papers out of the classroom. Such mutual practice with members in the discourse community generated the beneficial effect of deepening understanding of the texts. The three participants described their collaborations as follows:

- It was really helpful for me to have the environment in which we could work together. (Akiko's weekly journal #4)
- As I asked many unknown words to my peers, I came to understand a flow of the content, which led me to examine the article in-depth. (Chiaki's interview)
- I appreciated my peers' different perspectives on the scholarly texts during the informal sessions. (Miho's focus group interview)

Akiko, Chiaki, and Miho found that the collaborative work outside the classroom worked well for them.

Participating in the Discourse Community

As time passed, the seminar students came to be more socialized into the discourse community, have more classroom discussions, and share their ideas to promote further understanding of the disciplinary articles. For instance, Akiko, Jonghyun, Chiaki, and Kenta realized that strong engagement with participation in the community became a critical factor in the progress of their academic literacy.

- Classroom discussions were really valuable because some ideas were similar to mine, but others were different. When I heard the different opinions, they helped me to understand the critical perspectives. As having many discussions in the classroom broadens my ideas and sights. I really like it. (Akiko's weekly journal #5)
- The mutual discussions in the classroom helped me to move toward a deeper understanding of the articles. (Jonghyun's focus group interview)
- Talking about the assignments with my seminar members was good for me to realize correct meaning of texts and understand the content further. (Chiaki's interview)
- My classmates shared their philosophical thoughts with us. (Kenta's interview)

These participants adopted elements of academic literacy socialization, which encouraged them to facilitate further understanding of the scholarly articles with active participation. Furthermore, the mutual discussions in the classroom helped the students to move towards a deeper understanding of the contents of the articles. The joint enterprise in the disciplinary community became a comfortable space to share their candid comments.

- I realized that my disciplinary knowledge was constructed through interactions with my seminar students. (Jonghyun's interview)
- My understanding of the disciplinary discourses of English certainly arose from discussions and talks in the classroom more than anything else. (Akiko's interview)
- I recognized that being socialized into not only the community of research seminar, but also that of other related academic courses, enriched my development of academic literacy. (Chiaki's interview)
- The discussions inspired me to deepen understanding of the topic, L2 writing scholarship. (Taisei's interview)

Akiko, Chiaki, Jonghyun, and Taisei revealed that active participation with others yielded insights about their professional knowledge.

DISCUSSION

This present study investigated the way undergraduate multilinguals in a research seminar course negotiate and become socialized in their academic discourse using various English scholarly articles. Based on the sociocultural perspectives of CoP (Lave & Wenger, 1991), this study also examined how the newcomers were socialized into the disciplinary community and shifted from LPP to an old-timer or senior to develop their academic literacy.

As the participants' snapshots illustrated, some participants employed the traditional learning approach (grammar-translation) as their natural learning process, and many participants recognized that strong engagement and direct interactions helped them to deepen understanding of the scholarly articles. In this study, most students (e.g., Akiko, Chiaki, Jonghyun, and Taisei) came to shift from legitimate peripheral participation to active participation by interacting with others. The participants employed several methods to enculturate into their discourse community and to obtain membership by actively joining in in class discussions and activities. Then they realized that interactions played a major role in their development of academic literacy. Although the students had negative attitudes while negotiating the academic discourse, the negative elements gradually generated substantial success in knowledge construction of the disciplinary field (Riazantseva, 2012). As Lave and Wenger (1991) point out, novices devote minimal efforts to the tasks with limited participation at the beginning but move to be engaged in full participation. At the initial stage of examining the academic discourse, most participants relied on a traditional learning approach. However, they attempted to be socialized into the community to achieve mutual interactions with peers.

Moreover, Akiko, Chiaki, and Miho concentrated on the casual meeting sessions to understand the content of the academic articles. Ferenz (2005) indicates that creating a social network inside as well as out of class is a critical component to accelerate the development of academic literacy. Akiko, Chiaki, and Miho realized that such a joint enterprise out of class played the role of scaffolding for knowledge construction of the discipline and for progress in academic literacy. Chiaki expressed appreciation for having opportunities to enter the communities of other professional courses. During the classes, she engaged in discussions on various topics in terms of education and applied linguistics. She was aware that this mutual relationship with others in the different specialized communities helped her to be a member of the community of the research seminar course. As a result, Akiko, Chiaki, and Miho appreciated their informal meetings on their assignments together outside the seminar course. Mutual engagement in a comfortable environment encouraged them to take a step towards interpreting the meanings of the scholarly texts.

As academic literacy socialization in diverse contexts has yet to be fully discussed, more investigations of this topic using qualitative approaches need to be conducted. In particular, exploring an individual learner's discourse socialization would be meaningful to make an adequate interpretation of learning situations. A holistic viewpoint of a deeper personal frame of reference would contribute to a sound foundation of the personal investments involved in the development of academic literacy.

Conclusions

This study examined academic literacy socialization by seven multilingual students in a mandatory research seminar course in a Japanese university. The primary purpose of this research was to explore how the participants attempted to engage in the development of academic literacy using English scholarly texts.

As snapshots of the participants illustrated, they found that socializing with peers had a beneficial influence upon their development of academic literacy, even though they adopted their own strategies at the initial stage of examining the academic discourse. In particular, mutual interactions with peers in and out of the classroom contributed to a deeper understanding of the disciplinary discourses and to active participation in the discourse community.

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The Why and How of Transitioning to Conversation-Based Teaching

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The arguments against language courses based on product syllabuses (lists of structures or functions) are almost as old as the syllabuses themselves. While the arguments were always backed by principles of developmental SLA, recent theories of motivational psychology have added extra weight. At the same time, alternative paradigms based on process syllabuses, which involve learners in deciding what is learned and how, have been elucidated in the form of Task-Based Language Teaching and Dogme. However, in the context of South Korean university English classes, uncritical implementation of such approaches is problematic due to large class sizes and learners with little communicative experience. I suggest instead an adaptation of Dogme, named Conversation-Based Teaching, and outline a framework through which teachers can transition comfortably away from a product syllabus. The framework includes assessment; language development based on concepts of complexity, accuracy, and fluency; individualized error correction; and organization of learning.

INTRODUCTION

For almost as long as a communicative approach to language teaching has been enshrined in academic literature, a parallel debate has been taking place over the type of syllabus that should underpin it. On one side are the proponents of syllabuses that take linguistic structures or functions as their "unit of progression" (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 71), labelled as *product* by Breen (1987b), and the term preferred in this paper, or *synthetic* by Long and Crookes (1992). Product syllabuses take an externally dictated, linear, and unitary approach to the organization of language learning by presenting lists of items, often grammatical, syntactic, or lexical structures, for practice and supposed acquisition by the learners, and are at the heart of many "four skills" coursebooks from international publishers. Implicit in a product syllabus is an expectation of accurate production of these items. On the other side of the debate are teachers and applied linguists who believe that the structures and functions, activities, and methods should be tailored to – and influenced by – the learners. Breen (1987a) labels these *process* syllabuses, which "seek to represent knowledge of how correctness, appropriacy, and meaningfulness can be simultaneously achieved during communication within events and situations" (p. 160). Two well-known approaches based on process syllabuses are *Dogme* (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009; Thornbury, 2000a) and *Task-Based Language Teaching* (Long, 2014, among many others).

While I have found no published research to draw on, anecdotal evidence suggests that a coursebook forms the *de facto* syllabus for a number of university English courses in South Korea (henceforth, Korea). However, the argument that product syllabuses are neither the most efficient, nor the most motivating, way to learn a second language (L2) is increasingly backed by findings in second language acquisition (SLA) research, which should motivate teachers to transition to a process syllabus for the benefit of their students. This paper is presented to help those wishing to reduce or discontinue the use of product syllabuses or coursebooks. I summarize two key arguments against product syllabuses (I will avoid the wider debate about coursebooks due to space restrictions), and then suggest an alternative, conversation-based approach based on a process syllabus, along with a framework for implementing it. By the end of the paper, the reader should be in a position to begin a transition in their own classroom or institution.

Developmental and Motivational Arguments Against Product Syllabuses

SLA research shows that features of English learned as a second language are acquired in predictable orders that are independent of the first language (L1) of the learner or the instruction that is received, meaning that features taught out of order cannot be learned. This is evidenced by English morphemes, of which the progressive *-ing* and the plural *-s* are acquired before the possessive *-'s* and the third person plural *-s* (see Goldschneider & DeKeyser, 2001, for a meta-analysis). When studies have been conducted to try to skip a stage in morpho-syntactic development, it has been found that it is possible only with a much greater instructional focus than the structure of a typical course allows (Long, 2014). Furthermore, when that focus is shifted, learners revert back to the expected stage in their development (Lightbown, Spada, & Wallace, 1980). A further example is the developmental path of English negation, which learners follow through an initial pre-verbal negation stage (*I no go*), even if their L1 has post-verbal negation, as in the case of Swedish (Hyltenstam, 1977). These findings suggest that there is a “learner syllabus” (Corder, 1967) of L2 developmental features that is independent of the L1 or instruction, and therefore, if the learner is developmentally unready to learn a particular feature, teaching it will be ineffective. There is, of course, a counter argument that teachers of English in Korean universities are preparing students to use English in the future, and that they will learn the structures eventually, even if not in that class. After all, learners clearly have acquired languages under the dominant product paradigm, else there would be very few L2 speakers. However, the evidence presented above demonstrates that an externally directed route to language acquisition is not the most efficient, because teachers or syllabus designers cannot be aware of, or cater to, the different learner syllabuses present in classrooms, and furthermore, the time available to practice individual structures in a typical first-year English course in a Korean university is not sufficient to effect lasting restructuring. Furthermore, there are other powerful affective arguments that suggest that product syllabuses are inappropriate for Korean university English courses, as we shall see.

Further evidence for abandoning product syllabuses comes from SLA research conducted from a psychological perspective, which foregrounds the role of the learner's self-concept in creating and sustaining motivation. As English has developed into a global, multi-cultural, and essential tool for communication, the traditional view of motivation as driven by the desire to integrate into a single language community (and thus produce that variety of the language) has been replaced by a greater focus on the individual and the ways in which they can enact their identities as English users across multiple contexts (Ushioda, 2011). The *L2 Motivational Self System* (Dörnyei, 2009) proposes that L2 motivation can be investigated in terms of the learner reducing the discrepancy between their current self-concept and two future self-guides: the *ought-to L2 self* (a visualization of the attributes required by society) and the *ideal L2 self* (a visualization of the attributes desired by the learner). However, Ushioda points out that the self-concept and the self-guide, rather than being separate, are continuous identities stretching from the present into an imagined future (2011, p. 203). This explains the presence of a third dimension in Dörnyei's theory, *L2 Learning Experience*, which describes the impact of the "teacher, curriculum, peer group and experience of success" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29) on the learner. Ushioda (2011) elaborates:

> Thus, if we wish to enable learners to visualize themselves as competent L2 users in the future ... it seems important that they are enabled to engage their current selves and identities in their L2 interactions with people. In this way, learners are then also enabled to engage directly with their possible future selves as users of the L2. (p. 203)

In other words, without the opportunity to discover a current L2 self, learners cannot envision their future selves, thus absenting the claimed motivational benefits. For students in Korean universities, whose exam-dominated high school English careers may have featured little speaking of any kind, opportunities to engage in meaningful, self-developing communication will be a critical part of their university English education. In purely product syllabuses, "the linguistic tail is wagging the communicative dog" (Thornbury, 1998): language is the object, and accurate production the objective. In order to be successful in these terms, teachers must exercise a large degree of control over classroom discourse and content in order to ensure that the structure of the day is practiced and produced, by creating structure-based, faux-communicative activities such as *Find Someone Who...*, and pushing meaningful, self-developing communication outside the classroom, where there is little time or opportunity for busy students, or into a hazy future of language use, which is easily deprioritized by students who have much more pressing demands on their time. I suggest, then, that the first priority for teachers in Korean university contexts should be to create an immediate psychological reality of language use, in which students can both experience communicative success and begin the task of building an L2 self. In the second half of this paper, I will set out how this can be achieved.

DEFINING CONSERVATION-BASED TEACHING

For many teachers in Korean universities, student behaviors such as chatting about non-class topics (in L1 or L2) or using mobile messenger programs are likely to be classified as "off-task." These off-task behaviors are likely to share the following properties:

1. They will be spoken (or texted);
2. They will be spontaneous and take place in real time;
3. They will have a shared context;
4. They will be interactive, reciprocal, and interpersonal; and
5. They will be expressive of the wishes, feelings, attitudes, and judgements of their participants (adapted from Thornbury & Slade, 2006).

These properties are, of course, what make off-task interactions so distracting: They provide the opportunity to engage the self in language use that faux-communicative, future-directed activities fail to provide. The fact that Dörnyei's model theorizes a motivational benefit to conversation is an additional but periphery benefit. Developing a syllabus that allows students to engage in genuine conversations is primarily aimed at capturing students' attention in the present.

The clearest proposal for a conversation-based approach is the aforementioned Dogme, which is underpinned by three core tenets: classes are conversation-driven, materials are minimal, and instruction is focused on emergent language (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009). Thus, in a Dogme class, the content is derived from conversations that occur naturally between students, or from activities designed to elicit conversation. The teacher's role is to scaffold conversations by participating, directing, or recasting parts or the whole. There is no book and no traditional present-practice-produce structure. Instead, the teacher may halt conversations in order to focus on a linguistic feature that emerges from, or is required by, the students during their conversations.

For those of us with Korean university experience, a Dogme lesson as described here may seem idealistic. Firstly, large class sizes mean that a teacher cannot possibly keep track of, let alone scaffold, conversations unless they are on a whole-class level, which severely limits speaking opportunities. A more serious concern is that many students cannot drive conversations in the way that Meddings and Thornbury anticipate, due to low English levels, little experience of communicative classes, or a lack of motivation. A final worry may be that a clear structure is seen as effective for classroom management, with all learners involved in clearly delineated stages of a lesson, making off-task behavior less likely. These are real and valid concerns and therefore a similar but different approach is required.

I will set out in the following sections a basic framework for a conversation-based approach that is more suitable for the Korean university context, which I will call simply *Conversation-Based Teaching*. I begin with the role of assessment and constructs, and the effect of positive washback in driving students to speak. I will also suggest that teachers can select topics using their knowledge of students' lives, but gradually cede control of conversational direction within those topics, and show that the teacher's scaffolding role can be replaced by a framework for self-directed learning. In the final two sections, I will look at how error correction can be personalized and ways to ensure that class material is recycled even in the absence of a traditional syllabus.

A Framework for Conversation-Based Teaching in Korean Universities

Conversation-Based Assessment

Conversation-Based Teaching diverges from Dogme firstly in the area of assessment, with a much clearer vision of how testing should be undertaken. The original Dogme principles state that assessment procedures should be negotiated between teacher and students (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009). However, expecting students with little experience of communicative teaching to decide on effective assessment procedures is unrealistic, and when combined with the greater expectation of authority from teachers in East-Asian contexts, there is a strong case for assessment to fall solely to the teacher. Conversation-Based Teaching makes conversation the assessment: It is both the class material and the final goal. This pre-empts two potential problems: the tension between standardized exams and self-directed learning, and the danger that students will not participate in activities if they do not seem to relate to the assessment system. Both are solved because conversation is the medium and the target: Any language that emerges from conversation can be fed back in, and practice undertaken in conversation should bear fruit in assessments – positive washback, in other words. Teachers will doubtless be familiar with giving activities face validity with the magic phrase, "this will be on the test"; under this framework, everything is always on the test.

Thornbury and Slade's properties of conversation form the basis of assessment in Conversation-Based Teaching. Accordingly, tests that deny spontaneity, interactivity, and the agency of the participants to express their wishes, feelings, and judgements cannot be considered valid under this framework. Furthermore, any test that is not conversational also lacks face validity in that it does not link to classroom activity, and therefore, limits the potential for positive washback. All assessment thus adheres to these four principles:

1. No set tasks or language items.
2. No scripting or rehearsal.
3. Random selection of groups immediately before the test.
4. Challenging time limits.

The first rule follows from the first tenet of Dogme: Students are responsible for driving content. They may be guided toward topics from class because, having practiced these, they should be able to talk about them more fluently during the test, but they are not penalized for choosing other topics or for following tangents. Rules two, three, and four ensure relative spontaneity: Students do not know their partners or the topic, and therefore cannot rely on memorization.

Conversation-Based Teaching therefore presents a clear, workable, and motivating assessment structure in which students can see the results of their classroom efforts. The following section explains in more detail how the link is made between assessment and classroom activities.

Providing the Push

At this point, teachers may ask, "If students are given the right to direct the content and language of their conversations, might they simply stick to familiar topics and formulas?" This is an understandable query, especially for those whose students may be unused to self-directed learning. Conversation-Based Teaching accounts for this by pushing students to learn through conversations in two ways: a clear class construct and teacher control of topic.

During the first week of the class, students are given a Korean translation of a construct, which explains the language and skills upon which they will be tested. The term "construct" is borrowed from language assessment and refers to a description of the underlying abilities for which a test seeks evidence. It is shared with the students in order that they can attempt to develop the language and skills therein through conversations in class. It gives a message to students: Speaking alone is not sufficient; there is always an assessment to aim for.

The construct (Appendix A) is split in half, with one half describing how students can improve linguistically, and the other how they can involve themselves in successful conversations. The *linguistic* half borrows concepts of *complexity*, *accuracy*, and *fluency* from SLA research. To increase complexity, students are asked to engage with reading texts and model conversations and adapt, appropriate, and use whatever language is necessary for their own output. They are also encouraged to use resources such as learner dictionaries in order to fill gaps in their English. The accuracy section encourages them to engage with and modify their output through reflective activities such as transcription, as well as individual and group error correction. Fluency is seen largely as developing naturally through repeated conversations, but the course also employs automaticity-building activities such as "4/3/2" (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 54). In summary, the linguistic half of the construct directs students to areas that may be covered by product syllabuses (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) but sequenced and presented according to students' needs and lacks. The *participatory* half encourages students to speak as much as possible and to have agreeable and satisfying conversations in order to provide an environment in which linguistic development can take place. Thus, the *content* section describes the kind of contributions that students can make to conversations, with the emphasis on both saying plenty themselves and eliciting more language from others. The *social* section ensures that these contributions play a part in enhancing the atmosphere, and also helps to maintain spontaneity because students have to base their contributions on those of others. Finally, the *management* section looks at some of the more teachable and formulaic aspects of conversation: language for openings and closings, topic negotiation, and ensuring understanding.

The construct makes clear the link between activity and assessment. Each activity is marked with a pie-chart type diagram in which colored sections correspond to construct areas, in order that students understand the opportunities for learning that each activity presents (see Appendix A). In addition, the construct also forms the basis for all testing rubrics, and scores are given in each construct area for both summative and formative purposes in order that students are aware of their strengths and weaknesses.

The second way of pushing students is to present them with conversational topics in teacher-written materials (a departure from materials-light Dogme). Each week of the course, students are asked to talk about a new topic, chosen for its relevance to the lives of Korean university students and to make the most of their opinions or experiences; for example, high school, injuries, or hometown friends. Topics that are outside their sphere of experience, such as careers or far-flung destinations, are avoided. While it may be argued that students' agency is restricted here, the greater danger is that students who are not used to conversing in English will stick to linguistically comfortable topics, or worse, not know what to talk about at all. The aim of selecting topics is to provide a structure within which autonomy can gradually be shifted to students during the week: Units begin with structured or monologic activities such as teacher-dictated discussion questions and 4/3/2, but progress through less-structured and dialogic stages with the final aim being to have an extended conversation about the topic in threes or fours, with full control of how the topic is discussed and the freedom to explore tangents if they arise. Students are therefore involved in engaging their selves, identities, and L2s in meaningful communication in order to develop in all of these areas.

Personalizing Learning

As we saw in the arguments against product syllabuses, students require input that their internal syllabus can process, and that will be helpful to them in constructing their L2 self. These requirements cannot be satisfied by syllabus or coursebook-directed input, but rather by the students exploring and developing themselves. To give an example activity from the course, students are given a reading text in which the teacher tells a story or gives an opinion. Students then have to complete a similar task, but are given time to plan and experiment, during which they complete a table (Appendix B) of language items from the original text, or that they find from other resources, that will help them complete the activity. They are then challenged to use them within the speaking or writing of the new piece, during which the forms can be repeated and reinforced.

While scouring reading texts for new language can help students to develop complexity, it may not draw their attention to their accuracy problems. The internal syllabus dictates that the learner should ideally receive individual feedback on usage, yet the size of most Korean university classes precludes this during most activities. Under the Conversation-Based Teaching framework, learners correct themselves and peers (with teacher support) through transcription and speed-writing activities, and they also submit short writing assignments to the teacher through a mobile messaging service for individual correction. Errors in each activity are logged by the students (Appendix C), allowing them to build an awareness of the characteristics or their individual interlanguage L2s and where they can improve.

Structuring Learning

The final part of the framework ensures that the language that emerges during lessons is recycled often enough for proceduralization or automatization to take place. A strong argument for using product syllabuses is that repetition and recycling of target items can be planned and spaced in order to enhance learning; although, whether students could or would learn them is questionable. In any case, repetition and recycling can be realized in a conversation-based class by the use of spaced-repetition applications on mobile devices. These allow the teacher or student to create digital flashcards that can be used to review language that the teacher has focused on in class or that learners have discovered for themselves. An algorithm within the application determines when a language item is being forgotten, based on previous performance, and shows the learner a flashcard at that point. Daily practice of the flashcard decks allows at least as much repetition as product syllabuses do.

I would further argue that the linear structure of product syllabuses and their coursebook manifestations actually makes them less well organized in terms of providing opportunities for repetition and recycling. Few coursebooks provide an internal reality of language use – a sense that learners will do something with the items learned outside of the bounds of each unit. Structures are presented and practiced, then abandoned for something new. We have to assume, then, that the reality of language use for coursebooks is external, and that the repetition and recycling necessary for language development takes place outside the book and the classroom. Thus in Korea, where students are unlikely to use English outside of class, the system is incomplete: There is no external reality of language use, and therefore, the language learned has no purpose or repeatability. The syllabus underlying Conversation-Based Teaching, on the other hand, resembles a target, with all language learned aimed at improving performance in the central task: conversation. In this way, the reality of language use is internal to the classroom, and language item learning is subordinated to completing the task – if it is not useful, it is not presented. Conversation-Based Teaching therefore presents a complete system. Moreover, repetition of conversations through carefully spaced assessments provides continuous recycling of the same content, with a greater chance for genuine language development. I therefore believe Conversation-Based Teaching actually offers a more organized approach to classroom language acquisition.

Conclusions

The following of product syllabuses for university English classes in Korean universities runs counter to evidence from SLA research and theories of L2 motivation. The reasons for doing so, therefore, can only be convenience, standardization, or logistics. In this paper, I have presented a clear overview of an alternative, process syllabus paradigm that could be quickly implemented in a classroom or institution, with the intention of showing that a transition is not only possible, but that it can also bring real benefits for students' personal and linguistic development.

The Author

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Author's Note

I realized during the writing of this paper that this idea was in fact suggested more than 16 years earlier by Thornbury (2000b).

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APPENDIX A

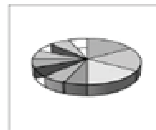
Class Construct

Linguistic	Lexical	**Complexity** • Has all of the language that they need to talk about the topic in English. • Tries to use more complex words and phrases from class where possible.
		Accuracy • Few wrongly used words or phrases, especially those highlighted in class.
		Fluency • Little waiting time to remember words, especially those from class.
	Grammatical / Syntactic	**Complexity** • Generally speaks using complete sentences, not single words or short phrases, unless appropriate. • Can convey more detailed impressions of time and attitude through use of aspect and modality. • Can use complex sentence structures, such as basic subordination, or comparison.
		Accuracy • Syntax is generally understandable. • Generally controls basic tense: past, present, and future. • Negatives and questions are generally in line with developmental goals.
		Fluency • Little waiting time or restarts in constructing sentences.
	Phonological	**Accuracy** • No badly mispronounced words, especially those from class. • Few mistakes on core sounds, especially those taught in class.
		Fluency • Little stumbling over pronunciation.
Participatory	Content	• Continually involved in the conversation in a verbal way: no long periods of inactivity. • Shows the ability to speak in longer turns, and fully explore and explicate contributions voluntarily. • Shows curiosity about other participants' contributions by asking follow-up questions.
	Social	• Contributions are relevant, such that they develop the conver sation and do not cause confusion or awkwardness. • Contributions are appropriate in content and length, such that they develop a positive atmosphere and do not cause frustration or offence. • Contributions are timely, such that they avoid awkward silences.
	Management	• Plays a part in opening and closing, using small talk and leave-taking. • Takes care to preserve understanding and non-understanding at all times. • Takes part in the management of topics of conversation.

APPENDIX B

Language Planning Table

Plan it!



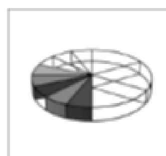
Plan a short speech about your high school experiences. Use the table below to make your speech more complex. If you are not sure if something is right, ask your teacher.

Topics I will talk about:	Words and phrases from the reading to use:	Words and phrases that I found:	Grammar points I want to remember:
School atmosphere *Food*	*I bet that…*	*ethics (윤리학)*	*my favorite teacher* *was* *Mr. Kim (past tense)*

APPENDIX C

Error Logging Table

Improve it!



Your teacher will give you some improvements from the homework. Complete the table with the three most important FOR YOU!

Original	Improvement	Personal Example / Rule

Using Drama to Develop Language Learners' Intercultural Competence: An Experiential Study

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Intercultural competence has become an important goal of foreign language teaching and learning. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the use of drama to develop intercultural competence for English language learners in a British-American culture course. One hundred and ten students of English at a university in Vietnam participated in the study. Data collected from the students' drama scenarios, classroom observations, and questionnaires were analyzed with one sample *t*-test and content analysis. The findings show that drama is an effective way of cultural learning that not only developed the students' intercultural competence and language proficiency, but also made them feel more motivated, self-confident, and creative in cultural learning. The study is expected to be used as a reference for implementing a drama-based pedagogy in cultural teaching and learning in the wider EFL context.

INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of cultural knowledge is usually focused in foreign language teaching and learning. However, in the era of globalization and international integration, cultural knowledge is insufficient for foreign language learners to communicate successfully with people from other cultures. Foreign language learners need to acquire not only cultural knowledge, but also intercultural skills, attitudes and awareness to improve their intercultural competence (IC). Since language learners tend to acquire only cultural knowledge through area studies in the British-American culture course, this approach to culture is not beneficial for them. Although drama has been used to develop learners' language skills, there is no study that deals with the development of IC for language learners through drama in a culture course. This paper aims to use drama to develop language learners' IC in the British-American culture course.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Concepts of Culture

Culture is a complicated concept. Weaver (1993) uses the metaphor of a cultural iceberg to show that a large proportion of our own culturally shaped perceptions are invisible and mostly unconsciously applied in our everyday interactions. Kaikkonen (2001) conceptualizes culture as the relationship between community, communication, and the individual. Kramsch (2006) classifies culture under modernist and post-modernist perspectives. The modernist concept associates culture with general knowledge about literature, art, music, literary achievements, and philosophy as well as behavior, food, customs, and beliefs. The post-modernist concept puts culture in discourse in which the membership of individuals in a culture is linked to their political identity.

The concept of culture in language learning is being re-evaluated. This re-evaluation tends to deal with the hybridity of culture that has been recognized by many contemporary cultural theorists (e.g., Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993; Tornberg, 2004). This hybridity and plurality of culture underpins the foundation for intercultural approaches to language learning in modern language teaching (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993).

Approaches to Culture in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, and Kohler (2003) mention four approaches to culture in foreign language teaching and learning as follows:

- *High culture*: This is the traditional way of teaching culture. It focuses on an established canon of literature. Cultural competence is measured through the breadth of reading and knowledge about the literature.
- *Area studies*: This approach to culture focuses on knowledge about a country, which is often presented as background knowledge for language learning. Cultural competence is particularly viewed through the depth of knowledge of the history, geography, and institutions of the target language country.
- *Culture as societal norms*: This approach views culture as the practices and values that typify them. Cultural competence is measured by one's knowledge about things that a cultural group is likely to do and understanding of cultural values by certain ways of acting or beliefs.
- *Culture as practice*: This approach views culture as sets of practices or the lived experience of the individual (Geertz, 1983). Cultural competence is viewed through their interaction with the target culture, which engages language learners in developing an intercultural perspective in which their own culture and the target culture are involved.

From these four broad approaches to culture, Liddicoat et al. (2003) distinguishes two main views of culture: the static view and the dynamic view. The static view of culture assumes that culture contains factual knowledge or cultural artifacts to be observed and learned about. The dynamic view of culture, on the other hand, requires learners to actively engage in cultural learning with knowledge of their own culture and an understanding of their own culturally shaped behaviors. The present study adopts the dynamic view of culture to develop learners' intercultural competence.

The Concept of Intercultural Competence and Intercultural Language Learning

The concept of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997) comes into existence from the refocus of the objectives of foreign language teaching and learning on culture as the core. The term “intercultural” reflects that foreign language learners need to know their own culture as well as the target culture. IC is defined as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2006, p. 194). Since the 1990s, based on a deeper understanding of the interdependence between language and culture, intercultural language learning (IcLL) (Liddicoat et al., 2003) has emerged as a new approach to language teaching that teaches culture as an integrated part of language. According to Liddicoat et al. (2003), IcLL is defined as follows:

> Intercultural language learning involves developing with learners an understanding of their own language(s) and culture(s) in relation to an additional language and culture. It is a dialogue that allows for reaching a common ground for negotiation to take place, and where variable points of view are recognized, mediated, and accepted. (p. 46)

In IcLL, it is important for language learners to develop qualities such as cultural sensitivity, the ability for empathy, respect for diversity, and tolerance. Most importantly, they need to acquire the ability to mediate between cultures in order to reach an intercultural perspective where they truly manifest their IC.

The Use of Drama in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

A variety of previous studies have used drama in foreign language teaching and learning, such as Desiatova (2009), Vu (2009), Do (2009), and Nguyen and Phan (2012). However, these studies only focus on the use of drama to develop language skills for language learners. In addition, Belliveau and Kim (2013) states that there is still too little empirical research that investigates drama in the foreign language classroom as well as learners’ experience of this method of learning. The present study innovatively uses drama with the approach to culture as practice in light of IcLL to develop learners’ IC, which has not been investigated before.

METHOD

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. How do English language learners demonstrate their intercultural competence through drama?
2. How do they evaluate drama in their cultural learning?

This study was conducted with 112 learners of English at a university in Vietnam. The students designed their drama with respect to intercultural language learning. Drama scenarios, classroom observations, and evaluation questionnaires were used for data collection. One sample *t*-test was used for quantitative data, and content analysis was used for qualitative data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Learners' Demonstration of Intercultural Competence

Through the students' drama performances, they were able to develop knowledge about the target culture, awareness about cultural differences between the two cultures, positive attitudes, intercultural skills, and intercultural perspectives.

Knowledge About the Target Culture

The students' knowledge about the target culture manifested in their drama scenarios was widely expanded beyond the course material. They explored different kinds of dancing in England, Scotland, and Hawaii; the national costumes, cuisines, customs and habits of English and American people in daily life; and festivals. This shows that the students took initiatives to explore new knowledge about the target culture rather than only learning the existing facts in the course material. This is a dynamic approach to cultural learning in which the learners were actively involved in the process of discovering and experiencing the target culture.

For example, the students were deeply concerned about the daily cultural customs and habits of the target culture. They wanted to explore the social etiquette in Britain and the tipping culture in the USA:

> Social etiquette is extremely important in English society, and politeness is the foundation upon which it is based. Saying "please," "thank you," and "excuse me" are expected all the time, as well as other social rules such as queuing or having a seat on the bus or the train. (Group 5)

> America has a custom that you should give a tip for a waiter/waitress. It is recognized by the law. When you go to a restaurant, follow the rule: for the waiter 15-20% of the bill; the waiter at the counter: 15-20%; other waiters: 10%. (Group 3)

Such examples as above show that the students really engaged in exploring the target culture by themselves, rather than just memorizing the facts from the course material. It is due to their active involvement in the process of cultural learning that they were able to develop their intercultural knowledge and understanding about the target culture.

Awareness About Cultural Differences Between the Two Cultures

The students developed much awareness about cultural differences between the target culture and their home culture in their drama performances. For example, the students were aware of the socialization of the tradition of the tea break in Britain and the different practice in food and drink services in the USA in comparison with their own culture:

> Tea break is a social activity closely related to British culture. It is not just a break between sessions, but an opportunity for people to interact and talk with each other to create an intimate atmosphere in the workplace. While tea break is a social ritual in offices in the UK, it is the culture of the Vietnamese hospitality when a guest is usually welcomed by the host with a cup of hot tea. (Group 3)

> In the USA, there are many self-service shops like this one where you have to come over the counter to order and pay there. Sometimes you also have to clear the table by yourself after eating such as in a MacDonald's. This self-awareness is highly appreciated in the USA. In Vietnam, food and drinks in shops are usually served by waiters rather than self-service ones in the USA. (Group 6)

More importantly, this awareness also had a good influence on the students' previous awareness, which helped them change their wrong awareness about the target culture. For example, one group of students used to think that America was a chaotic and complex society, but then they found that was a wrong idea.

In short, through drama performances, the students were able to enhance their intercultural awareness, which helped them understand the target culture better and change their previous awareness of the target culture.

Positive Attitudes

The students' awareness of cultural differences also has a positive effect on their attitudes. A positive change in their attitudes made them feel friendlier to the target culture:

> Pubs in Britain have a very friendly environment where people can talk and make acquaintances even with strangers. This makes me feel a cozy life in Britain where people can make acquaintances in public places in the simplest way. (Group 2)

> American culture is completely different from Vietnamese culture. I saw people who have different skin colors live together in a country and they use many different languages. Because America is a multi-religious and multi-cultural country, I feel life there very interesting. I tried to know more about this place and now I think America is like my second home land. (Group 4)

The students also showed respect and empathy towards the target culture. They respect the American cultural values displayed through historical events. For example, the students became more sympathetic with the black people who had to work as slaves in the tobacco and cotton plantations in America's South, or appreciated the value of humanism in the target culture:

> Slavery lasted nearly 200 years in the USA, but it was finally abolished by President Abraham Lincoln. This shows the humanity of such a civilized society where any bad treatment towards human beings is condemned. This makes me feel friendlier with this country. (Group 9)

> Thanksgiving Day in the USA has a humanistic meaning through the appreciation of people who sought for the new world towards the Indians who were willing to help them to survive. This has made humanism become a nice cultural value of

American people. (Group 10)

In short, accurate awareness of the target culture helped the students to form positive attitudes about the target culture with friendliness and appreciation of the cultural values of the target culture.

Intercultural Skills

The students were also able to develop their intercultural skills through different situations in their drama scenarios. For example, in the situation of Kate as a new member in the British royal family, a group of students demonstrated intercultural skills to be used in royal family life from dressing and posture to greetings and responses to the Queen. In another situation, another group performed a piece of drama about the legend of Thanksgiving Day in the USA in a creative manner in which they reconstituted the adventure of the Pilgrims on the Mayflower ship to look for the New World. This group showed their intercultural skills in communication with the Native Americans in the new land so that they could survive thanks to the native inhabitants' assistance in hunting, fishing, and planting vegetables. All the students' intercultural skills in the situations of their drama scenarios provide evidence for their acquisition of intercultural competence and their creativity in scenario construction.

Intercultural Perspectives

In the acquisition of IC through drama, some groups of students were able to mediate between cultures in order to reach a position where they could form an intercultural perspective to deal with different cultural values. For example, one group of students clearly showed an intercultural perspective about different cultural values of the target culture and their home culture:

> American society highly values equality in the society. This is one of the prominent cultural values of American people. Meanwhile, Vietnam highly appreciates the value of "respecting the older and conceding to the younger," a traditional cultural value that shows relations between generations in the society. We cannot say the equality or the hierarchical attribute is better as each culture has its own values that need to be respected. (Group 8)

Such an intercultural perspective offers clear evidence of the students' ability to mediate between cultural differences of the two cultures with respect to the cultural values of each country. It is this intercultural perspective that helped the students adopt a more objective view of the target culture and avoid ethnocentrism, a view which states that one's culture is superior to others.

In short, active involvement in the target culture with a dynamic view of culture helped the students enhance their knowledge about the target culture and develop intercultural awareness, skills, and attitudes towards the target culture as well as intercultural perspectives as evidence of their IC acquisition.

Learners' Evaluation of Drama

The students positively evaluated the use of drama in the culture course (Table 1) thanks to the benefits that they gained from their drama performances.

TABLE 1. Learners' Evaluation of Drama in the Culture Course

Statement	N	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p**
1. Drama motivated me a lot in cultural learning.	112	4.39	.509	28.982	.000
2. Drama developed my self-confidence and creativity in cultural learning.	112	4.33	.576	24.460	.000
3. I was able to construct my intercultural knowledge about the target culture and my home culture through drama.	112	4.22	.694	18.660	.000
4. I was able to develop my intercultural skills through drama.	112	4.14	.708	17.072	.000
5. I was able to develop positive attitudes towards the target culture through drama.	112	4.03	.741	14.668	.000
6. I was able to develop awareness of cultural differences between the target culture and my own culture through drama.	112	4.02	.629	17.116	.000
7. I was able to develop intercultural competence for better communication with people from other cultures through drama.	112	3.94	.661	15.000	.000
8. I gained new ways of learning about cultures through drama.	112	3.88	.720	12.998	.000
9. My language proficiency improved as a result of my drama performance.	112	3.88	.791	11.823	.000
10. I found that drama is an effective way of learning about cultures.	112	3.86	.669	13.554	.000

* Significant at $p < 0.05$.

As the results in Table 1 show, the majority of students agreed that drama was an effective method of cultural learning, with this item receiving the highest mean (M = 4.39, SD = .509, t = 28.982, $p < 0.05$). In addition, the students gained news ways of learning about cultures through drama (M = 4.14, SD = .708, t = 17.072, $p < 0.05$). This innovative approach to culture is shown in the way the students made their drama scenarios about specific cultural aspects of British/American culture in relation to those in their home culture, which helped them develop a better awareness about the two cultures and move towards an intercultural perspective that is appropriate for both cultures.

The students also agreed that drama helped them acquire IC, with awareness about cultural differences being rated first (M = 4.33, SD = .576, t = 24.460, $p <$ 0.05), followed by positive attitudes (M = 4.03, SD = .741, t = 14.668, $p < 0.05$), intercultural knowledge (M = 3.94, SD = .661, t = 15.000, $p < 0.05$), and finally, intercultural skills (M = 3.86, SD = .669, t = 13.554, $p < 0.05$). This order of acquisition shows that learners' awareness developed mostly due to the construction of scenarios about the relationship between the two cultures. The students also paid a lot of attention to developing positive attitudes towards the target culture so as to avoid ethnocentrism and adopt ethno-relativism for mediation between cultures. Moreover, instead of learning cultural facts in the course material in a passive way, the students confirmed that drama made them feel more self-confident, creative, and enthusiastic in cultural learning, and that their language proficiency also improved in their drama performances.

CONCLUSIONS

This experiential study uses drama to study culture. The findings show that the students positively evaluated drama as a very practical method of cultural learning, which helped them to experience the target culture more deeply than the traditional way of cultural learning through area studies in the British-American culture course. Through drama, the students were able to develop IC as well as improve their language proficiency. In addition, they felt more interested, self-confident, and creative in learning about cultures.

In the era of international integration, IC has become more and more important for language learners. If drama is applied with such an innovative approach to culture-as-practice, this new method of cultural learning is likely to help learners perfect their language proficiency as well as develop IC to communicate successfully with other cultures.

THE AUTHOR

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Instruction and Evaluation of Mastery Sentences: A Workshop

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This workshop discussed a study which examined the types of word knowledge errors students made when writing *mastery sentences*. After a brief overview of the study, attendees of the workshop had the opportunity to mark and discuss some example sentences provided by the presenters. Practical suggestions for providing students with feedback on their productive use of high-frequency vocabulary were discussed. Attendees were then presented with a list of target words with which they were asked to create their own mastery sentences. The presenters welcomed attendees to share their own suggestions for helping students improve their knowledge of words at deeper levels.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this workshop was to introduce attendees to a sentence writing activity employed as part of a “Four Skills” course at a university in southwestern Japan. After demonstrating how to instruct students on how to complete the activity, the presenters offered suggestions on how to evaluate the quality of students’ writing. A number of examples of students’ sentences were provided and attendees were asked to work in groups and discuss how they would grade each sentence. Finally, attendees were provided with a list of target words with which they were asked to construct their own “mastery” sentences. The results of this activity were discussed as a group.

WORKSHOP PROCEDURE

Theoretical Background

The workshop began with a brief theoretical background on the nature of the writing activity. Nation (1990) discussed the importance of learning the many aspects of a word when studying vocabulary, including not only the meaning of the word but also its spelling, pronunciation, collocates, and how it is used grammatically. In Japan, and perhaps other Asian contexts as well, much focus is placed on students receptively learning vocabulary (meaning and spelling), while little attention is paid to productive use (collocations, register, and associations of the word) of high-frequency vocabulary (De la Fuente, 2002; Webb, 2005). The need for productive practice of high-frequency vocabulary has been argued by many (Laufer & Paribakht, 1998; Schmitt, 1998; Schmitt & Meara, 1997). The basic aim of the activity, therefore, was to push students beyond the receptive knowledge they already have of high-frequency vocabulary to a point where they could demonstrate an ability to *use* the target word appropriately in a written sentence.

In this activity, students are required to write a "mastery" sentence using a target word. The term "mastery" is used to mean a sentence in which the meaning of the target word is clearly demonstrated within the sentence itself. For example, for the target word "couch" students may start by writing a sentence such as "I have a couch in my apartment." The goal of the activity, however, is to construct a sentence in which only the target word could be used if it were left blank. Using the "couch" example above, any number of words could conceivably be used in the sentence "I have a __________ in my apartment." Students are taught to improve the quality of their sentences by writing longer, more detailed sentences that clearly demonstrate the meaning of the target word, such as "I fell asleep on my couch in the living room while watching TV." By having the students complete the activity in this manner, the hope is that, through a deeper level of processing and sustained engagement with the target word, students will deepen their knowledge of the word.

The Mechanics of the Activity

After explaining the theoretical underpinnings of the activity, the presenters then provided a detailed explanation of how the activity was carried out in the classroom. Each week students were provided a list of 40 high-frequency vocabulary items. For homework, students were instructed to choose 20 words from the list and construct a mastery sentence for each of the 20 words. Students were responsible for knowing all 40 words on the list each week; however, the homework assignment asked students to write a minimum of 20 sentences. Students could, of course, choose to write sentences for all 40 words if they so desired. After completing the homework, students reviewed their sentences with their peers in the classroom, using a variety of activities in class. In the following lesson, students were given a quiz in which the teacher randomly chose 10 words from the list of 40, and students were required to write a mastery sentence for each of those 10 words. The teachers collected the quizzes, provided written feedback on any mistakes made in the sentences, and then returned the quizzes to the students. Students were then asked to review their quizzes and make corrections to their sentences based on the teacher's feedback. This process was repeated for a 10-week cycle.

Evaluation of Written Work

Once the mechanics of the activity were made clear, the workshop moved to a discussion on how to evaluate the written work of the students. Each week after the quiz was completed, the teacher collected the quizzes and provided feedback on the quality of each of the ten sentences the student wrote for the quiz. There are four possible marks a sentence could receive: star, circle, triangle, or an X. A star represents a "mastery" sentence, meaning that the sentence has no spelling or grammar mistakes, and it clearly demonstrates the meaning of the target word within the sentence itself. An example of a mastery sentence for the target word "church" would be "My family goes to church every Sunday because we are Christian." If the sentence is of reasonable quality but has one or two small errors, for example spelling or grammatical inaccuracy, the sentence is marked with a circle. Using "church" as the target word again, an example would be "My family went church yesterday to pray a God." This sentence clearly demonstrates the meaning of the target by using a common collocation (*go* to church) and a common association (church – pray), however two small grammar mistakes would award this sentence with a circle. The teacher in this case would typically indicate where the errors are in the sentence, and then the student is responsible for correcting the errors after the quiz has been returned to them.

Sentences which are marked with a triangle generally have multiple errors but are clear enough to at least demonstrate that the student knows the meaning of the target word. Again, using "church" as the target word, the sentence "I going church and pray" would typically be marked with a triangle. Lastly, sentences are marked with an X if no sentence is written at all, the sentence is unintelligible, or the student clearly misunderstood the meaning of the word. For example, "I buy church yeserday" clearly shows that the student does not understand the basic meaning a "church" and thus would receive an X for a mark.

Once these guidelines were clearly explained, attendees of the workshop were asked to form small groups. Each group was provided with a list of ten example sentences of actual students' writing and asked to discuss how they would mark each of the sentences. This part of the workshop generated a good amount of discussion and raised a number of insightful questions. Attendees found it rather easy to identify a mastery sentence (a sentence which would receive a star for a mark), but the distinction between a sentence marked with a circle versus a triangle created some interesting talking points.

Experiencing the Activity

Once the evaluation portion of the workshop was complete, attendees were then given the opportunity to experience the activity from a student's point of view. Attendees were provided with an actual vocabulary list used in the Four Skills course, and asked to choose 3–4 words and write a mastery sentence for each of those words. Again, this activity generated a good deal of discussion amongst the attendees with regards to how detailed and complex sentences needed to be to achieve mastery status.

Discussion

The workshop concluded with a brief discussion on two research projects related to this activity that were carried out by the presenters. Gallacher (2015) examined the types of errors that students tend to make when completing this activity. In this study, two types of errors were analyzed. Errors related to the *meaning* of the target word were examined, as well as errors related to *usage* of the target word. Errors of meaning basically fell into three categories: (a) failure to produce a sentence, (b) insufficient context to demonstrate meaning ("The paragraph is boring."), and (c) mistaken meaning conveyed ("I matched the game on TV."). Errors of usage had three categories as well: (a) grammatically flawed ("It occur to me that he gets lost."), (b) contextually inappropriate ("He has fairly money"), (c) both of the above. A large sample of sentences were coded for these two types of errors, and results showed that errors of usage far exceeded errors of meaning. This is to be expected. However, an interesting trend appeared upon closer analysis of the data. When errors were parsed by proficiency level of the students, it appeared that higher-level students tend to make more usage errors than lower-level students. A deeper analysis of the data indicated that this could be the case because higher-level students were attempting to make much more complex sentences and using lower-frequency vocabulary, and thus, left themselves open to making more grammar mistakes. Attendees of the workshop were advised to keep this in mind when evaluating their own students' work.

The other research project related to this activity measured the difficulty, usefulness, and level of interest that students had when completing this activity. Howarth and Thompson (2015) found that while students perceived the mastery sentence activity to be quite useful, they found it to be difficult to do and not particularly interesting compared to other activities (speaking, reading, and listening) in the Four Skills course. Student comments on the survey confirmed this as well; for example, "This format helped me to understand how to use a word" and "I learned the words more deeply than regular classes" were commonly noted. The surprising outcome of the study is that students recognized the usefulness of the activity, but did not perceive it to be interesting. Attendees of the workshop were not surprised by this finding, noting that students, especially those who are not highly motivated, can see when an activity is effective, but often do not enjoy doing it because it is hard work.

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Improving Speaking Task Engagement Among Japanese University Learners

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Developing communication skills in English is an important educational goal in many Japanese universities. However, approaches taken to support their development can sometimes be faced with challenges, including learners accustomed to teacher-centered approaches, passive behavior, and complications associated with the compulsory study of English. We report on an attempt to address these issues and improve learner engagement in speaking activities at a university in Japan. In order to understand the situation, this collaborative action-research project first focused on the existing curricular speaking resources through teacher perspectives. Following analysis, an intervention was developed utilizing a dictation and dialogue approach. A series of tasks were developed to supplement the existing curriculum. A one-year trial of these tasks followed. The intervention was then evaluated using questionnaire feedback from teachers and learners. The intervention provided evidence of improvements in learner engagement and demonstrated the positive impact of an action research approach.

INTRODUCTION

If the goal of English language learning is communication, then it follows that learners need to be provided with opportunities to practice using English in diverse situations so that they are better equipped to deal with the wide-ranging interactions in which they may take part. However, finding ways to engage learners in speaking activities can be challenging, particularly in contexts where English is studied as a compulsory subject, unrelated to their core degree choices, as at our university in Kyushu, Japan, the setting for this research.

Common complaints among the mainly non-Japanese teachers at the institution have often centered on difficulties engaging learners who tend to lack motivation and interest in communicative tasks. There have been comments that the provision of communicative opportunities in the curriculum material may not adequately address the communicative goals of the institution. Like in other centers, it has often been left to individual teachers to develop these skills and meet course objectives. We were motivated to find a more consistent approach to providing communication-orientated materials that were more effective at generating interest, motivation, and learner engagement.

This article reports on a collaborative action research project conducted with 228 first-year students at the university between April 2014 and April 2015. We developed and evaluated an intervention to enhance levels of engagement in speaking activities. This involved the development of a series of dictation and dialogue tasks covering a range of topics and incorporating some pragmatics instruction. These tasks were trialed over an academic year. Feedback was obtained from both learners and teachers who had used the tasks. We then reflected on the feedback and considered ways of adapting the material before rolling it out for wider use at the institution.

The Context

The research took place at a university of approximately 3,000 students in Kyushu, Japan. English is not available as a major, but students in the first two years of study are required to attend two 90-minute communicative English classes per week. As mentioned, the compulsory study of English can result in classes containing numerous learners who lack motivation, interest, and communicative ability. Indeed, as measured by the Oxford Online Placement Test (2015), a sizeable number of students at the institution score below the A1 level on the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2001).

The enduring use of teacher-centered approaches in secondary-level English language education in Japan may contribute to these challenges. Despite top-down language policies encouraging the development of communicative skills in English since the 1980s (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008), learners may have had limited opportunities for communicative practice, and they often arrive at university unaccustomed to taking an active role in speaking tasks (King, 2013). In such conditions, it is unsurprising that engaging all learners in even basic conversation tasks can be very difficult.

Research Approach

In order that the research lead to adaptations and improvements in practice at the institution, we used an action research approach (e.g., Robson, 2002). We were, however, concerned that using an approach to merely find a problem and identify ways to solve it through improved teaching practice could lead to a narrow view of language learning as "relatively unproblematic, *a*social, matter of cause-and-effect relationships" (Allwright, 2003, p. 113-114). Therefore, our approach was more investigative in looking at a "puzzle" in our classroom situations; that is, the lack of learner engagement in speaking tasks at the institution, in the hope that our investigations might bring about positive change (Allwright, 2003).

Investigating the Challenges

The specific aims of the project were to investigate the challenges and identify ways in which we could develop an intervention that might result in greater learner engagement in speaking tasks. Firstly, to understand the problem more fully, we consulted eight teachers at the institution (including the project researchers) to learn about their experiences and to discuss what had and had not worked in their classes. This was conducted via a short email questionnaire. The following questions were asked on the teacher questionnaire to improve understanding of the situation:

- To what extent do you feel the existing curriculum material meets the center targets regarding developing and practicing speaking skills?
- What is your approach to teaching speaking skills in your class?
- What has been effective in your classes in your attempts to boost learner engagement in speaking tasks?
- What measures do you employ to improve learner participation in speaking tasks?

Data from these questionnaires were discussed among the researchers, and interpretations were made. The process was collaborative throughout, in terms of sharing ideas in the data analysis and in the decision-making when it came to planning the intervention. Different options were considered. One teacher had commented that there was insufficient sharing of teaching ideas and that some teachers were doing things in class that others were not. Therefore, it was clear that a more consistent approach could be effective. We also identified from the feedback a need to provide more speaking opportunities and more guidance for teachers. The responses also led us to conclude that the situation could improve with activities in which learners were *not* required to take part directly in tasks involving the individual expression of ideas or the exchange of opinions. Prompts such as "What do you think about X?" provide insufficient scaffolding and are generally overwhelming for our lower-level students.

The Intervention

The intervention involved the development of a series of sixteen speaking tasks, each requiring approximately 20-25 minutes of class time and coinciding with topics in the existing curriculum. Table 1 shows a list of these topics. Our justification was that this approach could lead to an increase in opportunities for learners to participate in conversations on a range of topics. It was considered that starting each task with content-focused listening, using language likely to be familiar to learners and leading to a focus on production and accuracy, might aid learner engagement. For the listening component, we selected a creative dictation approach in which learners would be exposed to this familiar language before using it in their own production. We wanted the approach to ensure that all learners would be involved at all stages of the tasks. Therefore, the tasks were designed to be immediate for learners, aiming at high levels of learner engagement throughout. Since the tasks included practice in all skills areas, in addition to accuracy and fluency, we hoped that motivation would be raised as learners would be using various skills at the same time.

Table 1. A Breakdown of the Topics Covered in the Speaking Tasks

1. Self-Introductions	9. Invitations
2. My Family	10. Hotel Reservations
3. My Hometown	11. Giving Directions
4. My Hobbies	12. Making Dinner Plans
5. My High School Interests	13. At the Restaurant
6. Free Time	14. Giving Advice
7. My Neighborhood	15. At the Shops
8. My Routine	16. Buying Clothes

Each of the sixteen tasks followed a broadly similar pattern with a creative dictation exercise in which the language focus was a dialogue between two individuals, leading to controlled, and later freer, practice. The dialogues were introduced through running, whispering, shouting, or pair dictations. The controlled practice included substitution drills and disappearing dialogues. This led to freer practice such as role plays, conversation practice, and script-writing and performance. Our decision to utilize this approach was motivated by both Davis and Rinvolucri (1988) and Norris (1993). Davis and Rinvolucri (1988) reported that a similar approach could help address learner passivity in addition to being technically useful. Norris (1993), in attempting to manage and motivate large groups of low-level English language learners in Japan, had used related techniques and reported that focusing practice on the exploitation and activation of existing grammatical knowledge could support more successful communication tasks.

Feedback Stages

Before the tasks were used in class, individual teachers from outside the research group were asked for feedback on the task design, coverage, relevance, and potential. The research group made several adaptations with regard to the teacher feedback. The tasks were then available for trial among 18 teachers over the academic year, though teachers were under no obligation to use them.

Following the year-long trial, a short open-ended questionnaire was administered to teachers via SurveyMonkey to determine the extent to which the new materials were being utilized, if the materials were beneficial additions, and what, if any, shortcomings or areas for development existed. The four questions on the questionnaire were

- To what extent have you perused the EC1 and EC2 speaking tasks located on the server?
- To what extent have you used the EC1 and EC2 speaking resources located on the server? (This includes using them with your own modifications and/or using them only partially.)
- Please briefly describe how you feel the speaking resources to be beneficial.
- Please briefly describe any limitations to the speaking resources.

The eighteen teachers completed a survey of multiple choice questions and left additional comments where applicable. At the same time, learners were given the chance to provide their feedback via a short, anonymous paper survey immediately after completing one of the tasks towards the end of the trial (Appendix).

The final stage involved the researchers taking part in a focus group discussion to reflect on the feedback and consider ways of adapting the materials. Starter questions included

- How should we respond to the feedback in terms of adapting the design of the material?
- How should we respond to comments about ease/difficulty of materials?
- In light of the feedback, and your own thoughts, what other adaptations could be made to the existing tasks?

In analysis, we utilized an investigative approach in line with the action research methodology. We used open coding in which we collaboratively attempted to identify and categorize the feedback, enabling theories to emerge from the data (e.g., Dörnyei, 2007).

Teacher Feedback

Following the trial of the intervention, feedback was obtained from teachers and this was positive overall. However, there were some indications that the materials could benefit from modifications regarding student level and ease of delivery. The majority of the teachers, approximately 90%, indicated that they had looked at the material, though some indicated that they had only looked at a few of the activities that were made available to them. Approximately 45% of the teachers reported using four or more of the stand-alone activities. Only two of the teachers reported never using the speaking activities.

The majority of teacher comments indicated that they found the speaking tasks beneficial to their students. Many of the positive comments referred to the activities as being student-centered and task-based. One teacher wrote of the tasks: “They assist me in making my class less teacher-centered.” Another teacher wrote that the activities “provide students with opportunities to do task-focused, simple, do-able activities with various classmates.” Other comments stated that teachers appreciated that the activities could be adapted to suit their class and that the activities offered a successful approach that teachers might not otherwise have attempted. Teachers also commented that, from their perspective, the students found the activities enjoyable and that there were indications of greater engagement in speaking tasks.

Learner Feedback

An analysis of the data indicated that the vast majority of the 228 participating students appreciated the speaking activities because they were enjoyable, provided speaking opportunities, and were useful for developing skills (Figure 1). A clear indication of student positivity was unprompted language that included the words *good* and *great* (81), *happy* (30), *fun* (20), *enjoy* (18), *exciting* (13), and *interesting* (11), among others. Additional responses made reference to appreciation of increased opportunities to speak English (29). Typical responses in this category included: "I felt it [was] interesting [because] I can enjoy and learn English conversation with my friends." Twenty-seven (27) students specifically mentioned improvements in vocabulary, listening, reading, and pronunciation.

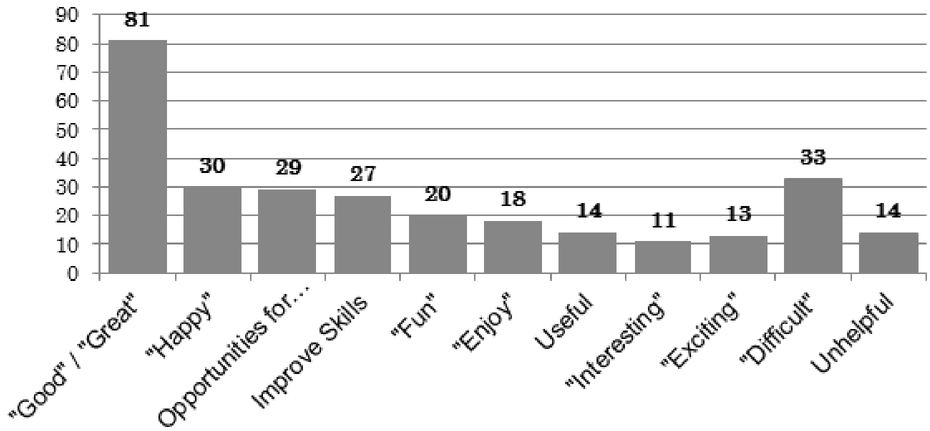

FIGURE 1. Coding of student responses. (Quotation marks indicate direct quotes.)

Of all the 228 participants, the majority (184, 81%) circled the word *helpful* in the second item on the paper survey. Of the 44 students who did not circle *helpful*, 19 omitted circling anything, perhaps an inadvertent omission. Twenty-five students either circled the word *unhelpful* or made comments indicative of such sentiment. Of this subcategory, frequently noted comments included *tired* or *tiring* (4) or some indication of apathy such as *"I don't like speaking"* and *"not interesting."* In some instances, it is possible, perhaps due to time constraints or inadequate preparation, that the teacher was unable to provide a freer production activity in which students expressed their own thoughts. Another possibility is that the student in question simply did not require as much practice as other classmates in preparing for the freer production.

A number of students issued mixed responses. For example, while 33 students reported that the activities were difficult, 21 also circled the word *helpful* on their survey. Six of the same students also included an unprompted *enjoyable*. Though these students found the activities challenging, they nonetheless saw value in them. Similarly, five of the students who had written *enjoyable* on the survey forms, also wrote the word *tiring*.

Focus Group

The four researchers then gathered to discuss the data analysis and to consider ways to respond to this and adapt the material. Results were largely positive from teachers and learners alike, and there were indications that our attempts to improve learner engagement had been effective. Learner feedback *may* have been positive due to participant expectancy in which students consciously or unconsciously provided answers that they felt the teachers wanted to receive. However, this limitation should have been somewhat mitigated by the anonymous nature of the survey responses. Teacher feedback was encouraging overall, although some teachers may have felt isolated from the project objectives since these may not have been made sufficiently clear. One teacher noted that he had not used the materials because he had been unaware of their existence. Providing a short professional development workshop and/or making available a video of an activity demonstrating how the tasks worked and clearly stating the aims may be beneficial going forward.

The discussion also led to the conclusion that some of the tasks may have appeared slightly incomplete and that it could be useful to provide a further wrap-up stage in the form of short formative feedback. In addition, it was felt that more free production activities could be added. However, we acknowledged that in the existing structured activities, many of our low-level learners would be likely to use a wider selection of forms than in freer practice where they may use more comfortable forms, or “the path of least resistance.”

The discussion continued around the material being somewhat contrived. This was necessary for many learners due to generally low levels of proficiency. However, the material could be adapted for higher-level classes, possibly by incorporating more authentic and complex texts to use as conversational models. We felt that the ordering of activities would not need to change even if the dialogues were replaced. We also felt that, given the positive feedback, it would be useful to develop more tasks connected to the existing topics and for the second-year curriculum.

Conclusions

Overall, the project enabled us to investigate the challenges of dealing with learner passivity and oral inactivity in speaking tasks. These investigations led to a greater understanding of the situation in terms of a perceived shortage of speaking materials to match the communicative aims of the institution’s curriculum and the need to provide greater consistency across classes. This understanding of the “puzzle” (Allwright, 2003) led to the development of an intervention that we hoped would lead to change in practice, not through the application of improved teaching techniques but through a more detailed understanding of the situation. This research approach, we hope, may offer teachers working in similar contexts and facing similar teaching challenges evidence that an action research approach can be beneficial.

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Appendix

Paper Survey for Learners

私達は、今年使用した新しいスピーキング教材に関して、皆さんがどのように思っているのかを知りたいと思っています。

この調査は研究を目的にしています。もし、快く参加して頂けるのなら、下の質問に答えて下さい。

1. This activity made me feel ________________________________
2. For my English speaking skills, this activity was *helpful* / *unhelpful* (please circle) because ____
   ____

Mediated Collaboration and Active Listening: Integrating Facebook Use into the TEFL Listening Classroom

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Listening comprehension is the outcome of meaningful language input and output, as well as the result of the interaction between "bottom-up" and "top-down" listening skills. In this study, Facebook was used as a social networking system for putting up announcements, sharing resources, connecting information, organizing online discussions, connecting with students outside of class, and providing extended materials for listening. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of integrating a Facebook listening club into a university TEFL listening classroom. A brief overview of the literature on the use of Facebook for social interaction, the rationale, the platform, and the issues created with the new environments is offered. For the eleven-week listening sessions, 103 university TEFL students received guided instruction by using Facebook. Listening lessons with before-, during-, and after-listening elements to allow learners to use their top-down skills and to develop their bottom-up skills were provided (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Saricoban, 1999; Tyler, 2001). The results showed that the participants were mainly satisfied with the use of the Facebook club. The interviews revealed that student-to-student, student-to-teacher, and student-to-material interaction were important for active listening, and texts that are relevant could motivate learner's involvement. Both limitations of using the Facebook club and implications for pedagogical practice are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

As one major concern of language learning, the development of listening skills plays a significant role in communication (Bozorgian & Pillay, 2013; Shrum & Glisan, 2000; Vandergrift, 2002; Winitz, 1981). In TEFL contexts, the emphasis of listening class is mainly on a means of preparing learners to take standardized tests. The training of critical thinking, developing sensibility to grammar expressions and language use, and note-taking skills in terms of second language acquisition have often been neglected. TEFL learners often regard listening as the most difficult language skill to acquire. In real-life communication, listening is an active process, which is created through the interaction of those involved (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002).

Some low-achievers have been found to be inactive in listening participation, as they are incapable of dealing with the input. Kim (2000) concluded that the factor of listening anxiety affecting learners' performances was their inability to understand well, as well as a lack of confidence, so they became stressed when answering questions. On the other hand, if learners negotiated in a group or on the Internet, they could transform into more confident learners. Scarcella and Oxford (1992) claimed that listening tasks were able to provoke anxiety in listeners when they were unfamiliar with the content of radio talks and said that this would reduce their confidence in answering questions. An interactive approach may enhance learner motivation because it accommodates diversified student needs, learning styles, and proficiencies (Onoda, 2011). Sharif and Ferdous (2012) claimed that a low-anxiety and high-confidence classroom environment will inspire learners to participate actively and effectively in the listening process. For these reasons, the authors decided to activate learners' involvement in English listening and enhance participants' listening comprehension via a new pedagogy. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of integrating a Facebook listening club into a university-level TEFL listening classroom.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Learners' Involvement and Listening

Students' involvement and learning environment have been a growing concern since these two factors have a salient impact on students' learning (Astin, 1993; Carini, Kuh, & Klein, 2006; Porter, 2006). Many researchers mention the concept of involvement as a key determinant of learning outcomes (Astin, 1999; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Astin's (1999) study strongly supported involvement as a powerful ingredient for enhancing the undergraduate student's cognitive and affective development. It is important to increase the understanding of involvement in learning and development activities, not only getting involved in learning but also the situations that may facilitate involvement (Maurer, Murphy, & Simonds, 2007).

Moreover, the interactive approach aims to enhance learner motivation because it meets student needs, learning styles, and proficiencies (Nation & Newton, 2009; Onoda, 2011). L2 listening can be taught effectively and interactively using three stages: pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening (Nunan, 1998). The pre-listening stage offers background information and target vocabulary for the theme of the text. The during-listening stage allows learners to engage in listening to understand the gist first and then the details. The post-listening stage encourages learners to react, summarize, and discuss the information with a view to drawing on it in future listening. The interactive approach has pedagogical implications for teaching listening in the Taiwanese EFL context. The incorporation of meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, and fluency development tasks into listening classes would be one way to improve listening proficiency (Nation & Newton, 2009). Furthermore, listening teachers armed with a technological tool are more likely to employ that tool in the language curriculum.

Virtual Communities and Collaboration

Virtual communities are groups for students, faculty, advisors, mentors, and teaching assistants who interact and connect with others (Blanchard & Cook, 2012; Chen, Chang, & Liu, 2012). Blanchard and Cook (2012) stated that helping with homework, advising, and stimulating students' potential curiosity, and facilitating collaboration with their major could be included in the types of interactions in virtual communities. As a result, the functions of virtual communities can connect across classes in a program and may include former-student professionals who can help as teachers. Social networking sites such as Facebook that could bring participants closer together for discussion via the Internet have been considered as virtual communities. Moreover, Wenger (1998) pointed out that sharing and internalizing knowledge online enables people to talk about their experiences and to exchange knowledge while focusing on specific problems. Facebook owns an application called Note, which actually functions like a simple blog and which may be useful in facilitating such exchanges.

Yang (2008) commented that teacher and students can employ Facebook as a "blackboard." On Facebook, the teacher can post and introduce articles to students, and students could use Facebook in order to share information. In addition, Facebook acts as a free publishing space; teachers have the responsibility to offer students opportunities to publish their works and share them with others. Munoz and Towner (2009) created a virtual classroom in which learners were asked to create their own Facebook account and become friends with another member of the class. It showed that the virtual community brought people together to exchange information online and was sometimes mixed with face-to-face interaction. Barbour and Plough (2009) found that Facebook use could improve the quality of discussion groups. In accordance with these studies, Facebook has been shown to be a space mediated for sharing, learning, and connection.

The Use of Facebook

Facebook is a platform for social communication. It is a helpful website for learning and for creating and sustaining relationships. Facebook has many useful functions for every user, such as texting anyone at any time, acquiring information, and helping with rapid publishing of something you want to share without a face-to-face meeting. Boyd and Ellison (2007) described Facebook as an instrument allowing users to construct a private profile in order to connect and interact with people who are part of their extended social communication. Munoz and Towner (2009) described the steps in construction of a virtual classroom through Facebook: (a) students create a group in Facebook; (b) the students can make a private space if it is needed; (c) the teacher can post topics, videos, links, and others related items; (d) experts can be invited into the group and make contributions; (e) the students can respond to the teachers' posts and give their opinions; (f) closing the student groups depends on the students' needs when the class is over.

Most studies reviewed focused on the effect of using Facebook with learners.

There are two aspects of Facebook use: the technological setting and the instructional setting. From a functional point of view, the main goal of virtual communication via Facebook is sharing information via links, photos, and videos. Besides, participants can use the message function to contact others rather than telephone. Ahmad (2011) indicated that social networking sites have evolved as a combination of a personalized media experience within the social context of participation; he stated that profiles are publicly viewed, friends are publicly articulated, and comments are publicly visible in social network sites (SNS). From an instructional perspective, in Facebook lies an innovative environment for teaching and learning for researchers to investigate. Madge, Meek, Wellens, and Hooley (2009) describe Facebook as a useful instrument for improving effective academic practice. Alias, Siraj, Daud, and Hussin (2013) suggest that the instructional design model, which focuses on the learner perspective instead of on a content-based perspective of learning will improve creativity and interest among students in an educational environment. Likewise, Selwyn (2007) claims that Facebook is an attractive tool for teaching and facilitates related interactions between peers. Cerda and Planas (2011) mention that for group work, Facebook provides a virtual space. In mediated collaboration, learners can have shared objectives, share their opinions, hold events, publish information, share ideas and suggestions, and text other users. Facebook has become one of the most popular social network platforms among students. The reason is that users can connect with new friends and keep in touch with old ones, join groups, share things with others, and message other people in the network. Facebook also has potential for teaching and learning because of diverse functions that offer pedagogical, social, and technological solutions (Cam & Isbulan, 2012; Hew & Cheung, 2012; Munoz & Towner, 2009; Aydin, 2012; Wang, Woo, Quek, Yang, & Liu, 2012).

Studies on Facebook Language Learning

Conducted in language classroom contexts, recent research has indicated that the application of Facebook in class could give great support in helping students establish and maintain immediacy among themselves (Mazer, Murphy, & Simonds, 2007). Mazer, et al., (2007) pointed out that students may be conscious of similarities with peers, which could lead to more comfortable communications and better learning outcomes through accessing Facebook. Mutual collaboration is regarded as a necessary factor in developing a sense of community, which creates an environment that encourages continued participation in a group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Likewise, Blattner and Fiori (2009) suggest that promoting a community of learners is immensely useful as it often positively impacts affective learning and students' motivation.

The examination of Facebook as an online learning community indicates that Facebook offers authentic and sufficient environments for improving communications, interactions, and discussions (Mills, 2009). In an online community, participants can actively join in online discussion by leaving comments on a discussion board, which may not be easily achieved in a formal educational context. The findings also revealed that Facebook could be utilized for real language interaction and could be taken advantage of for enhancing the performance of language learners (Blattner & Fiori, 2009). According to Mills'

(2009) study, in comparing traditional discussion with online discussion, her students in the Facebook environment of online discussions thought that the language class was more interesting than normal practice. A writing study by Omar, Embi, and Yunus (2012) investigated 31 ESL learners' participation in an information-sharing task with Facebook Groups, in which the participants' feedback was made through Facebook. The findings showed that feedback received from the participants was positive. Facebook is a visual environment that can be used to promote interaction in English learning. The study suggests that Facebook Groups be used for language learning activities to practice and use communicative language. Promoting awareness of available online tools and modeling effective use of the tools are suggested to help enhance learners' online interactions.

Unlike regular classroom interaction, Facebook Groups is not limited in time and space. Therefore, teachers may become facilitators and intermediaries between students and resources (Bower, 2001). Language learners have been provided with a significant opportunity for language learning with the advent of Facebook. Learners can contact and interact with other learners; they can communicate with each other as well as collaborate on solving problems in terms of language learning through the use of Facebook. Previous research investigating Facebook for language learning has focused on online community formation in language learning, learners' perception and motivation with respect to participating in an online learning community, and the effect of an online learning community on language learning development. To sum up, Facebook has been shown to be an effective teaching instrument for learners. Students are able to concentrate on learning without being subjected to a tedious environment. Materials are more appealing to learners when they appear on Facebook. Despite the fact that these studies for the use of Facebook have provided general information on language learning, they have been conducted mostly in classroom settings. Little attention has been directed toward the involvement of Facebook as a club in a listening classroom. In view of the benefits of Facebook functions, this present study aimed to explore ways of incorporating listening material with Facebook use and the perception of learners toward a Facebook listening club.

METHOD

Participants

The participants in this study were 103 third-year English majors at Southern University of Science and Technology, aged 19 to 22. Students enrolled in the listening course were required to join in the Facebook listening club to use the technological medium. Twenty-one mixed-level Facebook groups (two groups of four students; nineteen groups of five students) were assigned to take the pre-test. In each group, a capable learner with high achievement was selected as the group leader based on their performance on the listening pre-test. Each group was required to cooperate together: exchange ideas, fulfill listening tasks, publish their work, and share with others.

Research Instruments

The instruments included learning objectives, listening tests for pre-testing and post-testing, Facebook listening club guidelines, English listening materials (short talks, short videos, English news), a questionnaire, and interviews.

Facebook Listening Club

Before the 11-week training session began, there was a five-week warm-up session. During this time, the authors created the exclusive Facebook listening club, invited all students, arranged Facebook groups, offered note-taking lessons, and managed the participants' collaboration and interaction. In this study, the Facebook listening club was the main tool for scaffolding learning. It was thought that through a Facebook listening club, learners could get into contact with others who joined the club more easily, and that the listening club would be beneficial for learning another language together (i.e., that it would bring about more interaction between learners, as well as teacher and learner). The functions of the Facebook listening club are listed in Table 1. These functions were designed to provide immediate assistance and for scaffolding social interaction. One example of a teacher's class announcement is shown in Figure 1.

TABLE 1. Functions of the Facebook Listening Club

	Facebook Function	
	Sharing	Posting themes and introducing articles to students Sharing pictures and video links Adding listening files/pictures Giving answer keys/scripts
Mediated Collaboration	Discussing	Leaving messages in the chat room Announcing listening topics Real-time questions and answers
	Announcing	Managing classroom/listening activity rules Offering background knowledge and key words Understanding the topics
	Interacting	Working on the assignment with FB groups Giving responses to questions based on FB group Private group discussion
	Connecting	Immediate feedback Solving problems Extended topics and extended exercises

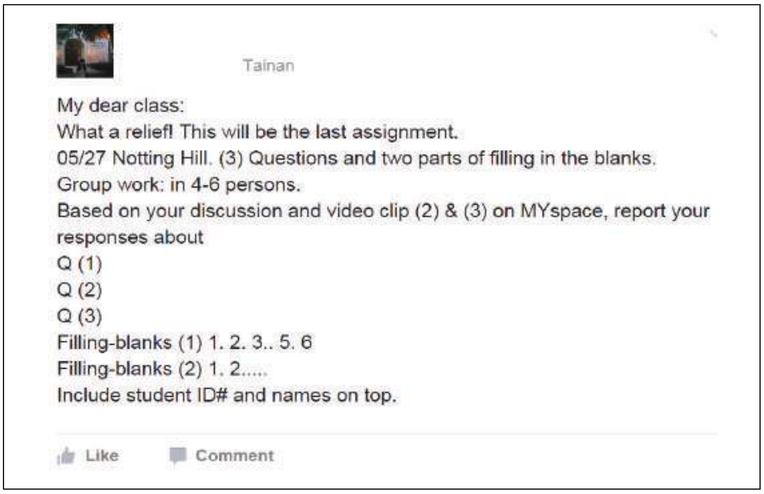

FIGURE 1. A Class Announcement.

Private Chat Room

An online private chat room has the element of interactivity: Users can exchange comments and their understanding of the topic in a chat room. In this way, the Facebook group members had the opportunity to compare what they hear with each other. Meanwhile, capable peers could integrate all the ideas and reconfirm details that some members might overlook, ignore, or doubt. The leaders could express their opinions on different points and remind the group members of important parts. Finally, each group leader could help the group submit the assignment to the Facebook listening club. An example of the private chat room is displayed in Figure 2.

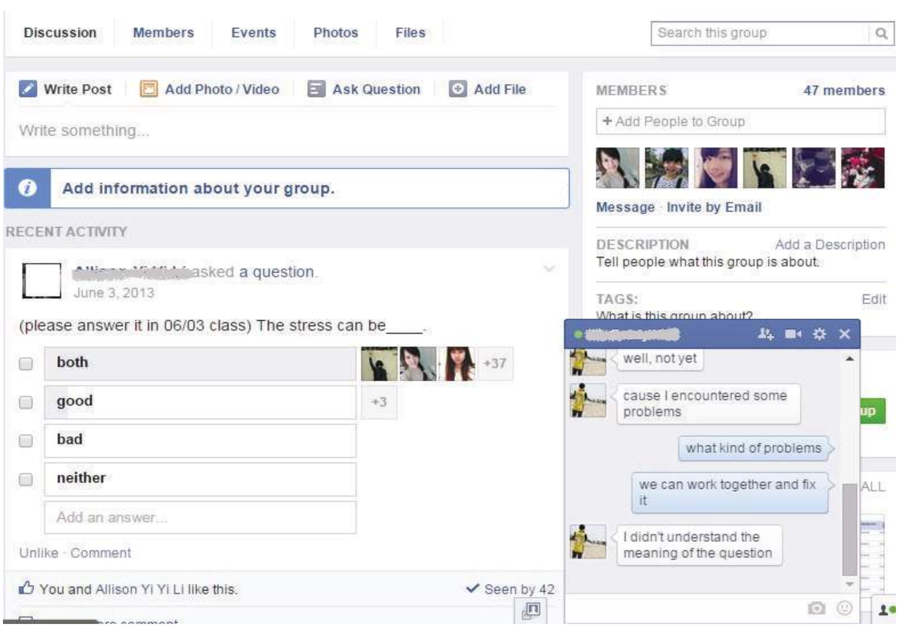

FIGURE 2. The Private Chat Room on Facebook.

Listening Materials

The listening materials included video exercises, listening tasks, and a listening quiz. Figure 3 displays the link to the online video and a question on the Facebook listening club.

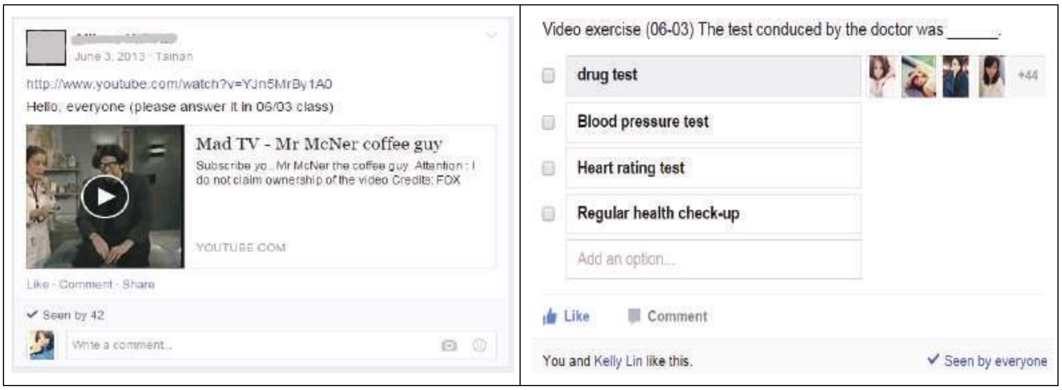

FIGURE 3. Video Link and Question on the Facebook Listening Club.

There were three types of listening exercises: filling in the blanks, responding to the question, and true or false questions. Table 2 illustrates the main themes of the meaning-focused input.

TABLE 2. The Themes of the Listening Materials

Category	Themes	
CNN News	Technology	Environment
TED Talks	Stereotypes	Appearance
YouTube Movie Clips	Romance Health	Autobiography

Shown in Table 3 is the training syllabus for each topic; the (capable) group leader would submit the listening responses. Meaning-focused output was mediated interactively through the Facebook listening club at three stages: pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening (Nunan, 1998).

TABLE 3. The Listening Training Syllabus

Week	Topic	Theme	Video	Procedure
1	CNN news: "International Smart Phone Savings"	Lifestyle	Travel expert Chris McGinnis gives us some tips on how to save on smart phone calls when traveling overseas.	Pre: getting background knowledge of the video from the textbook During: taking notes After: discussing with group members and submit the answer by the group leader
2	CNN news: "Hurricane disaster"	Environment/ Ecology	August 29, 2005: Hurricane Katrina made landfall on the Gulf Coast, destroying lives, leveling homes and leaving thousands of survivors with the same story: We lost everything.	Pre: getting background knowledge of the video During: answer the questions After: watch the video again and write a sentence or two summarizing the message.
3	TED talks: "Chimamanda Adichie: The danger of a single story."	Culture	Novelist Chimamanda Adichie tells the story of how she found her authentic cultural voice; and if we hear only a single story about another person or country, we risk a critical misunderstanding.	Pre: accepting the general knowledge about the video During: taking notes After: sharing what they heard from the video and submit the answer by the group leader
4	TED talks: "Cameron Russell: Looks aren't everything. Believe me, I'm a model."	Appearance	Cameron Russell admits she won "a genetic lottery": she's tall, pretty and an underwear model. But don't judge her by her looks. In this fearless talk, she takes a wry look at the industry that had her looking highly seductive at barely 16 years old.	Pre: receiving the speakers' background information During: taking notes After: answering the questions with the group members which created by teacher
5	YouTube movie clips : the first part of "Notting Hill"	Personal relationship	Understanding the interesting interpersonal relationship.	Pre: getting background knowledge of the video During: taking notes After: collaborating with group members and submit the answer by the group leader
6	YouTube movie clips : the second part of "Notting Hill"	Personal relationship	Students could know about the relationship between people, and how to get along with friends.	Pre: accepting the general knowledge about the video During: taking notes After: discussing with group members and submit the answer by the group leader
7	YouTube movie clips : the first part of "Miss Potter"	History of creator	Students would know the information about the woman who made the Peter Rabbits.	Pre: accepting the general knowledge about the video During: taking notes After: sharing what they heard from the video and submit the answer by the group leader
8	YouTube movie clips : the second part of "Miss Potter"	History of creator	Students would join the whole life of Miss Potter, and would understand never give up.	Pre: receiving the speakers' background information During: taking notes After: answering the questions with the group members which created by teacher
9	YouTube movie clips: "Mad TV - Mr McNer coffee guy."	Addicted	It was a funny and relaxes video that cultivated students' humor of America by the video. The behavior of a person addicted to coffee.	Pre: getting background knowledge of the video from the textbook During: taking notes After: discussing with group members and submit the answer by the group leader

Questionnaire

The questions on the questionnaire were adapted from those of a previous study (Lin, 2010), which were modified from the studies by Lu and Liu (2011) and Huang (2004). There were two parts to the questionnaire: the first part was demographical information. In this part, the participant's background information was collected, on topics such as gender, age, and habit of using Facebook. The possible responses to the questionnaire were in a 5-point Likert-scale format.

Data Collection and Analysis

The classes each received an 11-week training session (plus a 5-week pre-training period). The participants received basic knowledge, which was taught using the textbook, and they also got to familiarize themselves with the listening skills and materials. The pre-test was conducted during the first week of the training session, with the contents of the listening portion made up of dialogue and short talks. The pre-test contained fifty multiple-choice questions selected from standard items of the TOEIC test. The purpose of the pre-test was to assess the participants' listening ability and use it as data for grouping the participants. After the completion of the listening training session, the post-test examined the participants' listening ability again, including true-false questions, multiple-choice questions, and fill-in-the-blank questions. The testing materials for the post-test were based on what students studied during the training session. The participants were required to respond within a week. Questionnaires were given to understand the participants' motivation and learner interaction.

Quantitative analyses were conducted with the use of paper documents, and the use of SPSS and Excel for statistical analysis. The mean scores revealed the students' opinions toward the use of Facebook. The value of the mean scores was interpreted according to Table 4:

TABLE 4. The Value of Mean Scores

Value of Mean Scores	Meaning
4.51-5.00	Very good
3.51-4.50	Good
2.51-3.50	Average
1.51-2.50	Bad
1.50 or lower	Very bad

FINDINGS

Table 5 shows the descriptive analysis for mean and standard deviation for questionnaire statements concerning the use of the Facebook club for listening class. Mean scores for attitudinal statements related to using Facebook for the listening class ranged from 3.25 to 4.29, which is between average and good. The highest mean score (4.29) was for the statement about teacher-student interaction: "The Facebook club is a good access to class announcements and listening directions." The lowest mean score (3.25) was for the statement "The Facebook club helps me build up my confidence in listening response." The overall average mean score was about 3.84 out of a possible 5.00, showing that the participants had a positive attitude toward the Facebook listening club. The 17 statements of the questionnaire, their mean scores, and the category of that score are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5. Results of Evaluation of Learners' Attitudes Toward the Use of Facebook for Listening

Questions	Mean	SD	Result interpretation
1. The Facebook club is more efficient than the other platforms.	3.85	.87	good
2. The Facebook club helped me to build up the relevant background information for the topic and the content.	3.81	.80	good
3. The Facebook club is a good access to class announcements and listening directions.	4.29	.74	good
4. The Facebook club is a helper for receiving scaffolding resource from instructor.	4.26	.72	good
5. The Facebook club increased my impetus for submitting the assignments.	3.54	.94	good
6. The Facebook club helped my understand with the link of the video and audio files.	3.92	.75	good
7. The Facebook club helped me to build up my confidence in listening response.	3.25	.87	average
8. The Facebook club increased my interaction with peers.	3.52	.92	good
9. The Facebook club increased my interaction with the instructor.	4.09	.73	good
10. The Facebook club helped me to get the gist of the content of the listening.	3.79	.73	good
11. The Facebook club helped me with the on-line answer keys and explanations.	4.02	.80	good
12. The Facebook club helped me a lot with the immediate assistance and feedback.	4.02	.73	good
13. The Facebook club helped my personal growth and academic study.	3.88	.80	good
14. The Facebook club reduced my anxiety for listening activities.	3.66	.88	good
15. The Facebook club and the group increased my participation this semester.	3.70	.87	good

Most of the participants believed that using the Facebook club for listening had numerous advantages:

1. Students were motivated to get in touch with other users (as per Darvell, Walsh, & White, 2011), and their learning was facilitated because, for example, low-achievers could interact with other students.
2. Users of the Facebook listening club received messages immediately. It is a convenient place for activating schemata, great for learners' sharing and discussion.

3. Facebook provides a lot of information that can be shared with the teacher and other learners. Accordingly, the participants enjoyed the brainstorming activity, which triggered their thinking skills.
4. Most of the participants were agreeable to in-class discussion and outside classroom interaction, which reduced their anxiety related to listening.
5. The participants could download the data and listen to it over and over until the problem was solved.

Figure 4 shows the active listening involvement of two classes for the training course. Figure 5 illustrates listening responses on Facebook. The immediate response demonstrated that student involvement and college environment had a salient effect on learning. The participants did not have to wait long to get the things they needed; in addition, the participants agreed that they could have more interaction with the teacher and peers on the Facebook platform, suggesting closer student-teacher relations.

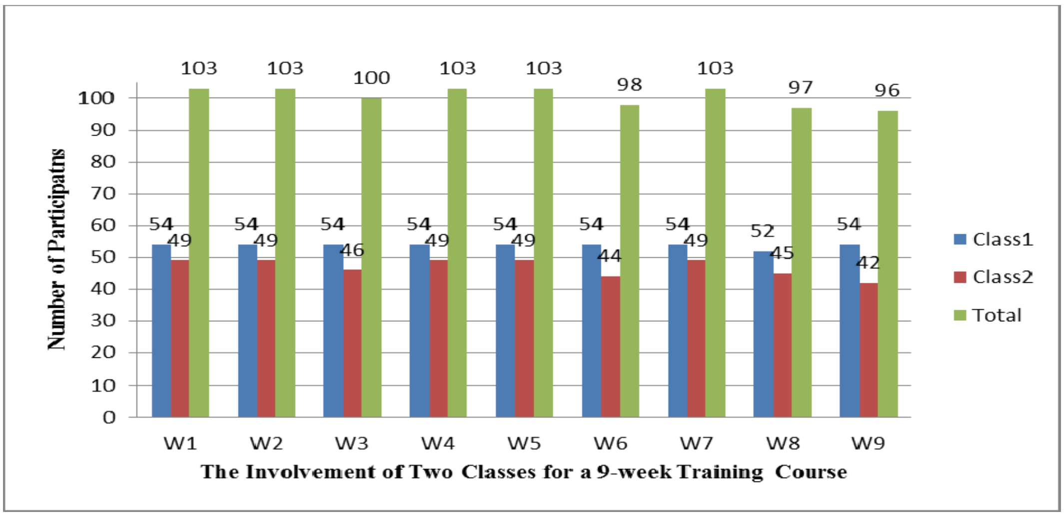

FIGURE 4. The Frequency of Class Participation.

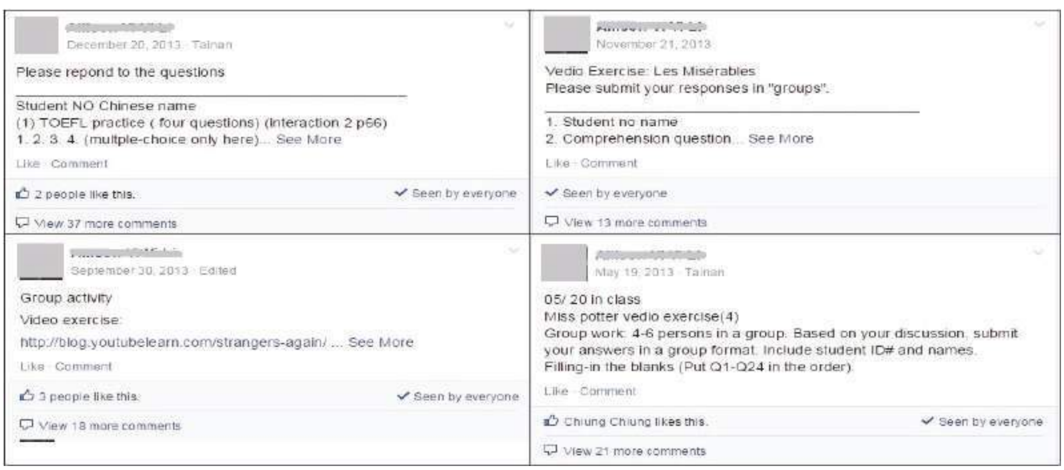

FIGURE 5. Listening Responses on the Facebook Club.

Table 6 below shows the mean score of the text quiz for each listening lesson. Along with the positive results of the participants' attitudes toward the use of Facebook, the participants agreed that, with the help of the input, including background information, target vocabulary, and online listening materials, the Facebook club participants improved their comprehension because they had enough time to practice listening tasks via the video clips posted on the Facebook listening club page.

TABLE 6. The Mean Score on the Text Quiz

Week	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9
Average Score	100	100	96.5	100	93	98	100	100	95

Table 7 shows the comparative results of the listening pre-test and post-test scores for the participants. The average mean scores on the pre-test and the post-test were 65.8 and 70.6, respectively. The standard derivation for the pre-test and the post-test were 2.15 and 1.83, respectively. In terms of a *t*-test result, one could conclude that the post-test score was higher than that of the pre-test at a significance level of 0.00. The learners' listening comprehension increased significantly through cooperative work in the Facebook listening club. The results are displayed in Table 7.

TABLE 7. The Result of Comparison of the English Listening Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Class 1 (*n* = 54)		Class 2 (*n* = 49)		Total (*N* = 103)	
Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
61.2	69.6	70.4	71.6	65.8	70.6

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings showed that the 103 participants were satisfied with the integration of the Facebook listening club into their listening course. The use of mediated collaboration for the development of listening comprehension appears to have been effective, indicated by the post-test scores. Analysis of the participants' responses to the questionnaire revealed that they were actively engaged in listening. Through collaboration, the participants exchanged ideas, gained knowledge from the other group members, and even learned how to communicate with others; it enabled them to better engage by being part of a group. Darvell, Walsh, and White (2011) point out that the more often one uses Facebook, the greater the involvement. As reported by Staines and Lauchs (2013), Facebook promoted participants' ability to engage with their peers and increased participant communication with both their peers and teaching staff. Overall, the participants were pleased that they had joined the Facebook listening club as that provided them with a special experience in their listening course. The participants indicated that the Facebook club was a useful platform for communicating with classmates in that it was easy to get information about the class. The participants also indicated that they preferred to submit their assignments through the Facebook club because one of the fundamental functions on Facebook was notification. Therefore, they would not forget to do the homework.

The class observation revealed that the students would like to express and share their ideas. Therefore, involving them in discussion in the Facebook club could improve learning interest and motivation. The findings correspond to Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which explained that the ZPD is the process between a student's ability to perform a task under adult guidance and with peer collaboration, leading to solving a problem independently. Accordingly, the Facebook club holds a special attraction for students, making it able to assist in peer collaboration and increase involvement in language learning.

The findings derived from this study have several implications. The theoretical implication is that the results of this study are in accord with the theories of scaffolding and the ZPD. During the training course, the teacher needed to be well-trained in the selection of the listening content, the information about the listening, and content topics that were a match with the background knowledge of the learners. The ZPD emphasizes collaboration between peers and an adult. In this current study, a capable person would lead other group members to solve their questions and increase their listening motivation. Learners helped peers and learned from peers through collaborative learning to improve their English listening.

As for pedagogical implications, the use of Facebook for listening improvement can be a successful method for enhancing the learning involvement of learners. First of all, the listening instructor, as a facilitator, could encourage students to cooperate with group members in English listening practice. Secondly, the activities using Facebook with the listening class were more student-centered. That is, the teacher brought the exercises into the Facebook club as the homework, and the students had to interact and discuss these with their group members in the Facebook club until a conclusion was arrived at. The entire process was controlled by the students. Thirdly, three stages of listening engaged learners, with comprehensible input and meaningful output.

There were some limitations of this study that need to be noted. First, not every student used Facebook often. Hence, using Facebook to do the listening activities was not an enticement for them. Second, Facebook is a public platform where some of the most conscientious students would hand in their homework sooner than others, and their homework content would be taken. In addition, Facebook has a lot of information that interferes with student learning. Some students are easily distracted by this information on Facebook while discussing their homework with their classmates. The results showed that many students consider Facebook to be a useful instrument but think that it is not a perfect platform.

The purpose of this study was to investigate students' prespectives on using a Facebook club for a listening class, without attempting to measure the effectiveness of the use of Facebook on students' listening abilities. A future study could focus on investigating whether students' English listening ability improves more after participating in Facebook activities online. Facebook is a popular platform that can be used to contribute to autonomous learning and language processing. It may be used as a channel to influence participants' attitudes toward language learning.

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Online Doctoral Candidates: Challenges for FLT Professionals

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Many FLT professionals endeavor to enhance their careers by completing an online doctoral degree. However, much of the data for online degree completion research does not specifically address doctoral degrees. With the increased enrollment in online doctoral degrees, this pilot inquiry reports on FLT professionals' academic challenges, faced as graduate students, that are unique to online post-graduate research programs. Recommendations for those venturing into such programs are offered. Doctoral faculty and postgraduate administrators receive recommendations on how to better support those enrolled in online doctoral programs.

INTRODUCTION

Many individuals in the field of foreign language education seek to be more competitive by taking advantage of online degrees. In English-as-second-language (ESL) settings, like the United States, online degrees often provide individuals the convenience of completing coursework without the commute to a physical campus or relocation to the area of a reputable school and may offer more affordable tuition with respect to face-to-face program tuition. In English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) settings, like Korea, online degrees provide the same benefits as those mentioned, but also offer native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) the ability to enroll in institutions in English-speaking countries if they do not have sufficient mastery of the local language to do academic work at a domestic institution. The same is true for individuals in foreign-language-teaching (FLT) settings (i.e., languages other than English) within the United States and Korea. Even if they master the local language to enroll in domestic institutions, individuals may be restricted by full-time employment schedules and family commitments.

This paper describes the outcome of a pilot inquiry in preparation for a formal study examining the experiences of FLT professionals in online doctoral programs. The pilot study described is informed by a limited number of FLT professionals' online learning experiences located in the Unites States and Korea. The collected data is used to narrow the focus for a subsequent formal study to inform prospective FLT professionals considering enrollment in online doctoral programs and to offer doctoral faculty and postgraduate administrators information on how to better support students enrolled in online doctoral programs in the fields of TESOL, FLT, applied linguistics, and education.

Literature Review

Academic Preparation

The growing enrollment in online doctoral programs presents distinct challenges for students who have completed online master's degrees in TESOL, applied linguistics, education, and related fields by coursework only rather than in combination with a thesis. If students from face-to-face and online master's programs complete a thesis, there can still be challenges as the process of conducting and completing a doctoral dissertation is more rigorous. Even though research methods and writing instruction are provided in online doctoral programs, some students may not receive the guidance needed due to the nature of online instruction and multiple demands on faculty from students. It requires more time and effort of faculty to deliver online courses than to teach corresponding face-to-face courses (Allen & Seaman, 2015). The notion is that technology allows teachers to provide quality instruction to a larger number of students through online programs. However, this is not necessarily the case. In addition, a large majority of students lack the self-discipline and autonomy to successfully complete online programs (Patterson & McFadden, 2009). Added to this, the lack of face-to-face, personalized contact with a thesis supervisor and/or mentor often results in academic isolation of the student. This results in doctoral students attempting to complete thesis requirements without the academic rearing and research support needed. Some may unnecessarily drop out, failing to complete the degree (Yorke, 2004).

Completion Rates: Face-to-Face Programs

Embarking on a doctoral degree entails a level of academic rigor and personal commitment not experienced during a bachelor's or master's degree. Completion rates are impacted by a range of academic and personal circumstances, leaving some unable to complete graduation requirements. Doctoral programs usually are described as taking 4–6 years to complete, but can be extended for lengthy periods of time. Records estimate that after four years into a program approximately 10% do not complete their doctoral program (Jaschik, 2008), and with every additional year, an additional 10% drop out (Jaschik, 2007; Jaschik, 2008). Records estimate that ten years into a doctoral program, 56% of students in the social sciences and 49% of students in the humanities fail to complete their doctoral program (Jaschik, 2008). Therefore, about half of those who start a face-to-face doctoral program in a field related to TESOL, FLT, applied linguistics, or education do not finish if they extend the process.

It is important to note that not all individuals who drop out of a doctoral program advance to the dissertation stage. Many leave before beginning the dissertation process. However, the dissertation process is a long and less structured segment compared to coursework requirements. Figures indicate that drop-out rates increase dramatically during the dissertation stage (Jaschik, 2008). Therefore, it can be assumed that the dissertation is a major factor in students' decision to leave programs. The figures mentioned are for face-to-face doctorate programs. However, based on the high drop-out rate for online degrees in general

(Patterson & McFadden, 2009), it could be argued that non-completion rates for online post-graduate degrees, like doctoral programs, would be comparable.

Completion Rates: Online Education Programs

The term *online education* refers to a range of courses and programs ranging from free, non-accredited short-term and massive open online courses (MOOCs) to formal accredited degree-granting programs. Although studies have shown the effectiveness of instruction in these diverse online environments to be comparable to that of the traditional classroom (Russell, 2001), studies and anecdotal evidence indicate attrition rates for online courses are often much higher than for face-to-face courses (Bos & Shami, 2006; Diaz & Cartnal, 2006; Rovai, 2003; Willging & Johnson, 2004). Adult professionals show higher attrition rates in face-to-face programs compared to traditional aged students (Patterson & McFadden, 2009). This suggests that adult professionals' increased drop-out rates in online programs may be due to diverse commitments in their professional and family lives when compared to those of young-adult, face-to-face students. Academic institution leaders argue that students may not possess the discipline and autonomy to be successful in online programs (Allen & Seaman, 2008). Since mature-aged adults make up the majority of online program enrollment in graduate programs (Rovai, 2003), it can be assumed that this lack of autonomy and competing demands outside of the academic program may be factors in non-completion rates.

There has been growing research examining the completion rates of online doctoral programs (Jashick, 2007). The existing research examines a variety of undergraduate and graduate online programs (Allen & Seaman, 2015; Lederman, 2013; Padderson & McFadden, 2009). Among the existing literature, some studies (Diaz, 2002; Diaz & Cartel, 2006) indicate that there is a significant difference between online and face-to-face completion rates, while other research (Poulin, 2013; Russell, 2001) suggests the difference is insignificant. While online students do complete their degrees, Allen and Seaman (2015) suggests that may be less about the online mode of instruction than about the types of individuals who enroll in online degrees. Most online students are nontraditional learners (Allen & Seaman, 2015), individuals who are juggling work, school and family commitments. Therefore, it is logical that they require more time to complete degrees or be inhibited from completing graduation requirements. So, if they do complete an online degree, the focus maybe should be on the personal characteristics of the individuals. Overall, the literature suggests that students in online programs, regardless of degree program, require more discipline to succeed compared to those in face-to-face programs (Allen & Seaman, 2008) and the ability to manage time, financial demands, work, and family are crucial.

Institution Response to Completion Rates

Of course, there are individual professional consequences and emotional implications of not completing an online degree. However, the effects are not limited to the individual. An institution's reputation is impacted by low online program completion rates. It is beneficial for institutions to report high retention rates in order to secure funding, gain market value, and attract potential students. Institutions view online education as a vital part of their long-term development and service offerings to be competitive (Allen & Seaman, 2008).

Therefore, some institutions have responded to the lack of completion of online programs by adopting approaches to increase graduation rates. The initiatives are informative to understand institutions' investment in assisting online students to successfully complete programs. First, graduate schools are trying to be more explicit about the demands of programs and online education (Jaschik, 2008). This is done through promotional material, online information, and recruitment processes. The idea is that with better information when about to begin an online program, students will be more aware of the demands and prepare for them ahead of time. This will be beneficial for those examining online doctoral degrees as a lack of information about what is required to earn a doctoral degree places individuals at a disadvantage in having to deal with demands unexpectedly as they arise. Second, graduate schools are starting a range of programs to assist online students with the writing process of the dissertation, providing effective and individualized support (Jaschik, 2008). Third, graduate schools are implementing family-leave policies to support students who become parents and for other personal family demands. (Jaschik, 2008). These policies will allow individuals a leave of absence to attend to family responsibilities without having to leave the program. Fourth, some institutions offer online courses for students enrolled in doctoral programs to be better prepared for doctoral studies (Thesiswisperer, 2015) by better understanding requirements.

The important point here is that institutions are addressing the challenges for adults in online programs, understanding that student success is important to the long-term sustainability of their brand image and product. However, not only are the needs of online doctoral students different from students in the broader range of online programs, but the needs of FLT professionals enrolled in doctoral programs are distinct from other online doctoral students. In ESL, EFL, and FLT settings, FLT professionals have a range of academic diversity. Some may be new to the field of FLT, applied linguistics, or education, or transferring from another field; some may be new to the FLT context/country (e.g., Korea) in which they are working; some may be working with different levels of academic English experience, and so on. Despite the growing enrollment of FLT professionals in online doctoral degree programs, there is little literature addressing their needs and experiences.

Methods

Participants

The pilot inquiry consisted of seven participants: five enrolled in U.S. domestic hybrid programs and two enrolled in U.K. fully online programs. The participants consisted of three native English-speaking (NES) FLT professionals and four non-native English-speaking (NNES) FLT professionals. All online doctoral programs were conducted in English.

TABLE 1. Participant Details

Participant	Type of Online Doctoral Program	Domestic/ International	Country of Program	Country of Residence	NES/ NNES	Type of Master's Degree
1	Hybrid	Domestic	US	US	NES	Online
2	Hybrid	Domestic	US	US	NNES	Face-to-Face
3	Hybrid	Domestic	US	US	NNES	Face-to-Face
4	Fully Online	International	UK	Korea	NES	Online
5	Fully Online	International	UK	Korea	NES	Online
6	Hybrid	International	US	Korea	NES	Online
7	Hybrid	Domestic	US	US	NNES	Face-to-Face

Data Collection

For participants outside the U.S., a questionnaire (see Appendix) was sent by email, completed, and returned by email. If any follow-up questions were needed based on the questionnaire's content, the questions were posed via email. Responses were submitted via email. In one case, personal, face-to-face, interaction in terms of an informal interview was available with one participant (Participant 6).

For participants in the U.S., a questionnaire (see Appendix) was also sent by email, completed, and returned by email. In some cases (i.e., for Participants 3 & 7), an informal interview addressing the questionnaire topics was conducted, as the participants did not complete the questionnaire but offered to provide the information in person.

In all cases, the responses to the questionnaire items required about 15–45 minutes to complete, depending on the amount of input offered by the participant. The questionnaire was intended to address items at a surface level over a broad-spectrum of topics, as the pilot inquiry served as a needs assessment for a more formal study rather than a research study offering data on an area where there is a gap in the literature. The objective was to identify which area of FLT professionals' needs and experiences in online doctoral programs most warrants further study, based on the case study data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Fully Online and Hybrid Programs

The data obtained reflects the information in the current literature. First, regardless of being enrolled in a fully online or hybrid program, the majority of the participants felt under-prepared for the level of academic research required, and were surprised by the time and academic demands. Some experienced a lack of support in research design and in the writing of the dissertation. However, students in face-to-face doctoral programs often have similar experiences. So, it could be argued that the general feedback from the study participants is not significant as the sense of a lack of preparation is due to the nature of transitioning to doctoral research. Nonetheless, the results from the study participants are minimally informative as the impact of distance from a physical academic program campus and advisors further influences the participants' ability to develop a sense of rapport with advisors, relationships with other students, and research design and thesis writing skills. So, in this pilot inquiry, the responses from the participants were similar to what would be expected from face-to-face doctoral students, but it is unclear in what way the nature of online programs impacted students' sense of being underprepared. A subsequent study may wish to compare the experiences of online doctoral students with those of students enrolled in face-to-face programs to describe these differences.

Fully Online Programs

One participant (5) expressed that he enjoyed the program, had little trouble in completing requirements, and expected to graduate on time, based on his time management skills and sense of autonomy. The participant even expressed that he may not be among the norm, based on his meta-cognitive learning/study skills and self-disciple. This individual represents a portion of the population who are self-guided, and if needed, find support within their local community for their online academic ventures. Such individuals may do well in a fully online environment as they are able to pursue multiple goals locally (e.g., family, job, hobbies) in addition to academic goals at a distance (e.g., academic work requirements, study groups, professional relationships, etc.).

However, the other fully online participant (4) expressed a sense of frustration after the coursework phase, which reflects the literature regarding the struggles of online students (Jaschik, 2008). The participant has long-standing experience in FLT with an online master's degree in TESOL by coursework. Nonetheless, he expressed a frustration in writing the dissertation. At one point, he indicated that he was willing to leave the dissertation uncompleted, as he believed he could still legitimately put his doctoral degree on his curriculum vitae noting without dissertation to obtain potential professional opportunities. At the time of the study, the participant had re-engaged with the dissertation process and was working to complete his dissertation.

Hybrid Programs

Some hybrid programs offered short-term residencies over the summer, or at other times during the course of the program, where participants would commute to a physical campus for two to four weeks of face-to-face instruction. The participants in these programs felt that the ability to interact with instructors, meet classmates, and visit a physical campus provided a sense of belonging to the academic student body; offered formal structure and guidance from instructors/advisors; and developed a sense of community among students for academic support, collegial guidance, and/or professional work.

One participant (6), enrolled in a program with well-known faculty in the field, felt well-supported as there was the necessary support available, and the personal interaction with renowned FLT faculty motivated her and gave her a sense of being part of the FLT professional community beyond her local context. Personal contact with her thesis supervisor, a renowned FLT professional on the faculty, provided her the individualized support needed and the sense of being part of the professional community of practice (CoP). Although she would not complete her residency until later in the program, she felt a sense of personalized interaction with her supervisor due to the nature and frequency of the communication.

The participants, in general, also expressed a sense of struggle due to the demands and workload, but they indicated that they were on track in their studies and expected to complete their program. Some of their stated success may be due to the structure of their programs, but some of their success may be a result of their personalities and individual motivations or forms of support. Some had an undergraduate academic background and long-term experience in FLT (Participants 1, 2). Some had undergraduate and postgraduate in addition to professional experience in other fields and came to the field of FLT as a second profession (3, 7). Some had a young family (1, 7) and some did not (2, 3). Some (2, 3, 7) had financial support and/or employer grants, and another (1) did not.

Participate Background and Local Context

The results did not indicate that the participants' academic background (i.e., completion of an online or face-to-face master's degree) was significant in this small sample. One participant (4) did express frustration with the dissertation-writing process based on his academic research experience. However, it was not clear if this was due to his completion of an online master's degree in TESOL rather than a face-to-face master's degree as there was not sufficient data to make this correlation. Therefore, a subsequent study may wish to explore this factor further. Whether the participant was an NES or NNES professional did not appear to be a factor in participant responses. The location of the participant (e.g., U.S. or Korea) did not appear to be a factor in this sample. Although the study addressed these factors in the survey/interview process, they did not come up as relevant factors in the participants' experiences.

Summary of Findings

The sample size is exceptionally small; the participants have diverse backgrounds and were enrolled in distinct, fully online and hybrid doctoral programs. However, hybrid programs appear to be more suited to a diverse range of students as they offer more personalized guidance during the dissertation process, opportunities to meet face-to-face, and the ability to develop a CoP. Fully online programs appear to be better suited for highly self-directed students who have the academic background to work independently on their research and dissertation. This information may appear straightforward and logical, but if prospective students are not guided by online doctoral program literature to consider such factors in a program choice, individuals may not consider these factors.

Additionally, the responses of participants in hybrid programs contrasted to those in fully online programs with the mention of a sense of support through direct communication, the value of belonging to a physical campus, and academic connections to classmates. This suggests that the hybrid programs foster a sense of membership to a group and a CoP. Doctoral faculty and program administrators may wish to explore how they can use technology and other means to generate an increased sense of CoP in online programs to support students.

Although brief, the results offer a basis for questions to be further investigated. Among the principle outcomes are the following questions: (a) How can institutions offer FLT professionals what they need to know when considering to enroll in doctoral programs regarding academic, financial, and personal commitments? (b) What guidelines can be used to choose between fully online or hybrid programs? (c) Is a long-term plan for completion on the academic, financial, and personal levels guided by institutions?

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the small sample size suggest that those who are autonomous learners and have metacognitive strategies may do better in fully online FLT doctoral programs, which is not necessarily unexpected. The small sample size also suggests that individuals who may gain social-capital knowledge and advantages from an online program's institution's name and/or well-known faculty interaction (fully online or hybrid) may be instilled with more motivation by the perceived professional leverage. The sample did not suggest that participants experienced any special needs based on their field of FLT or whether they were domestic or international students in the online doctoral program. The study does suggest that the presence of a CoP as part of the online doctoral program and strong rapport with instructors and/or the dissertation supervisor are significant in supporting students.

Based on this pilot inquiry, a formal study may explore (a) factors associated with dropout in online FLT doctoral programs, (b) perceived barriers to completing doctoral programs, and (c) the effect of different types of online communication tools in developing a CoP in FLT doctoral programs.

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APPENDIX

Online PhD TESOL Student Experience Questionnaire

- *Please use this document to answer the questions, inserting your responses after the appropriate question number.*
- *Save the document with the existing title and your name as the title of the file.*
- *Thank you.*

Name:

School Attending:

Place of Work:

Country:

1. What degree are you enrolled in (PhD, EDD, Applied Linguistics, Education, etc.)?

2. How many classes are in the program (credits, course number)?

3. What kind of classes does the program offer (Foundations SLA, Methods, Capstone, etc.)?

4. Where are you in the degree process?

- *For the following questions, please feel free to use extended answers to respond to the questions as the detail in the responses will provide more understanding and limit any follow-up needed for clarification.*

Online Program

1. Delivery of your program?

* Please check all that apply and describe below, if needed, how much of the different instruction is offered.

____ **Synchronous classes**: Require all of the students that are enrolled in the class to meet at the computer via web cams on specific class times and days. The professor takes attendance and presents lessons on a computer platform that enables PowerPoint; videos can even have students discuss topics in small breakout rooms.

____ **Asynchronous classes**: Do not require students to meet at a certain time and day. These classes are delivered by having students read assignments and write papers on their own schedule and submit assignments by a specified due date. The students in the class may be required to write comments on an online class bulletin board or discussion board or respond to other students' comments or ideas.

____ **Hybrid Programs**: Some colleges and universities are offering a mixture of classes that are both online and in a traditional classroom setting. There are also programs that may provide the majority of the classes online but require a short (several weeks) residency on the campus several times a year. Many graduate students appreciate the flexibility of a hybrid program because they are given an opportunity to interact with the professors and classmates face-to-face and the flexibility of taking classes online when their schedules will not accommodate class time on the campus.

____ **Fully On-Campus Programs**: Course meets face-to-face on campus with access to teachers and university resources.

Comments:

2. What were the key factors in choosing the program? What are the effective elements of the program design (describe all, rather than list items)?

3. What are the challenges you face (describe all, rather than list items)?

4. What is your overall rating of the program's effectiveness?

5. What is your assessment of your performance in the program and ability to complete?

Task Improvement Through Student Self-Assessment and Repetition

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This study is one of very few TESOL studies ever carried out in Lao P.D.R., and it is assumed to be the only one carried out on a mining site in the country. The aim of this small-scale action research project was to answer two research questions: (a) Can improvements on emphasizing key points be encouraged by task repetition and student self-reflection on their own video-recorded task performances? and (b) Could this procedure be used as a framework to encourage improvements on other performance tasks? The procedure used was based on the theoretical assumptions of Sadler (1989), which details what students must do in order to improve task performance. A great deal was learnt regarding an applicable framework for task-based lesson planning. While the learning situation reported on was in Laos, it has ramifications for all task-based TESOL contexts.

INTRODUCTION

This research was carried out in my own classroom on a mine site in southern Lao P.D.R. (Laos). The company mines copper and gold, and employs around 3000 Laotian staff. It also provides them with English training. The local culture, rural poverty, the history of political isolation, ethnic minority groups, mine site practices, the influence of Australian colleagues, and finally, classroom dynamics and the teacher, all contribute to the characteristics of the learners. These contextual factors were foremost in my mind when carrying out this research. They are of paramount importance when evaluating the procedure detailed within and its possible application to other contexts.

AIMS

To meet the workplace language needs of the intermediate-level students, a Professional English course was conceived. All of the course assessments were based on practical workplace tasks. Feedback showed that this benefited them professionally. However, I hadn't personally witnessed many of the students achieving the level of improvement on task performances that others believed was possible. This paper reports on a small-scale action research project into student self-assessment of their own video-recorded presentations and the subsequent repetition of that task. A procedure was designed to improve student ability to emphasize key points using repetition, stress, pausing, and stretching.

The situation described above led me to develop the following research questions:

1. Can improvements on emphasizing key points using stress, repetition, pausing and stretching be encouraged by utilizing a combination of task repetition and student self-reflection on their own video-recorded task performances?
2. If successful, could this procedure be used as a framework to encourage improvements on other performance tasks?

RESEARCH METHOD RATIONALE AND DESIGN

Action research (AR) is extremely effective for small-scale classroom research projects. The reflective aspect of this method enables a teacher-researcher to reflect not only on events, but also on their own behavior and the way this influences events. AR can be employed to solve classroom issues, or to pursue best practice and "inform the practical decision-making of practitioners" (Kemmis, 2001, p. 92). Although they disagree slightly on the details, the various models all illustrate a cycle that is essentially made up of planning, action, observing (or recording), and then reflection. The different models are all very similar but differ in the number of stages and the starting point of the cycle.

The spiral model in Figure 1, devised by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), is the one that I personally favor because it utilizes a spiral in place of a circle. Any model which involves a circle rather than a spiral, in my opinion fails to indicate the progress that must surely be made by carrying out each cycle of research. After one cycle of action, the teacher/researcher's understanding of the problem should have progressed beyond the start-point. For this reason, I have chosen to utilize a procedure based on Kemmis and McTaggert's 1988 Action Research Spiral for this AR project.

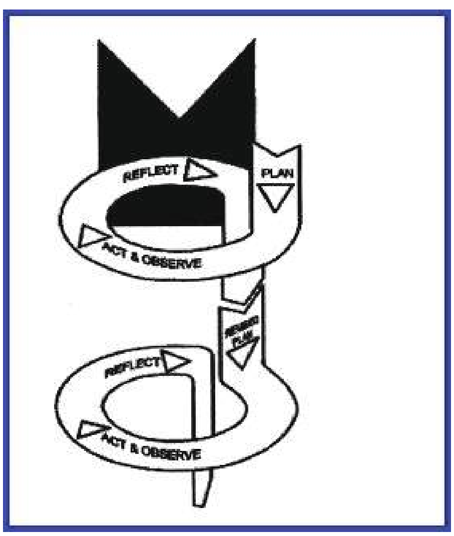

FIGURE 1. The Spiral Model of Action Research. This model employs a spiral rather than a circle – plan, act & observe, reflect, revised plan, act and observe, reflect... (From Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988)

A variety of approaches to the improvement of task performance have evolved in the literature. I consider Sadler (1989) to be particularly applicable to this study. It describes instructional procedures for "wherever multiple criteria are used in making judgments about the quality of student responses" (p. 119). This correlates with the learning objectives method of assessment used for the Intermediate Professional English course, because the teacher must use a variety of criteria to assess students' task performances.

My understanding of Sadler's hypothesis is that in order to improve task performance, students must develop the following: a concept of the target standard of performance, the ability to self-monitor during task performance, the ability to compare their own task performance with that of the model, and the ability to modify their own work. In addition to these, students must be provided with a model of the target standard of performance and must be provided with effective feedback.

Research Procedure Design

The initial stage was planning the exact method and procedure for carrying out my research, based on the action research spiral. The entire procedure, using Kemmis and McTaggert's (1988) terminology, is as follows: plan, act and observe, reflect, revise plan, act and observe, reflect. For ease of reference, the procedure has been described in this paper as two spirals. However, I interpret the spiral as continual, that is, I don't perceive a point at which the first spiral ends and the second spiral begins.

There was then a very limited time period to decide on solutions to any perceived weaknesses in the original plan. These solutions were then implemented by revising the original lesson plan. The revised plan was then employed before a further stage of reflection. This final stage of reflection allowed key learnings to be identified and applied to the future planning of lessons and materials.

Participants

The six students who participated in this study are Laotian members of my regular Intermediate Professional English classes and were chosen to represent a cross-section of my student base in terms of age, background, profession, and ability in language and workplace tasks. All participants are long-term students who have already been studying with me for at least several months. All participants have become accustomed to performing tasks individually or in groups as part of Intermediate Professional English, and have been videoed previously as part of the course, on more than one occasion.

Data Collection

The procedure incorporated the collection of data in the form of student self-assessments and teacher reflections. As student self-assessment forms specifically about the learning objective were to be filled in as part of the procedure, these were an ideal source of data. I was particularly eager about the collection of data that included students' opinions on whether self-assessment and task repetition had helped them to improve their performance of the task. This had the potential to be a very valuable source of appraisal.

METHODS

The First Action Research Spiral

"The first action research spiral," based on Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) model, includes "plan," "act and observe," and "reflect."

Plan: Lesson Plan and Materials

After conducting background research of relevant articles and papers, the next stage of the AR spiral, in this case, was planning a lesson procedure with the aim of improving students' spoken presentation skills, specifically emphasizing key points. The plan was based on the literature, experiential knowledge of students' abilities, and the successes, failures, and reflections of previous attempts at the improvement of similar tasks. I designed and considered several possible variations in the ordering of stages and managed to settle on a procedural plan for my lesson. This incorporates an initial formative presentation of information by students to the group. Students were then informed of the learning objective for the lesson and shown a model of the techniques to be focused on before self-assessing a video of themselves with specific relation to the techniques. The seven-step lesson procedure follows:

1. Students present information to the group without any prior knowledge of the lesson aims.
2. The teacher states the learning objective of the lesson and uses video to model the target level of performance for emphasizing key points in a presentation.
3. Students then complete a self-reflection form (specifically about emphasizing key points) while watching themselves presenting information (using videos that have already been recorded).
4. Practice stage with ready-made key points
5. Students use their self-reflection to inform the assessed presentation task that they will present individually but with support from the teacher during the remaining class time.
6. Students are assessed on their ability to emphasize key points while presenting them. (videoed)
7. Students then complete a second self-reflection form while watching the assessment they have just completed.

The student self-assessment form (Figure 2) was designed to encourage students to recognize the use of the four techniques separately (repetition, stress, pausing, stretching) when watching themselves on video. Students were also asked to judge whether they made the key points clear, and asked to "self-mark" (Boud & Falchikov, 1989) using the Australian training-style assessment criteria. Finally, there was a space where students were encouraged to write comments to help themselves improve. The overall purpose was a student self-diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses in emphasising key points.

Student Self-Assessment Form

Emphasising Key Points when Presenting Information

Assess yourself while watching yourself on video.
1. Did you use:

repetition?	Yes / No
stress?	Yes / No
pausing?	Yes / No
stretching?	Yes / No

2. Were the key points in your presentation clear to the audience? What were they?

3. Rate yourself according to the assessment criteria used by the teacher:
The learner can emphasize key points effectively when presenting information. 1 2 3
(1: Strongly competent, 2: Competent but needs more practice, 3: Not yet competent)

4. Comments to help myself improve:

FIGURE 2. Student Self-Assessment Form.

Three videos, Seido Language Institute (2010a, 2010b, 2010c), provided descriptive statements and demonstration of the techniques of repetition, stress, and pausing and stretching for the emphasis of key points. These were short but effective, and included examples that provided students with a model of the target standard of performance for these specific techniques. In order to enable students to focus their cognitive effort on the practical techniques, I designed some practice cards that used language that was well within the students' capability and that was familiar to them in their professional context. Finally, for the second performance of the task, I planned for students to use different presentation material from the first performance. The student self-assessment form for the second self-assessment was the same as the first form.

Act and Observe

Students had been given presentation material at the end of the previous lesson and were told to prepare to present it to the class. The first stage of the current lesson was to record students presenting it. Next, students were shown the videos of emphasizing key points in a presentation that included a clear model of the target standard of performance to aim for. Students were informed that they would be assessed on using these techniques at the end of the day's lesson.

Students then completed a self-reflection form while watching the recording of themselves presenting on video, which was recorded at the start of this lesson. Students took much longer to complete their self-assessment forms than I had predicted. This contributed to my running out of time at the end of the class, and it was carefully noted in my researcher journal to be considered during the “reflect” and “revised plan” stages.

Students then practiced the techniques for emphasizing key points. Having already watched themselves on video, students were able to focus on any specific areas of weakness that they had noticed in their own performance. Students used their self-reflection form to inform their second attempt at the performance task, which was also videoed. Finally, they completed a second self-reflection form while watching their own second performance of the task.

Students used the same material that they were already familiar with in order to save time and so that the content was familiar. Immediately after the lesson, I assessed students’ performances and made critical reflections in my researcher journal.

Reflect

Certain aspects of the procedure required improvement. Firstly, the timing I had allocated did not allow students to become familiar enough with emphasizing key points using repetition, stress, pausing, and stretching for them to apply these readily. Although it hadn’t been planned, I allowed students to present the same material in the second performance as they had in the first. By eliminating the planning time for the second performance, more focus could be placed on the techniques and less on subject matter. It also allowed more well-needed time for the practice stage.

Students took longer to complete the self-assessment forms than predicted, which was dealt with by extending the allotted time. These forms were an essential part of both the achievement of lesson aims and of data collection. Students later commented that they had found the practice stage enjoyable and useful, but that they hadn’t had the opportunity to fully grasp the techniques. This matched my own observations and confirmed to me that the timing of this stage should be extended.

Student Self-Assessment Results

After watching their own formative performance of the task, students completed the first self-assessment form in order to diagnose their own strengths and weaknesses. Most of the students judged that they had not used two or three of the four techniques mentioned on the self-assessment form (i.e., repetition, stress, pausing, and stretching). It is also interesting to note that every student expressed a desire to improve on their performance and identified a variety of areas for improvement. Among the topics commented on were the need for more practice, self-criticism of higher-level issues such as general pronunciation, and the emphasis techniques that were mentioned on the form. To select just one example: “Improve speaking technique is required. Require more practice. Link words or sentence need to be clearly.”

Students generally felt that they had used more of the four techniques during the second performance than in the first. The comments indicated that they felt they had improved: “The second time is better than the first time because I used the technique for emphasizing key points" (Student B). They expressed the need for more practice. However, all students again rated themselves as "2: Competent but needs more practice" in the self-rating exercise.

Summary of Findings

Overall, the formative performances reconfirmed the need for instruction and practice in emphasizing key points. It was also abundantly clear how much of an advantage students with clear pronunciation were at when utilizing the specified techniques for emphasizing key points and when presenting or training in general.

The second performances of the task were slower and more considered, but not all of them were an improvement on the first performances. Students attempted to apply the techniques, but rarely achieved much success with pausing and stretching. Some students seemed to lack confidence when attempting to apply the techniques. In order to attempt to remedy this situation, I decided to increase the practice stage of the lesson during the second AR spiral.

The Second Action Research Spiral

The second action research spiral includes the stages revised plan, act and observe, and reflect. The Revised Plan section details changes made to the original lesson plan and materials as a result of reflections made after the first AR spiral.

Revised Plan

Several modifications were made to the original plan: An additional five minutes were allocated for students to complete their self-assessment forms after each of the first and second performances. The timing of the practice stage was doubled from ten to twenty minutes, requiring students to practice in pairs, then change partners and repeat the practice stage with different practice cards.

Students presented the same material in the first and second performances of the task to reduce preparation time, allow more time for the practice stage, and increase the focus of cognitive effort on the emphasis techniques.

Act and Observe

I invited student C1 back (labelled student C2 in the data) so that I could ask him to compare the two lessons, and give his opinion on the changes made to the procedure, and also so that I could compare the improvements he made during each lesson.

Reflect

My own evaluation of the second AR spiral was that the revisions made to the timing of the lesson, and particularly the practice stage, seemed to increase the effectiveness of the procedure in achieving the lesson aims. Students visibly increased in confidence during the lengthened practice stage, and there was a noticeable increase in their ability to apply the techniques.

A concern I had was that when students were watching their second performance and completing their self-assessment form during the following lesson, they might not be able to effectively judge whether they had improved without viewing the first performance again. When teaching this lesson procedure again, I would like students to watch both their first and second performances during completion of the second self-assessment form. I hope that this would make differences between the two performances more apparent to the students, and highlight the effectiveness of repetition, stress, pausing, and stretching for emphasizing key points.

Student Self-Assessment Results

The comments from the student self-assessment forms for the first and second performances of the task were more difficult to interpret during the second AR spiral than they had been for the first AR spiral. Firstly, several students seemed to judge that they had used the emphasis techniques when the teacher had not noticed any evidence of them. Secondly, although the teacher judged the group to have improved more during this spiral than during the previous one, the students themselves were more modest in their recognition of improvements and were more self-critical: "Repetition to make the presentation more interesting. Frequency of speaking. Make the presentation not too flat" (Student E).

Some students mentioned that they still needed improvement in the techniques, even when there was no more opportunity to practice during class time. To select one example: "Use techniques and practice more particularly about the pronunciation, eye contact, etc." (Student C2). This at least indicated that students were taking this opportunity to analyze their own performances in depth.

Summary of Findings

Once again, the formative performances confirmed the need for instruction and practice in emphasizing key points using repetition, stress, pausing, and stretching. Despite the mixed responses from the students in their performances, it was clear to me as an observer of both the lesson as it happened and of the video recordings that student confidence and proficiency with the techniques improved more during the second AR spiral.

To evaluate at this stage, I would say that the procedure is effective for setting up the conditions for students to improve their competence in emphasizing key points. However, there are numerous other factors at play.

Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

Data Analysis

There were plenty of valuable interpretations to be made from the comments that students made in response to the other questions on the form. The only major modification made to the lesson procedure after the first spiral was an increase in time allocated to practicing the techniques. Student C1 / C2, who attended the lesson during both spirals, commented after the second lesson that the extension of the practice stage was "very helpful to give us more practice and got us to improve the techniques more than in the first lesson."

I was particularly struck by how significantly individual differences affected learner autonomy. The range of capability in English, but perhaps even more so in presenting information to a group, played a significant role in the success individuals experienced in improving their performance of the task. The amount of “available” cognitive effort appeared to increase according to student capability, familiarity with the subject matter, and with proficiency with the techniques.

The second broad category of individual differences I observed was attitude, which played a significant role. It is vital to note, in cases such as these, that the teacher can provide the opportunity for students to work autonomously, but can only suggest or encourage students to take advantage of the opportunity.

Interpretation of Findings

In interpreting the data, I attempted to evaluate students’ self-assessments and my own reflections in terms of the first research question. In manipulating all aspects of the lesson procedure and observing the results, I developed a much greater awareness of the factors affecting the encouragement of improvements. I am confident that overall, the procedure used in this study managed to encourage improvements, but these were not to the extent that I had hoped for.

Of all the aspects affecting the progress made, I feel that task repetition was undoubtedly beneficial to the achievement of the learning objective. Similarly, I perceived student self-assessment to have only positive effects. I believe it yielded significant benefits in empowering students to work autonomously to improve their own performance. I hypothesize that with increased exposure to the technique of self-assessment for task improvement, students would become more accustomed to it, and as a result, would be able to achieve greater increases in competence.

With reference to the first research question, although task repetition and student self-assessment were effective in encouraging improvements, students’ individual differences had an overwhelming influence on the results. It is important to note that with a group of individuals with diverse learning characteristics, results are difficult to predict and cannot be guaranteed.

Conclusions

In response to the second research question, I believe this procedure could be adapted to other learning objectives, but that I have not yet discovered what I would consider to be a “model” procedure. The most optimistic implication of this research is that some progress has been made in moving closer to something resembling a model procedure for task improvement. More research is necessary.

My interpretation of the data and my critical reflections of the lesson procedure, conclude that providing the closest conditions possible under the circumstances to those described by Sadler can go some way toward empowering students to strive toward the target standard of performance. Despite providing the conditions for task improvements to occur, there were numerous additional factors that may have impeded greater success. Students’ English proficiency, presenting ability, pronunciation, and motivation were some of the main limiting factors observed during this study.

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Dimensions of Reflective Practice in Group Settings in Korea

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Reflective practice (RP) has a rich tradition in ELT (see Mann, 2005). In this study, the author, using a grounded theory approach, seeks to understand emerging themes arising from an analysis of the discourse contained in four teacher development group (TDG) sessions comprised of predominantly native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) working at various levels in the Republic of Korea. Major themes include (a) use of clarifying questions, (b) social exchange, (c) activity exchange, and (d) negative comments. The author addresses the potential value of the findings and provides recommendations for the facilitation of future TDG sessions by ELT practitioners.

INTRODUCTION

The data reported and commented on in this article is part of a larger study comparing the discourse features of teacher development groups (TDG) for English language teaching (ELT) in the Republic of Korea (henceforth, Korea). The original research question is concerned with how patterns of teacher reflection (see Hatton and Smith, 1995; Valli, 1997, Farrell, 1998) vary when the discussion in a TDG is focused on teacher video performance and when clear observational data is not present. That study is still ongoing. To date, the author has analyzed four sessions where the video recording of teacher performance was absent. This article will address some of the basic patterns that emerged when TDGs were conducted without the use of videoed teacher performance. While specific meetings do have some variations, there are clear trends present during the sessions under consideration. This article will address themes present in the TDG sessions under study and provide recommendations for conducting more effective TDG sessions for ELT practitioners in Korea.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHOD

Reflective Practice (RP) has a rich tradition in the ELT literature (e.g., Mann, 2005; Farrell, 2008; Lockhart & Richards, 1994). In other areas of education, TDGs have been promoted since at least the 1970s (see Stanley, 2011). There is much support from many educators about the value of various forms of TDGs both in general education (Flythe, 1989; Matlin & Short, 1991; Stanley, 2011) and ELT (Farrell, 2008; Oliphant, 2003; Vo & Nguyen, 2010). However, many of the benefits listed for TDGs are often lacking precision and are derived from either personal experience or qualitative studies. For example, Oliphant, in an appendix for a prevalent ELT practicum textbook (Crookes, 2003), cites the following benefits: greater awareness, increased motivation, better teaching, benefits to students, joy of sharing, connection to others, new ways of thinking, and empowerment. She doesn't support these claims with citations. Indeed, it appears very difficult to verify these statements quantitatively. The present research seeks to provide greater precision to the claims of those who are supportive of TDGs.

From March to September 2014, four TDG sessions were recorded in two major Korean cities. The characteristics of the meetings are listed in Table 1. All sessions were audio recorded and then manually transcribed by the researcher. Participants in all sessions were informed in advance that sessions would be audio-recorded. The author attended all sessions as an observer-participant.

TABLE 1. Topic, Date, and Participant Demographic Characteristics

Session No.	Session Month	Number of Participants	Nationalities	Topic/Theme*	Education Level
1	March 2014*	8	American Canadian	The First Week of School (Facilitator MSEd: TESOL)	Bachelor's: [4] Working towards an MA in TESOL: [1] MA in a TESOL-related field (i.e., Applied Linguistics): [3]
2	May 2014	9	American Filipino South African Canadian French	Proudest Accomplishment This Semester (Facilitator: Bachelor's degree)	Bachelor's or lower: [4] MA or higher in a TESOL-related field: [4] Doctoral candidate (non-TESOL): [1]
3	June 2014	5	American Canadian	Soliciting and Utilizing Student Feedback (Facilitator: MA Applied Linguistics)	Bachelor's: [1] MA in a TESOL-related field: [4]
4	September 2014	5	American Canadian	No Formal Theme** (Facilitator: MA TESOL)	Bachelor's: [1] MA in a TESOL-related field: [4]

* Selection of session facilitator varied among the groups. In Session 1, the facilitator had been the de facto facilitator for approximately one year. In Session 2, the facilitator had never occupied the facilitator role in a RP/TDG session previously. For Sessions 3 and 4, the RP/TDG tended to change facilitators from session to session.

** This TDG's organizer was replaced prior to this session. Thus, the new group organizer did not establish a formal theme, and approximately the first 20 minutes featured a discussion about the future direction for this particular TDG.

The sessions were read multiple times, analyzed, and eventually coded for emergent themes using a grounded theory approach (see Perry, 2011). The researcher facilitated the first session. Unfortunately, the nature of the data is somewhat corrupt due to difficulty in gathering complete data. In two later sessions, the facilitator (a person other than the author) organized partner discussion sessions. This resulted in recording that was incomprehensible for approximately five minutes in Session 3 and the recording of only one pair of partners during the TDG discussion activity in Session 4. The incomprehensible material from Session 3 was not considered for purposes of analysis.

RESULTS

The author noted the following four themes during the four TDG sessions: (a) frequent use of clarifying questions or hypothesizing techniques, which resulted in further elaboration from the initial speaker, (b) social exchange, (c) activity exchange, and (d) negative comments. The recorded number of observations for each category is listed in Table 2. The author used the following criteria in coding the aforementioned categories:

Clarifying questions/hypothesizing techniques (CQ): The listening/eliciting action resulted in more elaboration from the original speaker.

Social exchange (SE): Data was coded as SE if the speaker's comments gave some information about or concrete insight (i.e., classroom management issues, student motivation levels, administrative concerns in a school) into the functioning of a school. It is worth noting that Session 1 was the only session where all participants were not from different schools (in Session 1, three individuals were from the same school).

Activity exchange (AE): This concerns both the exchange of teaching/learning activities intended for use in a classroom/formal learning setting and techniques that may be relevant for professional development, such as guided reflection techniques or classroom videoing.

Negative comments (NC): This pertains to comments that are hypercritical or ridiculing about factors relevant to education in Korea, such as student motivation, aspects of Korean culture, or school policy.

TABLE 2. Frequency Counts for Emergent Themes

Session No.	Session Month	CQ	SE	AE	NC
1	March 2014	48	42	33	21
2	May 2014	22	32	16	8
3	June 2014	64	43	44	4
4	September 2014	50	22	11	1

Examples of Clarifying Questions

Clarifying questions often allowed the initial speaker to elaborate further on his original statement. In Session 3, for example, a participant described his use of a shocking anecdote used while leading a teacher workshop/webinar. One of the participants sought to gain further understanding behind the rationale and asked, “As a metaphor?” Interestingly enough, the initial speaker didn’t fully answer the question, instead he provided implicit advice: “I don’t recommend that as a webinar move because you can’t see people laughing or being confused.” Later in the same session, a participant asked about another attendee’s use of soliciting individual student feedback, asking, “As a group?” The initial speaker responded, “No, no, individual. They sat down with me; they got the questions.”

Examples of Social Exchange

Social exchange spanned a wide range of issues. References to perceived racism as an ELT instructor occurred in Session 2. One participant in Session 3 noted that he was asked to leave a previous place of employment due to poor student evaluations. There was much detail exchanged about the local settings from most of the TDG participants. In Session 1, a series of instructors elaborated on the low motivation of many students, whereas another participant noted the use of TDGs in his/her institutional setting, while still another participant noted the use of social drinking as a bonding mechanism among many adult learners. The latter participant’s comment was rather insightful into many aspects of English language acquisition in Korea: “They want to get to know each other; they want to build rapport. Um...uhh...and they usually don’t like making mistakes in English in front of people, because they’ve been told they’re teachers, and they need to break that down.” At times, information was exchanged relevant to areas beyond Korea. For example, one participant in Session 4 noted design features of completing the Cambridge DELTA course: “The DELTA and the other one, the RSA diploma, the one assignment is to put down to the minute how much time this is going to take for each one of the lessons.”

Examples of Activity Exchange

Activity exchange was similarly broad. Group composition and the topic heavily influenced the nature of the activities mentioned. In Session 1, a young teacher who recently began work in a university noted the benefits of the smart phone app Socrative. In Session 2, a teacher working in a predominantly rural area explained a coping method for classroom management challenges: The instructor gives the students a brief writing task, while the instructor consciously takes a deep breath. In Session 4, an instructor detailed the insights that emerged from audio recording and then transcribing classroom lessons. The instructor described the problems: “I have this class that’s quite challenging to me because they don’t ever, ever shut up; and sometimes the volume just gets so high it’s like they’re going to break the windows.” Following recording and transcribing, the instructor notes his/her attitude towards the class has changed, and that perhaps the “noise” concerns were not as problematic as initially believed: “Mostly pleasant surprises, where I'm going noise, noise…actually, most of them, most of the time, are making plenty of noise in English. Using target language and yeah it's loud…but mostly useful."

Examples of Negative Comments

Negative comments were especially prevalent during Sessions 1 and 2. Comments include one instructor from a lower-level university stating his perception of many of his students: "They've slept through ten years' worth of English." In the second session, in reference to the same university, a participant not employed by this university states: "They're physically adults." Another instructor in Session 1, working in a rural elementary and middle school environment, notes the dubious criteria used to select textbooks: "We decided this was the best English textbook [because] it was red, which one had the prettiest colors."

Discussion

Given the data detailed in this article, on the surface, the benefits of participating in RP meetings or TDGs seem impressive. Typically a wide range of information is shared during TDGs for ELT practitioners in Korea. In education, it is standard to claim the power of learning in a social context (see Marzano, Pickering & Pollock, 2001; Vygotsky, 1978). TDGs offer a clear forum for instructors to both reflect and possibly learn new strategies and techniques from peers. Thus, participation in TDGs may sustain motivation for further professional development among educators in a profession that has recently gained a reputation for recidivism and burnout (see NCTAF, 2007, for American examples from general education). Frustration with local constraints (e.g., administrative decisions, student motivation) was voiced several times. Unfortunately many educators, and especially NESTs working in contexts where most are non-citizens in the host country, have limited influence over such constraints. Nevertheless, forums like TDGs can at least allow ELT practitioners to vent frustrations among peers. As one participant noted: "It's a lot like therapy."

Especially for younger teachers, it appears that TDGs can provide a scaffolding function on at least two fronts: (a) refining thinking and (b) expanding awareness. The large number of CQ, AE, and SE items may improve the quality of instruction an ELT practitioner can deliver, both due to prompts intended to clarify the meaning of an utterance from an individual instructor and the effect of observing other educators articulating their viewpoints. Regarding awareness of different environments, participation in TDGs can help prepare an educator for future teaching environments. For many NESTs working in Korea, employment is quite fluid, with many educators, if not most, signing one-year contracts. Participation in TDGs can provide striking insight into both regional variations, and differences arising from proficiency and grade levels. Multiple critiques and recommendations for the facilitation of TDGs observed for this research can be offered. As many of the comments were colored by emotional judgments, perhaps frameworks focusing on using descriptive language, such as the experiential learning cycle (see Kolb, 1984), may lead to a higher quality of group reflection. Interestingly enough, certain members in Session 4 expressed resistance to employing a rigid (or any) framework during RP sessions. Also, the quality of interaction may be enhanced if the facilitator of the session is highly respected or educated. Session 2 was the only TDG meeting where the facilitator did not hold an MA or higher in a TESOL-related field. That session was coded as having the lowest number of CQs and AEs of the sample under consideration. In Session 1, the facilitator (this author) was both significantly younger and less experienced than four of the participants in the Korean TESOL environment. That session received the highest number of NCs (13 more than the next highest). In Session 3, the facilitator held an MA in applied linguistics and was a high-ranking member of a graduate school-level teacher-training program at a major university in Korea. Session 3 had the highest number of CQs, SEs, and AEs, as well as a very small number of NCs.

Beyond facilitation, there are obvious constraints to the value of the information exchanges occurring during a TDG. While there were many AEs, explicit detail was not always present. Teaching has a justified reputation as a context-specific task. An idea practiced in one environment is not readily transferable to another context. Nevertheless, ELT practitioners are often prodded by leaders in the field to adapt materials (see Epstein & Ormiston, 2007). The prolific ELT author Keith Folse (2006) has told us that one should never reject a teaching idea without considering if at least one aspect of it might be useful. Addressing another area of concern, human memory has long been recognized as rather corrupt (see Schacter, 2001). Hence, the information shared in the TDG sessions under consideration probably contain several inaccuracies, regardless of the sincerity of participants, or authenticity of the experiences related.

LIMITATIONS

This study itself had multiple limitations. There is the clear possibility of novelty and experimenter effects (see Perry, 2011) due to the presence of a recording device and the researcher who served as a participant observer. As the research was collected in a more "natural" setting, the author made no efforts to control for population. Four participants attended multiple sessions (though no single individual attended more than two sessions). Significantly, Korean ELT practitioners were not represented in this sample. More research on the dynamics of TDGs for ELT practitioners in Korea is justified. Future research could address in greater depth areas such as the differences between voluntarily attended meetings (which this research solely addressed) and institutionally mandated TDG sessions, as well as the influence of population characteristics on the quality of discourse in TDGs. For example, how does participants' educational level impact discourse? How would similar TDG sessions exclusively involving Korean ELT practitioners vary from those comprised primarily of NESTs?

Conclusions

Many scholars in the field of both ELT and education have argued in support of the benefits of participation in both reflective practice and teacher development groups. At times, the claims have lacked precision. Through open coding of four RP TDG sessions among NESTs in Korea, I have sought to provide greater precision to the claims of those in support of TDGs. The results indicate that much of potential value is exchanged during TDGs; however, the value of the discourse is heavily contingent on the nature of the topic and the characteristics of the participants, especially the facilitator.

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Implementing the Process Genre Approach to the IELTS Academic Writing Task 2

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This study focuses on the implementation of the process genre approach (PGA) in writing the IELTS Academic Writing Task 2 (IELTS AWT 2). There have been a number of studies conducted to discover the effectiveness of the process genre approach in teaching and learning writing. However, there have not been any studies conducted into finding out the effectiveness of the PGA when it is applied to the writing section of the IELTS test. This is an experimental study. The subjects are students of the IELTS course in the SMA Labschool Jakarta. The results show that the process genre approach was effective in improving the students' writing, particularly in Task Response, and Coherence and Cohesion, yet it was lacking in improving the quality of arguments in the students' writing. In the students' perception, most agreed that their writing had improved through PGA, particularly in the modelling of text, collaborative writing, and feedback phases.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the essential language skills. However, writing seems to be more difficult and demanding than the other three skills: speaking, reading, and listening (Zheng, as cited in Yan, 2005). IELTS (which actually stands for "International English Language Testing System") is one of the tests that values the importance of writing. IELTS is also one of the assessment tools used worldwide. IELTS plays an important role in people' lives because it is often used as a measurement for certain universities to admit students, particularly those who learn English as a foreign language (Uysal, 2010).

A number of studies have sought to determine the best teaching approach to improve students' writing ability. Generally, three main approaches have been used to teach writing. The first one is the product approach. It is commonly known as "a product-oriented approach" (Nunan, 2000, p. 86). The second one is the process approach. It is an approach that focuses on "real-world" writing (Trupe, 2000, as cited in Yan, 2005, p. 19). Nunan (2000) adds that the process approach is used to support the development of skilled language use. The last one is the genre approach. It is a "framework for language instruction" (Byram, 2004, p. 234). The genre approach teaches writing within a certain social situation and for a certain purpose, which creates conscious learning through imitation and analysis (Hyland, 2004). This happens through explicit instruction.

There is also a hybrid writing approach, which combines the process approach and the genre approach, known as the process genre approach (PGA; Badger & White, 2000; Yan, 2005). Yan (2005) points out that this approach allows students to study the relationship between the purpose and the form of a particular genre as they use the recursive processes of prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing. It also exploits the rhetorical conventions of English text through the real processes of writing. The process genre approach is considered the most appropriate approach in teaching and learning writing (Badger & White, 2000; Yan, 2005). A number of studies have been conducted to find out the effectiveness of the process genre approach in teaching and learning writing (Badger & White, 2000; Chow, 2007; Elson, 2011; Gupitasari, 2013; Velandia, 2009; Yan, 2005). Those studies mostly tried to determine whether the PGA could increase improvement for various groups of students in writing different genres of text.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition and Issues in Writing

Murray (1987) defines writing as a logical and understandable process that is used to convey information that has words as symbols and a rational sequence in moving the words to make a clear meaning. Academic writing is one of the types of writing that has been the focus of various studies. Swales and Feak (1994) define academic writing as the product of many considerations: audience, purpose, organization, style, flow, and presentation. To Hyland (2002), academic writing is the main source through which social positioning is built. Kroll (1990) believes that academic writing demands the integration of many skills to master all areas of language so as to flow smoothly with a logical understanding of the text.

Approaches in Teaching Writing

Depending on how writing is viewed, three main approaches and one hybrid approach have been used to teach writing in the past few decades: the product approach, the process approach, the genre approach, and the process genre approach (Badger & White, 2000; Yan, 2005).

Product Approach

The product approach is a teaching approach that puts emphasis on the final product of writing, which is mainly assessed based on vocabulary, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and the organization of the writing (Brown, 1994). The product approach focuses on the result of the learning process (Nunan, 2000).

The Process Approach

The process approach focuses on how "a text is written instead of the final outcome" (Nordin & Mohammad, 2006). It helps students to understand the nature of writing and the procedure in teaching it (Hyland, 2003). It emphasizes the importance of the process within the writing procedure: prewriting, drafting, evaluating, and revising (Hyland, 2003).

The Genre Approach

The genre approach is basically created from the word "genre." Swales (1990) defined genre as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (p. 58). Hyland (2004) added that genre is "a term for grouping texts together that represents how writers use language to respond to a particular situation" (p. 4). Hardy and Klarwein (1990) explain that a genre is something that has a purpose, has been determined by the culture, has a number of obligatory parts that have a characteristic order, and has identifiable grammatical features. Harmer (2004) and Byram (2004) also explain that genre is a framework of different writing instructions.

The Process Genre Approach

The process genre approach (PGA) is the combination of the process approach and the genre approach (Badger & White, 2000; Kaur & Chun, 2005; Kim & Kim, 2005; Yan, 2005; Gao, 2007; Nordin & Mohammad, 2007; Babalola, 2012). This enables the learner to learn how to write (Yan, 2005). This combination enables the learner not only to get knowledge from the context, the purpose, and the features of certain texts, but also to experience the process of improving their writing skills and response towards certain writing contexts (Frith, 2006; Gao, 2007).

IELTS and Related Issues

The IELTS test is one of the internationally used assessment tools for English proficiency. Green (2005) defined IELTS as a test of English for academic and vocational purposes. It is managed jointly by three partners: University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, the British Council, and IELTS Australia/IDP Education Australia. The test, consisting of writing, reading, listening, and speaking components, is designed to measure "the language ability of candidates who intend to study or work where English is used as the language of communication" (IELTS, 2003, p. 3).

IELTS is often used as a measurement by universities in admitting students, particularly foreign students (Uysal, 2010). A survey conducted in 2002 supported Uysal's opinion by revealing that around 82% of test-takers took the IELTS test as it is one of the requirements for acceptance to universities (IELTS, 2003, p. 6).

There are two kinds of training modules for the IELTS test. These are (a) the general training module for those who need to apply for a job and (b) the academic training module for those who plan to pursue higher education. Both modules are divided into two sections: Task 1 (IELTS AWT 1) and Task 2 (IELTS AWT 2) (Uysal, 2010). They are both "communicative and contextualized for a specified audience, purpose, and genre, reflecting recent developments in writing research" (Uysal, 2010, p. 314). The difference between the writing section modules for academic and general training lies in the IELTS AWT 1 (Uysal, 2010). For the academic writing module, test-takers are asked to write a report of around 150 words based on a given table or diagram. On the other hand, in the IELTS AWT 1 for the general training module, the test-takers are asked to write a letter responding to a given problem. In the IELTS AWT 2, both academic and general training modules require the test-takers to write a 250-word argumentative essay in response to certain problems. Both modules allot 60 minutes for completion.

Definitions and Issues in Argumentative Text

Schwegler (2004) defined argumentative text as a text that is used to show the rhetorical patterns that make writers and readers explore, understand, and argue on questions of culture, identity, and value in their communities. Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013) defined the argumentative text as "a genre of writing that requires the writer to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner" (p. 40). Hyland (1990) initially pointed out that the goal of the argumentative essay is to invite the reader to agree or disagree with the opinion delivered.

Students' Perception of ESL/EFL Writing

An investigation of students' perceptions, particularly in a writing course, will enable the teacher or program designer to understand more clearly what the students expect from the course (Ismail, 2011). Students' perceptions on certain topics of writing will inform teachers as to what sort of assistance is needed by the students (Ismail, 2011). Silva (1992) found that four types of essays are commonly given to graduate students: a statement of purpose, a descriptive essay related to the students' major field, a letter to the editor of the campus newspaper, and an essay for a TESOL journal.

Studies have also been conducted to discover students' perceptions on the interference of L1 and L2 from the learners' writing (Cohen & Brooks-Carson, 2001; Li, 2007; Wang & Wen 2002; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2002; Weijen, Bergh, Rijlaarsdam, & Sanders, 2009; Xuemei, 2007). The findings revealed that the culture, identity, and beliefs of the students may reshape the learners' beliefs and identity in L2 writing. However, these studies generally focused on the learning strategies used by learners.

METHODS

Participants and Instruments

The subjects of this study were 10 students (out of 20) who joined an IELTS program held at SMA Labschool Rawamangun, Jakarta. The ten students were taken from two different classes. Five students were taken from the Monday-Wednesday class and the other five students were taken from the Tuesday-Thursday class. The PGA was applied to the Monday-Wednesday class (experimental group) and the product approach was implemented in the Tuesday-Thursday class (control group).

Both groups were given a pre-test at the beginning of the course to measure their current ability. The first data collected were the participants' scripts on pre-test, delayed post-test, and post-test. The three tests were given in order to answer the first research question, which is whether the PGA is effective in improving the participants' writing on the IELTS AWT 2.

This study applied a quasi-experimental method. A quasi-experimental study is an experimental study that applies both a pre-test and a post-test, has an experimental and a control group, and applies no random assignments (Nunan, 1992).

Data Analysis

The data was analysed in two ways. The first data analysis was conducted to figure out the effectiveness of the implementation of the PGA in the IELTS AWT 2. The later data analysis was carried out to discover the experimental group's perception of the implementation of the PGA.

Two sub-analyses were conducted to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of the PGA on the IELTS AWT 2. The first analysis was an analysis of the scores. The examiners of the essays based their assessment on two rubrics. The first one was the IELTS AWT 2 band descriptor (IELTS, 2013). Since the main investigation of this study was on the IELTS AWT 2, assessment on this rubric was considered significant. The IELTS AWT 2 band descriptor is categorized as an analytical method of assessment. Elson (2011) pointed out that an analytic scoring method gives a further analysis of the technicalities of the students' writing. This evaluates in terms of content, structure, cohesiveness and correlation, grammar, and style. This method of scoring has been used by teachers around the world because it gives detailed results of students' ability in writing, particularly in the revision process (Weigle, 2002).

The second rubric used by the raters was Toulmin's Model of Argument (Toulmin, 1958, 2003). Toulmin, (1958, 2003) created this model to assess argumentative writing. The IELTS band descriptor puts more emphasis on the linguistic aspect, whereas Toulmin's Model of Argument (Toulmin's MoA) places more stress on examining the quality of the arguments delivered in the argumentative writing. The reason for using these rubrics is because the researchers wanted to discover whether there was any improvement in the students' IELTS AWT 2 essays, both in the linguistic aspect, and in the quality of the argument.

The third analysis was an analysis of the students' perceptions. The data analysis technique used in this topic was the manual transcription of the questionnaire results. There were three main areas analyzed for the participants' perceptions on the implementation of the PGA: the participants' background, the comprehension of the implementation of the PGA, and students' feelings towards the implementation of the PGA.

Discussion

This section presents two main findings, and discussion on these. The first one is the findings and the discussion on the effectiveness of the process genre approach on the students' IELTS AWT 2 writing, and the second one is the findings and discussion on the students' perceptions on the implementation of the process genre approach.

The Effectiveness of the Process Genre Approach on the Students' IELTS AWT 2 Writing

The findings shows that the experimental group showed more improvement than the control group. This was particularly seen in a comparison of students' pre-test scores to their delayed post-test and post-test scores.

In the IELTS AWT 2 band descriptor, the analysis results showed that the experimental group increased improvement in their writing in both their delayed post-test and post-test scripts. This was proven from all *p*-values being smaller than the level of significance. Meanwhile, the control group showed no significant improvement from the writing on their pre-test to their delayed post-test and post-test scripts. In fact, the statistical results showed extremely high *p*-values. Suprisingly, in Toulmin's MoA rubric, both groups showed no significant improvement from their pre-test to their post-test score. However, the experimental group experienced a significant improvement in the quality of the arguments in their delayed post-test scripts. This supports Coffin's (2004) study on the role of argument in IELTS, which explained that it is hard for IELTS test-takers to really write a good argumentative text based on Toulmin's MoA because the test prompt for the IELTS AWT 2 only asks test-takers to explain the issue with their own ideas, knowledge, and experience. Moreover, with an impromptu issue for a 40-minute test given directly in the test venue, it is hard for test-takers to create a solid, grounded argumentative text.

Qualitatively speaking, the results of this study showed that the experimental group experienced improvement in all criteria of the IELTS AWT 2, with significant improvement seen in the items Task Response, and Coherence and Cohesiveness. This shows one of the advantages of the PGA highlighted by Badger and White (2000), namely that the PGA helps students to understand the social function of the text (Task Response) and also the detailed process of writing it (Coherence and Cohesion). As the Task Response criterion requires test-takers to address the issue well and elaborate on it within a specific structure (IELTS, 2013), the PGA helped the experimental group to cope with that requirement. Moreover, the PGA also taught linguistic knowledge and skill to the experimental group. The result of the implementation shows that the experimental group could use proper connectives or conjunctions in their writing. In addition, the experimental group demonstrated that they were able to link all their arguments to the topic. This was also because the experimental group took time to revise while the control group did not.

In Toulmin's MoA rubric, the experimental group showed a slight improvement in Claim and Ground criteria. This improvement, however, was only found in their delayed post-test scripts since it was revealed that they did not make any significant improvement in their post-test script. Interestingly, even though the experimental group did not make any progress in the quality of the arguments they produced on the post-test, their IELTS score was still higher than that of the control group. This supports Coffin's (2004) explanation that no matter how well test-takers do in Claim and Ground on the IELTS AWT 2, if they are weak in linguistic features, their IELTS score will still be low.

Students' Perceptions on the Implementation of the Process Genre Approach

This section presents the findings from the student questionnaires on their perceptions of the implementation of the process genre approach. There are three aspects analyzed in this section: the participants' background, their understanding of the implementation of the PGA, and the participants' feelings on the implementation of the PGA.

The overall results show that the participants gave positive responses towards the implementation of the PGA for the IELTS AWT 2. This is shown from the range of positive responses, with 60 to 100% *strongly agreeing* or *agreeing* that the PGA helped them to improve their writing on the IELTS AWT 2.

The first aspect analyzed was the background of the participants. This was done to avoid ambiguity in the results: things such as if some of the participants had already learned how to write IELTS-like argumentative writing. With previous argumentative writing knowledge, participant improvement could be from their background knowledge rather than from the implementation of this research. The data gathered showed that none of the participants of the experimental group had had any lessons or explanations on how to answer the IELTS AWT 2 or on argumentative writing. Moreover, 80% of the participants found it difficult to understand how to respond to the IELTS AWT 2 the first time they tried it, whereas 40% found it in-between. The reason for including this statement on the questionnaire was to find out the participants' first perceptions before the implementation of the PGA. The change in the participants understanding is expressed in the results of the second aspect.

The second aspect investigated was the participants' understanding of writing the IELTS AWT 2 after the implementation of the PGA. Responses to the six questions pertaining to this showed that the participants believed that the PGA helped them in understanding more about writing the IELTS AWT 2 through: the explanation of structure or modelling of text (80% strongly agreed; 20% agreed), the given exercises (a total of 60% who agreed and strongly agreed), the collaborative writing they had with their classmates and teacher (100% – 60% who strongly agreed, 40% who agreed), the feedback given by the teacher (80% strongly agreed, 20% agreed), and the revision or individually constructed text they made (20% strongly agreed, 80% agreed). The last point of this aspect shows that 60% of the participants felt that their writing had improved after the implementation of the approach. Yet, there were also 40% who thought that it might or might not have improved their writing. This could be because of negative feelings they had during the process.

Last but not least, the third aspect analyzed was regarding negative feelings toward the implementation of the PGA. This aimed at finding out whether the approach affected the motivation of the participants. The questionnaire revealed that most of the participants found that the activities were sometimes boring but sometimes not (20–60%). Additionally, none of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the process of the PGA was a boring activity. Moreover, the participants revealed that they felt neutral when asked whether the exercises given in the module were boring or not. This revealed that a majority (60%) felt that way. The results also revealed that there were two activities of the approach that fascinated the participants: modelling of text (80% agreed) and collaborative writing (80% agreed).

CONCLUSIONS

The present research has described how the PGA is effective in improving students' writing on the IELTS Academic Writing Task 2, how it also affects the quality of the students' writing, and how the students themselves perceive the implementation of the PGA in writing the IELTS Academic Writing Task 2.

The findings and the analyses show that the PGA tends to be more effective in improving the students' IELTS AWT 2 writing compared to the product approach, particularly in IELTS AWT 2 criteria. This is supported by a more significant improvement seen in the experimental group's writing from the pre-test to the post-test compared to that of the control group. This also leads to the conclusion that the experimental group still produced better writing than the control group even though the experimental group was given two different topics for their final essays (delayed post-test and post-test). Moreover, it could also be concluded that the PGA has more effect on linguistic aspects of the students' academic writing (the Task Response and Coherence and Cohesion criteria) than the other linguistic aspects assessed in the IELTS AWT 2 band descriptor. In terms of the quality of arguments, neither groups showed a significant improvement from their pre-test scores to their post-test scores. The experimental group did however show some improvement in the quality of the argument in their delayed post-test script. This shows that neither the PGA nor the product approach could significantly affect the quality of the arguments of the students' essays. This also can be because the IELTS AWT 2 tends to give ambiguous wording in its test prompt and insufficient time for the test-taker to explore their arguments in sufficient detail.

All the students in the experimental group felt that the PGA has helped them to improve their writing on the IELTS AWT 2. The students also admitted that all steps given in the PGA gave them more insight and assistance in producing their IELTS AWT 2 writing, particularly in regard to the explanation of the structure, the feedback from the teachers, and the collaborative writing they had done with their classmates and the teacher. These show how the implementation of the PGA may affect the perceptions of the experimental group members towards instruction in writing the IELTS AWT 2.

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Transitions in Faculty Awareness: Exploring What University Students Don't Like About Teachers

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A group of university students and teachers collaborated to generate a list of 24 common teacher behaviors considered to be "hindrances" to classroom learning. A short video that demonstrated these behaviors was then produced and subsequently shown to a total of 125 students and 44 teachers. Students were asked to rank which behaviors they thought were the worst. Teachers were asked to do the same from a student perspective, that is, rank the behaviors as they perceived students would. Comparing the results, teachers were able to predict 4 of the 6 student-ranked worst hindrances, and 3 of the 5 least disturbing hindrances, suggesting that teachers are at least partially, if not totally, aware of what behaviors their students don't like.

INTRODUCTION

As the Japanese population shrinks and competition for students becomes more intense, Japanese universities are paying increasing attention to "faculty development," a term popularly known as "FD." Now a buzzword at Japanese universities, the term appeared in a 1995 white paper by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) titled "Remaking Universities: Continuing Reform of Higher Education" (Suzuki, 2013), which may have initiated the term's popularization. Subsequently, in 2005 the Central Council for Education, an entity that advises MEXT, announced that, in 2007, the total capacity of all universities and junior colleges in Japan would exceed the number of potential entrants. This announcement officially heralded the age of universal access to higher education in Japan. This new era has brought with it a need to investigate and reevaluate the very nature of what a university is and what it should do, and in addition, bringing about an increased focus on learners and learner needs.

A shrinking population and too many university seats to fill have compelled universities to undertake quality control measures in order to improve their competitiveness. This has resulted in a heightened interest in FD, no less at the government level. According to Suzuki (2013, p. 2), Article 25-3 of the Standards for Establishment of Universities was amended in 2007 to require that "a university shall conduct organized training and research for improving the contents and methodology used to give classes at said university." While this revised Article 25-3 provides a tentative framework for FD, it does not specify what organized training or research should be undertaken, nor what content or methodology should be applied.

A number of semi-government and academic organizations have attempted to address these concerns. Among these is the Japan Association for Educational Development in Higher Education (JAED), a member of the International Consortium for Educational Development, formed in 2009, based on results of "Research on the Support for FD Program Construction and the Development of FDer Capacity" conducted by the National Institute for Educational Policy Research (NIER) (Suzuki, 2013). Kawashima (2010), who oversaw the research by NIER and the formation of JAED as a result, said, "we need to improve our skills and knowledge in 3 areas: a micro-level, where individual instructors aim to improve their teaching skills; a middle-level, including curriculum reform and management; and a macro-level concerned with organizational development" (p. 9).

It can be argued that FD began at the micro-level. As Suzuki (2013) observes, the first systematic trend in answering the FD call was the implementation of course evaluation questionnaires to students. In the early 1990s, approximately 20% of universities administered such questionnaires, whereas today they are virtually ubiquitous.

However, while student evaluation of instruction (SEI) topically solicits student feedback, in most cases only individual teachers see the results, and it is left to their discretion whether to regard or disregard it. Some research into SEI indicates that it is one of the criteria used in teacher promotion (see e.g., Fox, Peck, Blattstein, & Blattstein, 1983; Burden, 2008). Yet, while student feedback may be widely solicited, its value does not seem to transcend the micro-level. That is, whether it is valued by teachers or actually helps improve their classes or teaching skills is unknown.

In most cases, items on these questionnaires are generated by the university, not the student. For example, items may solicit input on how much outside classwork the teacher provided, how well the teacher adhered to the syllabus throughout the semester, or how enthusiastic the teacher appeared to teach the class. Universities may perceive this data as valuable because it can be included in compliance reports to accrediting agencies. In other words, the act of administering a questionnaire and collecting data serves primarily as evidence that a university is engaging in FD activities, or "FD-ing."

Given the large volume of data, questionnaire forms are often generic, with machine-read bubbles to fill in. Or, they can be given through online or learning management system-based systems. While such surveys are useful for dealing with large volumes of data, they may not be significantly helpful for the teacher. For example, an item commonly included on course-end questionnaires is how well the teacher adhered to the published syllabus. Another common item is how appropriate the level of homework was. The feedback provided may be somewhat helpful for the teacher to consider, but it may have very little influence on improving learning outcomes. How well a teacher adheres to a syllabus may not be related to learning outcomes, just as how much homework a teacher gives may be less important to students than other things.

Some questionnaires may include a space for open comments, but students may be reluctant to add comments. They have no way of knowing whether their feedback will reach the teacher, nor the level of anonymity under which the survey is administered. Furthermore, eager to complete the forms and finish the class, many students may opt to leave them blank. The act of providing and receiving feedback between student and teacher is in no way interactive. In order for such feedback to have more meaning, we believe there is an enormous opportunity to explore ways to make the feedback process more interactive and to more actively solicit participation from both students and teachers.

STUDENT INPUT-BASED FD MATERIAL

This research embraces the philosophy that FD activities should foremost be for the benefit of students and teachers, and not just be for the sake of being able to report that a university is actively involved in faculty development. Further, while a lot of FD attention is paid to exploring improvements and changes to institutional policy, curricula and syllabi, as well as to classroom principles, methods, designs, (macro-level and middle-level), attention at the micro-level fails to address the things teachers do; that is, teacher behaviors and how they affect learning outcomes.

Some of these basic behaviors are treated in the concept of teacher immediacy, first introduced by Mehrabian (1969, 1981) with regard to teachers' use of nonverbal communication. Teacher immediacy has an enormous impact on student learning (Chory & McCroskey, 1999). In short, the more immediate, or close, the teacher is to students, the more students enjoy the course (Andersen, 1979; Gorham, 1988). Often, small actions and habits that greatly affect this closeness are overlooked or underestimated.

This research expands on a previous undertaking, detailed in Thollar (2013), which itself was inspired by the creation of FD-related materials at Yamagata University, in Yamagata, Japan. These materials included a handbook titled *Atto odoroku jugyo kaizen: Yamagata Daigaku jissen hen* [Amazing collection of university class teaching at Yamagata University] in 2003 and, subsequently, an entertaining series of short videos based on the handbook, titled *Atto odoroku daigaku jugyo NG shu* [Amazing collection of university class teaching don'ts].

Thollar (2013) enlisted the help of a willing group of students (34 male, 10 female) and four other teachers (3 male, 1 female) at Hokkaido Information University (HIU), in Hokkaido, Japan. Students were asked to list teacher traits, behaviors, idiosyncrasies, or habits that they perceived as obstacles or impediments to the teaching and learning process. Multiple answers were allowed and a small free comments section was included. All responses were anonymous. Students were also asked not to name specific teachers, and to refrain from vulgar or suggestive comments. It was explained that the purpose of the questionnaire was to form a list of teaching behaviors that students found inappropriate to enable a way for all staff to improve their instructional skills and style (p. 18).

Out of these student responses, a list of 27 discrete items, or hindrances to learning, emerged (p. 19). From these 27 items, the group of five teachers each selected and reenacted several hindrances of their choice along with a group of volunteer students. The result was a collection of 21 teaching traits (p. 21) presented in a short video titled "Bad Teacher." Subsequently, an answer-key video that identifies (and humorously labels) each of the behaviors was created.

Originally, the videos were intended to be shown to new faculty at HIU. New faculty would watch the "puzzle" video, try to identify as many undesirable teacher traits as possible, and then watch the “answer-key” video and compare what they identified. The proposal was presented at an in-house FD forum to all HIU faculty in November 2012. The current expansion features a number of improvements to the activity materials, as we seek to expand their usefulness to, and to employ feedback from, a wider audience of both students and teachers.

Research Method, Instruments, and Participants

For this iteration of research, we made two significant improvements to the video and the list of teacher behaviors. Firstly, the “puzzle” video – which was originally all in Japanese – was given English subtitles (authors’ translation), in order to accommodate a wider audience. Secondly, a list of 24 undesirable teacher behaviors was created, derived from the original 27 items that the pilot group of 44 students generated (Thollar, 2013) and from the 21 behaviors that are included in the video. These 24 items, which were originally all in English, were given accompanying Japanese translations, in order to accommodate Japanese students with limited English proficiency. These translations were provided with the help of two English-proficient native Japanese teachers.

Finally, two questionnaires were created: a version for teachers and a version for students. Each included instructions in English and Japanese. The student version asked respondents to choose 10 of the 24 items that they personally thought were the most undesirable. The teacher version asked respondents to choose 10 of the 24 items that they thought students would choose as the most undesirable. A total of 125 students who were in the authors’ English classes responded to the student-version questionnaires. Before they answered, they were shown the “puzzle” video, and then asked to choose 10 behaviors.

A total of 44 university instructors responded to the teacher-version questionnaires. These included Japanese teachers at HIU as well as teachers attending the authors’ presentation at KOTESOL 2015 in Seoul (Thollar & Rian, 2015).

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the 24 items (hindrances to learning), each with the number of times they were indicated on the questionnaires, as well as their rank (1-24). Student Rank (S Rank) and Teacher Rank (T Rank) show the rank of each item, ranging from highest (1) to lowest (24). Student Number (S Num) and Teacher Number (T Num) show the number of times each item was indicated.

Table 1. Hindrance Rankings by Students and Teachers

No.	Hindrance	S Rank	S Num	T Rank	T Num
1	inappropriate voice (too big or small)	8	80	**20**	5
2	incomprehensible	*5*	90	*4*	22
3	poor control (noisy or sleeping)	19	23	14	9
4	poor presenting skills (too fast, too small)	*3*	99	7	18
5	poor pace (too easy or too hard)	*6*	87	*6*	19
6	poor preparation	17	29	*1*	25
7	unrealistic demands	*1*	115	*5*	19
8	unable to answer questions appropriately	9	73	11	12
9	gender bias/favoritism	11	70	19	6
10	late start/early finish	**23**	6	13	10
11	poor concentration	**20**	21	**20**	5
12	recycled material	16	33	18	7
13	minimal or no homework	**24**	4	**24**	1
14	poor hygiene	*4*	96	15	8
15	inappropriate teaching style	7	84	15	8
16	poor support	10	71	11	12
17	inappropriate language	12	56	7	18
18	rude, self-centered or critical	13	54	*3*	23
19	nervous or withdrawn (in communication)	**21**	20	15	8
20	academic favoritism	13	54	10	13
21	doesn't respect students	*2*	107	*2*	24
22	aurally distracting	**22**	19	**23**	2
23	too friendly with some students (unequal)	15	37	9	14
24	inappropriate content (outside curriculum)	18	28	**20**	5

Note. S Rank = student ranking, T Rank = teacher ranking, S Num = number of times students indicated, T Num = number of times teacher indicated.

The top six hindrances indicated by students (bold italic numbers) were: (1) *unrealistic demands*, (2) *disrespect for students*, (3) *poor presenting skills*, (4) *incomprehensibility*, (5) *poor hygiene*, and (6) *poor class pace*. These rankings suggest a number of things. *Unrealistic demands*, the most common item, could indicate that students feel overwhelmed by their workload, either in class or outside of class. *Doesn't respect students* implies that many students are not satisfied with the attitude of the faculty member toward students. Before concluding that teachers are grumpy and hypercritical, however, this result may be slightly indicative of the complaints from many teachers that "today's students" can't take criticism – a result, some claim, of "relaxed" (*yutori*) education policies during the 1990s that over-softened classroom rigor and reduced the ability of students to perceive criticism as constructive (Takayama, 2007).

Ranked almost as highly as *poor presenting skills*, and a little higher than *incomprehensibility* and *poor class pace*, all of which are classroom management concerns, is *poor hygiene*. The implication here is hard to gauge: Either more teachers are unaware of their own hygiene than they realize, or the experience of just one out of many teachers made a considerably lasting impression. Either way, students do not like teachers who do not take adequate hygiene measures. Fortunately, it is ostensibly a much simpler thing to become aware of and do something about than classroom management practices.

Conversely, among the bottom three hindrances (bold numbers) were (1) *aural distractions*, (2) *minimal or no homework*, and (3) *late start/early finish*. *Aural distractions*, an item intended to refer to repetitive speech habits (such as saying "Right?" after every sentence), seem tolerable, presumably as long as they do not distract from the main message the teacher is trying to convey.

Interestingly, students seemed the least concerned about the impact of minimal or no homework as an obstacle to learning. Perhaps surprisingly, teachers also predicted that students would not be concerned by the same, with both teachers and students indicating *little or no homework* as the least invasive hindrance.

A comparison between student and teacher rankings can easily be seen in Table 2, as can the discrepancy in several of the items.

TABLE 2. Most Significant Differences in Rankings by Students and Teachers

No.	Hindrance	S Rank	T Rank
7	**unrealistic demands**	*1*	*5*
21	**doesn't respect students**	*2*	*2*
4	poor presenting skills (too fast, too small)	3	7
14	poor hygiene	4	15
2	**incomprehensible**	*5*	*4*
5	**poor pace (too easy or too hard)**	*6*	*6*
15	inappropriate teaching style	7	15
1	inappropriate voice (too big or small)	8	20
8	unable to answer questions appropriately	9	11
16	poor support	10	11
9	gender bias/favoritism	11	19
17	inappropriate language	12	7
18	rude, self-centered or critical	13	3
20	academic favoritism	13	10
23	too friendly with some students (unequal)	15	9
12	recycled material	16	18
6	poor preparation	17	1
24	inappropriate content (outside curriculum)	18	20
3	poor control (noisy or sleeping)	19	14
11	**poor concentration**	*20*	*20*
19	nervous or withdrawn (in communication)	21	15
22	**aurally distracting**	*22*	*23*
10	late start/early finish	23	13
13	**minimal or no homework**	*24*	*24*

Note. S Rank = student ranking, T Rank = teacher ranking

Foremost, the teachers ranked four of the top six student-ranked items – *unrealistic demands, disrespect for students, incomprehensibility,* and *poor class pace* – very similarly. Further, while not in the top six but still high up, *poor presenting skills* was also identified by teachers as an area that students would be concerned about. This suggests that teachers have a fairly good idea what behaviors students find bothersome. The exception was *poor hygiene*. This item, along with *inappropriate voice* and *inappropriate teaching style*, was ranked much higher by students than teachers. Conversely, teachers ranked *poor preparation* and *rude/self-centered/critical* much higher than students did.

Beyond similarities and differences in these proposed "hindrances" to learning, however, we believe the main lesson to be learned from this research is that teachers' perceptions of what students think is not necessarily accurate; that is, what is important to students might not always be important to teachers. Also, a locally co-constructed questionnaire, rather than a university-generated generic one, potentially does a lot more to bridge some of the potential misunderstandings between students and teachers that affect learning outcomes.

Limitations and Avenues for Further Development

As a now-mandatory part of the FD process, university-administered course-end questionnaires are arguably a step in the right direction. They solicit *some* student opinions, and provide *some* feedback for teachers. We submit the activities described in this paper as one of many possible innovations in FD that are more interactive and, we would argue, more fun – for both teachers and students. As such, we believe these kinds of activities stand to be much more informative than a mandatory course-end machine-processed template survey.

What we have presented here is not without limitations. Firstly, in addition to what we have outlined about teacher immediacy, a better grounding in the research literature on SEI (student evaluation of instruction) would be helpful.

Secondly, item reliability and validity need to be examined. The 24 items were entirely student-generated, however, the wording is ambiguous in some items and needs to be refined. For example, *late start/early finish* should technically be two separate items, as should *inappropriate voice*. Student comments (see Appendix) suggest that in most cases students were referring to inaudibility, but the duality of meaning compromises clarity. With regard to item construction, providing a way for questionnaire respondents to suggest new items would be ideal. Further, refining item wording and classifying items under a number of categories would lend itself well to devising a Likert-scale instrument. This would allow for Likert data on each item rather than just a simple count (ranking).

Thirdly, a wider and more structured approach to both teachers and students would garner more and better quality responses. For example, while we were able to approach more than 100 students in our own classes, with the cooperation of other teachers who were willing to dedicate some of their class time to showing the video and giving the questionnaire, many more responses could be garnered. In the same way, it would be valuable to increase the number of teacher respondents by including a wider selection of faculty members from a more diverse selection of universities, perhaps even accommodating differences in teacher nationality, specialty, age, and gender.

Also, this study has dealt only with what *students* don't like about what teachers do and what teachers think students don't like. For balance, a reverse version – what *teachers* don't like about students and what students think teachers don't like about students – might be equally as revealing. An accompanying video, if produced, could be titled “Bad Student.” Finally, this study has dealt almost exclusively with negatives. While constructive criticism is helpful, positive reinforcement is arguably more palatable. For further balance, an entirely positive version of this study – what students *like* about teachers and vice versa – would likely offer some interesting insights.

CONCLUSIONS

We believe that the video element of this study – and the fact that it was collaboratively produced by students and teachers – is important. This activity, or ones like it, could potentially be incorporated into regular classes. Meanwhile, student feedback provides a much more detailed blueprint on how to make classes better and may be helpful for teachers to better avoid indicated pitfalls. As universities change, the character of FD is, as Kawashima (2010) states, changing as well. If, as teachers, we are to make an effective transition toward those changes, we need to consider new ways to improve the effectiveness of our interactions with students.

Effective classrooms are based on how immediately available, or close, the teachers make themselves to students. We believe that this closeness begins with a willingness to get to know one another, and what we expect and need from one another. With the recent trend toward learner-centered classrooms, we should not forget that it is the teacher who makes the biggest impact in the classroom, sometimes a very lasting one. Falout and Falout (2005) report that nearly every study on L2 learner demotivation indicts teachers as a major source, often the primary cause, of this. This study focuses on what students report they don't like about teacher behavior, and offers insight into how we can become more aware of behaviors that hinder learning. In particular, we should be aware that these behaviors may not always have the same significance to students as we think they might.

With regard to teacher immediacy, Richmond (2002, p. 65) observes that students are “drawn toward teachers they trust and perceive as competent and caring.” We reiterate that if the goal of FD is for faculty to develop, preferably into better informed and more effective teachers, then novel approaches, especially fun ones, are a worthy pursuit.

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APPENDIX

Student Comments from Questionnaire (Authors' translation from Japanese)
**no gender indication = (s)he*

The following comments are excerpted from an open-comment question that asked, "Have you ever had a 'bad teacher' A bad classroom experience? Please share; describe what happened. (No teacher names please!)" Note that many responses include references to pre-university experiences.

- It's good to caution noisy students, but it slows down the class.
- The teacher spent most of the class scolding students on their manners.
- The room was full of chatty students, but (s)he did nothing. We couldn't hear anything. It was demotivating.
- Absolutely no talking in class – including asking my friend about a homework problem.
- I coughed once and the teacher got mad.
- The teacher mistook students' names. When we told him, he got mad.
- Inefficient: the teacher spent 30 minutes calling out attendance in a class of 200.
- The mic was so close to the teachers mouth that every time (s)he laughed "huh-huh," it made an awful noise.
- The teacher fell asleep during students' presentations.
- The teacher said we couldn't get credit for the class if we didn't buy the textbook (s)he wrote.
- The teacher would easily get irritated and then just leave the classroom.
- The teacher gave normally badly behaved students good scores for the one single day they took the class seriously.
- Scores were the same for both serious students and slackers.
- The teacher's phone rang in class. He said it was an important call, and walked out.
- Students were so quiet during class that the teacher got mad and walked out. He said, "I will not give classes!" until we all apologized. We had to work on our own for a month.
- Suddenly the teacher made us stay after school until we finished. It was elementary school, so our parents were worried (it got to be around 7 pm).
- I was told to forget my aspirations because they'd never come true.
- We were asked for our opinions on videos we watched, and he criticized those opinions.
- The teacher would ask us for opinions and such, but (s)he talked the whole time, so we didn't have time to think.
- The teacher spent a lot of class time bragging.
- The teacher bragged a lot. It always started with, "I don't mean to brag, but…"
- The teacher only wanted certain answers. Other opinions were shot down.
- The teacher criticized our opinions. (We were told, "In this case you should be thinking like ______!")
- For homework, we had to write reports that gushed praise for what was introduced in class. Example: Give reasons why ○○○ is an excellent way

of thinking.

- The teacher would say the same thing 4-5 times.
- The teacher would try to impress us on how busy (s)he was.
- When I asked for advice, the teacher gruffly told me to go figure it out myself.
- The teacher's voice was small and far away, and (s)he wrote illegibly on the blackboard.
- The teacher would go off topic and the class would end. Then (s)he'd tell us to go read the textbook.
- The teacher would break lots of chalk. It was a mess for us to clean up.
- If we sat in the front rows, we'd get a spit shower.
- My high school homeroom teacher. If we didn't get something, (s)he'd call the entire class stupid. Or if (s)he was in a bad mood, it'd get taken out on us.
- The teacher would just hand us worksheets and tests, and not hold a proper class. Plus, (s)he wouldn't answer our questions in class. We had to go to the teachers' room.
- The teacher would tell us "I'm in a bad mood today" during the first part of class, and it was just as (s)he said. (S)he'd single out certain students, or give nothing but off-the-cuff answers to questions.

Conference Overview

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Invited Speaker Presentations

Robert S. Murphy	Neuroscientific Benefits of Inquiry-Based Learning
Robert S. Murphy	Why You Should Know About Dynamic Skill Theory!
Chuck Sandy	Seeing Beyond the Dichotomies That Divide Us
Chuck Sandy	The ELT Writer's Retreat: A Workshop Approach
Chuck Sandy with Josette LeBlanc	Listen to the Teacher Within (and Unleash Your Superpowers)
Chuck Sandy	This Is Just to Tell You... (About Poetry, Projects, and Passion)
Boyoung Lee	English Education in Korea, Now and Onward
Boyoung Lee	The Future of English Education in Korea (at the Elementary and Secondary Levels)
Boyoung Lee	Tea Time with Lee Boyoung
Curtis Kelly	Adopting Inquiry-Based Learning Pedagogies into ELT
Curtis Kelly	Why Our Brains Like Stories
Glenn Stockwell	Transforming Language Teaching and Learning with Technology
Glenn Stockwell	Principles of Mobile Language Learning
Jon Nordmeyer	Inquiring into Writing: Building on Learners' Strengths
Ken Beatty & Craig Lambert	Education in Flux: Using Tasks to Your Advantage Online and in the L2 Classroom
Sara Davila	Assessment as a Motivator: The Global Scale of English Learning Objectives for Academic English
Sara Davila	Bring the 21st Century into the English Language Classroom
Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto	Creative Teaching for 21st Century Learners

Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto	The Lives of English Language Teachers
Kalyan Chattopadhyay	Critical Language Awareness in Teacher Learning
David Valente	An Intercultural Approach to Creativity in the Primary English Classroom
David Valente	Doing Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Primary English Language Programmes
Virginia Parker	Teenagers: Why Are They Like That? And What Can I Do About It?
Anna Loseva	Exploring World Cultures, Learning More About Your Own
Steve Iams	Story Slam: The Potential of Performed Stories in ELT

Symposia

Young Learners & Teenagers

Kalyan Chattopadhyay, Barbara Hoskins Sakamoto, Anna Loseva, Virginia Parker, David Valente	Teaching Children and Teenagers Globally: Challenges and Opportunities

Multiple Skills

Jon Nordmeyer, Madalena Elshoff, Bethany Martens, Mirela Matesan, Kwangmi Shin, Barbara Wrightson	Supporting ELL's in International Schools with the WIDA English Language Development Framework

NNESTs and NESTs

Lizabeth England, Yingliang Liu, Soonhyang Kim, Kyungsook Yeum	NESTs & NNESTs Meet Together: Creating a Collaborative Working Environment
Kara Mac Donald, Hyunsoo Hur, Jeong-Ah Lee, KyungAe Oh	Beyond the Native Speaker Fallacy: Korean NNESTs' Employment Struggles

Academic Presentations

Assessment / Testing

Amy Ahn	Testing in Korea and Its Implications for Classroom

	Assessment Tasks
David Allen	Japanese University Entrance Exams and IELTS: Washback Explored
Matthew Benson	Testing in Korea and Its Implications for Classroom Assessment Tasks
Yu-ching Chan	Factors Affecting Junior High School EFL Teachers' Practices of Multiple Assessments in Taiwan
Gil Coombe	Grading Participation in University English Courses: Why?
Kurtis McDonald	Aligning Test Factors with Purposes on the Vocabulary Size Test
Patrick McIver	Amazing Race to Alternative Assessment and Attitudes
Philip Riccobono	Amazing Race to Alternative Assessment and Attitudes
Youngsoo Song	A Multivariate Generalizability Study on How Scales Function in a Writing Test
Stefan Thomson	The Washback Effects of TOEIC Education on University Students

Classroom Management

Matthew Anderson	Effective Classroom Management Tipology
John Bedford	The Finnish Method for Classroom Management
Seonmin Park	Students, You Can Use Your Cellphones in Class
Joel P. Rian	Teaching at Universities: How Not To
George Settlemir	A Framework for Classroom Management and Motivating Students Through Gamification
Angel Steadman	Motivate Your Students With Learning Contracts
Simon Thollar	Teaching at Universities: How Not To
Paula Landers	From the Start: Classroom Dynamics

Content-Based Instruction

Ken Eckert	Why Is an English Professor Here, And Can/Should Literature Be Taught?
Mark Rebuck	Authentic Resources and Four Other Keys for ESP
Jack Ryan	Teaching Global Studies in English

Co-teaching

Annie Im	Co-teaching and the NEST's Role
Anna Callaghan	Exploring Co-teaching Experiences in the South Korean Classroom

Jesse Balanyk	Reducing Intercultural Misunderstandings Between Teachers with Different Cultural Backgrounds
Gordon Tyler Harry	Co-creation Through Open Communication

Culture and Language Learning

Marcus Springer	The Purpose of Education in Japan: A Case of Culture Clash
Dylan Glyn Williams	Understanding Context and Agency in a South Korean High School English Classroom

English for Specific or Academic Purposes

Eun-Jung Brown	Academic Writing, Promoting Speaking Listening Reading and Critical Thinking
Richard Miles	Eye Contact Moves in English Oral Presentations
Sterling Plata	CPP: Copy, Paste, and Process to Prevent Plagiarism
Supong Tangkiengsirisin	Effects of Group Peer Feedback and Revision on Business Writing Performance

Grammar

Cecilia Murniati	Exploring Pre-service Teacher's Belief About Grammar and Grammar Teaching in Indonesia

Identity (Learner or Teacher)

Ian Moodie	The Problem of ELT Turnover in Primary Schools
Ines Mzali	Second Language, Third Culture: Non-Korean NNESTs in Korean Universities
Premalatha Nair	There Is No Romance in Teaching: Confession of a Student Teacher
Eric Reynolds	Second Language, Third Culture: Non-Korean NNESTs in Korean Universities
Deborah Cason Suarez	Nurturing Nature: Motivating Collegiate Learners Through Identity Awareness

Inquiry-Based Learning

Neil Briggs	Engaging All Learners: The Importance of Dialogue
Alex Monceaux	Deepening Content Knowledge Through Problem-Based Learning in the ELL Classroom

Learning Preferences / Styles

Peadar Callaghan	Understanding Student Motivation Through Gamification
Kyla Mitsunaga	The Happiness Project

Lesson Planning "101"

Jean Adama	Lesson Planning 101: Suggestions for Structuring Speaking Courses for Different Teaching Styles
Allison Bill	Lesson Planning 101: The Importance of Engaging Learners and Activating New Knowledge
Wayne Finley	Lesson Plan 9 from Outer Space: Storytelling 101
Alejandro Hernandez	Effective Lesson Planning: Techniques and Strategies for a Dynamic Classroom
Angie (Yuri) White	Implementing a Backward Design in the Korean EFL Context

Listening

John E. Breckenfeld	Utilizing 3-Minute Audio Podcasts to Increase Native English Listening Comprehension
Naheen Madarbakus-Ring	My Friend TED: Implementing Effective Strategies into Academic Listening Using TED Talks
Roehl Sybing	Developing Perceptual Processing of L2 Speech Through Explicit and Implicit Practice
Matthew Wallace	Developing Perceptual Processing of L2 Speech Through Explicit and Implicit Practice

Materials or Course Design

Calum Adamson	Effective Lesson Planning for Content-Based and Content-Integrated Lessons
Matthew Baldwin	Flipping the Classroom in the Context of Blended Learning Initiatives
Mik Fanguy	Flipping the Classroom in the Context of Blended Learning Initiatives
Vincent Greenier	A Process-Oriented Framework for Creativity in the EFL Classroom
Rob Hirschel	Enhancing the Provision of Speaking Resources on a Communicative Curriculum to Improve Learner Engagement
Gareth Humphreys	Enhancing the Provision of Speaking Resources on a Communicative Curriculum to Improve Learner Engagement
Youngju Jeong	Exploring a Multiliteracies Framework in English Language Teaching
Carter Peyton	Creating Graded Readers Using Free Online Corpus Software
Glenn Tucker	Choosing Culturally Sensitive Materials: Gender Treatment in New Headway Plus Beginner

Holly Wang	Flipping the Classroom in the Context of Blended Learning Initiatives

Multiple Skills

Robert Berkley Griffin	The 21st Century English Language Lesson: Approaches and Best Practices in ELT
Barry D. Griner	Collaborative-Critical Writing Through the Use of Survey Tools
Nina Kang	Collaborative-Critical Writing Through the Use of Survey Tools
Jason Lapointe	Now Something Different: Workshops for My Favorite Lessons
Jiyeon Park	TED Through Reading Aloud
Jungmi Park	The 21st Century English Language Lesson: Approaches and Best Practices in ELT
Daniel Rueckert	The 21st Century English Language Lesson: Approaches and Best Practices in ELT
Paul Starr	Using Alternate Reality Games in the ELT Classroom
Tony Terry	The 21st Century English Language Lesson: Approaches and Best Practices in ELT
Hae Won (Sunny) Yu	TED Through Reading Aloud
Ingrid Zwaal	Go Fish for English

Music / Art / Video in the Classroom

Nathan John Galster	Music as a Tool for Language Acquisition with Adult ESL Learners
Scott Henderson	Using Movie Posters in ELT
Michael Lesser	Teaching Idioms and Expressions Through Television Shows

Orientation to Communicative Language Learning "101"

Tamara Roose	Centering the Writing Classroom on Communication
Paulino Sanchez	What Is Communicative Language Teaching?

Other Issues

Scott DeWaelsche	Critical Thinking, Questioning, and Student Engagement in Korean University English Courses
Mikyoung Lee	Non-native English-Speaking Teachers' Anxieties and Insecurities: Self-Perceptions of Their Communicative Limitations
Kara Mac Donald	Online PhD Candidates; Unique Challenges

Mayuko Matsuoka	Teachers' Awareness for Developing Learner Autonomy in English Learning
Alex Monceaux	Scaffolding Effective Student Stress Management in Education
David Shaffer	Reflective Inquiry for Self-Directed Learning
Sae Saem Sofia Yoon	Process Drama: The Future of the Hooha People

Pragmatics

Olivia Knapton	Using Lexis and Grammar to Frame Events in Discourse
Jennifer Kreisz	Developing Students' Vocabulary and Pragmatic Sense for Effective Email Writing

Reading / Literacy

Rheanne Anderson	ER: Triage for Lower-Level Students in Extensive Reading
Yutaka Fujieda	Development of Academic Literacy: Discourse Socialization by Japanese EFL Undergraduates
Robert Waring	What Exactly Is Extensive Reading?

Reflective Teaching Practice

Daris Chang	Self-Fulfilling Prophesy: A Thief in the Night
Bryan Hale	#Keltchat Live: Questions for My Older Teacher Self
Timothy Joe Hampson	#Keltchat Live: Questions for My Older Teacher Self
Anne Hendler	#Keltchat Live: Questions for My Older Teacher Self
Christopher Miller	Themes in Reflective Practice Among ELT Instructors in South Korea
Ted O'Neill	Collaboration in Teaching Self-Directed Learning
Jocelyn Wright	Seeing Things Differently, Seeing Things Better: Transformational Teaching

Second Language Acquisition

Ian Adkins	Your Students Are Terrified: Foreign Language Anxiety
Michael Alpaugh	Don't Speak Korean; This Is English Class... in Korea
Atsushi Asai	Phonological Rules for Voicing in L1 Applied to L2 Phonetics
Sandra Bruce	The Role of Confidence and Anxiety in First-Year Study-Abroad Students
Martin Hawkes	Task Sequencing and Form-Focused Instruction

Sociolinguistics / Language Policy / World Englishes

Aaron Hahn	The Global Model of English
Christopher Gareth Haswell	The Global Model of English
Christopher Gareth Haswell	Internationalization and EMI: The Problem of Linguistic Stress in the University Classroom
Yesul Oh	Effective Way: Code-Switching

Speaking / Conversation / Pronunciation

Jackie Bolen	How to Teach Speaking
Gunther Breaux	Speed Dating English: One Topic, Many Partners
Junko Chujo	Influence of Pronunciation Monitoring by L2 Learners on Affective Variables
Matthew Coomber	Portfolio-Based Assessment of Speaking
Simon Rhys Dawson	Developing Lstening and Speaking Skills and Building Vocabulary Using BBC Learning English
Alex Grevett	Transitioning to a Conversation-Based Classroom: Whys and Hows
Barry D. Griner	Issues in Teaching North American Vowels to Korean Speakers
Nina Kang	Issues in Teaching North American Vowels to Korean Speakers
Shaun Manning	Values Clarification Tasks: Pushing for Accurate Output in Opinion-Gap Tasks
Phil Owen	"Hear-Say" Activities for Almost All Classes
Tina Zaman	English Conversation Workshops for Fluency

Technology-Enhanced Instruction / CALL / CMI / MALL

Cathryn Bennett	Social Media for Language Learning
Colette DeWitt	Try Plickers! An Innovative Web-Based Teaching and Assessment Tool
Jesse Elam	The Reliability of Google Speech for EFL
Dawn Gillis	Using Digital Storytelling to Develop Academic and Communication Skills
Chia-Ling Li	Mediated Collaboration and Active Listening: Integrating Facebook Use into TEFL Listening Classroom
Chia-Yi Li	Mediated Collaboration and Active Listening: Integrating Facebook Use into TEFL Listening Classroom

Jo-Anna Lynch	Social Media for Language Learning
Anthony Marshall	Improvement of Task Performance by Videoing Tasks, Student Self-Assessment, and Task Repetition
Elizabeth May	Adventures and Reflections on Creating Online Spaces; Or What Not to Do
Kevin Roskop	Adventures and Reflections on Creating Online Spaces; Or What Not to Do
Christopher Shepard	Using Digital Storytelling to Develop Academic and Communication Skills
Pornpimol Sukavatee	Creating an Online Creative Writing Course: Enhancing Writing and Motivation
Phutsacha Tippanet	Creating an Online Creative Writing Course: Enhancing Writing and Motivation
Paola Trejo	Teaching with Technology: Three Fantastic Tools to Boost Students' Engagement
David Washburn	8 Bits, 4 Steps: Build Your Own ESL Computer Game
Clayton Whittle	8 Bits, 4 Steps: Build Your Own ESL Computer Game

Vocabulary

Johanna Estrella	V for Vocabulary: American Films and Vocabulary in EFL
Andrew Gallacher	Mastery Sentences: A Window into the Interplay Between Word Knowledge Types
Jiyeon Han	An Effective Way of Teaching Collocations to EFL Young Learners: Collocation-Based Activities
Mark Howarth	Mastery Sentences: A Window into the Interplay Between Word Knowledge Types
Jack Ryan	L2 Vocabulary Acquisition and TOEIC Test Preparation
Edward Sarich	L2 Vocabulary Acquisition and TOEIC Test Preparation

Web Resources for Teachers "101"

Michael Free	Spinning a Basic Web: 4 Tools to Enhance Your Students' Learning
George Settlemir	Spinning a Basic Web: 4 Tools to Enhance Your Students' Learning

Writing

Daniel Bailey	An Investigation of Writing Quality and Strategy Use Between Three Online Channels of Corrective Feedback

Douglas Baumwoll	the doing? is What couple
Iain Binns	Incorporating the Process Writing Approach in an ESL Classroom with Institutional Constraints
Mark Davis	Process Writing in ELT
Ben McBride	Lessons on Establishing Authentic Voice in Academic Writing
Maulidia Rahmi	Implementing the Process Genre Approach to Teach IELTS Academic Writing Task 2
Kiky Soraya	Implementing the Process Genre Approach to Teach IELTS Academic Writing Task 2
Hao Xu	Integrating Three Types of Models in Graduate Students' Academic Writing Instruction

Promotional Presentations

Gabriel Allison e-Future Co., Ltd.	Solving Problems! Fun and Practical Solutions for Problems Faced While Teaching Young Learners
Gabriel Allison e-Future Co., Ltd.	Can Phonics Instruction Be Fun, Effective, and – Shorter?
Jiyoung Ko Neungyule Education	Integrating 21st Century Skills into Your Classroom
Carl Dusthimer e-Future Co., Ltd.	Transitions in Reading
Gemma Kang e-Future Co., Ltd.	Comics to the Rescue: Using Engaging and Fun Comics to Promote Real Speaking
Allison Bill Anaheim University	Professional Advancement Through Online Doctoral, Master's, and Certification Programs in TESOL
Amelie Kelly Oxford TESL	Professional Development: Which Way to Go?
Olivia Knapton University of Birmingham	The University of Birmingham: ELAL MA in TESOL and MA in Applied Linguistics
Angel Steadman University of Arizona	Enhance Your Career Online with the University of Arizona

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