KOTESOL Proceedings 2017

Why Are We Here? Analog Learning in the Digital Era

The 25th Korea TESOL-PAC
International Conference

Why are we here?
Analog learning in the digital era

21-22 October 2017
Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul, Korea

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Andy Curtis
Nicky Hockly

Featured Speakers
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Proceedings of the
25th Korea TESOL International Conference – PAC 2017
Seoul, Korea, October 21–22, 2017

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

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Foreword

The 25th Korea TESOL International Conference – PAC 2017 was held on October 21–22, 2017, under the theme of **Why Are We Here? Analog Learning in the Digital Era**. There were 203 presentations given over the two days of the conference, with Andy Curtis and Nicky Hockly headlining the conference as the plenary speakers. In this volume of the *Proceedings*, we offer 40 papers, written by speakers and presenters based in South Korea and Japan as well as Indonesia, Thailand, China, the USA, Canada, Spain, and Rwanda.

Our conference theme – *Why Are We Here? Analogue Learning in a Digital Era* – might seem to be a bit curious. "Why Are We Here?" questioned the need for teachers in the physical classroom in this era of CALL, the Internet, and language learning apps. It questioned how classroom teachers can best make themselves relevant in a world of technology – and how much use of technology makes for the best balance. Our troupe of invited speakers and presenters answered the theme's question resolutely: Technology is only as effective in the classroom as the creativity of the teacher organizing it all!

The fourty papers in this volume include papers by plenary speakers Andy Curtis and Nicky Hockley as well as a paper by featured speaker Glenda Rose. There are 22 research reports, 11 papers on teaching techniques or activities, 2 workshop reports, and 2 panel discussion reports.

We hope you enjoy this volume of the *KOTESOL Proceedings*.

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David E. Shaffer
Editor-in-Chief

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KOTESOL Proceedings 2017

Why Are We Here? Analog Learning in the Digital Era

Proceedings of the 25th Korea TESOL International Conference – PAC 2017

CONTENTS

Techniques and Activities Reports

Workshop Reports

Panel Discussion Reports

Conference Overview

Plenary Speaker Contributions

The Journey of Applied Linguistics Through Time and Space

Andy Curtis

TESOL International Association, Alexandria, Virginia, USA

This paper represents two areas that are not usually combined: historical linguistics and film. However, many overlaps were found between these two. Therefore, the first part of this paper takes a brief look at three of the longest-established and most-cited scholarly journals in the fields of *Linguistics*, *Applied Linguistics*, and *International Applied Linguistics*. Analyzing the inaugural issues of those three journals as academic artifacts, it is possible to trace the development of linguistics, from "pure" to "applied" to "international." In the second part of the paper, two early movies are explored: *Ball of Fire*, released in 1941, and *My Fair Lady* (MFL), released more than 20 years later, in 1964. Part three focuses on the most recent film to feature language, linguistics, and linguists in the starring roles, *Arrival*, from which brief, opening excerpts are used to show how the language-related richness of the medium of film has changed over time.

LINGUISTICS: "PURE," "APPLIED," AND "INTERNATIONAL"

According to the University of Arizona's Department of Linguistics website (as of February 2018), "Although linguistics is still *largely unfamiliar* to the educated public, *it is a growing* and exciting *field*" [emphases added]. Who is being referred to as "the educated public" is unclear; for example, is that in relation/opposition to the "uneducated public"? However, chronologically, it is the reference to linguistics as a relatively "new" field that is more notable, especially for those of us who have spent all or most of our adult professional lives in and around the fields of linguistics and applied linguistics.

In spite of some of our life-long residences in and around those fields (or, at least, in my case, always loitering nearby), the idea that linguistics is "new" does seem to be applicable. For example, one of the pre-eminent publications in the field is the *Journal of Linguistics*, the first issue of which did not appear until just over 50 years ago, in 1965. An indication of where the field was at, at that time, is reflected in the first paper in that first issue, which was by N.E. Collinge and titled "Some Linguistic Paradoxes" (1965, pp. 1–12). In that inaugural issue's first paper, Collinge started by stating that "the emphasis on syntagmatic criteria in analysis ... has led many scholars, in Great Britain at least, to a disbelief in the adequacy of phonemes alone" (p. 1). The almost-parenthetical reference to Great Britain alludes to the fact that the geographic center of the linguistics world was, at that time, England, even to the extent that reference to other countries was deemed to be unnecessary. And to pick up on Collinge's theme of paradoxes, the use of "at least" alludes to Great Britain being, in fact, "the most," in the sense of

Britain being the dominant influence in linguistics at that time.

It is also worth noting that one of Collinge's previous publications was a book titled *The Structure of Horace's Odes* (1961), which begins in the flowery style characteristic of the academic literary non-fiction of that era: "The appearance of another book on Horace needs no apology. Undying interest, and the constant spilling of ink, is the price the poet pays for having caught the world's imagination with his words, especially his lyric words" (p. 1). That book is relevant as it is an illustrative example of the close connections between literary studies and linguistic studies, in which the latter was largely seen as an "off-shoot" of the former, without a distinct disciplinary identity of its own, in those early days.

In terms of the time needed, in our field, to go from a so-called "pure" version of a disciplinary knowledge domain to a more "applied" version – bearing in mind that "pure" versions are theoretical constructs, at the far ends of imaginary continua – that figure appears to be around 15 years. That number comes from the time elapsed between the first issue of the *Journal of Linguistics*, published in 1965, and the first issue of the journal *Applied Linguistics*, the inaugural issue of which was published in 1980. Looking back gives us a snapshot of where we were at that time. For example, the three main articles in that first issue of *Applied Linguistics* were Canale and Swain's 50-page paper on the teaching and testing of Communicative Language Teaching (1980, pp. 1–47), Wilga River's paper on "Where the Real Problems Lie" in relation to foreign language acquisition (pp. 48–49), and William Rutherford's discussion of pedagogical grammar (pp. 60–73). That interest in researching grammar has continued to the present day, with one of the articles in the most recent issue of *Applied Linguistics* being Carter and McCarthy's (2017) "Spoken Grammar: Where Are We and Where Are We Going?" (pp. 1–20).

In terms of the time needed to go from linguistics to applied linguistics, a related question is "How long, then, does it take to go from applied linguistics to *international* applied linguistics? Again, using the launch of major journals in the field as a chronological indicator, the *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* was published in 1991, 26 years after the *Journal of Linguistics* was launched (in 1965) and 11 years after *Applied Linguistics* was launched (in 1980).

Looking at the differences between the three areas, as reflected in and represented by the three journals (i.e., linguistics, applied linguistics, and international applied linguistics, the inaugural issue of the *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* (perhaps somewhat paradoxically) contained an article on "The Nationalisation of English" (Rosen, 1991) in England and Wales, which was legally required under a law that had just been passed. Rosen's paper challenged, "the new, legally binding provision that spoken Standard English should be taught to all school pupils [in England and Wales] who do not already speak it" (p. 104), thereby highlighting the more political nature of the field of applied linguistics, as it grew and matured. That interest in the (post)colonial politics of English has also (like the interest in grammar) continued to the present day. For example, Andrew Sewell and Jason Chan's paper (2017) is titled "Hong Kong English, But Not as We Know It: Kongish and Language in Late Modernity" (pp. 596–607).

Continuing to use academic journals as one of the indicators of the maturity of a disciplinary domain, the relative newness of linguistics is not the case for language studies. For example, *The Modern Language Journal* celebrated its

centenary in 2016, one-hundred years after its first issue was published in the fall of 1916. A kind of "timestamp" of the first volume of that journal is the paper by Carl Krause (1916), "Literature of Modern Language Methodology in America for 1915." Therefore, if linguistics came of age 50 years later, in the mid-1960s, and of noble British birth, then language studies may have been taking shape much earlier, not long after the turn of the century, emanating from the illegitimate colonial offspring in the New World, that would come to be known as "America."

Returning to the *Journal of Linguistics* as a barometric indicator of linguistics' past, present, and immediate future, the most recent issue (Volume 54, February 2018, p. 229) contains a list of forthcoming articles, including "Is Universal Grammar Ready for Retirement?" by José-Luis Mendívil-Giró. That is perhaps appropriate, as the fifth decade of life is, in many countries, when many people start to consider retirement, which may relate to the biological metaphor or analogy of the life-cycle of a particular field of research and enquiry. And in relation to the shifting axes of influence in the field, Mendívil-Giró is at the University of Zaragoza, in northeastern Spain, which may be a reflection of an on-going European dominance in the field, but at least it has, eventually, expanded beyond the borders of the Great British Empire.

The list of forthcoming articles in the February 2018 issues of the *Journal of Linguistics* also includes "Moving Along Paths in Space and Time" by Tuomas Huumo (at the University of Tartu, in southern Estonia). As the article has yet to be published, it would be unwise to speculate as to its contents and conclusions. However, the title of Huumo's paper leads us into a recent and relevant depiction of linguistics, and in particular, applied linguistics in modern pop culture, with the arrival of *Arrival* (Arrival, 2018), a film released first in Venice in September, then on general release in the USA in November of that year. According to the Internet Movie Database (IMDB), "When twelve mysterious spacecrafts [*sic*] appear around the world, linguistics professor Louise Banks is tasked with interpreting the language of the apparent alien visitors."

EARLY FILM REPRESENTATIONS OF LINGUISTICS AND LINGUISTICS PROFESSORS

Before turning to *Arrival*, and continuing our historical appreciation of what came before, we find that the origins of movies in which the central characters are linguists, and the plots of which revolve around academic and scholarly language studies, can be traced back long before *Arrival* appeared on the scene, going back nearly 80 years at least, to the release of *Ball of Fire* (Goldwyn & Hawks (1941). Two years earlier, in 1939, Hendrix's three-page paper, "Films in the Learning of Foreign Languages: Services to Be Gained from Motion Pictures in Teaching Foreign Languages" (pp. 308–311) was published in *The Journal of Higher Education*. Hendrix started his brief paper by stating:

> Little has been done in the utilization of moving pictures in the teaching of foreign languages, but the moving-picture industry in this country has made our students so familiar with films for entertainment that the adaptation of their use to another field would be simple." (p. 308, emphasis added)

Regarding students' familiarity with films, Hendrix may have been correct, but adapting films for their use in language classrooms would take some decades, and would not be "simple."

Ball of Fire (1941) starred two of the major Hollywood stars of the day: Barbara Stanwyck (1907–1990), who was active as an actress for more than six decades, from the 1920s to the 1980s, and Gary Cooper (1901–1961), whose acting career spanned 35 years, from 1925 to 1960, making a total of around a century on the silver screen between them. Cooper played Professor Bertram Potts, and Stanwyck – in a delicious example of nomenclature wordplay worthy of "Pussy Galore" in Ian Fleming's James Bond novel *Goldfinger* (1959) – played a character called Sugarpuss O'Shea. The two-minute trailer for *Ball of Fire* (which is still viewable on YouTube) opens with the lines: "Great educators throughout the world have been forced to streamline our dictionaries and encyclopedias because of the demands of modern slang." Bear in mind that that was said in 1941 – more than 50 years before the World Wide Web and the Internet became widely available, and therefore more than half a century before the explosion of online dictionaries of slang, such as Urban Dictionary (1999–2018). Consequently, although it was probably said somewhat tongue-in-cheek, as part of the trailer, the idea of us having to rewrite our dictionaries "because of the demands of modern slang" may be seen as impressively insightful, prescient even.

The black-and-white trailer continues, complete with classical music, and the (melo)dramatic voice-over by the narrator: "Selected to perform this Herculean task of rewriting these ponderous volumes of knowledge is Professor Bertram Potts – *who knows nothing about the subject of slang*" [emphasis added]. While the punch-line, about the know-nothing professor, is being delivered by the narrator, Cooper/Potts is shown wearing a tuxedo (including a black bowtie) walking slowly, while staring seriously and thoughtfully at the pages of a very large, hardback book, which appears to have been randomly opened (or just fallen open) to the middle.

Another comedic characterization of a linguistics professor was presented by the actor Tully Marshall (1864–1943), who played Professor Robinson. In a brief but memorable scene that echoes some of the frustrations expressed by many of my colleagues in The Academy today, Potts and Robinson say the following:

> Potts: I've just finished my article on slang. Twenty-three pages compiled from a dozen reference books, and eight-hundred examples.
> Robinson: Well?
> Potts: Everything from the idiotic combination of "absotively" to the pejorative use of "zigzag." I traced the evolution of "hunky-dory," and tracked down "skidoo" from "skedaddle." Eight-hundred examples, and I may as well throw it in the wastebasket.

It is possible that one or more films featuring linguistics and linguistics professors were released in the 1950s, however, the next most notable movie to do so, after *Ball of Fire* in 1941, was *My Fair Lady* (MFL), released more than 20 years later, in 1964. MFL was made at an estimated cost of 17,000,000 US dollars (Wikipedia), which would have been a significant sum even then, more than 50 years ago, and well over 50,000,000 USD today. Although presented in its film version as a light, romantic comedy, the movie is based on the play

Pygmalion (published in 1912, first performed on stage in 1913) by the Irish playwright and political activist, George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950). As such an activist, Shaw lived through what is referred to as the Home Rule Crisis, which was a flashpoint in the violent fight against the formation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in the early 1800s.

Given the turmoil and the armed resistance against what was seen as yet another "invasion" and "occupation" by the British Empire (this time, in and of Northern Ireland) the ever-popular musical movie version of *Pygmalion*, that is, MFL, can be seen as a highly sanitized version of the times through which Shaw was living. An example of this blinkered perspective can be found in the relatively recent book *Loverly: The Life and Times of My Fair Lady* by Dominic HcHugh, published in 2012, a full century after the publication of Shaw's *Pygmalion* and nearly half a century after the cinematic release of MFL.

As McHugh (2012) states, in the introduction to his book, in spite of the longevity of the tremendous popularity of MFL, with more than 2,700 performances on Broadway: "Yet to date, *My Fair Lady* has been the subject of comparatively little scholarly literature" (p. viii). Unfortunately, that definitive work about MFL appears to largely skip over what applied linguists and language teachers might be most interested in: the language lessons, especially those focused on pronunciation. To be fair to McHugh, his book was published in a series titled Broadway Legacies, which includes books such as: *To Broadway, to Life! The Musical Theater of Bock and Harnick* (Lambert, 2010), *Pick Yourself Up: Dorothy Fields and The American Musical* (Greenspan, 2010), and *Irving Berlin's American Musical Theatre* (Magee, 2012). That is to say, the focus of McHugh's book about MFL, like the other books in that series, is the songs and the lyrics of the American Dream (seen by some, after the 2016 USA presidential elections, as more of an American Nightmare; Considine, 2017). However, even taking that focus on the music and song lyrics into account, it is disappointing, from the perspective of language and applied linguistics, especially sociolinguistics, to see McHugh's conclusion that one of the main messages of the MLF movie "is that education can change your life" (2010, p. xv).

Having considered the de-politicizing, sanitization of Shaw's Pygmalion, as presented in the MFL movie, we can now turn to what I contend is one of the real messages of the film, albeit buried beneath layers of saccharine sentimentalism. That is, the way you talk shapes what people think of you, in ways that are so powerful and so pervasive that those who are doing the judging may not even be fully aware of what they are doing. Therefore, if you sound like a working-class commoner – in the case of MLF, a poor flower-girl living on the streets of Old London Town – then you will be looked down upon, from a great height, by the well-educated upper-class. However, if you can change the way you sound, those who make up that upper class can be tricked and fooled into believing that you are "one of them."

Turning now to the pronunciation aspects – or, more accurately, the "accent correction" aspects – of MFL, there are several pedagogical scenes between the two main characters: Professor Higgins, played by Rex Harrison (1908–1990), and Eliza Dolittle, played by Audrey Hepburn (1929–1993), both of whom were British-born Hollywood stars at that time. In terms of "life imitating art" and vice versa, the Professor Higgins character is reputed to have been based on the

real-life, and apparently larger than life (see Howatt, 1984, pp. 198–200), Oxford University-educated British phonetician and grammarian, Henry Sweet (1845–912).

A wager has been placed by the Colonel Pickering character (played by Wilfrid Hyde-White, 1903–1991), challenging Prof. Higgins to take an unwashed street urchin like Eliza and pass her off as a duchess at an embassy ball. Although the relationships between language, culture, and identity in this movie may have escaped those who claim to have studied MFL before, it has not been wasted on those of us in language education. Indeed, to see those scenes from the movie today, more than five decades after they were first seen by the general public (in 1964), is to travel back in time and place to the "listen-and-repeat" mantra of the Audio-Lingual method, and even Suggestopedia, as this scene, between Prof. Higgins (PH) and Eliza (ED), shows (*My Fair Lady*, 1964):

PH: All right, Eliza, say it again.
ED: The rine in Spine stays minely in the pline.
PH: The rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain.
ED: Didn't I say that?
PH: No, Eliza. You didn't "sie" that. You didn't even *say* that.
PH: Now, every night before you get into bed, where you used to say your prayers, I want you to say "The rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain" fifty times. You'll get much further with the Lord if you learn not to offend his ears.

Although fewer than one hundred words, and barely 30-seconds long, the scene above tells us so much about the relationship between pronunciation, social class, and the "caste system" of the British Empire at that time (which still appears to exist in England, at least to some extent, today). Focusing on the pedagogy, the phonetics, and phonology of the scene, we can see ideas related to extensive and intensive repetition, in this case, saying the same nine-word nonsense phrase 50 times, as well as the Suggestopedic learning-in-your-sleep methodology by praying at bedtime. And as for the punch-line, there is the delightfully colonial allusion to the distinct possibility that God is, in fact, an Englishman (see Delderfield, 1970) – and a White, Oxbridge-educated, upper-class Englishman at that, as the professor scolds his charge, Eliza, saying: "You'll get much further with the Lord if you learn not to offend his ears."

THE RICHNESS OF THE MEDIUM IN MODERN TIMES

Returning now to *Arrival* (Levy, Levine, Ryder, Linde, & Villeneuve, 2016), the first 60 seconds of the film are a voiced-over narration by the Amy Adams character, "Professor Louise Banks" ("Prof. B"), which alludes to the film's exploration of the relationships between time, space, and memory – and by extension, language, as it is language which connects those three aspects: "I used to think this was the beginning of your story. Memory is a strange thing. It doesn't work like I thought it did. We are so bound by time. By its order." There is also the explicit use of narrative structures, within the reference to "your story" (the person Prof. B is speaking to here is her daughter, who at that time is still a baby).

After two more minutes of the opening narration, based on flashbacks capturing moments between the birth and the death of her daughter, Prof. B continues: "But now I'm not so sure I believe in beginnings and endings. There are days that define your story beyond your life. Like the day they arrived," which repeats the narrative reference, reiterating the uniqueness and the specificity of "your story" by adding "your life." Although there are many explicit references to language and linguistics in *Arrival*, the references to narrative structures are implicit, but nonetheless important, as all narratives require language of some kind, to tell the story (Schiffrin, De Fina, & Nylund, 2010). For example, some clinical applications of narrative theory have also been found in fields such as speech pathology, as Elleseff (2017) concludes: "Because storytelling encompasses a number of higher-level language and cognitive skills, I believe that it should be an integral component of every language evaluation since no other assessment yields as much information about the child's language abilities as the narrative one." (See also Hutto, 2012, for work on sociolinguistic aspects of narratives).

This discussion of just the first few minutes of *Arrival* shows how rich the medium of film can be as so little screen-time can yield in-depth discussions of various aspects of language. Indeed, as noted by Curtis (2007, 2012, 2013), that richness can easily lead to cognitive overload for learners in a second/foreign language classroom if the scenes are not carefully chosen and closely matched to the learners' target language levels as well as their interests and motivations.

Another example of the richness of the medium provided by *Arrival* can be seen immediately after the opening narration, when we first see the Adams character, as Prof. B (at approximately 4½ minutes into the film), in her professorial role as she enters a large, tiered lecture theater. The theater is mostly devoid of students as they are elsewhere trying to find out more about the arrival of the alien spacecraft. As Prof. B enters the largely empty teaching and learning space after asking where everyone is and receiving only blanks stares and shoulder-shrugs from the few students there, she starts teaching while unpacking books and papers from her professorial-looking, large, shapeless, over-stuffed bag. While unpacking, she says, "OK. Well let's get started. Today we are talking about Portuguese and why it sounds so different from the other romance languages. The story of Portuguese begins in the Kingdom of Galicia [students' cellphones start ringing, so Prof. B pauses] in the Middle Ages, where language was seen as an expression of art."

The question of what a professor looks (or "should" look) like has generated a significant amount of discussion amongst some of the English language learners I have worked with. It was, then, necessary for me to do some research into this particular area. For example, in an online article titled "I Look Like a Professor," Kelly Baker (2015), the editor at *Women in Higher Education*, starts by stating: "I don't look like a professor, or so I've been told in my almost 13 years in, or adjacent to, academia." Professors, and how we dress, have even reached the pages of online fashion magazines, such as *Off the Cuff*, which recently ran a piece called "Making the College Professor Look Your Own: Timeless Style That's Always Current" (2017). Over the last 25 years, in dozens of countries and contexts, of all the words I have ever heard my students use to describe professors, "stylish" was never one of them!

Consequently, when I have showed the 30-second scene of Prof. B entering

the lecture theater, unpacking her bag and starting to teach, many of the English language students in my classes have said – *even before Prof. B starts speaking* – "Oh, she's the professor." That has led to a fruitful discussion of how the students know that, including the fact that, for example, she goes to the front of the classroom and does not sit down. The course participants also comment on the way she dresses, her bag, even the way she walks as she enters the lecture theater. With higher-level language learners, there have also been discussions about whether commenting on Prof. B's appearance is "sexist." The general consensus in our in-class discussions has been that those comments are not "sexist" as the students explained that they would make the same set of assumptions (correct or otherwise) about a professorial-looking male entering the room, dressed comparably, based on the same or similar criteria.

After viewing that scene with the volume turned off, the students then view it with the volume turned on, which confirms the assumptions of the majority of them as they hear Prof. B saying "Today we are talking about Portuguese, and why it sounds so different from the other romance languages. The story of Portuguese begins in the Kingdom of Galicia ... in the Middle Ages, where language was seen as an expression of art." As one of the students in our class put it, "Only professors talk like that."

Fifteen minutes into *Arrival*, we see the first meeting between Dr. Ian Donnelly (Dr. D), played by Jeremy Renner, and Prof. B, on a helicopter, as they fly towards the site where the nearest alien spacecraft has come to stop, suspended above the ground, in Montana (in northwestern USA). Dr. D is looking at a book from which he reads aloud to Prof. B the following lines:

> Language is the foundation of civilization. It is the glue that holds a people together. It is the first weapon drawn in a conflict.

After hearing those lines read aloud by Dr D, Prof. B says to him, "That's quite a greeting," to which he instantly replies, "Yeah, well, you wrote it." But the apparent compliment from Dr. D, positively received by Prof. B, turns out to have been a criticism:

> Prof. B: Yeah. It's the kind of thing you write in a preface. ... Dazzle them with the basics.
> Dr. D:　Yeah. It's great. ... Even if it's wrong.
> Prof. B: It's wrong?
> Dr. D:　Well, the cornerstone of civilization isn't language. It's science.

One of the reasons for the richness of the medium of film is exchanges such as this one. As well as listening for the tonal contours on Prof. B's one-word reply – "Wrong?" – which indicates disagreement rather than a question. It is also important to be able to see her non-verbal messages, especially the body language of her face, which reinforces her communicative intent to challenge Dr. D. At this point, Colonel Weber, played by Forest Whitaker, introduces the two academics to each other and explains what their first priority is regarding the aliens: "What do they want, and where are they from?" Being a theoretical physicist from Los Alamos, Dr. D appears to arrogantly assume that they will be taking a highly mathematical approach following classical Western scientific paradigms. Prof. B

interrupts him, firmly but gently, and in a moment that might be appreciated by Communicative Language Teaching devotees everywhere, she says, "Why don't we just talk to them before we start throwing math problems at them?"

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Unfortunately, on my journeys into classrooms around the world, I continue to walk into language teaching and learning lessons in which films are still being used, apparently more for "babysitting" and "crowd-control" purposes than for anything pedagogical. That may be because, for most people, movies are for entertainment – something to wash over oneself, an enjoyable distraction from the day-to-day realities that face us, at work and at home. But to use film in this way in the classroom is to completely miss the deep narrative connectivity across all cultures as stories have been told in all places, at all times, for as long as humankind has had language.

This brief look at two early movies focused on language teaching and learning, *Ball of Fire* (1941) and *My Fair Lady* (1964), shows that movies, not unlike the inaugural issues of scholarly journals, are artifacts that reflect how the languages, societies, and communities of practice are connected with (or disconnected from) each other. The more in-depth look at a third film *Arrival* (2016) illustrates how far film-making has come since Hendrix's 1939 comment (above), especially in terms of how language pedagogy, applied linguistics, and even the linguists themselves are represented. It will be interesting to see how future films tackle the subject of language and those of us who teach and learn it.

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Dr. Andy Curtis served as the 50th president of the TESOL International Association, and in 2016, received one of the Association's 50-at-50 Awards, when he was voted one of the Fifty Most Influential Figures in the Field, over the last 50 years. Over the last 25 years, Dr. Curtis has published more than 100 articles, book chapters, and books, and has presented to around 25,000 teachers in 50 countries, in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, as well as in North, South, and Central America.

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Trends in Technology and the Future of English Language Teaching

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Digital technologies are having an undeniable impact on English language teaching (ELT). What does rapid digital change mean for the future in ELT? Although it is notoriously difficult to predict the future, the seeds of that future are undoubtedly sown in the present, and examining current digital trends can provide clues for at least the immediate future. This article explores three key trends that have the potential to impact significantly on English language teaching: blended learning, learning analytics, and machine learning. To what extent these trends affect the profession will depend on just how ubiquitous and affordable the related technologies become, and in the long term, how effective they are perceived to be in helping learners achieve their language goals.

INTRODUCTION

Digital technologies are having an impact on not just manufacturing and industry, but on the liberal professions in areas such as law, medicine, education, journalism, and even religion (Susskind & Susskind, 2015). Digital innovation in education means that terms like *innovation*, *revolution*, and *disruption* are becoming commonplace when talking about the effects of technology. English language teaching (ELT) is no exception. What does rapid digital change mean for the future in ELT? Where is digital innovation taking the profession? Although it is notoriously difficult to predict the future, the seeds of that future are undoubtedly sown in the present, and examining current digital trends can provide clues for at least the immediate future. This article explores three key trends that have the potential to impact significantly on English language teaching: blended learning, learning analytics, and machine learning. To what extent these trends affect the profession will depend on just how ubiquitous and affordable the related technologies become, and in the long term, how effective they are perceived to be in helping learners achieve their language goals.

BLENDED LEARNING

In the last few years, blended learning in ELT has moved from being a fringe concern to center stage. Although the term *blended learning* has several interpretations, its use in ELT is arguably most clearly described by Whittaker (2013):

...in ELT, "blended learning" is the term most commonly used to refer to any combination of face-to-face teaching with computer technology (online and offline activities/materials). (p. 12)

In addition, blended learning is usually understood to take place in another location to the face-to-face teaching, and most likely in the learners' own time. However, blended learning in primary and secondary school contexts, currently most common in North America, can include learners working individually with educational software on computers in the school building, either in the classroom itself or in a separate computer lab (see Hockly, 2016, for a detailed discussion).

Blended learning can be perceived by educational institutions as a way of saving classroom space and reducing teaching hours, and therefore saving money; it is also seen by educational technology vendors and publishers as a hugely lucrative market. There is a push within K-12 (primary and secondary schools) in the USA towards a so-called "flex" model of blended learning being integrated into the school day. In this approach, learners are rotated out of face-to-face classrooms into computer labs, where they work individually on computers with educational software, getting to grips with key content, and overseen by paraprofessionals (non-specialist adults). Classroom time is then spent on more collaborative and problem-solving approaches with a qualified teacher. Despite there being scant evidence to date for the effectiveness of this sort of blended learning approach (Lafer, 2014), the twin drivers of technology and economics are likely to mean that we can see more learning software appearing in mainstream schools in the coming years, and more out-of-class online learning. In 2008, Christensen et al. even predicted that 50 percent of all high school courses in the US will be delivered online by 2019, although as we approach this date, this seems unlikely.

The putative cost-saving aspects of blended learning approaches that support a substantial out-of-class online element have also been questioned (e.g., Horn & Staker, 2012); nevertheless, the perceived cost savings of a blended approach have attracted institutions. In addition, large class sizes, a lack of classroom space, and teacher dissatisfaction with the impact of face-to-face teaching due to the limited exposure to the target language that learners inevitably experience in timetabled classes may be significant factors in choosing to implement a blended learning approach with a substantial online component, in some contexts (e.g., Aborisade, 2013). In other contexts, political instability may increase the need for blended learning when learners experience difficulties in physically attending face-to-face classes (e.g., Fleet, 2013).

It is worth noting that the flex model of blended learning is starting to impact teachers' roles in mainstream education in North America. When teachers share their teaching hours with computer software overseen by (much cheaper) paraprofessionals, then we can expect teachers to have fewer direct teaching hours, and their role will also change to that of guide and facilitator, rather than content provider. For teachers, this scenario suggests some pros (fewer teaching hours; a more facilitative teaching role), and some cons (potentially less pay for fewer teaching hours). How or whether a flex model of blended learning might be taken up within EFL remains to be seen, but if it is, it is mostly likely to first affect teachers working in mainstream educational contexts (e.g., in primary,

secondary, and tertiary institutions) rather than in the private sector (e.g., in private language schools), as ministries of education and school boards influenced by educational technology providers introduce mandates for this approach.

LEARNING ANALYTICS AND ADAPTIVE LEARNING

A second area that is already impacting on ELT, and is likely to play an increasing role in the future, is that of learning analytics and adaptive learning. These trends can be increasingly seen in digital language learning materials offered to English language learners, frequently as part of a blended learning approach. Digital technologies enable the collection and analysis of massive amounts of data about students' learning strategies, habits and preferences, and about the current state of their linguistic knowledge – hence the term "learning analytics." Proponents argue that knowing about students' learning in detail can help tailor content to their specific needs and make their learning more effective. This approach to content creation is known as "adaptive learning," and defined by Kerr (2016) as follows:

> In the most general terms, [adaptive learning] can be defined as a way of delivering learning materials online, in which the learner's interaction with previous content determines (at least in part) the nature of materials delivered subsequently. The process is automated, dynamic, and interactive. Its purpose is to generate a personalized learning experience. (p. 88)

Many language learning apps and websites, such as Duolingo and busuu, tailor the content provided to learners based on their interactions with prior content. Adaptive learning works by measuring a learner's interactions with content in a myriad of ways: for example, their navigational decisions, the correct and incorrect answers they provide to language learning activities, how frequently they do certain types of activities, and how much time they spend in the app overall. This information is then used to tailor the learning content in the app and to provide each student with the language learning content that they need, when they need it. Adaptive learning has already made inroads in ELT. A range of adaptive learning providers work with mainstream ELT publishers to incorporate their services into supplementary electronic learning materials, online study platforms and more. We can expect to see more adaptive learning in our field, both in online language learning materials, and in language learning apps.

Nevertheless, the lack of a strong research base showing that self-study adaptive learning materials really do lead to improve learning outcomes for students suggests that we should proceed with caution. For example, studies carried out into the effectiveness of mobile learning apps based on adaptive learning principles have proved problematic. This is due to the extremely high attrition rate of users, who may start using an app like Duolingo or Busuu, but find it difficult to maintain interest – and study habits – over more than a few weeks (e.g., see Vesselinov & Grego, 2012). However, learning analytics are here to stay and are likely to become more sophisticated in the future, but – as with every other technology – there is still a role for the teacher to play. Such a role

in this case would seem to be in teachers knowing their students on a more "human" level, being able to help when they are struggling, or having a difficult time outside of class (which impacts on what they do in class), and more.

MACHINE LEARNING

A further trend that is likely to affect ELT is the area of machine learning. Text-to-speech and speech-to-text translation apps drawing on machine learning with large databases of information are becoming increasingly mainstream. For example, Skype Translator is a free tool that enables people to make calls in their own language and to have their speech translated in real time into another language. One can easily imagine a German and Chinese business person holding a meeting via Skype Translator, with each speaking their own language and having their words instantly translated into the other's language and displayed as subtitles on the screen. Google is working on a similar product offering simultaneous translation via mobile devices and Bluetooth headsets. Although not yet 100 percent accurate, these sorts of programs are improving all the time, and not only bypass the need for a translator but arguably for a teacher and the need to learn a language in the first place.

However, although these software solutions may be effective in situations of expediency (such as navigating one's way around a city in a foreign language or holding a business meeting), they are not the same as two humans interacting in the same language, with all the nuances, subtext, and subtlety that this entails. But it does suggest that teachers of adults may need to become more specialized, prioritizing areas such as intercultural communication and soft skills over "just-in-case" general English language teaching. It is also worth remembering that there continues to be a digital divide in terms of access to the Internet. Not all of the world is connected to the Internet, and mobile data can be prohibitively expensive, making the regular use of real-time translation supported by machine learning unsustainable for many.

CONCLUSION

There can be no doubt that digital technologies are impacting on the field of ELT and will continue to affect teachers going forward. The role of the English language teacher is shifting, and will continue to shift, as newer digital technologies become more widely available. Learners now have a large range of options to choose from to learn a language online by themselves (see Hockly, 2015, for an overview), and the teacher is no longer the sole font of linguistic information. However, the human contact provided by face-to-face (or online) classes with real people is irreplaceable. We are social beings, and we thrive through social contact and communication. An English language "classroom," whether virtual or real, synchronous or asynchronous, will continue to provide a space for that interaction, no matter how futuristic our world may look.

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Featured Speaker Contribution

Painless Tech Integration

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Educational technology is an important aspect of modern language teaching and learning. However, not all teachers have the will, skill, or tools to integrate technology effectively into their classroom (Knezek & Christensen, 2015). Pedagogical beliefs also influence type and extent of technology integration (Tondeur, van Braak, Ertmer, & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2017). This paper reviews various models of technology integration and provides a framework for using technology to support learning outcomes and lesson objectives.

INTRODUCTION

Within the list of 21st Century Skills are two that relate to technology. The workers of tomorrow must have "leadership, teamwork, collaboration, facility in using virtual workspaces" and skill in using "information and communication technology (ICT), media and internet literacy, data interpretation and analysis, and computer programming" (*21st Century Skills*, 2016).

Whether we teach English to children or adults, we are teaching the future workforce, and these digital skills will only continue to grow in importance as the technology replaces much of the unskilled labor force (Frey & Osborne, 2017). However, even new teachers who have had courses on technology integration and are confident in their technology skills may not incorporate it into their teaching (Whitacre & Peña, 2011; Clausen, 2014).

To complicate matters, a significant "digital divide" still exists between world regions and within countries. At the Internet World Stats website, the *World Internet Usage and Population Statistics* (2018) table shows that North America has a 95% penetration rate, followed by Europe (85.2%), and Oceania/Australia (68.9%). Africa shows the lowest penetration rate of 35.2%. These figures indicate a large difference in digital access among nations that impacts instruction. Former TESOL International Association President Dr. Andy Curtis detailed this disconnect in a speech at the TexTESOL 2016 conference about how a certain country in Africa had a "laptop for every child" initiative. However, when he visited one of the schools, he found it did not have electricity. You cannot teach with technology simply because you have access to the tools.

Within developed countries, the digital divide is becoming smaller, but it still exists. For example, a 2016 study in the Republic of Korea investigated whether the proliferation of mobile devices, particularly smartphones, has helped to close the digital divide, but found that it still exists based on gender, age, education,

income, and occupation (Sung, 2016). As teachers, we must consider what technology we can use in and out of class before we engage students with it.

Once we have determined what tools and access both we and our students have, we can then begin to determine the best method of implementing technology integration for the best student outcomes.

MODELS OF TECH INTEGRATION

There are many models of tech integration, but for the purpose of this article, I will limit the discussion to three: TPACK, SAMR, and TIM.

TPACK stands for "technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge" (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Although the framework addresses three knowledge bases (technology, pedagogical, and content), it views these knowledge bases as intersecting at various points (Figure 1). The instructor needs to know the technology and the pedagogy as well as the content area in order to be effective at integrating technology. As a classroom tool for tech integration, the idea is to be aware of what you have and what you need to effect technology integration based on your knowledge, the course you are teaching, and your teaching philosophy. It is, in effect, a gaps analysis framework to help build teachers in all three areas. It also helps to ensure that teachers focus on balancing content and technology, and not simply apply a new shiny digital tool that is not aligned with pedagogy or course content (Koehler, 2012).
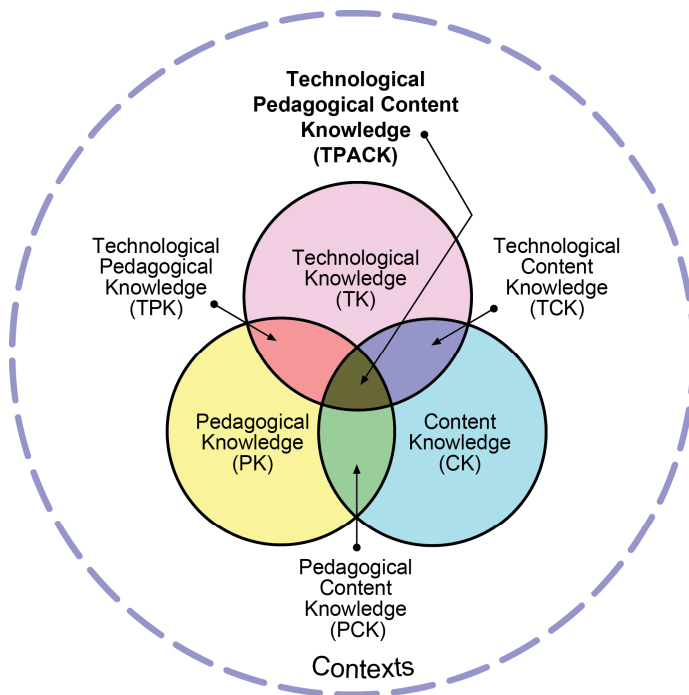
FIGURE 1. The TPACK Framework. (Koehler, 2012)

SAMR stands for Substitution, Augmentation, Modification and Redefinition. Many credit this model to Dr. Ruben Puentedura. Although I have not been able to confirm that it originated with him, he certainly contributed to its popularization (Puentedura, 2014). The SAMR model (Figure 2) may be popular because it is easy to use. It simply asks the question: How can I use technology to improve my lesson? Can I substitute a digital tool for something we do by hand? For example, should I have my students use a word processor to write their report instead of having them write it by hand. How can I augment that activity resulting in "functional change"? For example, instead of having students turn in their printed papers, I could have students send their digital versions to a shared folder (such as on Dropbox or Google Drive). Modification allows for "significant task redesign." For this document example, we could have the students publish their articles on a blog or classroom writing app (such as Write About) where they can share comments with one another. To redefine this activity, students can create multimedia documents that include images, audio and video files along with hyperlinks for additional information. I recommend Kathy Schrock's Guide to Everything page on the subject (Schrock, 2016).

THE SAMR MODEL
Dr. Ruben R. Puentedura

S **SUBSTITUTION**
Technology acts as a direct substitute, with no functional change

A **AUGMENTATION**
Technology acts as a direct substitute, with functional improvement

ENHANCEMENT

M **MODIFICATION**
Technology allows for significant task redesign

R **REDEFINITION**
Technology allows for the creation of new tasks, previously inconceivable

TRANSFORMATION

FIGURE 2. The SAMR Model: Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition. (Puentedura, 2014)

Finally, the Technology Integration Matrix (TIM) is a free resource provided by the Florida Center for Instructional Technology (2015–2018). It looks at two basic factors in using technology in the classroom: the teacher and the student. For the teacher, it looks at the comfort level and extent to which the teacher uses technology. It ranges from "entry" to "transformation." For students, it looks at how technology is being used (active, collaborative, constructive, authentic, and goal-directed). Their website has detailed information about each of the 25 cells in the matrix with examples (Figure 3). They also provide examples by content area and grade level. It is much more detailed than SAMR but includes the aspect of pedagogy (what kind of learning will students be engaged in) and a guide for growing as a professional educator from using technology solely to present your lessons to guiding students to choose and create technology to solve problems. At

this level, the tools become "invisible" the same way a pen becomes an "invisible" tool when you need to make a quick note. You reach and grab the pen to write. What you write is what matters.
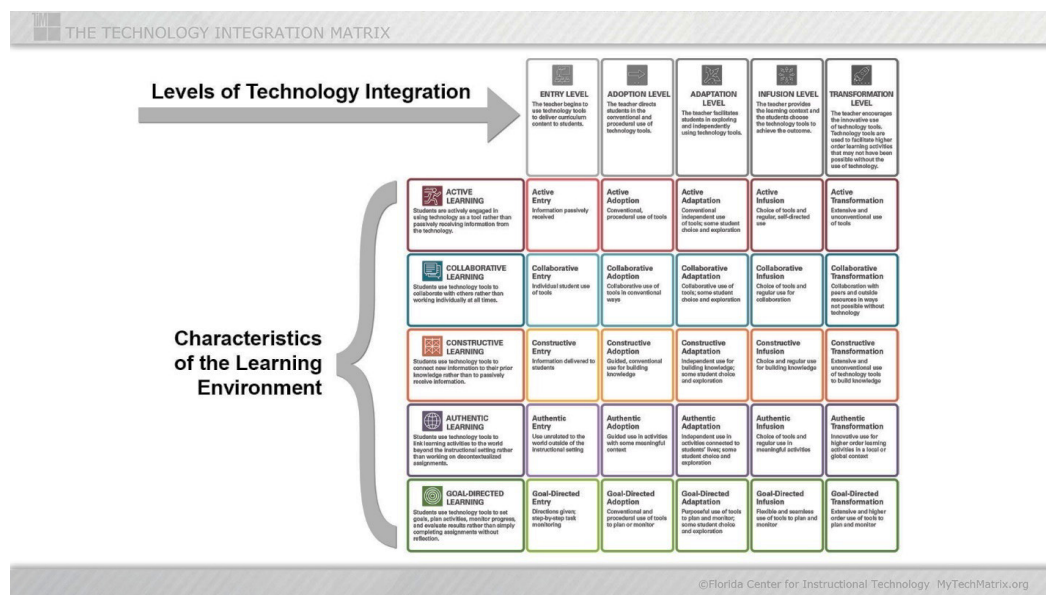
FIGURE 3. TIM: The Technology Integration Matrix includes five levels of technology integration and five characteristics of the learning environment for each of them. (Florida Center for Instructional Technology, 2015 – 2018).

This "invisibility" is the goal of technology integration: the tools are no longer bright and shiny but ones with which the students (and teachers) are so comfortable that they barely think about the tool itself at all.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Pu tting any of the frameworks of technology integration into practice can be a daunting prospect. Here are my personal suggestions for including technology if you have not yet gone behind using a PowerPoint presentation or video in your classroom.

1. Start with your course or class outcomes. What are the long-term goals of the class? Make sure any technology you decide to use will support those outcomes.
2. Decide on your learning objectives. Technology must have a purpose that aligns with your learning objective. What is it that you want the students to be able to do by the end of class?
3. Ask: What would I normally do to work toward meeting the learning objective? What can I change to include 21st century digital literacy skills?
4. Design your lesson!

a. What am I comfortable trying? Will I use something I already know well, or do I want to try something new? What tools do I have in my digital tools toolbox that will support my learning objectives and, ultimately, my course outcomes?

b. What level of integration is most appropriate for these students at this time? Are there any prerequisite digital skills that they need to successfully complete the learning objective?

c. What pedagogical (or andragogical) principles must I keep in mind as I design my lesson activities?

d. How am I going to assess the achievement (or not) of the lesson objective? Will technology play a part in the assessment?

e. What instruction methods, strategies, and activities will I use?

f. What materials (including technology tools and access) do I need?

As far as writing up your lesson plan, there are dozens of examples of lesson plans that you can find on the Internet. Two of my favorites are WIPPEA + R (warm-up/review, introduction, presentation, guided practice, independent/ collaborative practice, communicative practice, evaluation, application, and reflection) and 5E (engage, explore, explain, elaborate, evaluate).

Whatever template you use, if you use it regularly, you will greatly decrease the time needed to create an excellent lesson plan.

CONCLUSION

Most teachers probably agree that integrating technology is important for our students' futures in the workforce. However, sometimes it is difficult to know where and how to start integrating technology. We have taken a broad view of three models of integration: TPACK, SAMR, and TIM. I have provided some questions to consider when designing your lesson with technology so that it supports the student outcomes you desire.

The next step is to pick something and try it. If you have a "tech fail" experience, it will be a teachable moment for your students. Since professional learning communities (PLNs) can help us overcome the fear of new things, practice with a colleague or work on designing your first piece of tech integration together. Most importantly, set your mind to enjoy the learning curve and your students will ride that wave with you.

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Research Reports

Word Difficulty Properties Arise from Lexical Data and Votes

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The present study examines EFL learners' judgment concerning the difficulty of English words and schematically demonstrates the difficulty structures. We asked 352 students to name what words were difficult for them out of all the words in their EFL textbooks, and obtained 311 nouns on the type base. Data analyses by means of word length, semantic width, semantic depth, and semantic density, the frequency of word occurrences, and their difficulty vote counts revealed that the difficulty properties for the nouns consisted of four main components: polysemy, ambiguity, relevance, and perspective. Documentary data in dictionaries and learners' responses can thus disclose word difficulty properties. These consequences are applicable to EFL education; for example, college students can overcome the difficulty of learning the academic words that tend to have highly specific concepts if they have opportunities to learn those lexical properties and to use them in content-based or theme-oriented learning.

BACKGROUNDS AND PURPOSES

Difficult words may be less frequently appearing words, words with many meanings, or words for specific purposes (e.g., Asai, 2009). Asai and Matsuoka (2016) point to the finding that even some basic short English words with few meanings are difficult for EFL learners. The three major facets obtained in their study are the following: more abstract concepts, less experienced events even in L1, and fewer learning opportunities in L2. The contribution of those feature factors to word difficulty is schematically shown in Figure 1.
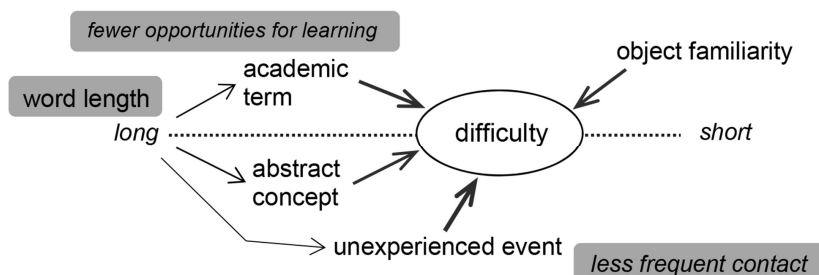
FIGURE 1. Feature factors to word difficulty. (Asai & Matsuoka, 2016)

Asai and Ishikawa (2010) and Asai, Ishikawa, and Matsuoka (2017) propose the ideas that word difficulty judgment can offer ample information on educational psychology and that the fewer opportunities there are for using a word and for the development of meta-cognitive ability, which may enhance the feeling of difficulty for the word.

The present study aimed to show further what would cause the English learners' feeling of difficulty with English words in typical EFL coursework at the college level.

SURVEY METHODS

The participants in the present survey were 352 students in their first year at a four-year university in Japan from six consecutive years who voluntarily answered which words were difficult in their English course textbooks, with no limit on the number of words, in a written format at the end of each semester (Asai & Matsuoka, 2016). Their English proficiency levels varied from the intermediate level, the STEP 2nd level, to the low-advanced, the STEP semi-1st level (STEP, 2012; Taylor 2014).

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey collected 1,751 words on the token base and 654 words on the type base. According to the definitions and synonym lists in nine dictionaries (Abate, 1997; Agnes & Guralink, 2001; Asano, 2001; Gillard, & Tono, 2004; Hatori & Nagata, 2016; Quirk, 2003; Sinclair, 2001; Summers, 2000; Wehmeier, 2000), three semantic properties were defined in the present study. Semantic width denotes the average number of definitions described in the dictionaries. The semantic width of a word shows the volume of semantic space in the word. Semantic depth is an index that points to a difference between the number of basic meanings in the four dictionaries for the beginning-level EFL learners, which consist of a limited number of entries (Asai, 2008), and those of advanced ones in the three dictionaries for the advanced-level, which cover more entries. The depth proposes a degree of semantic complexity and profundity of a target word. A lower value in the depth indicates a greater uniqueness of a word's meaning. Semantic density exhibits the number of similar words regarding the core and peripheral meanings, which is induced by the square-root average number of synonyms. The density suggests the valuableness and helpfulness in the comprehension of a target word.

In Table 1, frequency shows an index of the average frequency of occurrences in the three corpora in British and American English (Davies & Gardner, 2010; Hundt, Sand, & Skandera, 1999; Leech, Rayson, & Wilson, 2001). The marks in some dictionaries showing which words are important to learn and remember were not used in the present study because those markings primarily resulted from the frequency of occurrences on the whole.

There were slight differences in the three newly introduced semantic

properties among the parts of speech, and thus we focused on nouns here. As in Table 1, a small number of words gathered a large number of difficulty vote counts. Those highly difficult words exhibit a small semantic width and density, both of which indicate a small semantic range and high specialization, and a low frequency of occurrences in the corpora. Remarkably, those words were not short in length. The semantic width for the words with several counts in the difficulty votes was a little higher than 1, which means that those were headwords, and listed one definition in general dictionaries for EFL learners and those for L1 speakers. For example, the words with twelve or more votes had a semantic width of 0.99.

Vote count 0, in the bottom line, indicates that those 57 nouns were not voted on in the survey and were randomly chosen from the textbooks. These words excluded the words that were voted on, and are considered to be compared with the difficult words voted on.

TABLE 1. Word Properties for Nouns by Difficulty Vote Counts

Vote Counts	Number of Words	Word Length	Semantic Width	Semantic Depth	Semantic Density	Occurrence Frequency
6 or more	33	2.67	1.24	4.30	2.36	3.0
3-5	60	2.97	1.34	4.48	2.06	2.9
1-2	218	2.64	2.02	5.28	2.53	5.1
0	57	2.32	3.60	6.93	3.55	10.4

Figure 2 shows the distribution ratio of words that were voted on in terms of the number of syllables in the words (i.e., word length). The closed circles in the bold line indicate the ratio of words with six or more vote counts to all the words in Table 1. The squares and the diamonds represent the ratio of words with three to five counts and the ratio with one or two counts, respectively. The dark dashed lines display the ratio of words with zero count, which means that those are not difficult words. In Figure 2, the bold lines demonstrate a double-peaked distribution, which means that short words and long words coexist as difficult words.
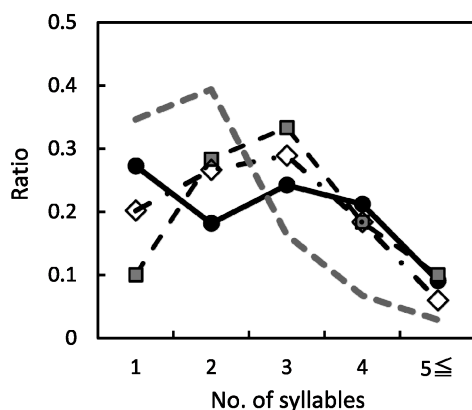
FIGURE 2. Distribution ratio of voted words that were voted on in terms of number of syllables.

Likewise, the panels of Figure 3 show the distribution ratios of semantic indices and the frequency index. Difficult words tend to have the smaller values, and show small semantic scopes and low frequencies of occurrence.
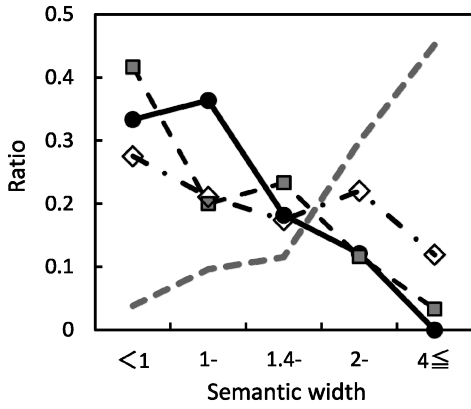
FIGURE 3a. Distribution ratio of voted words on semantic width.
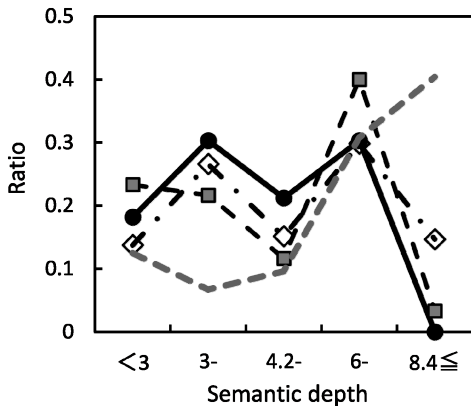
FIGURE 3b. Distribution ratio of voted words on semantic depth.
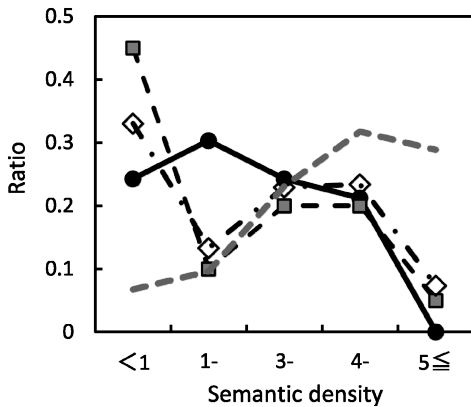
FIGURE 3c. Distribution ratio of voted words on semantic density.
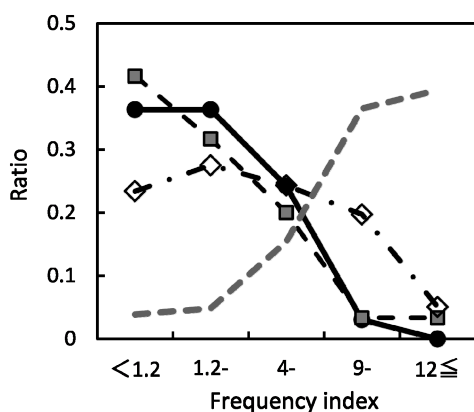
Figure 3d. Distribution ratio of voted words on the occurrence frequency index.

Next, correlation coefficients were obtained, as shown in Table 2, to learn about the relationship between difficulty vote counts and the above-mentioned five indices in the 311 difficult nouns (Haebara, 2002; Hoel, 1962). The single, double, and triple asterisks in the cells indicate a significance level of 5, 1, 0.1 percent, respectively.

The less frequently a word occurs in texts, the more difficult the learners feel the word is. Less frequent words are shorter and have a smaller number of definitions and synonyms as the frequency indices were significantly correlated with the semantic width, depth, and density, as shown in Table 2; however, the difficulty vote counts were not correlated with word length as an overall tendency.

Table 2. Correlation Coefficients Among Vote Counts and Five Indices

Coefficients	Vote Counts	Word Length	Semantic Width	Semantic Depth	Semantic Density	Occurrence Frequency
Vote Counts		.02	-.14*	-.11	-.11	-.18**
Length			-.33***	-.24***	-.17**	-.24***
Width				.66***	.59***	.58***
Depth					.54***	.48***
Density						.65***
Frequency						

Subsequently, a cluster analysis on word length, frequency occurrences, and the above-defined three semantic properties was implemented with Microsoft Excel and VBA scripts to learn about the relationship among the 311 nouns voted on (Johnson & Wichern, 2007). There seemed to be no particular systematic groupings for these words in terms of their structure and use. Another cluster analysis, limited to the three semantic properties, also did not reveal any significant grouping of the 311 words. Therefore, this study does not set any hierarchical structures for analyzing the words that were voted on.

ANALYSES AND DISCUSSIONS

This section describes data analyses in order to understand why the feeling of difficulty for nouns did not directly depend on word length. This study focuses on the main four components that occupy approximately 90% of the estimated total loading (Johnson & Wichern, 2007). Figure 4 shows an item placement on the 311 nouns by a principal component analysis with Microsoft Excel and VBA scripts. The first component, whose eigenvalue is 2.9, was the largest contributor, occupying a 49% judgment weight, and it seems to correspond to a degree of polysemy. Some polysemous words are in fact short. The second component seems to show object familiarity or life relevance. This can lead to a feeling of difficulty in understanding the contents.
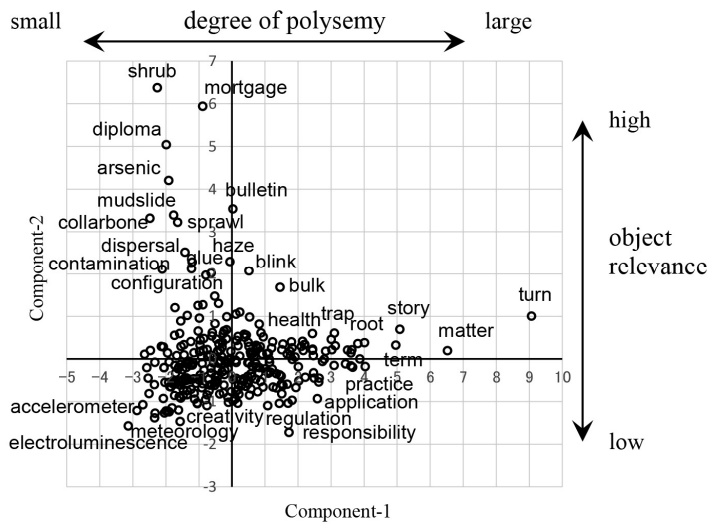
FIGURE 4. Item difficulty placement for the first and second principal components.
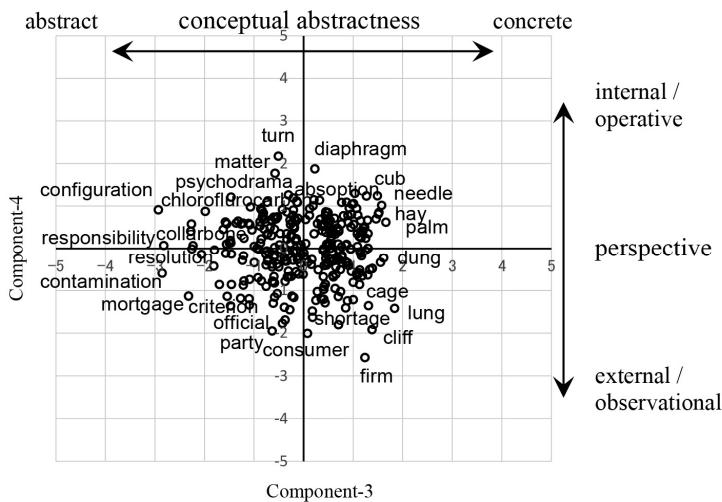
FIGURE 5. Item difficulty placement for the third and fourth principal components.

Figure 5 shows another item placement, suggesting that the third component relates to ambiguity and should therefore represent conceptual concreteness or abstractness. This dimension does not simply mean that a word with an abstract concept is difficult for a learner. Some of the concrete objects have low relevance with everyday life, and some of the abstract ideas are learned in school subjects in L1. The fourth component may be associated with the perspective of viewing or considering an object. The words in the upper region seem to require an internal standpoint, operative notion, or instrumental angle, and those in the lower region may involve an external viewpoint or observational depiction.

Thus, the feeling of difficulty may be linked with several factors including polysemy, object relevance, conceptual abstractness, and perspective, and may also concern the experience of using the words: semantic variety, familiarity, materiality, and visional laterality.

EDUCATIONAL APPLICATIONS

The experience of use is associated with the lexical notion that lexical knowledge may not effectively lessen the feeling of difficulty, but the active use of words, such as writing or speaking in a realistic context, can reduce such a sense (Asai, 2012; Asai & Ishikawa, 2010, 2011). Word length seems to function as a hidden factor to those components, and may not directly affect the difficulty judgment of learners. Teachers can provide vocabulary tasks even on short words if those words are important in comprehending the main ideas of texts and involve the four difficulties mentioned above. College students can effectively learn words that they are unaccustomed to. For example, many students can rest assured knowing that academic words tend to have a small number of meanings, are used in specific contexts, and are not to be paraphrased. Learners can overcome the difficulty of learning academic or abstract terms to a large extent if they are provided ample opportunities to use those words in content-based vocabulary tasks or in theme-oriented reading or writing tasks, which can in fact be preparation for the students' major fields.

CONCLUSIONS

Some characteristics of the feeling of difficulty for English words by EFL learners can arise from the objectively descriptive data on definitions and synonym lists in dictionaries in combination with the subjectively evaluative data, such as the learners' judgment. Some interpretations for the obtained data are as follows:

1. A small number of words gathered a large number of difficulty vote counts. These highly difficult words have a small semantic scope and high specialization at a low frequency of occurrence.
2. Word length seems to be unrelated directly to the feeling of difficulty on nouns.

3. The feeling of difficulty on nouns may comprise four components. The semantic factors appear as a degree of polysemy, life relevance, conceptual concreteness or abstractness, and internal or external perspective. Also, these factors may develop into opportunity factors such as semantic variety, object familiarity, materiality, and visional directionality, respectively.
4. The feeling of difficulty may involve not only the passiveness of vocabulary such as the small frequency of occurrences but also the activeness of vocabulary such as in the experience of using the concepts of words by the learners themselves. This can apply to educational settings.

Limitations and Remaining Issues

The present study suggests the importance of some apparent and hidden factors in word difficulty, but further study is expected to reveal indirect or hidden factors and to apply them effectively to EFL education. For instance, the free writing format may not fully reveal what the respondents sense and how difficult they feel a word is. A devised survey system will further show the difficulty of cognition of learners.

Acknowledgments

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The Pinwheel: A Navigation Principle for Efficient and Effective Contact in Classrooms and Careers

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The purpose of this article is to benefit both careers and classrooms via the discipline of intergroup contact, which consistently highlights gaps in one's knowledge and understanding of any topic. Both stalled career development and stunted student discussion and writing may stem from a limited influx of novel perspectives. The KOTESOL conference structure afforded the opportunity to demonstrate common gaps in knowledge about vast geographic portions of the world and show how a simple yet complex (simplex!) architecture can spur lively interaction. This same basic architecture can be applied in the classroom through a mechanism termed "the Pinwheel" that is outlined in detail in this article.

INTRODUCTION

This symbol (Figure 1) plays a key role throughout this article to represent the Pinwheel and its role as a navigation principle for both *Professional Development via the Developing World* (the title of my KOTESOL conference presentation) and for a classroom architecture. In both of these instances, the concept of understanding and implementing improved contact lies at the heart of the Pinwheel. By the end of the article, dedicated readers will catch the intended meaning of the symbol, its evolution, and the possible application of the Pinwheel navigation principles in their own classrooms and careers.
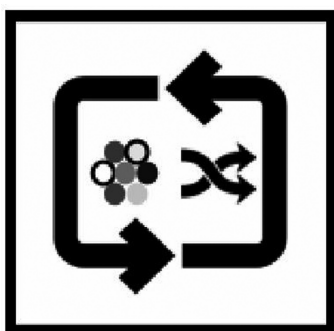
FIGURE 1. The Pinwheel.

Be honest. Most of your students care more about their classroom peers' opinions of them than they do about the content of your lesson, or even their own distant future lives. Maybe not all of your students, but most. Heck, this

might be true of most audience members at a TED Talk! The following article takes this honest assumption as its guiding principle for a discussion on professional development, the so-called developing world, and fighting *with* rather than *against* the nature of the human brain.

Also, let's be clear. Contact with cultures about which you are generally ignorant, means *receiving* gifts, not *giving* them. "Professional Development via the Developing World" does not refer to helicoptering in and then out of a place and bestowing blessings from greater lands. Instead, it means facing your ignorance, and hopefully filling in small portions of the gaps in your own understandings, and improving the architecture of your classroom. This development also means sharpening the awareness and the bravery to avoid the common pitfall of just "teaching as we were taught."

This article has a smaller agenda than might be expected from its title in that it is not meant as a cure-all for every classroom illness, stalled career disease, or the world epidemic problem. Much more humbly, this article is meant as one torchlight that has been successful in navigating around some dark areas of classroom management, career choices, and even personal reading lists.

The article is organized to explain rather than prove, to outline some basic classroom and career problems that I have often heard from teachers in my training and consulting work, and also some gaps in knowledge many teachers have that I found through researching this article. How I collected information and some guiding principles that have lit some paths will be explained below. Interestingly, at the core of all of it is the rather simple but also complex (i.e., "simplex") concept of *contact*.

LITERATURE REVIEW (FAMILY TREE)

Many authors have informed the evolution of the ideas presented in this article. However, the following review does not attempt comprehensiveness but instead points to a few pathways that intrepid readers can travel further down at their own leisure and peril.

The Grandparents: Anchoring Simplexity

Several authors more than a generation ago laid the groundwork for the ideas that come later in this article. These "grandparents" include Gordon W. Allport (1954) whose work on prejudice helped structure much of my own research on willingness to communicate among South Korean language learners (Edwards, 2011).

The *content* of Allport's Contact Hypothesis provides great insight into prejudice and intergroup relations. However, the *form* of the hypothesis also offers many benefits. Having a small set of factors that can be looked at in combination across a wide range of contexts allows for discussion and research with an anchor.

Thomas Pettigrew (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2007, Pettigrew, 2016)) has long been a meta-analyst of the Contact Hypothesis, looking at hundreds of studies across the world based on a small set of conditions. In turn, other meta-analysts,

recently Paluck, Green, and Green (2017), have built upon the work of Pettigrew. This has resulted in a world map of studies on prejudice and how contact among different group members has great benefit, as long as certain conditions are met.

The career and classroom architectures discussed here usually boil down to combinations of Allport's Contact Hypothesis conditions: *equal status* within the contact situation, *common goals*, *cooperation*, authority support for the contact, and ultimately *friendship potential*. Still, a few other prominent grandparents also deserve mention. Around the same time as Allport, Benjamin Bloom and his colleagues (1956) developed their famous taxonomy of educational objectives that has been used and debated ever since. The global familiarity with the taxonomy gives it continued value.

More than a century ago, Georg Simmel (see Simmel, 1950; Yoon, Thye, & Lawler, 2013) wrote about group sizes and their profound significance to interaction, for example, the differences between pairs and groups of three.

Last among the grandparents is Albert Einstein, who is always good for a quote, and pertinent to our discussion here. In a personal correspondence with French mathematician Jacques S. Hadamard in 1945, he explained his own thought process in this way:

> The words or the language, as they are written or spoken, do not seem to play any role in my mechanism of thought…. But taken from a psychological viewpoint, this *combinatory play* seems to be the essential feature in productive thought – before there is any connection with logical construction in words or other kinds of signs which can be communicated to others.

Einstein's idea of combining elements provides a cornerstone for the Pinwheel architecture, graphically represented in Figure 1. The different parts of the symbol will be explained below.

The Parents: Evolution, the Human Brain, and Wrongness

Kurt Fischer (2009) and Tracey Tokuhama-Espinosa (2014) both conduct research in the growing field of mind, brain, and education. They offer insight gained from recent advances in brain imaging technology and translate them directly into practical classroom applications. Yuval Noah Harari (2014) looks at how humans have evolved over the past 70,000 or so years to be deeply social creatures needing contact for both survival and identity (see also Lieberman, 2013; Johnson, 2004). Morgan and Braden (2015) look at how constraints can often have beautifully creative results by actually forcing our minds "out of the box." Christian and Griffiths (2016) take the computer programmers' perspective on our everyday lives and show how numeracy and algorithms can greatly improve the efficiency of many of our tasks. A final parent, Kathryn Shultz (2011) advises that we not try to avoid the inevitable state of being wrong that we will often find ourselves in, but rather embrace it and learn to navigate it. All these contemporary writers have contributed to the foundation of the Pinwheel principles described below.

Cousins and Neighbors: A Little Similar, But Different

For those looking for where the Pinwheel might be situated in terms of other classroom management styles, the following may be helpful in understanding what the Pinwheel is not. Aronson's (1978) jigsaw classroom has been linked to the Contact Hypothesis (Pettigrew, 1998) in terms of cooperation, but it lacks the shuffling of students and repetition of the Pinwheel. Think-Pair-Share (Lyman, 1987) has been recently shown to have positive neurological benefits for learning (Owens & Tanner, 2017), but the technique also lacks shuffling and repetition, as well as having the limitations of pairs as Simmel points out. A final cousin, Dogme (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009) focuses on student communication as does the Pinwheel, but eschews textbooks and other methodologies more stringently. The Pinwheel strives to work alongside any established curriculum.

As mentioned in the extended summary for this KOTESOL conference, the "developing world" can be a great pool for research participants and other outside observations. Although highly developed by any measure, South Korea, because of my ignorance and curiosity about it, served as an excellent location for me to explore researching it. Many other non-Koreans have investigated the country culturally (e.g., Maher, 2016) and academically (e.g., Booth, 2018). I have also experienced teams of educators (e.g., Gondree, 2018) go to countries in Africa, and subsequently enliven interest in their students toward volunteerism.

In sum, the authors mentioned above lay the foundation for what follows: a template for rudimentary action-research data collection, and a practical guide for implementing a classroom architecture, both designed for increased student contact, known as the Pinwheel.

METHOD

KOTESOL offers a three-tiered opportunity for presenters at its 2017 International Conference: an extended summary published before the event, the presentation event in October, and these proceedings. My extended summary offered background for my upcoming poster presentation titled "Professional Development via the Developing World." The idea for this presentation stemmed from recent projects in which I had taken part in Africa and Latin America, with both private groups and with the U.S. State Department's English Specialist Program. I have taught in South Korea and Japan at the university level for the past 25 years, but this article reflects many things I learned from my experiences in Nairobi, Kenya; Cali, Colombia; and Kigali, Rwanda. Specifically, contact unlocks ignorance. The issues of concern in this article for both professional development and classroom management stem from the same place: lack of contact.

Grateful for KOTESOL's multiple contact points with their audience, I took the opportunity in my extended summary to explain, "Because the so-called 'developing world' often confronts us with our own ignorance, navigating those wide gaps in our knowledge can benefit our careers in English." The idea here was that contact with certain countries around the world may develop a certain *singularity* in a teacher's career because of its rarity. Navigating through one's

own ignorance might be enough to help gain a unique quality, and it need not be via employment in a faraway corner of the map, but instead simply by opening a book.

To highlight this idea, a link to an online survey, the KO-7 Challenge, was included in the extended summary. I invited KOTESOL members to review their personal reading lists, checking for omissions:

> Do you Know *Of* seven (KO-7) books by different authors, of different genders, from different eras and areas of prominence, from these three parts of the world: Latin America, Africa, and Central Asia? Find just a total of seven authors, at least two from each region.

Somewhat jokingly I vetoed Nobel Prize laureates whose names begin with "M" because Mandela, Marquez, and Malala are too easy! The results of the survey came in different ways, but mostly in the form of apologies, both online and much more so at the conference. Well-educated educators expressed their regret at being unable to list seven books they knew of that matched the geographical criteria.

At the conference event, because the subject matter of *contact* and *ignorance* were already at the forefront of this presentation, a poster session seemed an excellent arena for continued exploration of these themes. *Ignorance* became an obvious choice of topic for the poster display and an opportunity to spur interactivity among KOTESOL attendees. The following seven quotes were posted on separate laminated sheets:

1. *Most ignorance is vincible ignorance. We don't know because we don't want to know.* — Aldous Huxley
2. *Not ignorance, but ignorance of ignorance, is the death of knowledge.* — Alfred North Whitehead
3. *Ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge.* — Charles Darwin
4. *Prejudice is the child of ignorance.* — William Hazlitt
5. *The doorstep to the temple of wisdom is a knowledge of one's own ignorance.* — Benjamin Franklin
6. *We allow our ignorance to prevail upon us and make us think we can survive alone in patches, alone in groups, alone in races, alone in genders.* — Maya Angelou
7. *By giving us the opinions of the uneducated, journalism keeps us in touch with the ignorance of the community.* — Oscar Wilde

Participants were asked to read all seven quotes and select three that struck them most. They were encouraged not to analyze their selection but rather quickly choose from some "gut instinct." Each participant was given three stickers with the same identifying number on it to place on the sheet with the quote they selected. This was done to identify individual participants while keeping their anonymity, and also the physicality of sticking their number on the sheet seemed to promote a visceral selection. Figure 2 shows the results from 25 participants:

KOTESOL *Ignorance* Poster Data Table

	Participants:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Totals
	Authors																										**Totals**
1	Huxley	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X			X			X	X									11
2	Whitehead	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X		X				X								12
3	Darwin					X	X								X				X				X				5
4	Hazlitt	X	X				X		X			X								X	X	X		X			9
5	Franklin			X	X		X			X	X		X	X	X					X	X	X		X	X	X	14
6	Angelou				X			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X				X	X	X		X	X	14
7	Wilde											X	X				X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	10

FIGURE 2. KOTESOL 2017 *Ignorance* Poster Data.

Perhaps the most significant result came in the form of discussion among the participants. Some simple math tells us that there are exactly 35 possible combinations of sets of three from a set of seven. All seven quotes received some votes, with Darwin at the bottom with 5, and Angelou and Franklin topping off at 14 each. Four different pairs of exact duplicates emerged from the 25, but of course all participants had overlapping selections with other attendees. The point here is that the *form* of this task had much to do with the resulting lively discussion due to the clearly seen similarities and differences among the participants, highlighting those *contact* points.

DISCUSSION

The Pinwheel: Form Unlocks Content

This section will explain the image and equation above. As stated previously, the term "simplex" refers to something that is simultaneously simple and complex, and the Pinwheel aims to bring this quality to classroom and career architecture. Whether among schoolmates or nations, simplex contact relieves ignorance. Providing *simplexity* to a group's topic or task can create all of Allport's Contact Hypothesis conditions, invoke previous knowledge, and spur higher-level thinking. Often, however, teachers leave it up to the students to make the most of a topic and then cite shyness, lack of motivation in the students, low or mixed language abilities, and other reasons for uninspired discussion.

$$7!/2!3!2! = 210$$
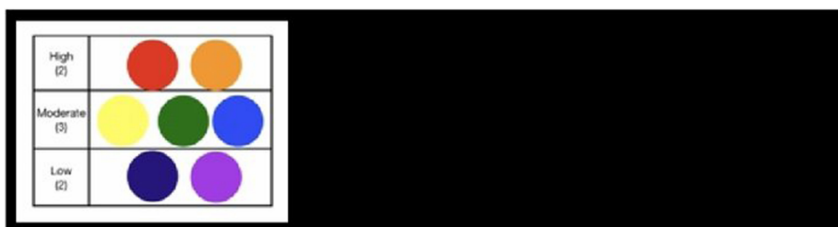
FIGURE 3. Heptad: A set of seven circles on three levels.

The set of seven circles on three levels (termed a "heptad") represents partitioning any topic into seven parts or types (see Figure 3), and then leveling them by any selected criteria into high, moderate, and low. That is to say: one thing, or rather one noun (person, place, thing, or idea), partitioned into seven elements or types, which are then leveled onto three tiers or shelves; for example, the story (a thing or idea) of *Frozen* partitioned into seven key characters, which are then leveled into having either high, moderate, or low impact on the final outcome of this modern fairytale. Is Olaf of high, moderate, or low impact to the story? This will spark discussion far better than "What's your favorite movie?"

Or your last week? Weeks, even better than rainbows or deadly sins, offer a relatable example for exploring the heptad structure. How would you characterize last week? Now go through your memories, your emails, your texts. Next shelve the past seven days by selecting three days that had moderate impact on your characterization of your past week, then two days each that had higher and lower impact; no need to differentiate within a single shelf. For example, my own last seven days look like this:

High: Friday, Wednesday
Moderate: Thursday, Saturday, Monday
Low: Sunday, Tuesday.

The 7! factorial equation at the top of this section (Figure 3) shows the somewhat tricky math that tells us that a three-level heptad yields exactly 210 different permutations of one week (order on one shelf does not matter): simplexity!

Try it yourself! Some shelves may be easier to fill than others. Still, the result, your heptad, brims with densely packed facts and feeling, perspectives and insights about you, your entire life, the concepts of days, weeks, and time itself – all in a neat package that graphically communicates to anyone else here, so much about the sophisticated design of your week.

A script outline could be helpful to many students and could go something like this:

I characterize my past week as _____. Some days had more impact on my week than others. First, I will explain the days that had (high/moderate/low) impact and why. Next, I will explain the days that had (level) impact, both describing them individually and comparing their impact level in contrast to the previous group. Finally, I will explain the remaining group and why those days fit into a category different from the others.

For those with limited language capabilities, the graphic representation of the heptad alone communicates much of the deep thought that the speaker put into its creation. The audience already knows that the speaker had exactly 210 options to choose from, and they know the specific criteria on which the selection process was based. They too just went through the same process but with more than a 99% chance that they came up with a different answer.

Triads

More and more through my career in the classroom, I have noticed a clear difference in the number of students in terms of the dynamics of how they interact. The following is meant to generally outline some of my observations and reasons why I structure my classrooms in certain ways for certain tasks.

I love groups of three and could go on and on about why, but to be more concise, I will only mention a few here. First, group dynamics are about relationships more so than individuals. *How* group members work together holds more significance than *what* characterizes each single person. With groups of three, there is a balance of three individuals *and* three relationships among them. Three relationships and three individuals seems to provide a balanced cognitive load that does not exist with any other dynamic; two individuals have only one relationship and four individuals have six.

A second factor that begins with having three as opposed to only two is that group existence never depends on any one individual. For example, if Sally, Bobby, and Chris decide to be the Eagles (or any other group decision for that matter), even if Chris threatens to leave, the Eagles can remain with just Sally and Bobby. Chris alone does not have the power to destroy the Eagles. Additionally, in the Eagles triad, any one member can be *outvoted* by the other two, or conversely, the one can attempt to *divide and conquer* the other two.

Imagine two boxers in a ring. The better boxer that day most likely wins the match, but if *three* boxers are in the ring at the same time, then the better strategist and negotiator wins, or perhaps brings all three together in peace. Such negotiation skills have great real-world value. From family disputes to international politics, the core of human interactions can often be found in what happens in triads.

Even in groups of four, two pairs that are not communicating well with each other may easily branch off. This becomes more likely as the group size increases. *Fragmentation* weakens cooperation, and solutions to tasks often do not get full attention from the group or result in needless reproduction of the same solution twice from one group.

Triads then offer much that pairs cannot, while avoiding the pitfalls of too many relationships for members to keep track of and/or fragmentation. Triads also allow each member a chance at one-third of the talk time. Larger groups not only lessen that amount but less forceful speakers can slip into unnoticed silence.

Spotlights

Key to the Pinwheel process is *spotlighting*, which is simply the term for the element of the discussion process in which each member of their group of three (fours only when required by numbers) and speaks uninterrupted, with the full attention of the other members. While perhaps daunting at first, as public speaking often is, spotlighting within the Pinwheel mechanism is eased by several factors. First, the small group size keeps the number of eyes on the speaker relatively low; only two or three people are watching the speaker. Also *equal status* has a calming effect because each spotlighted speaker understands that the other members will also be spotlighted within the same few minutes.

H23H Seasons

The graphic above shows a class of 23 students put into seven groups of three or four. Number 1s switch clockwise and number 2s switch counterclockwise. Through the mechanism of the Pinwheel, all students begin in a "home" group of three (or four) members. Everyone then switches to their "group 2" in the manner described elsewhere in this article, so that all groups have new and different memberships. The next switch again results in a completely new "group 3" for everyone. The final switch in the Pinwheel mechanism returns everyone to their home group: H23H.
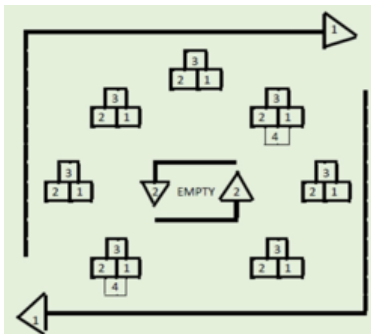
FIGURE 4.

Each iteration, or *season*, provides every student in the class with a new opportunity to discuss the same topic; each season, starting in winter, building on the others. The repetition with new group members offers not only practice and the exchange of different perspectives on the same topic, but all can gain a "linguistic ownership" of the new words and phrases they learn along the way.

For example, if a student, Sally, had never known the word "blork," which she heard in the springtime of group 2, she can try out the new word in the summer of group 3, where nobody knows that she just heard *blork* for the first time. By the time Sally returns home in the autumn, she owns *blork* as part of her linguistic repertoire, impressing her homies with her ease of usage.

In fact, without fail, as the H23H seasons turn, the quality of language and ideas improves. Not so surprisingly, practice improves performance. Often teachers not only teach as they were taught, they cling to a hope that their students will practice outside of class time in their L1 environment, whether they reside in their home country or find L1 enclaves abroad or online when they exit the classroom. Naïveté from teachers may result in slow progress for the majority of their students.

CONCLUSION

Hopefully, the meaning, evolution, and application of the Pinwheel as a navigation principle, and its core elements as represented in Figure 1 (presented here again), are now clear.
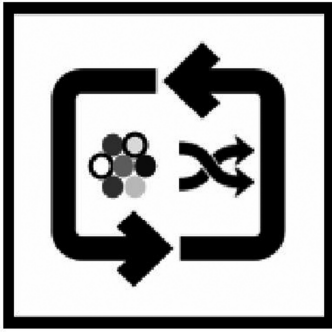
FIGURE 1. The Pinwheel.

A simple checklist of questions emerges to see how your career and classrooms align with the Pinwheel architecture:

1. Has the target topic been given a clearly partitioned but empty shelf that participants must fill in (e.g., heptads)?
2. Have the participants also been partitioned in such a way to allow each member significant *spotlight* time to express the selection of their heptad?
3. Will the entire class, while remaining on topic, *shuffle* into new groups for a new season of listening and expression that evolves from the previous season? Finally, at the end of an H23H cycle of seasons, does everyone return to their home group to share where they have taken their ideas and how they have evolved, sharing with their home members who remember their ideas' first season and can remark on the evolution?

The Pinwheel, again, has moderate aspirations: to provide an architecture for partitioning any topic into simplexity and efficiently increasing contact, aligned with our human brain's social nature. Any actual solutions to the woes of the world must come from those wishing the architecture. For those with further interest, please explore the wisdom of the authors below and those they in turn cite.

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Student−Teacher Conferences: An Aid to Critical Syllabus Design?

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Effective syllabus revision needs student input. Therefore, teachers need to put procedures in place that allow their students to provide this input. As the content of one-to-one student–teacher conferences are predominantly student-driven, they provide students with the opportunity to ask questions regarding the aspects of a course that they feel are in need of greater teacher attention. Consequently, these conferences offer insights into how a syllabus may be revised in order to better meet students' needs. This paper explains the rationale and findings of an action research project on an EAP reading and writing course. The participants attended at least five one-to-one student–teacher conferences during the term and completed post-conference reflection tasks noting what they felt were the key points from each conference. By categorizing the items noted, the author identified elements of the course that were perceived as requiring greater teaching time.

INTRODUCTION

Academic institutions generally require teachers to provide a syllabus outlining course content prior to a course commencing – what Candlin (1984) referred to as "a clear statement of forward planning" (p. 35). However, Candlin (1984) also noted that what actually takes places in a classroom may not always reflect what is written on a syllabus because teachers have to react to the needs of their students when delivering course content. While these changes may be made during a course, teachers will often also reflect on aspects of a course that they feel are in need of revision and build these revisions into the syllabus so that students who take the course in the future can benefit from them. Therefore, it is important to consider what information teachers have access to in order to make these modifications. Students' performance in class and on assignments may well indicate aspects of a course that need revision. However, this often relies on teachers using their intuition. While this can be a very useful way to improve a course, it would be helpful to apply a more data-driven approach. As such, some form of needs analysis procedure should be applied.

Needs analysis can take many forms, including interviews, tests, and journals. When considering that method to use, there are number of criteria to consider. Firstly, when conducting needs analysis students should be given tasks that do not limit their potential responses. As Serafini, Lake, and Long (2015) state, "It is vital to deploy open-ended procedures first ... so as not to preclude the possibility of discovering needs the needs analyst might not have considered" (p. 13). A further consideration is that the procedure should enable students to analyze their

own needs effectively. While Weddel and Van Duzer (1997) argued that student interviews can provide valuable insights into their needs, both Peyton (1993) and Matsumoto (1996) supported the use of written tasks. With Matsumoto (1996) noting that students placed greater value on written tasks as "written retrospection ... was perceived as being more effective and beneficial to the learner than oral retrospection through interviews" (p. 147). Finally, it is important that the procedure does not place a significant burden on either the students when providing the data or on the teacher when analyzing it.

The aim of the current research project is to create a data collection procedure that enables the author to gather information regarding students' needs using an approach that is both beneficial to student's learning and ecologically valid in the author's workplace. To do this, the author created a feedback loop that enables him to make revisions to the syllabus that are based on data rather than on intuition (see Figure 1).
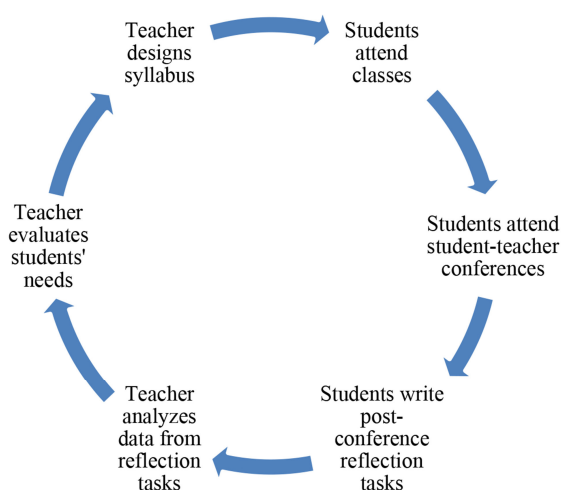
FIGURE 1. This figure illustrates the feedback loop employed in the critical syllabus revision.

This paper will report on the preliminary findings from the project into the role that students' written reflections on one-to-one student–teacher conferences can play in identifying the aspects of a course that the students perceive as being in need of greater teaching time. The findings of this study will be used when revising the syllabus for future use so that the revised syllabus will more appropriately meet future students' needs.

The following section outlines the rationale behind the design of the needs analysis procedure used so that the procedure could be smoothly integrated into a coordinated EAP program at the author's workplace.

Teaching Situation

The Current Approach to Syllabus Design

This study was carried out at a liberal arts university in Tokyo, Japan. The data was collected from two freshman classes during their first term of a

compulsory English Academic Reading and Writing course. The course, which is part of a coordinated EAP program, is taught by a number of teachers. The course's curriculum was drawn up in accordance with a backward design approach (see Richards, 2013). This involves a seven-step process:

Step 1: Diagnosis of needs
Step 2: Formulation of objectives
Step 3: Selection of content
Step 4: Organization of content
Step 5: Selection of learning experiences
Step 6: Organization of learning experiences
Step 7: Determination of what to evaluate and the ways of doing it (Taba, as cited in Richards, 2013, p. 21)

Consequently, the course has learning objectives and content that are set prior to the teachers meeting their students. However, although the objectives and content are fixed, each teacher of the course is able to organize the content and learning experiences as they see most appropriate. As a result, different teachers may emphasize different aspects of academic reading and writing in their class syllabus. It should also be noted that as a teacher is likely to teach the course to a different classes over a number of years, it is probable that the teacher will modify their syllabus from year to year.

In order for this backward design approach to be effective, it is clear that needs analysis has a key role to play. However as the syllabus is constructed prior to the students commencing the course, Candlin's (1984) doubts as to whether or not the learners are involved in the design process are pertinent. Therefore, the question that arises from this approach to the design of the syllabus is how the students can be more involved in the process of identifying their needs so that these needs can be addressed in the course.

Student − Teacher Conferences

In the author's workplace, student–teacher conferences (also known as "tutorials"), individualized meetings between a student and their teacher, are a key part of the curriculum; they make up part of the teacher's allotted teaching load and are built into students' schedules. As the content of the conferences is student-driven, they have the potential to provide insights into the areas of the course that the students perceive as being in need of further teacher attention, especially as students who are taking a course have a better understanding of their needs than students who have yet to commence it (Serafini et al., 2015). Therefore, such an approach should be able to provide accurate data regarding the students perceived needs, which in turn will allow the teacher to assess which aspects of the course syllabus need to be modified. However, in order for teachers to be able to do this, the contents of the conferences need to be recorded.

In order to achieve this, the author required his students to write a reflection task after each student–teacher conference. Rather than recording the conferences and transcribing the recordings, post-conference written reflection tasks were used to collect the data as the tasks would elicit greater reflection of language learning processes (Matsumoto, 1996) while also meeting Serafini et al.'s (2015) criterion

for needs analysis tools to be open-ended. Moreover, the tasks should help the students learn more from the conferences. This is because as prior to the act of writing about the conferences in the tasks, the students need to mentally construct clear ideas of what had been discussed during the conferences (Britton, as cited in Xie, Ke, & Sharma, 2008). Consequently, the tasks are both effective data collection tools and are pedagogically sound.

METHOD

The students (N = 44) in the course had TOEFL ITP scores ranged from 350 to 450. Over a ten-week term, the students took three 70-minute classes per week. As course requirements, the students had to read nine short articles and write one 600-word essay. In addition, the students were required to attend at least five one-to-one student–teacher conferences during the term (the student could choose which weeks of the course they attended the conferences); each conference was scheduled to last 10 minutes. Prior to the first student–teacher conference, the students were instructed that the reflection task should include the key points from the conference and be written in list form. They were also told to write the task on the day on which the conference was held and to spend approximately five minutes writing the task. The students were not told explicitly how many items from the conference should be included in each reflection task; however, they were shown a model reflection task that included three items (see Appendix). At the end of the term, the responses to the post-conference reflection tasks were coded according to the key words contained in the items in the task. The percentages of the different types of responses were then calculated.

RESULTS

From the initial analysis of the responses, it became clear that the students prioritized discussing writing over other aspects of the course content in the conferences. Of the 373 items listed in the responses, 39.95% were related to writing (see Figure 2).
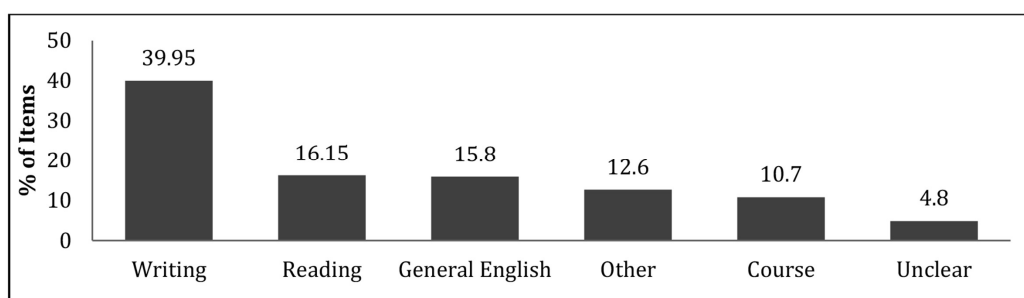
FIGURE 2. This figure illustrates the focus of the items in the post-conference reflection tasks (N = 373).

To gain a deeper understanding of which aspects of writing were of particular concern, the data was then reanalyzed excluding the non-writing related responses. This data (N = 149) showed that almost half of the items listed (49%) pertained to editing specific aspects of each student's essay (see Figure 3).
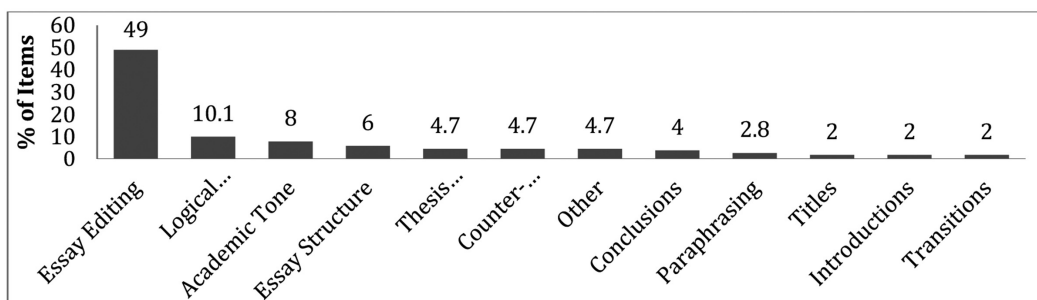
FIGURE 3. This figure illustrates the focus of the writing-related items in the post-conference reflection tasks (N = 149).

Although interesting, this did not provide clear information regarding the aspects of the course syllabus that were perceived to be in need of revision. To address this, the data related to writing was reanalyzed excluding the items pertaining to essay editing. From the remaining items (n = 76) it was possible to identify a number of aspects of writing that appeared with a relatively high frequency (see Figure 4). In particular, a large number of items referred to logical reasoning (19.8%) and academic tone (15.8%).
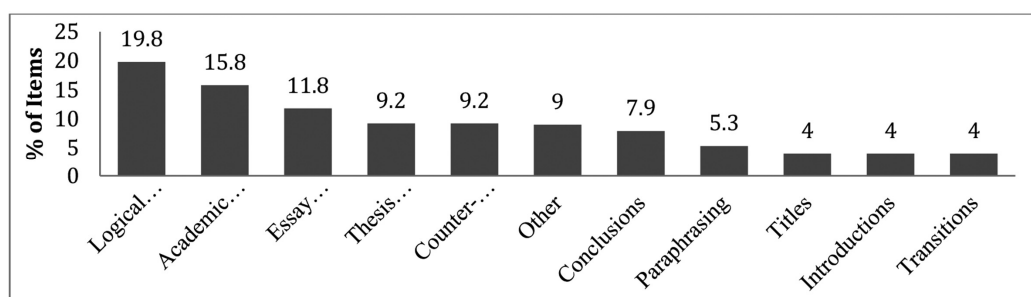
FIGURE 4. This figure illustrates the focus of the writing-related items (excluding essay editing) in the post-conference reflection tasks (n = 76).

DISCUSSION

Application

As the first stage of an ongoing action research study, the data provided some useful insights in terms of the student's perceptions of their needs. The analysis of the data showed that students felt it was most important to focus on their writing needs in the student–teacher conferences. This is an interesting finding as it

shows that the students prioritized discussing writing-related issues over those related to the readings. Based on this, it would appear that the students generally did not perceive that greater teaching time needed to be dedicated to understanding the course readings. In addition, the data indicated that the students viewed discussing specific issues related to their own essays as a priority during the conferences. This is not surprising as the essay was the largest piece of work that the students did during the term, and it was a highly individualized task. Consequently, the students appear to have come to the conclusion that the individualized conference was the most opportune place to get guidance on how to improve their essay.

The most relevant finding in terms of critical syllabus design was that there were a number of items related to particular aspects of academic writing that the students perceived as being in need of greater teaching time. Specifically, logical reasoning (19.8%) and academic tone (15.8%) were the most frequently mentioned aspects of academic writing that appeared in the reflection tasks. While teaching time is dedicated to these in the current syllabus, it would appear that greater teaching time needs to be assigned so that more students gain a clearer understanding of them.

Taking these findings into consideration, the course syllabus for the first term in the next academic year will be revised. More class time will be allotted to the teaching of logical reasoning and the use of academic tone. In order for this to be possible, it will be necessary to reduce the amount of time that was previously spent comprehending and discussing the reading passages.

Further Research

Data collection will be repeated in first term of the next academic year to investigate whether the modified syllabus leads to a change in the items noted by students in their post-conference reflection tasks. In addition, the author will conduct a survey of the students' attitudes regarding the post-conference reflection tasks in order to investigate whether the students' views are in line with Matsumoto's (1996) findings that learners see written reflection tasks as beneficial to their learning.

Limitations

Although all students were required to attend at least five conferences and write five reflection tasks, eight students did not meet this course requirement. As a result, the findings may not fully reflect the views of all of the students who took the course. In addition, as the data was collected from students in their first term at the university, a number of the students did not seem to fully understand that the conferences were intended to specifically support the content of the Academic Reading and Writing course. As a result, a number of the conferences (and therefore, the items on the reflection tasks) were not related to the content of the course. Therefore, it will be interesting to investigate whether this changes as the data is analyzed from students in their second and third terms, as the students should be more familiar with the purpose of the conferences by that stage in their academic life. In addition, it became clear that students may need

further training in how to write the reflection sheets so that they more clearly show the specific focus of the conferences. Therefore, more time will be dedicated to this at the start of each academic term.

CONCLUSIONS

In order that course syllabi can be revised to meet students' needs, it is important that teachers find ways to conduct needs analysis for the courses that they teach. In teaching contexts that allow for one-to-one student–teacher conferences, asking students to write reflections on these conferences would appear to offer a valuable source of data for critical syllabus revision. By doing so, a feedback loop can be established that allows the teacher to make syllabus revisions based on data-driven needs analysis rather than relying on intuition. Although such a syllabus may not "emerge as [the] joint construct of teacher and learners" that was outlined by Candlin (1984, p. 35), the critical syllabus design procedure employed in this project should result in a syllabus that more accurately meets the students' needs while also satisfying institutional demands for clear, forward-looking statements of course content.

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APPENDIX

Model Post-conference Reflection Task

Tutorial Date: 14/4/17
As a result of today's tutorial:
- I learned what to include in an essay's conclusion.
- I can understand the parts of the article "The Value of a Liberal Arts Education" that I could not understand.
- The first draft of my essay counts towards my final grade.

Speaking Fluency Development in Japanese University Students

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Complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF) within second language acquisition (SLA) have been the focus of attention for an extensive period of time. SLA researchers believe that CAF contributes to productive performances of learners (Ellis, 2009; Norris & Ortega, 2009; Skehan, 1998). This study focused on examining English speaking fluency development in Japanese university students by measuring their fluency gains in an English as a foreign language (EFL) context. Fluency development was operationalized as utterance fluency (the number of pauses, mean length of run, frequency of pausing, and chunking during a response) and cognitive fluency (content, organization, and lexical density – the ratio of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs to the total number of words in a response). Results indicated that task type affected fluency for all groups within this study. In addition, the author discovered that time on task and interaction with an interlocutor also have significant roles in relation to fluency.

INTRODUCTION

Previous and current research that focus on speech production refer to Skehan's (2009) proposed model that describes the importance of complexity, accuracy, fluency (de Jong & Perfetti, 2011; de Jong, Steinel, Florijn, Schoonen & Hulstijn, 2012; Polat & Kim, 2014; Pallotti, 2009; Révész, Sachs, & Hama, 2014; Spoelman & Verspoor, 2010), and lexis (de Jong et al., 2012; Iwashita, Brown, McNamara, & O'Hagan, 2008). The components of complexity, accuracy, fluency, and lexis will strengthen speech acquisition and production for L2 learners provided that comprehensible input and explicit instruction are given (and reinforced), in conjunction with consistent, available opportunities for production (i.e., output; see de Bot, 1996; Du, 2013; Muranoi, 2007; Polat & Kim, 2014; Stafford & Wood Bowden, 2012; Swain, 1995).

When second language learners implement any of the planning types (pre-task, rehearsal, within-task planning), the complexity of their speech will improve (Ellis, 2009; Skehan, 2009). However, we should not hasten with generalizing the positive effects of planning on complexity. Planning is important and necessary, yet what a learner is doing during any part of the planning stage should be further investigated as he or she might be accessing additional resources to assist with successful production. Such resources might also aid with accuracy during the speech process.

The aim of accuracy is to produce error-free comprehensible speech. In their study, Kormos and Trebits (2012) stated that grammatical awareness and

inductive ability were the best predictors of accuracy for L2 speakers. The researchers stated that learners might prioritize accuracy over lexical variety provided that they possess a high level of inductive abilities. It should be expected that as learners increase in proficiency, accuracy might improve at the expense of complexity, and vice versa (Skehan, 2009). Educators should enact countermeasures to ensure that learners do not experience a deficit between the two. These measures should be considered as well when focusing on strengthening speaking fluency.

Fluency (i.e., how sounds, syllables, words, and phrases are interlaced when speaking) traditionally has been associated with proficiency: The more fluid speakers sound, the higher degree of fluency they are perceived to have (Segalowitz, 2010). Individuals must be introduced and have repeated exposure to a specific part of a speech act. Through explicit instruction, learners will initially concentrate on form and will gradually expend less cognitive resources on delivering the correct verb tense while speaking. The process will become automatized, thereby reducing the cognitive load on the speakers and permitting them to direct attention to other tasks or processes. Factors such as pausing, unfilled pauses, speech breaks, and time between pauses have been found to be predictors of proficiency or fluency for speakers as well (Iwashita et al., 2008; Préfontaine, 2011).

Furthermore, to assist with fluency, complexity, and accuracy, lexis must be introduced and developed for L2 speakers. The depth and breadth of an individual's lexical knowledge might lead to higher and more salient speaking proficiency. One of the multitude of differences between beginning and advanced speakers is the application of vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. Speakers with an extremely limited range will have difficulty obtaining fluid production, regardless of how accurate, complex, and fluent they sound. Lexical diversity is needed for speakers to foster speaking development. Speakers whose priority is communicative effectiveness, not communicative competence, are more than likely to stagnate in their lexical growth (Polat & Kim, 2014).

Complexity, accuracy, fluency, and lexis should be measured and assessed individually as they are systems within complex parts. Therefore, assessment measures must account for how these aspects impact each other and investigate the extent to which they impact each other during speech production. Consistency with previous and current research is needed when measuring speech production. When measuring fluency, researchers have examined pauses, pause length, and filled pauses, all of which have been shown to affect proficiency (Baker-Smemoe, Dewey, Bown, & Martinsen, 2014). However, as previously stated, measuring what is happening during these pauses is as important as the pause itself. The learners might be using paralanguage or other observable means of non-verbal communication to assist with speech production. To measure these visual and aural aspects (e.g., verbal interrupters) would require video and/or audio-recording. Analyzing what learners do during the pauses would provide more insight into the learner's speaking proficiency.

METHOD

Context

The locations were at two campuses under administration by a national university in Japan. The university offers undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degrees as well as teacher licenses. For this study, I will concentrate on program descriptions relevant to the majors of the students. At Campus A, the university provides undergraduate degrees from two colleges administered by the School of Medical Science: the College of Nursing and the College of Medicine. At Campus B, the university provides undergraduate degrees in engineering, education, and global and community Studies.

The university is co-educational, and on average, has a larger male-to-female student ratio. Based on data obtained from the Educational Affairs Division for the 2016–17 academic year, the male-to-female undergraduate student ratio in the School of Engineering was 7–10:1. In contrast, the male-to-female ratio was significantly different in the Schools of Education and Regional Studies (1:3–4), Global and Community Studies (1:4), and Medical Sciences (1:4).

For the 2017–18 academic year, the *hensachi* at Campus A and Campus B is 70 and 56, respectively. *Hensachi* is the standardized rank score given to Japanese universities by the leading cram schools in Japan. *Hensachi* is equivalent to a standardized score where the mean is 50 and the standard deviation is 10. The *hensachi* range is from 20 to 80. A university with a *hensachi* of 60 is moderately difficult to get into, compared to a university with a *hensachi* of 40. The *hensachi* for Site A falls within one standard deviation of the mean, and the *hensachi* for Campus A falls within two standard deviations of the mean. Based on the *hensachi* scores, Campus A has a lower acceptance rate compared to Campus B.

Participants

Participants were in English classes assigned to the author during the Spring 2017 semester (April to July, 15 weeks). The classes were taught at two campuses (referred to as *Campus A* and *Campus B* within this study).

Campus A

Class A (*N* = 35) was comprised of first-year medical students. Participants had six years of compulsory English education (three years at junior high school and three years at high school) prior to enrollment at the university. Class placement was based on the 14,000-word version of the Vocabulary Size Test (Nation & Beglar, 2007) and an English language interview based on the CEFR-J (Runnels, 2013).

Campus B

Class B (*N* = 22) was comprised of first-year engineering majors. Class C (*N* = 24) was comprised of second-year engineering majors. Both classes had six years of compulsory English education (three years at junior high school and

three years at high school) prior to enrollment at the university. Class placement for Class B was based on the 14,000-word version of the Vocabulary Size Test and an English language interview based on the CEFR-J. Class placement for Class C was based on the participants' highest TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) score as first-year students. The TOEIC test was administered twice during their first year: July and December. In addition, participants in Class C had two semesters of required English language classes during their first year.

Treatment Design

The participants completed three speaking tasks during the semester: a directions task, a picture description task, and a story retelling task at Weeks 3, 8, and 12 with an assigned partner. Each task was accompanied with a prompt. Student "A" read the prompt to Student "B." Student B was given time to prepare before responding. Student A was permitted to assist with eliciting more information (e.g., "Where is…?", "Could you tell me more…?", "What happened next?"). When finished, the students reversed roles. Students completed the tasks during class. The researcher audio-recorded the participants' responses during the tasks. Tasks were counterbalanced to minimize confounding variables (see Table 1 below). Participants also completed an evaluation form to rate task complexity, topic familiarity, and planning time.

TABLE 1. Treatment Design

Week	Class A	Class B	Class C
Week 3	Directions Task	Picture Task	Story Retelling Task
Week 8	Picture Task	Story Retelling Task	Directions Task
Week 12	Story Retelling Task	Directions Task	Picture Task

Procedures

Story Retelling Task

Participants were given a short story prior to their assigned task performance. Each participant was randomly assigned a copy of an unknown folk tale the week prior to the task performance. This was to provide sufficient time to read and understand the story, and to search the meanings of potentially new vocabulary and expressions. On the day of data collection, participants were allotted two minutes to review the story, then two minutes to recall as many details of the story as possible. Each participant retold the story to a partner. Roles were then reversed. The researcher recorded the participants' responses.

Picture Task

Each participant was randomly assigned a picture and had one minute to study the picture. When time ended or when the participant indicated readiness, the picture was turned over. Each participant had one minute to describe what

they saw to a partner. Roles were then reversed. The researcher recorded the participants' responses.

Directions Task

In pairs, each participant received a map (Map A and Map B). Participant A was instructed to select a location and ask for directions. Participant B provided directions. Roles were reversed. Participants were reminded to use attention phrases ("Excuse me."), reconfirmations ("So, I go north...?"), and closing phrases ("Thank you very much."). The researcher recorded the participants' responses.

RESULTS

Story Retelling Task

The majority of the participants used slightly more than a third of the provided time. (M = 1.11 minutes). Only four spoke longer (M = 2.28 minutes). Class A and Class C had increased pauses between clauses when recounting specific details (e.g., names, locations) and using reported speech (e.g., "The young man said..."). Class B had increased pause length when recalling specific details. Participants had grammatical errors (article omission, subject–verb tense agreement) yet could summarize the folk tale.

Picture Task

For this task, utterance and cognitive fluencies were correlated: When utterance fluency was high, cognitive fluency was high; when utterance fluency was low, cognitive fluency was low. These fluencies were also related to the type of picture used. Pictures with dynamic visualization (e.g., people engaged in various activities at a park, an image of a family shopping at a supermarket) assisted the participant with their descriptions, whereas pictures with static visualization (e.g., a person reading a book) did not provide sufficient information for a participant to describe.

Directions Task

For this task, utterance and cognitive fluencies were co-constructed: Partners made oral adjustments based upon their interactions within the speech act. In addition, the participants engaged in more use of paralanguage (e.g., gestures, intonation, hesitation noises), which suggested that both were employing more meta-communicative strategies to ensure that the message was understood.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

For future research, the following recommendations are offered.
Use a specific task type (e.g., personal narrative) for all groups with varied

prompts (e.g., "Describe the person you admire the most," "Do you prefer to study alone or with other people?"). Depending on the task, a heavier cognitive load might be placed on the individual, requiring greater resources to complete the task. In general, the participants encountered little difficulty with the directions task, yet had a greater challenge with the picture description task.

Additional time is needed for participants to plan, prepare, and perform a task. Within this study, participants were given a limited amount of time for planning, preparing, and performing a task. Second language speakers need sufficient time to think about how to complete a task (i.e., planning and preparing) prior to accomplishing a task.

Time for in-class practice and repetition should also be included whenever it is possible. This will allow participants to become more familiar with a task and will permit a teacher to monitor the activity, engaging in correction or answering questions as needed. Furthermore, repeatedly performing the same task will enable the participants to increase their speed with a task with minimum effect on production, as well as bolster their confidence (which would reduce anxiety as they concentrate more on production). Participants with increased exposure to practice and repetition will have greater gains in automatizing production, which is an integral aspect of fluency.

It is also necessary to acquire more information about the affective aspects of the learners. Although the author disseminated a background survey to the participants at the beginning of the semester, conducting interviews to follow-up post-study responses was not possible at the end of the semester. In the future, a post-study survey will need to incorporate motivational constructs that will address the students' attitudes towards the tasks, proficiency self-rating, and so forth.

Having knowledge of the participants' linguistic proficiency would be useful as well. Prior to enrollment, students at the university have taken some form of a norm-referenced test, the most common being the TOEIC. However, the students' TOEIC scores are not reflective of their oral linguistic capabilities. The students' educational backgrounds will vary. Some students might have participated in semester- or year-long exchange programs in junior high or high school. Nearby high schools from which some of the participants attended are recognized for their English language curriculum. Students who are alumni from these schools usually have higher oral and aural proficiency compared to students from other local high schools. In addition, most students had attended specialized schools (called *juku*, or "cram schools") from elementary school until high school graduation. These schools prepare students for university entrance examinations that rarely include an oral production component. The norm-referenced examinations (e.g., TOEIC and entrance examinations) are predominately used for placement purposes but are not indicators of the students' aural and oral capabilities.

It is the hope of this author that this study will benefit L2 researchers who are interested in examining how specific tasks contribute to speaking fluency in L2 speakers of English and determine the types of activities that promote fluency. These activities should involve procedures or routines that are communicative, authentic, focused, repetitive, and follow a formula, assisting L2 speakers with gaining greater speaking fluency.

Second, administrators, instructors, and others involved with language assessment, curriculum design, and placement might be able to obtain information about features unique to L2 Japanese English speakers as well as how raters perceive these students' speaking proficiency. This would be useful in addressing and potentially minimizing bias that raters might have due to education, professional experiences, and familiarity with the culture and language of the L2 participants.

THE AUTHOR

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An Accurate Representation of a Globally Modelled English Language

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The Global Model of English is an attempt to redefine how the language operates as a global lingua franca and seeks to effectively reorient the way students and teachers of the language view their interactions with a fundamental tool of transnational communication. This paper outlines the fundamentals of the Global Model, how its predecessors shaped its creation, and how it can replace previously flawed representations of the English language. The paper then goes on to describe how the model operates in practice, and how acceptance of the ideology underpinning the model will affect the learning and teaching of the language in the era of English as a lingua franca. It is the intent of this paper and the Global Model to directly address past inequities in the structure of language modeling and help support a new paradigm in English language use that more equitably benefits all the language's users.

INTRODUCTION

Formerly thought to be the property of a small number of countries, English is coming to be understood as belonging to anyone who uses it, in whatever ways, styles, and varieties they find fitting to achieve their communicative goals. This change in understanding is far from complete, but future discussions of the language will hopefully focus on issues of use and context rather than on ownership and control. Sociolinguistic models of English, therefore, need to both account for the present state of global yet fragmented English use while also helping move towards the aspirational future wherein historically privileged varieties no longer dominate either usage or the teaching and learning process. Another way of saying this is that English models need to recognize the past but become untethered from it, thus more accurately representing the present and pointing the way to the future. To understand where we are aiming, let's first briefly look to prior attempts at modeling varieties of English on a global scale.

BACKGROUND: A SHORT HISTORY OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC MODELING

Sociolinguistic modeling has its roots in the earliest days of the study of the language as a medium of global communication. Daniel Chase's cone-shaped

model of the early 1930s was referenced by Braj Kachru as an early indication of where the study of language modeling was heading: complexity caused by interactions between local varieties in far-flung geographical locations (Kachru, 1985). Later models transposed varieties onto maps (Strevens, as cited in Kachru, 1992) or arranged them in circles (Kachru, 1985), wheels (Görlach, 1989; McArthur, 1987), bubbles (Modiano, 1999), and then cylinders (Yano, 2000), with each model adding a further level of complexity over the last. By the time Park and Wee (2009) added contextual-varietal value to their model, models of English language use had represented language history, variation, location, user, proficiency, performance choices, communicative and economic value, and the sociopolitical relationships between users. Nonetheless, each of these models has been (rightly) criticized, each in their own way, for problems such as lack of scope, ubiquity, over-application, the codification of hegemony, and unworkability. A new model was needed that built upon the positive aspects of prior models while mitigating the problems – especially the last two, since we felt that the most important issues to overcome were cases where prior models naturalized rather than worked against linguistic imperialism and/or were more accurate but too complex to be of use to actual practitioners (especially language learners and educators).

The Global Model of English was introduced in 2013 and represented the use of English as occurring across three zones: the Surface, upon which are arrayed all the varieties of World Englishes (WE), represented users in their specific geographical location; the Outer Core represented English being used as an international language (EIL), with users able to access a wider range of English lexicogrammar, thereby enabling them to communicate with users of English in different locations; the Inner Core represented proficiency that allows fully negotiated performance of the language, where the language is being used as a lingua franca (ELF) (Haswell, 2013). In 2016, the model was refined in two major ways (Haswell & Hahn, 2016). First, users came to be visualized not as points at singular locations, but rather as dynamic, flexible, three-dimensional shapes that represented the various aspects of the language that they could access in communicative situations. Second, as we came to consider lingua franca English to be more of an attitude towards English language use (Canagarajah, 2007; Jenkins, 2009) rather than an actual independent variety being employed cross-culturally (Sobkowiak, 2005), the Inner Core became much more strongly associated with users than with varieties, such that a user who achieved Inner Core skills gained access to nearly all points of the model; that is, they acquired the ability to negotiate meaning and modulate their own performance regardless of the attitude or proficiency of their interlocutors. We believe that the 2016 model achieved the two primary goals expressed above: The clear visual metaphor makes it easy for language educators and learners to understand what knowledge of English actually is, and the centralization of trans-national and cross-cultural skills (along with the resulting relegation of strictly national varieties to the periphery) helped invert the more common elevation of the so-called "native speaker" found in many prior models.

OPERATIONALIZATION: LINGUISTIC MOVES AND BEHAVIOR WITHIN THE MODEL

In presenting our model at various conferences throughout Asia, we have gathered inquiries from conference participants, paper reviewers, and colleagues, and these questions have informed the ongoing discussion between the authors about how to further develop the model. Many of these inquiries can be distilled into a single question: How can this model be operationalized in the classroom? This question gets to the heart of our goals in creating, modifying, and promoting this model – while we do believe that making a better model is important in and of itself, we are most concerned with how it can be used by all people involved in English language learning to improve the process, outcomes, and, most fundamentally, the orientation of language users towards international, transcultural proficiency. Our recent work has taken two approaches. First, we began collecting data directly from students to understand better how they approach learning English from a global perspective. Results of our pilot studies have been reported in prior presentations. The present paper explores the second branch of exploration: trying to better understand the implications of our own model to determine what it metaphorically suggests for future English learning processes.

WHAT IS A USER OF ENGLISH IN THE MODEL?

A user of English in the Global Model can best be thought of as a three-dimensional profile whose size and shape represent the linguistic repertoire of the individual; that is, what linguistic tools they can use in various situations. This repertoire expands and changes shape as the user becomes more adept, encompassing a larger area of the model. A user does not necessarily have perfect and immediate access to their entire repertoire, and the circumstances of the conversation, such as technological or physical resources, emotional state, and the importance of the conversation may make different parts of the users' repertoire easier or harder to access.

When one is an early user of the language, either as a child in a country where the language is regularly used, or as a learner in a country where the language is used for international communication, the shape sits at either the edge of the Outer Core or fully on the Surface, depending on how heavily regionalized the user's "home" variant is. When the user acquires the ability to access lexicogrammar that enables them to use the language as a medium of communication with another user of English outside their geographical context, the profile expands through the Outer Core. In addition, users who gain the ability and have the willingness to both modify their own communicative performance and adjust to the varying performance of their interlocutors expand not only within the Outer Core but also towards the center of the model. For the most proficient and flexible users, this expansion can continue into the Inner Core, at which point users begin to rapidly and easily gain access to the entire model. That is, a user with a true ELF stance (Canagarajah, 2007) can

communicate with many or even most other users, even if those other users have access to only limited regional varieties of English. This ELF competence does not mean that a user has perfect access to every piece of English lexicogrammar or knowledge of the phonological properties of every variety – rather, that they have the skills needed to succeed at linguistic tasks even when they don't readily know every word being spoken, and even when their interlocutor uses idiosyncratic structures or pronunciations.

Implicit within this concept of an expanding space within a three-dimensional area are several points of linguistic behavior that should be addressed. Firstly, the model suggests that any learner would very quickly move away from the Surface as they (a) acquire more lexicogrammatical and phonological resources and (b) accept more of the responsibility for the success of any interaction involving the use of English. Note, however, that the prior description may sound a bit idealistic in that it seems to ignore the fact that, at present, there is still, in many places in the world, social capital associated with so-called "prestige" varieties, most of which are linked to the varieties of the historically dominant (especially, native US and UK) English-speaking countries. In part, this idealism is intentional: As discussed, part of the goal of this model is to point towards an aspirational future that destabilizes the current system and valorizes the ELF speaker over the so-called native English speaker.

At the same time, the model can, to some degree, account for the native-speaker centric mindset. In the same way that an ELF speaker who extends into the Inner Core gains flexibility, which can be represented by their three-dimensional map being fluid and extensible when the communicative task depends on it, a native-speaker centric mentality can be represented by a hardening of boundaries. A person with this mentality deliberately walls off their speech and refuses to admit phonological or lexicogrammatical forms that they feel are outside of "proper" boundaries. Note that this doesn't mean they are unable to understand language outside of these boundaries. Rather, it's almost as if such a person has two maps – one that stakes out what English repertoires they have actual access to, and one that defines what is "acceptable." Any performance falling in between those two boundaries may be understood, but is considered wrong, inferior, and/or deficient to the non-ELF-oriented user. When those judgmental boundaries are also linked up to formal systems of evaluation (such as high-stakes language testing, both in school entrance exams and in private language testing like TOEIC and TOEFL), language learners need to conform to certain "standards" in order to obtain a real-world reward. The Global Model positions this ability to conform to an arbitrary but socioeconomically relevant "standard" as a subset of the more general skill of modulating one's speech to conform to specific local circumstances. The most successful users – those with Inner Core access – will not only be able to modulate their performance to meet those of the tested standard (or the standard set by an inflexible Inner Circle-oriented gatekeeper), but also recognize that this modulation is not done because it renders their usage more "correct" but merely because it makes them more successful in a specific communicative task.

How Can One Refer to Moves Within the Model?

One of the ways we have recently been using the Global Model to explore potential pedagogical applications is to look at what the model tells us about the types of communicative interactions that occur in the real world, based upon what zones the interlocutors have access to. Interactions can then be mapped as scalable moves between or within zones. That is to say, due to the relative proficiencies and motivations of the interlocutors, the linguistic connection between them can be large or small, and the efforts of each individual can be high or low. There are seven observable moves represented in the model:

1. O_x = Same zone connection; minimal communication
2. O_n = Same zone connection; **n**egotiated communication
3. O_e = Same zone connection; **e**qual-proficiency communication
4. 1_n = Adjacent zone connection; **n**egotiated communication
5. 1_u = Adjacent zone connection; **u**nilaterally negotiated communication
6. 2_u = Connection across two zones; **u**nilaterally negotiated communication
7. 2_n = Connection across two zones; **n**egotiated communication

O_x – This is a surface-to-surface interaction where the interlocutors remain within two different local language varieties, undertaking no negotiation of performance. Although communication is possible, it can occur only in cases where aspects of those local varieties have some overlap at a basic level. It is a relationship where no party attempts negotiation; miscommunication and frustration is a likely outcome.

O_n – This is an outer core-to-outer core interaction where interlocutors do not have access to the same linguistic resources but do have a general understanding of language variety. A paradigmatic example would be users who have strong intraregional English skills but come from different regions, such as a proficient user of Asian varieties and trans-Asian commonalities interacting with a European user who is similarly used to various local and regional varieties of English. Both interlocutors have experience with and the ability to negotiate their performance, yet difficulties may remain. Actual success may be partial and will depend on a variety of factors, but will likely be measured in large part by the strength of intent and the amount of willingness to employ circumlocution and contextual communication strategies.

O_e – This could be a surface-to-surface interaction (same location) or inner core-to-inner core interaction (same zone). In both cases, the interlocutors are equally competent in the required linguistic repertoire. This could be an interaction when the interlocutors can employ the same local variety and therefore need no negotiation of performance, or the interlocutors could be able to employ a full repertoire of negotiation skills in the inner core: both forms of interaction are likely to lead to successful outcomes, though, again, intent still matters (that is, successful communication is never guaranteed, even between two speakers who grew up in the same house and acquired nearly identical linguistic repertoires).

1_u – This refers to communication events where the negotiation is unidirectional: At least one member of the interaction is unable or unwilling to negotiate their performance, as in an outer core-to-surface interaction. One of the parties never leaves their regional variety, and the responsibility for achieving a successful interaction falls on the participant(s) in the adjacent zone.

1_n – This occurs when two or more participants are each capable of some degree of negotiation of performance. The negotiation responsibility is unequal in that one or more of the participants have to perform more negotiation than other interlocutors participating in the interaction. This is an outer core-to-inner core interaction.

2_u – The relationship between two or more interlocutors where the negotiation is unidirectional and entirely successful due to the proficiency of the interlocutor in the inner circle. This is an inner circle-to-surface interaction.

2_n – The relationship across two zones that exhibits some reciprocal negotiation. This interaction might be observed where the surface interlocutor does not move from their use of a local variety but does assist the inner core user to utilize effective negotiation strategies – that is, the surface user demonstrates a willingness to communicate without altering their own performance. This is an inner core-to-surface interaction.

If these categories of interactions adequately describe the variety of interaction types that are possible between different types of users (and note, that this categorization is provisional with room for future adjustment as the model is refined), then they point towards a primary goal of language learning being the development of cross-varietal skills such as negotiation and circumlocution. This implies that there may be a strong value in exposing students (especially those who have already established a sizable outer core lexicogrammar) to significant amounts of cross-varietal communication. It may also mean that more attention is needed in our curricula to deliberately set up students to "fail"; that is, putting them in language situations where communication at first is incomplete, and then giving the student the confidence, willingness, and tools needed to repair those initial mismatches. A learner who could do that is gaining the negotiation strategies that are hallmarks of successful 2_n, 1_n, and 1_e communication, and can aid them even in cases where they are communicating with the hardened, native-speaker-centric people described in the section above.

THE FUTURE: IMPLICATIONS FOR EFL AND BEYOND

If one adopts the implicit and explicit aims of the Global Model, it can have profound implications for language teaching. The first and most important shift would be a move away from any location-based model of performance as a course goal. For some teachers and curricula, this shift would be a small alteration of current practice, or the deletion of some verbiage from their syllabus. For others, it would be a fundamental shift – when programs or materials have been

specifically marketed as being for American or British English, the Global Model may be incompatible with their native-speakerism. A second, but no less profound, change would be in how teachers are trained.

We have no illusions that such a fundamental change in ELT practices can be undertaken quickly. Our goal may be a generational one – curricula and syllabi can change overnight; ideologies gain acceptance on far longer timescales.

FUTURE RESEARCH

This ongoing research activity seeks to address the calls for a WE curriculum that can make a sustainable difference in student ideologies. Previous attempts by other researchers have led to some positive effects but no long-lasting changes (Galloway, 2013; Sakai & D'Angelo, 2005). We have undertaken some previous research into the area of course content (Haswell & Hahn, in press), but this needs to be continued, broadened to include students in other universities, and furthered by the production and trialing of course materials. Research into the fields of WE, EIL, and ELF has been continuing for decades with some incremental changes in the opinions of users of the language not involved academically in this part of sociolinguistics. That is to say, those who already support a pluricentric view of the English language are not our target; we would like the ideology of the Global Model to be more widely appreciated and adopted by all users of the language. For this reason, our efforts will not end with merely designing and operationalizing the model; we must be proactive in publicizing its advantages as widely as possible.

CONCLUSIONS

The Global Model is a departure from previous efforts to model the English language. This new way of concurrently envisioning English language varieties along with the idiosyncratic skills of individual language users has, at its heart, three goals. First, we wanted to create a model that more accurately represents the actual use of English in transnational, transcultural contexts as being focused on communicative success rather than conformance to a so-called native-speaker standard. This strongly aligns the model (and ourselves) with an ELF-centric approach to language learning – one that holds that the key to transvarietal English success is not solely related to core linguistic knowledge but is rather strongly tied to attitude, to a flexibility in both production and reception, and to an attendance to the specific, local circumstances and the linguistic styles and skills of one's interlocutors. Second, we wanted the model to be useful to language teachers and others involved in setting language and educational policies, in that we wanted it to be visually striking, such that it was easy to see the relationships between learning goals and outcomes, and thus help them shape future language teaching towards enabling student success in actual communicative endeavor. Third, essentially running between the first two goals is that the model represents an aspiration for the future – one in which the decades-old hegemony of so-called

Inner Circle dominance is removed or at least mitigated to provide more equity in opportunities for the majority of English language users.

Working closely with the model for several years has shaped our own understanding of what to do in our classrooms as well as possible approaches we could take in the future. Most recently, the above-described classification of interactions within and across zones has pointed us to a potential curriculum that would not only expand students' access to additional linguistic skills but also specifically teach them how to negotiate language use across zones with both cooperative and non-cooperative partners. Along with our more practical work exploring student attitudes towards the incorporation of global language skills into the classroom, we hope to make significant shifts in our own teaching and provide tools for other educators looking to do the same. We recognize the changes we want to effectuate will take a considerable amount of time, but we believe that for such a change to take place, it will not come just from hoping that national educational policies or society-wide attitudes spontaneously change, but rather from individual teachers taking incremental steps to change the attitudes of both their students and colleagues towards an understanding of the language that promotes equitable globalization.

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Australian－Japanese Multimodal e-Books for Language and Cultural Exchange

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This paper will introduce an e-learning collaborative project involving students, teachers, and researchers at five locations in Australia and Japan. Students were trained by local instructors to create cultural e-books that introduce local and domestic culture in a foreign language through digital media using iPads. The Japan-based students did this mainly in English, while their Australian counterparts did so mainly in Japanese. Videos were exchanged online throughout this study from October 2016 to September 2017. Tools used include Comic Life, iMovie, Puppet Pals, Tellagami, and eBook Creator. Through the use of these edu-tech tools, this paper will highlight the value of ICT use in foreign language education in recent times. It was discovered that not only digital literacies but also various cognitive and non-cognitive skills such as teamwork discussion skills developed in the process.

INTRODUCTION

Wherever we look these days, the younger generation seem to be immersed in their handheld devices. Whether we like this or not, this is something that will only escalate with time. There is no doubt that this trend is having a huge impact on education (Martin et al., 2011). Despite the ubiquitous presence of mobile technology in Japan, where this study was conducted, high school students for the most part are forbidden to use mobile technologies within the confinements of their school curriculum. This project aims to highlight the benefits that mobile technologies can provide the foreign language learner, especially in a digital cultural exchange like this one between school students in Australia and Japan.

As mobile technologies continue to advance and developers continue to target the education sector, foreign language teachers like us are left with some very difficult decisions to make regarding which tools to use. This project will hopefully alleviate this dilemma by introducing a cultural exchange project between school students in Australia and Japan that utilizes multimodes of digital technologies to exchange e-books about local and national cultural elements. Each of the ICT tools used in this project will be introduced along with descriptions of students' collaborative output and opinions obtained from an online survey.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of this project was to encourage authentic language and cultural exchange through the multimodal medium of iPads. With sufficient guidance and facilitation, high school students in Matsuyama, Japan, were introduced to several hand-picked iPad applications. Students then used these tools to create videos that introduced local and national culture items in English while their partner school did the same, but in Japanese. Videos were exchanged every 2–3 months over the course of one school year from December 2016 to September, 2017. The aim of this project was for students to create digital material using their respective target languages, while also commenting on each other's work in their native language.

The main objectives of the project are as follows:

- To facilitate new kinds of 21st century learning
- To improve cognitive skills
- To broaden digital literacies
- To encourage active learning
- To improve non-cognitive skills like collaborative learning and group skills
- To improve cultural understanding
- To have fun using iPads with English

BACKGROUND

This paper covers a wide variety of topics from the use of technology in foreign language education, such as telecollaboration and current trends around the world on collaborative learning. There is a plentiful volume of literature available on all of these themes. This short literature review though will highlight several key research areas from an international perspective.

In the context of ICT education, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (hereafter, MEXT) has recently published education policies on the promotion and facilitation of teaching with and learning with technology at elementary, lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools (Tsuchiya, 2015). In April 2016, MEXT announced a plan for the promotion of "digitization of education" in schools in Japan. This announcement emphasized that school students in Japan should be encouraged to consider what matters in their learning settings, collaborate with others, struggle with the creation of new values, and work better to find and solve problems using ICT with computers and other devices such as iPads and PC tablets. The operative goal of this initiative was to motivate students and to keep up with other developed nations where the use of such tools is already well established.

Collaborative Learning with Technology

Despite the high-tech image that Japan has, various studies have highlighted the poor digital literacy skills of Japanese students and the preference of teachers

to continue to opt to teach without technology (Kusano et al., 2013; Cote & Milliner, 2016). MEXT would like to change this and is trying to encourage collaborative learning through the use of ICTs and promote active learning.

MEXT seeks to establish an environment where students can learn and research with future prospects and enrich education through dialogue and cooperation with society. From a Japanese perspective, collaborative learning is defined as a kind of learning method whereby several students form into groups, work on their common issues, and deepen their understanding of these issues while expressing opinions with each other on the topic at hand (Tsuda, 2013). Other Japanese researchers argue that collaborative learning can support self-independence and raise awareness of autonomous learning (Erikawa, 2012). It is also suggested that skills acquired through collaborative learning projects like this one, can build both cognitive and non-cognitive skills like motivation, perseverance, and teamwork skills that can influence learners later in life and impact society in general (Tsuchiya, 2015). Through the use of ICT integration in education, we can encourage collaboration and motivate our learners to become better prepared for future endeavors.

Warschauer (2011) suggests three main goals for using technology in education: (a) to improve academic achievement, (b) to facilitate new kinds of 21st century learning, and (c) to promote educational and social equity. Modern-day technology can make the transition from teacher dependence to learner independence that much smoother, further promoting the concept of learner autonomy in contemporary pedagogy. The relation here to foreign language education is paramount.

Telecollaboration

Several studies have focused on the value that a relatively new area of research, called *telecollaboration*, has brought to our field of education (O'Dowd, 2006). Telecollaboration involves students from different language and/or cultural backgrounds collaborating online on common tasks, whether synchronously or asynchronously, in recognition of the fact that both language learning and intercultural learning are enhanced by interaction and negotiation of meaning (Helm, 2015). Through this process of exchange, students come into contact with native speakers of their target language and with the addition of user-friendly, edu-tech tools.

Telecollaborative projects can benefit students on both sides through authentic oral exchange with video conferencing tools like Facetime and Skype. Students can also exchange written comments with each other through online video uploading tools like YouTube and Vimeo. The aims of most telecollaboration projects go beyond the development of language competence to include the fostering of intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997) as well as new online literacies (Guth & Helm, 2010).

SIMILAR PROJECTS

Our study is similar to that of a broader e-learning project in Europe called

eTwinning, which enables schools in more than 40 European countries to collaborate online through ICT. The eTwinning goals and objectives are to bring school children together through the exchange of digitally produced pictures, videos, and stories from varied cultures and linguistic backgrounds across Europe. In the eTwinning case, all materials are exchanged through the safety of their own portal, a European Commission approved and endorsed private site. According to the *Learning with eTwinning* handbook, "The portal is a highly sophisticated communication and collaboration platform which offers a wide range of tools to teachers to facilitate their project work" (Crawley, Dumitriu, & Gilleran, 2007, p. 1). Established in 2005, eTwinning declares on its official website through a recent online survey that "eTwinning has had a positive impact on increasing student motivation and fostering collaborative work among them" (eTwinning, 2018, para, 5).

Helm and Guth (2016) claim that there are several models of telecollaboration, the first of which they refer to as the eTandem and the Cultura models. These models are based on the partnering of foreign language students with "native speakers" of the target language, usually by organizing exchanges between two classes with each group studying the other's native language as was the case in this project.

The Cultura model involves learners communicating through the digital exchange of materials in their L1, their native language, through digital platforms. This communication in the digital sense could mean giving comments on videos or digital media uploaded in their own language rather than the target language. This would mean Australian students giving comments on uploaded material in English with students in Matsuyama doing so in Japanese. The rationale behind this, according to Helm and Guth, is twofold: "first, learners can more accurately describe cultural subtleties in their native language, and second, in this way learners provide rich linguistic input for each other" (Helm & Guth, 2016, p. 247).

A similar school exchange multimodal e-learning project to this one was carried out between middle school students in Australia and China in 2015 (Oakley et al., 2017). According to Oakley et al., the exchange led to improvements in students' language, cultural understandings, and 21st century skills, including digital literacies and technological skills, and helped teachers extend their pedagogical horizons. As of yet, no similar studies to this one could be identified between Australia and Japan.

THIS PROJECT

Participants

This project was part of a wider cultural exchange project sponsored by the Australia–Japan Foundation (AJF) from their Perth branch in Western Australia (WA). The AJF was established by the Australian Government in 1976 to create a bilateral and regional relationship between Australia and Japan (Australia–Japan Foundation, n.d.). The project was managed by Professor Grace Oakley of the University of Western Australia (UWA). Professor Oakley recruited participants of this project from three sectors of education: university teachers who coordinated

the project from their locale, teachers of the partner schools, and students within the partner school setting. In total, there were 411 participants involved with this project. This number was comprised of 398 students from eight different schools (four in Japan and four in Australia); 8 teachers, 4 from each country; and 5 coordinators. Four of the coordinators were based in Japan, while the project leader was at UWA in Perth, Australia. This project was conducted from September 2016 to August 2017. Due to space limitations this paper will only discuss the project objectives and results related to the Matsuyama-based group.

A Smaller Part of a Wider Project

The authors of this paper were the local-based coordinator and the head of the English department at the public, university-affiliated high school where this study was conducted in Matsuyama. This group was comprised of 37 students who were partnered with a private grammar school in Albany in the south of WA. The Matsuyama-based students were all 16-year-old first-year high school students, 31 female and 6 male. All students officially had 4 years of English learning experience and ranged in ability from beginner to intermediate level. There were 12 student participants, 7 female and 5 male, involved in the project from the Australian side, all of whom were 14 and 15 years old and had been learning Japanese for one or two years. Their Japanese level was all at the beginner level.

A total of 12 tools were used to create e-books with iPads by students in both Australia and Japan. Students were gradually introduced to each tool in workshop-style sessions that were held from 4 p.m. after school hours and lead by the local coordinator in Matsuyama. In these workshops, students were given tutorials with two prime objectives, to introduce the video task and to show students what tools to use when creating materials. The difficulty and complexity of each tool increased over time. The first tools introduced in task 1 were very simple, while those in task 5 were more advanced. Table 1 gives a description of tools used and a brief overview of the contents of each task.

TABLE 1. Tasks and Their Contents

Task	Timeframe	Contents	Student Tools Used
1	Oct. 13 - 31, 2016	Self-introductions	Comic Life 3, iMovie (2)
2	Dec. 1 - 26, 2016	Local culture	Comic Life 3, iMovie, Vimeo (3)
3	Jan. 19 - Mar. 3, 2017	Pop culture	Comic Life 3, iMovie, Vimeo Puppet Pals, Tellagami, (5)
4	May, 20 - June 3, 2017	Daily routines	Comic Life 3, iMovie, Vimeo Puppet Pals, Tellagami, Book Creator (6)
5	June 10 - July 10, 2017	Introduction to local sightseeing spots	Comic Life 3, iMovie, Vimeo Puppet Pals, Tellagami, Book Creator, Puppet Pals 2 (7)

The number in brackets in Table 1 indicates the total number of apps students used for each task. For task 1, this number was two, while for task 5, the total

number was seven. The ICT tools used to create each task became progressively more complicated over time.

Student-Created Digital Media

For completion of the first task students were asked to use two iPad applications called Comic Life 3 and iMovie. Comic Life is a simple tool that allows users to create digital comics with pictures, speech bubbles, onomatopoeic sound effects, like "bang, bash, slap" and captions. Narration for these comics were then provided using iMovie, a free tool available from the Apple App Store in the form of one-minute self-introductions. For the completion of each task, students worked in groups of either six or seven members. These short individual recordings were then transferred to one central device using Airdrop and then edited with iMovie to make a 6-minute video. The second task used a similar production process but with new contents.

The ICT tools used for the completion of task 3 included the previous two applications, but also an additional two called Tellagami and Puppet Pals. According to their official website, "Tellagami is a mobile app that lets you create and share quick animated videos" (Tellagami, 2018, para. 1). With Tellagami, users can record voice and add dialogue, which is dictated by an avatar of your choice. Backdrops can be added through the photos function on the tablet. Puppet Pals is a similar tool that allows users to choose a wider variety of backdrops and characters to record narratives. Both tools were used to introduce pop culture and daily routines.

The final task that students were assigned was to create an actual e-book with a tool called Book Creator. Students used their digital skills acquired in the project so far to add short videos, sound files, pictures, and texts, and then embed them into an e-book up to eight pages long. These e-books were then sent to the group in Australia.

Exchange Process

In the initial stages of this project, a Moodle site was set up where all participants, (coordinators, teachers, and students) on both sides could view each other's work. However, due to the large numbers involved, after several months of inactivity, even after the first exchange, its usage was discontinued. Moodle proved too complicated for the majority of users in our context. In place of this, a Google Drive was set up where teachers on both sides could relay completed material. From there, the coordinator would then upload materials to a popular video-sharing tool called Vimeo. All videos were password protected for security and privacy purposes and links were distributed. All students had access to the link and provided comments to each video they watched. Students in both Australia and Japan had a selection of six videos to choose from and were instructed to watch a minimum of three videos each and to provide comments with a minimum of three lines each. As expected, Australian students gave comments in English, while Japanese students gave comments in Japanese. This project culminated in a group Skype session of all participants ($N = 52$), including all students from both sides, the local coordinator, and teachers.

RESULTS

At the end of the project, students from both sides were asked to comment on their learning experience through an online survey conducted with SurveyMonkey. The survey was comprised of ten questions, the first two were scale questions, while the remaining eight were all open ended (see Table 2). Due to wording limitations of this paper, the answers to three of the ten questions will be reported on in this section. The shaded areas below show the three questions that will be reported on. All survey questions were conducted in Japanese and then translated into English for readers of this paper.

TABLE 2. Survey Questions

Questions	Avg.
Q1. On a scale of 1 - 6, how would you agree to the following statement: "This project has been enjoyable."	5.00
Q2. On a scale of 1 - 6, how would you agree to the following statement: "I have learned a lot from this project."	4.95
Q3. What did you like best about making the e-books?	
Q4. How do you think creating the e-books helped you learn English, if at all?	
Q5. How do you think creating the e-books helped you learn about culture in Japan/Australia, if at all?	
Q6. How do you think creating the e-books helped you learn more about your own culture, if at all?	
Q7. What did you learn about using technology through creating the e-books?	
Q8. What other valuable skills do you think you have learnt through this project? For example: collaborative skills, iPad skills, group learning skills.	
Q9. What kinds of difficulties did you have when creating the e-books, if any?	
Q10. How would you improve this project for future students?	

Note. n = 37.

For both questions 1 and 2, all respondents were asked to choose a response on a scale of 1–6, where 1 was "strongly disagree" and 2 was "strongly agree." For question 1, 27% of the respondents (10) chose "6," 43.2% (16) chose "5," 24.3% (9) chose "3," while 1 respondent each chose "3" and "2." For question 2, 35.1% of the respondents (13) chose "6," 24.3% (9) chose "5," 32.4% (12) chose "3," while 8.1% (3) of respondents chose "3." The near identical average figures of 5 and 4.95 for question 2 indicates the overwhelming majority of this group both found the project enjoyable and educational.

Figure 1 indicates the volume of answers regarding word count of comments received from all participants. The x-axis shows the question number while the y-axis shows the word count in Japanese. The lower figure indicates the average word count. Responses received to the above questions were almost entirely positive. This tendency of participants to give positive feedback was uniform both in responses received from Japan and Australia. Table 3 is a sample of answers received from two participants each from Australia and Japan.
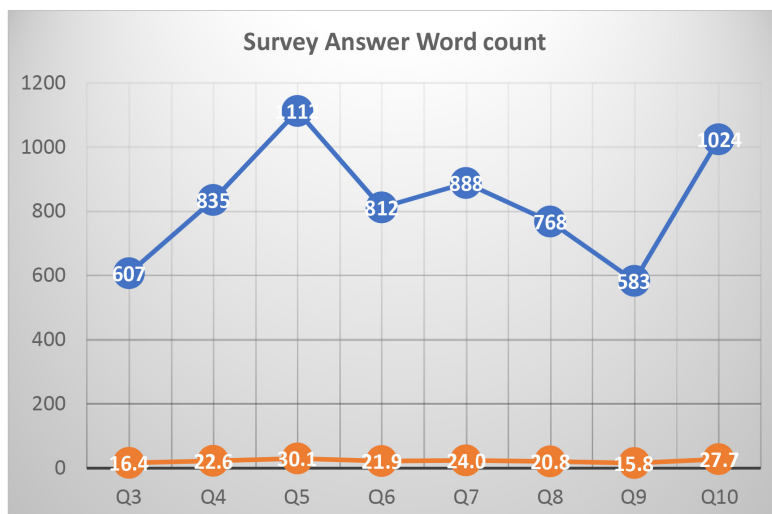
Figure 1. Survey Answer Word Count Questions 3—10.

Table 3. Responses Received to Q8 from Four Students

Students from Australia	
S1	"I think it was a great idea to make videos because it was fun and a good way to practice our Japanese speaking."
S2	"I found that the course was very educational and I have enjoyed every bit of it. The course was very interesting as it allowed us students who have very little idea of Japanese lifestyle and schooling etc. to understand more about how the Japanese students live."
Students from Japan	
S3	"I learnt a lot about different ways of learning through this project. The only English writing I have had to do so far was for writing homework, but I found writing and making the e-books for this project more meaningful than that."
S4	"mutual cooperation and communication ability with other group members."

Conclusions

This collaborative project has demonstrated the value of educational technology in foreign language cultural exchanges. However, the digital literacy skills that students attained and the professional development that teachers and coordinators acquired from this project were not the only positive outcomes of the project. It must also be added that it is not the technology or hardware itself that can bring about change. As Warschauer (2011) states, "It will not be any particular device that transforms education, rather it will be how the teachers and learners make use of them that will" (p. 41). Comments received clearly suggested that students built on 21st century collaborative learning skills, learnt more about cultural differences in language and culture, and perhaps most significantly, enjoyed the learning experience. Unfortunately, this project was not permitted to be a part of any curriculum and therefore had to be undertaken after school

hours, at least from the Japanese point of view. Perhaps a well-constructed and well-funded language and cultural exchange like this one can persuade national curriculum decision-makers to make projects like this a permanent addition to foreign language learning courses worldwide.

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"I Love Stress-Free English Speaking": Effects of Dialogic Jigsaw Puzzle Activities

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The aim of this research is to investigate dialogic discourse patterns of ESL speakers in the process of jigsaw-puzzle drawing activities within the Vygotskyan sociocultural framework focusing on speakers' collaborative speech acts and strategies. Six dyads of Korean ESL speakers were given a set of worksheets that lacked partial information. This jigsaw-puzzle information-gap task was designed to mediate speakers' exchange of verbal information to match and draw identical figures in their worksheets. Each pair's activity was video-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and ad-hoc participant interviews were also recorded. Data show that participants actively applied typical discourse and non-verbal strategies to solve the problem together. Analysis of the verbal and nonverbal strategies that ESL learners actively apply sheds light on the sociocultural aspects of the learners' discourse patterns and attitudes displayed in collaborative problem-solving tasks.

INTRODUCTION

Within the Vygotskyan (1978) sociocultural framework, the concept of language as a tool for social formation of mind within the zone of proximal development inspired researchers of second language acquisition to explore the process of scaffolding among English language learners to find out what kind of collaborative and formative strategies leaners apply in the real setting of second language use (Lantolf, 2000). Drawing upon this framework, Platt and Brooks (2002) and Platt (2004) discuss the formation of intersubjectivity and transformation of speakers in the process of jigsaw-puzzle information-gap tasks.

These discussions on sociocultural theories and the formation of language and mind in the dialogic process lead to the following research questions: First, is there change in the speaker's attitude in the dialogic process of problem-solving using the target language? Second, what type of collaborative verbal and nonverbal strategies do speakers adopt or develop during the problem-solving activity?

To find clues for these leading questions, six dyads of Korean ESL speakers in Virginia, USA, volunteered to participate in a communicative information-gap task to match and solve a jigsaw task grid originally designed by Brooks, Donato, and McGlone (1997). Transcribed discourse data of these participants show that speakers actively tried to complete their task, in which they experienced a spectrum of feelings from frustration to accomplishment in their moment-to-moment discourse patterns such as the use of expressions of frustration, first

language, private speech, cumulative talk, disputing talk, and exploratory talk. In addition, they also drew on their knowledge of L1 culture and self-regulatory gestures to cope with the ESL problem-solving situations. In the ad-hoc interviews, these ESL speakers unanimously expressed their willingness to experience more tasks that were focused on language use rather than language learning as they realized that they were totally free of anxiety over grammatical and pronunciational errors while they were concentrating on the problem-solving itself. "I love stress-free English speaking," a statement made by one participant, could be the epitome of the effect of task-based communicative activity in an ESL setting.

METHOD

As this research explored the dialogic patterns of ESL speakers, participants were directed to solve jig-saw puzzles in their L2 as much as possible. Participants sat facing each other at a university's tutoring office with a one-and-a-half foot tall screen between them so that they could not see each other's jigsaw puzzle sheet. Participants were twelve Korean immigrants in Virginia, USA, three pairs of which were teenage students and three pairs were college students. Each participating dyad was directed to match and solve the jigsaw task grid originally designed by Brooks et al. (1997) and slightly adapted by the author. While the two participants of the dyad exchanged information to complete the missing parts, their conversation was recorded by video camera for analysis, and ad-hoc interviews were held for the participants' voluntary feedback about their task experience. As the nature of this research was to explore the process of the speakers' collaborative discourse patterns, participants were guided but not strictly required to match all the missing information.
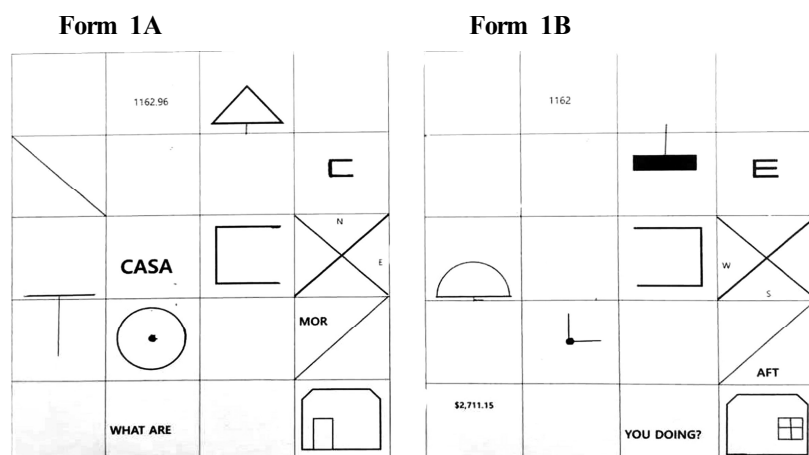
FIGURE 1. Example of a set of grids for the jigsaw puzzle task. (Adapted from Brooks et al., 1997)

Based upon the transcript of problem solving discourse, six different categories of discourse patterns were formulated: use of first language, private

speech, cumulative talk, disputing talk, exploratory talk, and passing. As for the use of L1 and private speech, Ahmed (1994) and Berk (1992) explained that L2 learners tend to use private speech and their L1 to keep self-regulation. In the case of cumulative, disputing, and exploratory talk, Fernandez, Wegerif, Mercer, and Rojas-Drummond (2001) introduced these three types of social discourse patterns in problem-solving situation. Disputing talk is characterized by disagreements, short assertion, and counter-assertions. Cumulative talk is characterized by repetitions, confirmations, and elaborations. Lastly, exploratory talk is a discourse pattern in which participants engage critically but constructively with each other's ideas, offering questions and justifications. The concept of "passing talk" is from Rymes and Pash (2001), who claimed that L2 learners tend to "pass" risky situations by ambiguously uttering "Yes," pretending that they understood the situation or agreed with the other to keep face or social identity. The basic six categories used in this data analysis were formulated based on these discussions within the same framework to identify and interpret the L2 learners' self-transformation and scaffolding patterns in the problem-solving setting. Types of data collected were audio and video records of activities and interviews with participants. In the process of transcribing, reviewing, analyzing, coding, and interpreting the data, meaningful aspects of the Korean ESL learners' scaffolding patterns in their target language emerged, which could shed light on the initial guiding questions.

For a better understanding of the ESL learners' discourse patterns, three phases of a systematic data analysis method were applied. First, recorded discourse was transcribed word-for-word, including facial expressions and gestures. In the second phase, each sentence or utterance was coded following the six coding schemes for use of L1, private speech, cumulative speech, exploratory speech, disputing speech, and passing. In the third phase, the video and audio data were probed into a micro-genetic process to secure a holistic overview of what kind of verbal and non-verbal strategies learners adopt in the process and how the task influences participants' collaborative language use.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Discourse examples which signify specific patterns were probed for understanding of scaffolding patterns and the formation of intersubjectivity between participants. Typical examples of each scaffolding pattern were grouped into three categories: (a) private speech and L1 use, (b) passing talk, and (c) cumulative, explorative, and disputing talks. Each utterance was analyzed in moment-to-moment, micro-genetic, and sociohistorical aspects. Coding was formulated for each unique utterance: L1 use (L1), private speech (ps), disputing talk (d), exploratory talk (e), and passing talk (pass). To maintain the privacy of the participants, pseudonyms were used in data discussion.

Private Speech and L1 Use

Examples of how private speech and first language emerge together within utterances could be found from most of the dyads. In the discourse example from

the beginning part of the problem-solving between Aron and Cole, when Aron mentioned "rectangle," Cole failed to identify it. He inadvertently whispered in his L1, "A-i-mo-ya" (line 80), meaning "Oh gosh, what is it?" in Korean. Right after that, he uttered "Ha-yo-tun," which means "Anyway," a typical expression of resilience among Korean speakers.

```
(c) 79. Cole:      Rectangle.
(L1, ps) 80.       Is it, 아이모야 (A-i-mo-ya)
(L1, ps) 81.       하여튼 (ha-yo-tun)
(c) 82. Aron:      Left and right side are longer
(Pass) 83. Cole: Yeah.
```

In a challenging situation, Cole relied on his L1 in private speech mode, through which process he regained his self-regulation and strength to continue the task. This implies the function of private speech, a process of assisting "self-regulation" as Frawley and Lantolf (1986) and Ahmed (1994) have argued. It suggests that when an ESL leaner temporarily resorts to L1 in private mode, it is a self-regulating process of the learner in an effort to cope with the target language situation more strategically.

Passing Talk

Passing talk is, as Rymes and Pash (2001) discuss, a strategy to go through the situation and avoid problems through passive expressions such as smiles, silence, or "yes." Participants took this strategy when each one was in troublesome situations but not ready to cope with it.

```
(e) 36.        Ali: What do you have for first, first line and second rectangle?
(c) 37.        Tom: It seems like…
(e) 38.        Ali: Blank? Empty?
(pass) 39.     Tom: Yeah…empty…and one line.
(e) 40.        Ali: One line?
(pass) 41.     Tom: Yeah…
(e) 42.        Ali: One?
(pass) 43.     Tom: Yeah…
(e) 44.        Ali: And the line goes like horizontal or vertical?
(pass) 45.     Tom: Uh…
(e) 46.        Ali: Uhm. Does it like…uh…it goes left to right or up to down?
(pass+c) 47.   Tom: It's like…uh…left to right.
(e) 48.        Ali: And is it straight?
(pass) 49.     Tom: Yeah.
(e) 50.        Ali: Does it go all the way?
(pass) 51.     Tom: Yeah.
(c) 52.        Ali: Ok…Ok…Ok. First line and third rectangle.
(c) 53.        Tom: It's like rectangle and …the…no…uh…square…
(e) 54.        Ali: Square?
(pass) 55.     Tom: Yeah.
```

In this excerpt, Tom frequently uttered "yeah" when his partner asked questions to solve the problem together. In lines 41, 43, 49, 51, and 55, Tom

aimlessly repeated "yeah," while video clips showed that his pencil moved here and there to locate the proper object on the worksheet with his pencil pointing at odd spots. His voice became weak and vague, and he did not attempt to look at his partner. Tom dealt with the challenging situation with "passing talk" to save his face and maintain his identity.

Cumulative, Disputing, and Exploratory Talk

Numbered data show that participants of this collaborative task uttered twice as much cumulative talk as exploratory talk, and they uttered less disputing talk. Disputing talk emerged in the middle of the process when the participants faced a troublesome situation. In the case of Mia and Billy, disputing talk emerged when Mia and Leo got stuck and could not find clues. In turn 277, Mia said, "You messed up," and in turn 282, Mia accused her partner again by saying, "You messed up," and by adding "All of it" in line 284. When they could eventually settle the problem together, Mia no longer accused her partner.

(e) 275. Mia: Ok. For A two, what do you have?
(c) 276. Lon: Blank. Blank, blank, blank.
(d) 277. Mia: I knew that. You messed up. For A two...the dollar thing,
(c) 278. Lon: A two?
(c) 279. Mia: A two, you have to have the dollar thing.
(c) 280. Lon: Thank you. (Sigh) So we are ready.
(c) 281. All the things that are...
(d) 282. Mia: You messed up.
(c) 283. Lon: Well?
(d) 284. Mia: All of it!
...
(c) 327. Lon: Then you will get
(c) 328. Mia: Ok, ok I was wrong. And it's squares

Mia uttered "Ok, ok I was wrong" (line 328), and this change in Mia's attitude from accusing to apologizing shows the flexibility of oneself in the collaborative process. In the beginning, as a novice of this activity, Mia found it challenging, and she tried to blame her partner Lon for their failure. Later, when she found that she could solve it together with her partner, her attitude became more moderate, and she could accept her mistake. This process shows the power of dialogic activities between speakers, which also implies that language is not only a tool for information but also a medium for intersubjectivity and self-transformation.

Non-verbal Strategies: L1 Culture Knowledge and Intrapersonal Gestures

In addition to the six discourse strategies, significant features emerged from speakers' cultural knowledge in L1 implanted in their L2 discourse and in their use of physical gestures as a tool for thinking. Even though ESL speakers use their target language, they do not separate themselves from their original culture, and it is reflected in their L2.

(c) 54.   Amy: I have a grave...
(e) 54.   Bob: What? I don't understand. You mean "grave"?
(c.L1) 55. Amy: A half "달 (dal)." No, I mean "half-moon."

Amy tried to describe a semicircle shape to her partner Bob, and she tried to describe it in another figurative expression using her L1 culture image of the traditional Korean graves. While in America, the typical gravesite is flat on the surface with tombstones, tombs in Korea are semi-ball shaped with green grass covering them. As soon as Amy noticed the semi-circle in her worksheet, she remembered the shape of a traditional Korean grave. Realizing that her partner did not understand her description, Amy uttered "a half 달(dal)" inadvertently, using Korean "dal" in place of English "moon" this time. She corrected herself right away saying "I mean 'half-moon.'" This sequential change of expressions shows how ESL speakers dynamically switch from L2 into L1 and then back again into the target language using both their L1 language and cultural knowledge as language resources. Another non-verbal strategy that is remarkable among speakers could be found in their gestures behind the screen. For example, participants constantly and actively used facial expressions and hand gestures even though they are not looking at their partner on the other side of the screen. This implies that, as McCafferty (2004) and Gullberg (2010) discussed, language and gesture are interconnected, and gestures function not only for communicative purposes but also for self-regulatory purposes for the speaker, a tool for thinking.

Summary of Scaffolding Discourse Patterns and Other Elements of Discourse

The whole process of data analysis provided significant clues to the initial research questions in four aspects.

1. Learners dynamically adapted themselves to the given context and took responsible roles, which implies that one's identity is not a fixed concept but is more reflective toward the situation.
2. Dynamic application of discourse strategies of the participants contributed to the formation of intersubjectivity between speakers in challenging situations, and in the process of the task, their discourse served as a tool for self-transformation.
3. Private speech, L1 use, disputing talk, and passing talk were adopted more frequently in challenging situations, and cumulative and exploratory talks sustained the dialogue in the whole process.
4. Other nonverbal strategies such as resorting to L1 cultural knowledge, and the use of gestures for thinking are also noticeable in this ESL-speaker problem-solving task.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The verbal and non-verbal discourse patterns that participants revealed in their dialogic information-gap activity reveals pedagogical implications for classroom teachers and material developers as well as for researchers on second language acquisition.

1. Providing ESL learners with proper learning experiences and activities to stimulate collaborative discourse patterns such as exploratory talk and cumulative talk enhances their communicative activities either in ESL or content area classes, thereby empowering ESL speakers.

2. As Rymes and Pash (2001) claimed, ESL learners tend to keep quiet and pretend to understand what the teacher or what other students are saying in the class by using the passing talk strategy to protect themselves from losing face or identity. Teacher attention on this attitude is recommended, and it is suggested that they double check if the ESL student in the class is following directions when he or she repeatedly responds by saying "yes" or silently smiles.

3. In the ad-hoc interview, participants voluntarily mentioned that they "enjoyed" this activity and wanted to have more chances to play "games" of this kind. This implies that a well-designed activity that can motivate and mediate the ESL learners to use the target language will benefit learners who are anxious about their grammar skills, pronunciation, and accent.

4. Even fluent ESL speakers resort to their L1 or L1 culture knowledge in difficult situations, but it does not mean that they are incompetent speakers. Discourse data frequently show that they notice their mistake right away and try to correct their errors by providing better or proper expressions.

5. Physical gestures function not only as a visible communicative tool but also as a medium for thinking and "intrapersonal problem-solving" (McCafferty, 2004). It reminds one that language use is a holistic process, and at the same time, it is physical.

To sum up, wholistic tasks in pairs and small groups in which participants can make use of all verbal and nonverbal functions and strategies are strongly recommended for language classes so that learners physically experience the target language, through which they may become active agents of the language.

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New Assistant Types for English Activities in Japan's Primary Schools

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Widening varieties of assistants have been working at public primary schools since fewer than 10 percent of Japanese homeroom teachers have licenses to teach the recently mandated English activity classes. Beyond native English-speaking helpers, local Japanese and non-Japanese with English skills are being actively recruited. Yet their perspectives and contributions remain unrepresented in EFL research. This paper provides a profile of 33 non-native English-speaking assistants and their opinions on team-taught classes. It compares their impressions of goal-achievement with those of homeroom teachers and native English-speaking assistants in an earlier survey and then describes what these non-native assistants in particular see as successful and unsuccessful classes. Findings show that issues of classroom discipline, motivation, and team-teacher communication gaps are the greatest barriers to success. Recommendations are made that teacher and assistant teacher training schemes recognize and take steps to incorporate this influx of new team members.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2011, Japanese primary schools have been required to offer 35 class hours per year of "foreign language activities," generally English-related classes, to pupils in grades 5 and 6. Numerous voices have been contributing to the development of Japan's primary school English education, with government mandates leading the trend, and with the media, scholars, and teachers providing models, analyses, and criticism. Amongst the various educators represented in research to date, most attention has been given to homeroom teachers (e.g., Aline & Hosoda, 2006), to native English-speaking assistants or "ALTs" (e.g., Kano, Ozeki, Yasu, & Suga, 2015), and to pupils (e.g., Ikeda, 2016).

Although the term "ALT" has been used for over a generation to refer to people from Kachru's (1985) "inner circle" of native English-speaking countries, who still constitute about 90% of assistants on Japan's extensive JET Programme (CLAIR, 2017), another group of instructors exists. A nationwide survey (Mahoney & Inoi, 2014) of 1802 primary school homeroom teachers (HRTs) of grades 5 and 6 revealed that almost 8% of classes were taught with people described in the original Japanese as 外国語活動協力員 or, in this paper, "English Activity Assistants" (EAAs), whom respondents did not consider ALTs. Further, another 4% of HRTs taught with an "Other" combination of team teachers (p. 17).

The contributions of atypical assistants (here, EAAs) have not been assessed in any study to date. Yet when HRTs in the above survey were asked in an

open-ended question about who or what has been of most support in conducting foreign language activities, 62 of 1563 respondents identified their "EAA" (Mahoney & Inoi, 2014, p. 26). While the frequency of this response may not appear remarkable, it placed second only to "ALT" (839), even more often mentioned than "textbooks" (57), "teacher training" (50), or class "preparations" (41).

Since fewer than 10% of primary teachers of grades 5 and 6 hold any English-teaching qualifications (Benesse Corporation, 2010; Mahoney & Inoi, 2014), schools have been facing increasing pressure to secure the best possible instructors. With the decision from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT, 2013a) to lower the commencement of foreign language activities to grades 3 and 4, and to teach English as a full, core (i.e., evaluated) subject in grades 5 and 6 from 2020, the demand for non-native English-speaking assistants will surely increase. In fact, a recent budget request for fiscal year 2018 will allow funding for an extra 2200 professional English (and other) teachers to assist HRTs (Negishi, 2017). Previously, the percentage of primary schools with paid outside help for foreign language activities had increased from 57% to 67% between 2013 and 2015 (MEXT, 2013b, 2015b). MEXT estimates that Japan requires as many as 70,000 people to assist in its approximately 21,000 primary schools (MEXT, 2014a); yet there are only 11,439 ALTs, both non-Japanese and Japanese, working at public primaries (MEXT, 2015a, p. 2).

Beyond a pioneering quantitative study from Suga and Yoshida (2015), opinions and comments from the ever-broadening range of assistants have yet to be elicited. This paper responds to the research gap by discussing the results of a new MEXT-sponsored survey of 33 EAAs who have been assisting HRTs with classes in various capacities. It will describe them and explore their opinions in regard to two research questions: 1) What are EAAs' self-assessments of classroom goal achievement? 2) What do they consider successful and unsuccessful classes?

Terms to Be Used: Caveats

The very designating of individuals as either "native English speakers" (NESs) or "non-native English speakers" (NNESs) has been regarded by researchers and others as unnecessary, outdated, and even "offensive" (Phillipson, 2009, p. 40). Braine (2010), however, notes that although alternatives like "second language teaching professionals" have been proposed, they have generally failed to gain wide recognition; further, the customary and convenient adjectives can serve as useful keywords through which researchers can find a wealth of studies that have already been done (Medgyes, 1999). Finally, in Japan, NES and NNES distinctions remain important to most teachers, students, and parents, and will be retained in this paper.

Similarly, one may also argue that the custom of using "ALT" to describe only those assistants who are both non-Japanese nationals and NESs no longer reflects employment realities. In fact, eight of the 33 respondents (including one Japanese national) in this EAA survey listed their job type as an "ALT." Further, two Filipinos wrote "English" as their native language, one of whom had also listed "Tagalog." Confusion over placing people into categories and the meaning of job titles can be seen even in a comparison of MEXT reports (MEXT, 2014b; MEXT,

2015a). Both state that since 2014 "the term 'ALT' can include local Japanese [citizen] human resources." The 2015 report increases the number of ALT category types from five to six, separating "Other ALT (Foreigner)" and "Other ALT (Japanese)"; yet the same report then lumps these together in its total count, confusingly labelled "Other ALT (Foreigner)" (p. 2).

Lastly, the term "JTE" had originally been used to refer to Japanese nationals at junior and senior high schools who specialize in teaching English on a full-time basis. The label has recently gained currency, however, at primary schools, and may now also mean part-time and full-time teachers of English who hold Japanese citizenship (e.g., Kitamura, 2015). Ideally, researchers should call people what the people themselves (and not necessarily their employers) wish to be called. Survey respondents represent various nationalities and will therefore be referred to as "EAAs," with other details provided as needed.

METHOD

The author and his associate prepared a four-page EAA survey (see Appendix), largely based on those previously used for HRTs and ALTs (Mahoney & Inoi, 2014), in Japanese and English. They were distributed by post, by hand, and by email between late 2015 and mid-2016. During this process, it was quickly realized that, while HRTs and ALTs can be found at primary schools throughout Japan, locating EAAs who work at public primary schools can be time-consuming. There are no nationwide lists that indicate which schools employ EAAs, many of whom are volunteers. Telephone calls to prefectural boards of education led to calls to municipal ones. Some municipalities were able to identify schools that host or have hosted EAAs. One board of education pointed out that its international association was in charge of hiring NES and NNES assistants. Participants were also recruited through personal requests at primary English-teaching (J-Shine) conferences and at lectures. The response rate for questionnaires emailed to EAA-employing boards of education was 60%, while that for posted questionnaires to individual schools and an international association was 55%.

Participants

Questionnaire respondents represent a convenience sample, mainly from Fukushima (n = 14) and Tochigi (n = 13) Prefectures, with three respondents from Miyagi, and one each from Hokkaido, Saitama, and Tokyo. The 15 Japanese nationals responded in Japanese, and the 18 non-Japanese answered in English. The nationalities and first languages of participants appear in Table 1.

Respondents' self-reported English levels were 9% "beginner," 55% "intermediate," and 36% "high." Additionally, the EAAs in this survey taught regularly at an average of 2.6 primary schools, with 30% indicating that they generally taught alone. They were significantly older than ALTs surveyed in Mahoney and Inoi (2014), with almost half the EAAs in their 40s and none in their 20s. This contrasts sharply with 387 typical primary school ALTs (Mahoney & Inoi, 2014, p. 44), of whom 54% were in their 20s.

TABLE 1. EAA Participant Nationalities and Native Language(s) (n = 33)

Country*	Number	Native language(s)*
Japan	15	Japanese
Philippines	8	Tagalog (7), English (2)
Sri Lanka	2	Sri Lankan
Russia	2	Russian
Bangladesh	2	Bangladeshi
Mexico	1	Spanish
India	1	Bengali
Nepal	1	Nepali
Tunisia	1	Arabic

Note. * = Multiple answers accepted.

The most common subjects that EAAs had studied at university were "English" (21%), followed equally by "economics" and "none" (i.e., no university education) at 17% each, and "literature" at 14%. A variety of other subjects accounted for the other 31% of respondents. Six of the respondents (18%) hold Japan-issued teaching licenses for junior and/or senior high school-level English. Subject majors may be contrasted with those of primary ALT participants (Mahoney & Inoi, 2014, p. 47), of whom 20% had majored in English or foreign languages (including literature), 20% in the Japanese language in particular, and 7% in education.

TABLE 2. EAA Contract Types (n = 33)

Employment Type	Frequency	Percentage
Contract with Board of Education	21	64
Volunteer	4	12
Contract with School (*Gyomu idaku*)	1	3
Other*	7	21

Note. * = Six of whom work for municipal international associations.

TABLE 3. Grades Taught (n = 33)

Grades	Frequency	Percentage
All (1 to 6)	9	27
1	1	3
1 and 2	1	3
1, 2, 3	6	18
3, 4, 5, 6	5	15
5 and 6	8	24
6	3	9

Tables 2 and 3 provide a summary of EAA participants' contract types and grades taught.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

EAA Assessments of Foreign Language Activity Classes

According to MEXT guidelines, children are not evaluated numerically, since language activities do not lend themselves well to evaluation (MEXT, 2008, p. 6). The official goal of the classes lacks specifics, perhaps necessarily so, but will remain as follows until 2020: "To form the foundation of pupils' communication abilities through foreign languages while developing the understanding of languages and cultures through various experiences, fostering a positive attitude toward communication, and familiarizing pupils with the sounds and basic expressions of foreign languages" (English translation of MEXT, 2008, p. 7).

For these reasons, designing a question on goal achievement in two very different languages for a diverse pool of respondents required long consideration before arriving at "How satisfied are you with Foreign Language Activity (FLA) classes you teach?" in English, with "To what degree have you achieved the objectives of your FLA classes?" as a Japanese near-equivalent. EAAs were asked to assign a number between 1 (low) and 10 (high) for their classes in three grade categories: grades 1–4, grade 5, and grade 6. Although eight (24%) of the EAA respondents do not teach grade 5 or 6, their responses have been included in the grade 1–4 category in order to compare their assessments of classes with those of ALTs in Mahoney and Inoi (2014).

TABLE 4. Levels of Achievement for EAAs, ALTs, and HRTs

Grades	EAA *M* (SD, n)	ALT *M* (SD, n)	HRT *M* (SD, n)
1–4	7.1 (2.4, 22)	7.4 (2.1, 313)	N/A
5	7.1 (1.6, 21)	7.6 (1.7, 374)	6.5 (1.5, 850)
6	6.6 (1.8, 21)	7.3 (1.8, 377)	6.5 (1.6, 875)

Note. M = mean, *SD* = standard variation, *n* = number of responses.

While the results do not show a great difference in means amongst instructor types, several tendencies may be noticed. The first is that the grade 1–4 classes depict the most mixed results for both EAAs and ALTs, with the largest spread observable amongst EAAs (*SD* = 2.4). The second is that both types of assistants appear slightly less satisfied with their grade 6 classes, whereas data from homeroom teachers (who generally teach grade 5 *or* grade 6) did not reveal any such difference in either spread or mean. Lastly, it appears that both samples of assistants rated class achievement slightly higher than homeroom teachers did, with ALTs rating theirs highest.

Factors in Successful Classes

The questionnaire asked the open-ended question, "Please describe any *successful* FLA classes you've experienced and include grade level if possible." Fourteen of 18 English survey respondents answered, while all 15 of 15 Japanese-survey respondents provided comments. With such a variety of people from diverse backgrounds, it is difficult to summarize them all. However, in general, visual or audible signs that children enjoyed the class served as a basis for typical examples of a "successful" class for most respondents. In fact, the MEXT lists "to experience the joy of communication in the foreign language," and "to actively listen to and speak in the foreign language" in its Course of Study as overall objectives (MEXT, 2008, p. 9). While HRTs in the Mahoney and Inoi (2014) survey listed "when pupils don't learn" as the most common characteristic of unsuccessful classes (p. 40), perceptions of success similar to those in MEXT objectives are exemplified in a comment from a Filipino EAA below.

> Successful classes for me is [sic] seeing the kids leave the English room with a smile and asking for a few minutes' extension of the game. Whether it's a game or a lesson, as long as I see them getting interested with it, it's a successful lesson.

A Russian-Finnish EAA (who sees herself as an ALT) echoed the sentiment that pupil enthusiasm, motivation, and participation may be taking precedent over the learning or retention of anything in particular.

> My classes have been moderately successful. All my classes have been at grade six. It's my first year as an ALT. So I followed really closely the recommendations of the teacher's guide (*Hi Friends 2*). There is a lot of games there my students are happy to play. The more games the happier they are. But they forget everything quickly.

Five respondents' descriptions of success went beyond on the above perceptions. One from a Japanese EAA noted the general tendency for children's "voices [to] get louder at the end of successful classes" during games, yet added that they also "spontaneously end up learning the conversational targets" (all comments in Japanese translated by author). This notion of unconscious yet actual learning was seconded by another Japanese EAA who said the acquisition of simple sentences had occurred before they knew it, or *atto iu ma ni*. A Bangladeshi EAA at a school where English commences in first grade observed that his third-year pupils "look pretty confident" and learned parts of the body through a "This Is Me" song and the "Simon Says" game.

Building on children's reactions to games and displays of acquired abilities, teachers' preparedness in terms of roles, as well as the potential to assist (or be helped by) one's partner on-the-fly can further enhance teachers' feelings of success. This is demonstrated in the comment from a Japanese EAA: "when I and the HRT have thoroughly considered the class teaching, have determined each of our roles, and have the leeway and composure to lend each other support." This description perhaps best represents the pinnacle of success in which all teachers feel they have a "safety net," if needed, as well as the confidence, ability, and time

to lend a hand.

Factors in Unsuccessful Classes

Unfortunately, as with any subject, not all classes go smoothly. Another open-ended question asked EAAs to "describe any *unsuccessful* FLA classes you've experienced and include grade level if possible." The largest category of these, with nine respondents, identified discipline-related problems, ranging from students' talking or simple lack of attention and inability to calm down (e.g., after gym classes), to having spent 10 minutes listening to the HRT lecturing children, to a complete collapse of classroom discipline (*gakkyuu houkai*). Eight of these comments regarding discipline were made in Japanese, with only one from the English-based survey.

The second-largest comment type, from eight EAAs, identified problems regarding their HRTs. In the five Japanese-based descriptions, most were the result of teachers' lack of time or of English abilities. Specific examples were HRTs' lacking time to make preparations, forgetting to prepare, using too much Japanese, teaching pupils mistaken English, being unable to understand the ALT's English, being unaware of foreign language teaching methods, being unable to adapt ALT-made lesson plans, not reviewing EAA lesson plans beforehand, and not informing EAAs of timetable changes or class cancellations. This last problem shows that even when team teachers share a common language, essential information about classes may not be communicated.

English-based responses also touched on difficulties with HRTs, though only three times. These assistants noted that HRTs spoke too much Japanese in class, were too busy in general, gave demotivating comments to students about English, took charge of the class (unsuccessfully), and discouraged spelling, listening, and simple grammar. By way of comparison, the 2014 study of native English-speaking ALTs (Mahoney & Inoi) found "lack of HRT motivation," "lack of HRT participation," and "lack of discipline" the top three comment types in regard to unsuccessful classes.

Finally, it should be mentioned that more English-respondent EAAs (9 of 18) than Japanese ones (5 of 15) indicated that they were at least sometimes teamed-up with HRTs and native English-speaking ALTs in classes (i.e., that they work in teams of three). Despite this, only Japanese-based comments mentioned ALTs. These comments provided unique and fresh perspectives on three-person teaching teams. Four Japanese EAAs had mentioned native English-speaking ALTs in comments on successful classes. One noted that "when interactions with the ALT go smoothly," children are able to concentrate together on physical activities even in regular classrooms with tables and chairs put to the side. Another Japanese assistant felt that classes without a text (grades 1–4) that featured tailor-made, ALT-led classes went well.

However, two Japanese EAAs also mentioned ALTs as part of unsuccessful team-taught classes. One described how "children were not able to understand game instructions offered by an ALT who spoke English only" and that while attempting to start an activity, "the HRT was also unable to catch what was said in many cases." She stressed that at such times, "if only the ALT had spoken even a little Japanese, both the pupils and HRT would have been able to feel

comfortable." Another, who had worked with nine different ALTs over the past five years, emphasized, in very polite and respectful language, the "great differences in ALT abilities." Some of them were "extremely difficult to work with" and would not follow her suggestions; thus, as a result of "having little understanding of pupils' limited levels of English or academic abilities in general," the ALT had "proposed very complicated games for children in grade 1," among other problems. Reflecting on these experiences in a 301-character comment, the EAA continued:

> Since the HRT cannot speak English, s/he cannot offer any advice. Further, since I am just a volunteer and am in no position to give my opinion either, I feel that both the HRT and I are refraining from expressing our frank observations.

These kinds of tensions in the team-taught classroom have since been brought up in ongoing interviews with EAAs and hinder the teaching of English at primary schools in particular. Fortunately, however, most English-speaking ALTs in Mahoney and Inoi (2014) see the ability to speak Japanese as "important" (p. 53) and just over half of them rated their Japanese level "intermediate" (p. 57).

CONCLUSIONS

This study of primary school assistants from outside Kachru's inner circle has made several findings that reach beyond those of HRT and ALT studies. First, Japanese users of English commented on combinations of ALTs and HRTs, noting gaps, limits, and miscommunications. Second, while citing fewer homeroom teacher-related problems than NES assistants (cf. Mahoney & Inoi, 2014), EAAs appear to be more sensitive to discipline issues. And third, EAAs sometimes feel they are at the bottom of the teaching hierarchy and hesitate to address classroom management or communication problems directly.

Of course, conclusions based on a small sample size, taken from only six municipal school regions, cannot be applied to every EAA's situation. It would also have been better to let all respondents answer questions in their native languages. Yet one may conclude with hopes that all teachers be made aware of the feedback received in this study and that future HRT and assistant training be recalibrated in consideration of an increasing number of EAAs and three-person teaching teams. Planning that ignores EAAs will undermine the spirit of internationalization, English as an international language, and the spirit of these educators.

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APPENDIX

Survey Questions

1. Your approximate age (please circle):   20s   30s   40s   50s   60s

2. Nationality(ies):

3. Native language(s):   Second or other languages:

5. Number of schools at which you teach "Foreign Language Activities" (FLA):

6. School grades taught (multiple answers accepted).   1   2   3   4   5   6

8. In what capacity do you teach FLA?
   a) as a volunteer (parent, local resident, etc.)
   b) as a Foreign Language Activity Assistant（or 外国語活動協力員(EAA)）
   c) as a foreign language assistant (外国語指導助手, ALT, AET)
   d) as a general primary school teacher with a specialty in foreign languages
   e) Other (please describe in detail):

9. Under what employment category are you teaching at primary schools?
   a) contract with the board of education
   b) contract with the school
   c) contract with a dispatch agency
   d) volunteer
   e) other (please describe in detail):

10. Various kinds of team-teaching exist in FLA classes. Please indicate the ratio of each team combination you teach in.
    a) with a primary homeroom teacher   (   ) %
    b) with a primary homeroom teacher and an ALT (3 people) (   ) %
    c) Alone   (   ) %
    d) Other (please describe in detail):   (   ) %

11. Main area of training, if any, in university/college. Please include any education or language-related certificates or courses:

15. Do you hold a Japanese junior or senior high English teaching licence?
    1) Yes (jr high・sr high)   2) No

16. How would you rate your English abilities?
    1) Beginner   2) Intermediate   3) High

17. In terms of support for FLA, how important are the following?
    (Ascending order of 0 = not at all important, 1 = not very important,
    2 = important, 3 = extremely important)
    a) homeroom teacher's English ability   _____

b) teaching materials   _____

c) a regular teaching schedule   _____

d) motivation of homeroom teachers at school   _____

e) help from other teachers at school   _____

f) help from management (at schools or company)   _____

g) training for primary homeroom teachers   _____

h) links with other primary schools   _____

i) links with junior high schools   _____

j) pupils' motivation   _____

k) my knowledge of language education   _____

l) my knowledge of the Japanese language   _____

m) other (please describe):

22. On a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), how satisfied are you with FLA classes you teach...

a) to grades 1–4? _____   b) to grade 5? _____   c) to grade 6? _____

29. Please describe any successful FLA classes you've experienced, and include grade level if possible.

30. Please describe any *unsuccessful* FLA classes you've experienced, and include grade level if possible.

Teacher Autonomy and Assessment in Japanese University EFL Programs

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This research report describes a small-scale online survey of eleven educators from EFL programs in seven Japanese universities. It probes levels of teacher autonomy and top–down coordination as related to assessment practices in these institutions. Results indicate that there is very little top–down coordination and that levels of teacher autonomy are very high regarding the selection of assessment tasks, assessment criteria, and the distribution of grades. The conclusion drawn is that teachers are largely assessing in different ways. Thus, student grading and assessment in this sample of Japanese EFL programs are not decided by the sort of universal, coordinated system that is required to ensure fairness, and to monitor and maintain quality assessment.

INTRODUCTION

This study is interested in *teacher autonomy*, which is inderstood to mean teachers' "freedom from control by others" (McGrath, 2000, p. 101). There has been considerable analysis in the literature of top–down coordination (Hato, 2005; El-Okda, 2005) and teacher autonomy (McGrath, 2000; Benson, 2010). It is clear that there are limitless possibilities when it comes to balancing these essentially opposite phenomena: from absolute teacher autonomy, to complete top–down control, and every stage in between.

Many, if not all, educators from Western countries working in the Japanese university system will have noticed the very high levels of teacher autonomy that exist in these institutions. This is likely to be in extreme contrast to the experiences of those who have worked in U.K. universities and in British and Australian organizations in general, which tend to be coordinated in a much more top–down manner. Assessment standards such as reliability and validity are vital for consistency between teachers, courses, and institutions. This therefore led to the motivation for the current study to investigate, and to some extent, measure levels of teacher autonomy in Japanese universities regarding assessment.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

High levels of teacher autonomy, such as those that allegedly exist in universities in Japan, would seem intuitively to result not only in inconsistency in assessment standards such as reliability and validity, but in a complete inability to

measure or guarantee any standards at all. Huge amounts of money, time, and effort have been spent pursuing qualities such as inter-rater reliability and standardization by organizations such as Cambridge IELTS because they are the only way to ensure that tests are fair and consistent. For assessment standards to be controlled in any way, a reasonably high level of top–down coordination is necessary.

While top–down coordination can negatively affect teacher commitment and the ability of teachers to adapt to their students' needs, it tends to yield greater accountability, transparency, consistency, and continuity. It can also mean that the aims of a course and of entire programs of study are more clearly defined and courses complement each other and build on what has been learnt previously.

This study intends to obtain empirical data from university EFL educators in Japan regarding control over the aims of speaking assessments, how speaking assessments are conducted, the marking criteria used, and what is done with the results.

A great deal could potentially be learnt by examining the balance of teacher autonomy and top–down coordination in Japanese universities. It will be interesting and relevant from several contextual perspectives: within departments, within universities, and within Japanese culture as a whole.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The levels of autonomy and top–down coordination that I have experienced in Japanese universities contrast starkly with Hofstede's conclusions on the cultural dimensions of Japanese society. It could be argued that high levels of teacher autonomy contradict Japan's scores of relatively low Power-distance, low Individualism, and high Uncertainty Avoidance (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 1991).

Top–down coordination can come from government policy or from the management of institutions, and should result in shared aims and learning outcomes. More commonly, though, government policy decisions are criticized by educators as coming from policy-makers who are out of touch with the reality of implementation. One example of this in Japan is Hato (2005), who damningly concluded that government imposed policies for English language education consisted of "unattainable objectives" and "insufficient time," and that "accordingly, students and teachers will have to continue suffering undue blame for the failure." Fortunately, government policy does not apply to EFL programs in Japanese universities to the same extent; however, the effects of government policy on schools are definitely felt in universities for various reasons. Universities are forced to deal with the fallout of Japanese government policies on English education in schools.

When it comes to Japanese government policy on the assessment of English, Japan has never (Hagerman, 2010) attempted to align their assessment of English with internationally acknowledged standards such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001).

Although teacher autonomy is in practice in opposition to top–down coordination, there are also numerous benefits. According to Findley and Cooper

(1983), Pintrich and Schunk (1996), and Marks and Louis (1999), among these benefits is greater motivation. Other suggested benefits of autonomy are a greater sense of professionalism for the teacher, and the ability to adapt teaching and content to the needs of individual learners.

The most useful conceptualization of autonomy is by Benson (2010), who considered a "measure" of autonomy to lie between three points: student control (in this case, teacher control), no control, and other control (the institution, the government, etc.). "No control" is possible if, for example, the institution does not dictate terms to the teacher and if the teacher does not take control of the situation either. Teacher autonomy may be perceived in this way, even if it cannot be quantitatively measured. It is clear from Benson (2010) that measuring student autonomy quantitatively is a quest that may not have an eventual solution. Teachers, however, should be able to self-assess their own autonomy, whereas students are not able to do this as easily or at all.

At a localized level, it appears to me, through personal experience, the literature (Prichard & Moore, 2016a; Sheehan, Sugiura, & Ryan, 2012), and the accounts of other teachers and students in EFL programs in universities in Japan, that a range of balances exist between teacher autonomy, collaboration, and top–down coordination. In assessment specifically, levels of each of these factors seem to vary widely. In the Japanese universities that I have experience of, there is a lack of a clear hierarchy and subsequently top–down coordination is minimal. An alternative to this is collaboration between teachers. However, not all teachers are eager to collaborate, and therefore consistency, continuity, accountability, and transparency may be limited.

Prichard and Moore (2016a, 2016b) produced fascinating insights into the huge differences in teacher autonomy in the U.S. and in Japan. They surveyed 62 EFL programs in Japanese universities and colleges using an online questionnaire to gather empirical data. The questions probed levels of teacher autonomy, top–down coordination, and administration–faculty collaboration. This study focused on EFL programs in general rather than assessment specifically. They concluded that educators enjoy relative freedom in Japanese universities compared to those teaching on similar programs in the United States in terms of curriculum, pedagogy, and classroom management. Also, Japanese universities involve less top–down coordination, and much less collaboration than in the U.S. These findings were in contrast to the conclusions that Hofstede's cultural dimensions made about Japanese society (Prichard & Moore, 2016a).

Sheehan, Sugiura, and Ryan (2012, p. 38) reported on their teacher-led, bottom–up efforts of curriculum coordination and commented that "a greater burden" and "meetings" for all teachers, "systematic coordination," and "a spirit of cooperation" are essential to the success of such efforts in their Japanese university context.

Of the Japanese university context, Prichard and Moore (2016b) commented that "research explicitly examining this issue among EFL programs in Japan has been relatively sparse, and it is not clear how Japanese EFL teachers feel about teacher autonomy, top–down coordination, and administration–faculty collaboration."

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the issues raised so far, two research questions emerge:

1. How much top–down coordination and/or teacher autonomy exists in the assessment of spoken and written English in EFL programs in Japanese universities?
2. In view of the amount of top–down coordination and/or teacher autonomy, to what extent are reliability and continuity in assessment in Japanese university EFL programs affected?

PARTICIPANTS

The participants in this study were eleven educators from EFL programs at seven different Japanese universities. Five of these were female. Two were Japanese, two were Canadian, four were from the U.S., three were from the U.K., and one was Australian. Their ages ranged from around 27 to 55 years old, and between them, they had a wide variety of experience levels. All of the participants were previously known to the researcher. Some were former colleagues, and some were known through professional organizations.

DATA COLLECTION

Participants were contacted by email and asked to fill out a brief online survey. Everyone who was contacted completed the survey. Only a very brief title for the research was given in order that the purpose of the data collection remained vague. This was done with the intention of receiving responses that were as honest and genuine as possible. All of the results of the questionnaire are included in this research report.

The questionnaire consisted of six questions. These were multiple choice but with an "Other (please specify)" option to encourage more personal comments and reflections. This aspect aimed to collect qualitative comments in order to hopefully allow insights into the opinions of educators with knowledge of each individual context. The data is in quantitative form except for this "Other (please specify)" option for each question. By utilizing mixed-methods data collection, the conclusions drawn may be more robust and reliable. Triangulating data enables a researcher "to decrease, negate, or counterbalance the deficiency of a single strategy, thereby increasing the ability to interpret the findings" (Thurmond 2001).

RESULTS

The responses to the survey questions produced some interesting insights into actual current assessment practices at university EFL programs in Japanese universities.

Question 1

The first question "What is your current position?" was included just to confirm that all of those surveyed did in fact work in universities in Japan. The answers included a variety of positions all within universities.

Question 2

This question "What kinds of tasks do you use to assess students' speaking?" yielded a variety of responses, including several in the "Other (please specify)" category. Respondents were allowed to choose as many assessment types as they wanted. Forty-five percent of respondents said that they use some form of interviews to assess students' speaking, while 82% use group discussions. Only 18% use reading dialogues, but 73% assess their students through presentations. In the "Other (please specify)" category, two of the respondents said they assess students' speaking in pairs, one assesses students through a wide variety of methods: "poster presentations, Voice Thread, small groups, student-centered work rather than presentations, which are passive except for the presenters." Finally, one educator assesses students with "a general participation score that I just guess at."

Question 3

Question 3 was "What kinds of tasks do you use to assess students' writing?" and this also produced some interesting insights into assessment practices at Japanese universities. Again, respondents were allowed to choose as many assessment types as they wanted. Essays were by far the most popular form of writing assessment with 100% of respondents using them. The second most popular form of written assessment was timed tests with 45%, followed by emails (36%) and journals (27%). The "Other (please specify)" comments produced several interesting additional writing tasks: bibliography, essay plan/outline, thesis statements, paragraph reports every 3–4 weeks, Model United Nations research portfolios and papers, speeches, Edmodo.

Question 4

"Who decides what tasks are used to assess students?" was a question used to probe the amount of teacher autonomy or top–down coordination that exists in the various contexts where the eleven participants work. Tellingly, 64% of respondents said that the teacher chooses the tasks, while none of them answered that the faculty decides. Twenty-seven percent said that a combination of teacher and faculty decide, and one respondent commented that "we have common online homework, decided by all English teachers, and their completion of these assignments affects their grade in all general English courses."

Question 5

The question "If specific criteria are used to assess students, who decides

these?" was used to examine rating practices in EFL assessment. No respondents answered that "No specific criteria are used," which indicates that all of the educators are using some sort of scale, rubric, or competencies to judge students' spoken output. Interestingly, none of the educators said that the faculty decides assessment criteria, and 72% of respondents said that the teacher decides the specific criteria. Eighteen percent said that a combination of teacher and faculty decide assessment criteria. One respondent commented in the "Other (please specify)" category that "we use an in-house textbook for communication. For the units in the textbook, there are some tests provided for teachers. They are recommended but not required to use them."

Question 6

Finally, participants were asked "How are grades distributed in your classes?" in order to determine whether grading systems are consistent between different teachers teaching the same courses, between courses, and between universities. Thirty-six percent grade on a bell curve, one respondent allocates an even number of As, Bs, Cs, etc., and one respondent grades students to an external, unchangeable standard. Five respondents chose to utilize the "Other (please specify)" category. One educator said they "still don't know" how grades will be distributed; but this might be because one of those surveyed has just started her first year of teaching at university level. One respondent said that grades "often end up as a bell curve." Another said "as earned according to set criteria." The fourth commented "Not evenly, as that seems artificial, but if a student gets a certain percentage, that = A, if they get another percentage that = C, according to the university's guidelines. The university has a system where most advanced students get As or S. This is unfair to students who try hard at 'lower' levels." The final respondent said "evaluation on an absolute scale."

DISCUSSION

First and foremost, it should be said that the very small sample size in this study of only eleven university English educators means that the results here cannot necessarily be assumed to be representative of Japanese university language programs as a whole. Also, this survey did not probe the learning objectives of courses taught by these educators. A variety of learning objectives might coherently explain the wide variety of assessment methods used.

Regarding Questions 2 and 3 which focused on the types of assessment tasks used, it was encouraging to see that students are assessed on a wide variety of challenging and practical tasks, which seem to be related to the skills that students will need for real-life English usage, whether for studying abroad or for professional use after graduation. On the negative side, one respondent said that they "guess" at a general participation score, which, from personal experience, seems like quite a common practice. It could be argued that even a score based on concepts like "effort" and "participation" ought to have some sort of criteria in order to be measurable and therefore fair.

Question 4, which examined teacher autonomy in terms of the choice of

assessment tasks, showed that in all of the seven different universities where respondents work, the faculty does not dictate assessment methods. In just one university, there is collaboration between teachers in terms of deciding assessment tasks. Similarly, Question 5 focused on the criteria on which students are assessed, and it seems that almost all teachers decide assessment criteria without consultation with either other educators or with faculty management. This raises questions about the reliability of assessment methods between different teachers teaching the same courses. If students are studying the same course but with different teachers who are not collaborating with each other (which I believe is often the case), then they may be being assessed entirely differently by each teacher. Assessment reliability would be impossible to measure and would therefore be non-existent.

Finally, Question 6 was related to the division of student grades. The wide array of responses again indicated very little consensus between universities and probably within universities in the way grades are allocated. Without this consensus, getting a good grade becomes a lottery related to the personality of the individual teachers. Certain teachers are "strict" and grade according to their idea of an external standard that they want students to aspire to, or they grade each class on a bell curve, which means that students in the top streamed-classes receive equal grades to those in the bottom streamed-classes. There are even some teachers who award inflated grades (I have heard of students being awarded 100%) perhaps in order to be popular with students. Without university-wide, or at least course-wide coordination of grading, there can be absolutely no fairness as the above examples hopefully illustrate.

CONCLUSIONS

While each of the qualified and experienced educators in this study may be doing an excellent job in their own context, the lack of coordination between them and their colleagues would seem to indicate that there are no actual monitorable or measurable standards in assessment practices in this small sample of Japanese university EFL programs. This is a criticism of management systems rather than of educators, who we can assume are doing their individual jobs to the best of their ability. Such teacher autonomy appears to be in direct contradiction with the way that university language courses in Western countries function: with a strong emphasis on measurable external standards such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Many British universities work with internal but standardized assessment rubrics, guidelines, and procedures in addition to or in place of international standards, in order to maintain a certain quality of assessment validity and reliability. I have also experienced standardization workshops designed to increase inter-rater reliability, where educators compare samples of student work of various competence, such is the importance placed on assessment standards.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

A more comprehensive study into actual practices in Japanese EFL programs would be a useful addition to the field, or alternatively an international comparison study of a similar nature to Prichard and Moore (2016a). Additionally, an investigation into what educators think and feel about the levels of teacher autonomy and top–down coordination may provide insights into how effectively EFL courses are functioning in conditions that are very different to those in the Western world's top educational organizations.

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Can Amount of Learning Time Influence Learners' Autonomous Learning?

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In both digital and analog eras, EFL learners are often required to be autonomous towards the goals they set. Many universities in not only European but also Asian countries offer e-learning spaces or digital systems for English language learning. However, some researchers in Asian countries report that there are very few students who actively use such spaces and learning materials. In order to activate such learning systems, this study aimed to reveal the effect of time EFL learners spend on English language learning on their self-regulation, motivation, and use of reading strategies in English reading tasks. The result of a one-way ANOVA shows that learners who spend much more time have a higher self-regulated learning capacity, higher motivation, and frequently employ reading strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Learner Autonomy and Self-Regulated Learning in EFL Contexts

Learner autonomy (hereafter, LA) has been drawing the attention of researchers in language education settings since Henri Horec, the father of learner autonomy, published his seminal report in 1981 inspired by the Council of Europe's Modern Language Project. In foreign language education, LA has been recognized as a slippery term because of its various definitions. Horec (1981), for example, defined learner autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3), while Benson (2001) defined it as "a recognition of the rights of learners within educational systems" (p. 2). The differences of definitions are considered to have chiefly derived from the understandings of learner autonomy as either a means to achieve the goal of learning/mastering a foreign language or as a goal in itself (being autonomous learners); nevertheless, researchers seem to have reached the consensus that learner autonomy is important for EFL learners to effectively learn English to foster not only their English language skills but also 21st century skills such as life and career skills (for details, see the framework for 21st century learning on the website *http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-framework*). In order to capture LA itself, Murray (2014) clearly compared it with a similar term "self-regulated learning" (hereafter, SRL). SRL refers to a learning style that requires learners to monitor their own learning processes spontaneously, particularly focusing on metacognition, motivation, and behavior (Zimmerman &

Schunk, 2001). It has been drawing many researchers' attention in educational psychology since the 1960s, and now researchers in second language education are also showing strong academic interest for it (Takeuchi, 2008). As shown in Table 1, both LA and SRL have very similar characteristics such as active engagement in a task and metacognitive skills that are used to complete a task. Therefore, as Nakata (2014) has argued, this study is based on the notion that it is very natural to incorporate the notion of SRL into the framework of LA.

TABLE 1. Comparison of Learner Autonomy and Self-Regulated Learning

Characteristics	Learner Autonomy	Self-Regulated Learning
Active Engagement	✓	✓
Goal-Directed Behavior	✓	✓
Metacognitive Skills	✓	✓
Intrinsic Motivation	✓	✓
Learner Characteristic	✓	✓
Design Feature	✓	?
Learner Initiation of Learning Task	✓(?)	?
Control over the Learning Environment	?	?

Note. ✓ = included, ? = not clear. From Murray, 2014, p. 322.

In European countries and the United States, academic research focusing on and learning programs based on the theory of SRL have been produced and implemented, respectively (Schmitz & Wiese, 2006). Finland and Hong Kong have set the goal of developing an SRL capacity as well as foreign language skills (Yamamoto et al., 2013). Therefore, the current focus on a SRL theory within the EFL context is largely recognized as warranted by policymakers and language practitioners.

Time University Students Spend for Foreign Language Learning

According to Torikai (2006), a native speaker of English spends at least 36,500 hours over 10 years (from his/her birth) to master English, judging from her estimation that a 10-year-old English native speaker uses English for ten hours in a day. On the other hand, she claims that students who study English as a second/foreign language in EFL contexts spend only about 1,000 hours for studying English within ten years "at school," not at home or outside their classrooms. Considering the learning situation of university students in Japan, it can easily be imagined that the amount of time that university students in Japan spend on foreign language learning is small. The survey conducted by Benesse Corporation (2012), for example, shows that the average amount of time that university students in Japan spend doing tasks given in their classes is less than three hours per week, while the average amount of time that they actively do other learning tasks (self-learning) is about two and a half hours per week. Another survey conducted by one of the top national universities in Japan in 2013 reports that its university student spend about 30 hours learning per week, a level

that is typical of universities worldwide (for details, see *http://www. osaka-u. ac.jp/sp/ir_project/post-443/*). Here we need to carefully recognize that 30 hours include the amount of time students spend studying "in class." The survey revealed that the students spend 2.3 fewer hours learning outside of their classes. As Sakai (2002) mentioned, to master a language that has quite different parameters from a learner's mother tongue, a great amount of time is needed to learn it. Therefore, educators need to analyze the current situation of their students to support their students' second/foreign language learning outside of the classroom. As Ohtsu (2009) insisted, language educators should put their focus on developing autonomous learners so that learners can accommodate the rigorous requirements of the learning situation.

Learning Environment of University Students

With the aim to help such learners to develop their English language skills for learner autonomy (Morrison, 2008, p. 135), the self-access center (hereafter, SAC) has become "a standard feature of institutionalized language learning in many parts of the world" (Benson, 2007, p. 26) in recent decades. One of the benefits for students that SAC spaces bring is that they can increase "affordances for autonomous learning" (Reinders & White, 2011, p. 1). Although researchers, teachers, and even students in EFL contexts recognize the importance and benefits of SACs, Sakai, Chu, Takagi, and Lee (2008) revealed that only about 10% out of 107 university students in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan answered "yes" for the question whether they had studied English at a learning center in a university before. In addition, about 20% of students agreed that they would like to use such centers for their self-learning of English. Such a situation would be problematic if a SAC were built with desire of promoting leaners' autonomous learning, if such a small number of learners would want to use the center. Such a situation might suggest that the concept of a SAC does not necessarily fit the needs of learners. In order to improve their utility, teachers and researchers firstly need to adequately grasp the characteristics and needs of the EFL learners they are facing before establishing a SAC. In an effort to offer some pedagogical implications to help SACs to be more effective in an EFL teaching and learning context, this study aims to reveal the relationships between EFL learners' efforts (in this study this refers to the amount of learning time spent outside of the classroom), self-regulation, motivation (in this study, this refers to the reason why learners study English), and the use of strategies (the learning behaviors of learners).

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to reveal the English learning situation of university students in EFL contexts. To achieve this aim, it focuses on the relationships among the amount of English language learning, self-regulatory capacity, motivation, and the use of strategies in English language reading. The reason for targeting reading skills of university students is that they seem to have a lot of opportunities to read English texts compared to writing English essays or communicating with

English speakers in their daily lives. The followings are the research questions of the study:

RQ1: How are the degrees of self-regulatory capacity in English language reading different according to the amount of English language learning?

RQ2: How are the degrees of motivation in English language reading different according to the amount of English language learning?

RQ3: How is the frequency of use of strategies in English language reading different in relation to the amount of English language learning?

METHOD

Participants

The participants in the present survey were 229 freshmen at three different universities in Japan. All of them were enrolled in a compulsory English reading class. Their English proficiency levels varied from the beginner level (CEFR A1) to the upper intermediate (CEFR B2). Their majors were engineering and pharmacy. At the end of the first semester of 2016, students in two universities were asked to participate in the authors' questionnaire survey, while students in one university were asked to participate at the beginning of the second semester of 2016, due to their time schedule.

Questionnaire Items

The questionnaire consisted of the following four parts: (a) the amount of time spent learning English per week, (b) self-regulated learning capacity, (c) motivation, and (d) the use of reading strategies. The questionnaire contained 59 items in total: 20 for self-regulated learning capacity, 20 for motivation, and 19 for the use of reading strategies. All the items were five-point Likert scale items derived from existing questionnaires by Tseng, Dörnyei, and Schmitt (2006) for the Self-Regulating Capacity in Vocabulary Learning Scale; by Noels, Pelletier, Clément, and Vallerand (2000) for motivation; and by Matsumoto, Hiromori, and Nakayama (2013) for reading strategies.

The items on self-regulatory capacity were slightly modified to ones for self-regulatory capacity in English reading to ask participants' about five types of control: commitment control (e.g., "When reading an English text, I believe I can achieve my goals more quickly than expected."), metacognitive control (e.g., "When reading an English text, I have special techniques to keep my concentration focused."), satiation control (e.g., "During the process of reading an English text, I feel satisfied with the ways I eliminate boredom."), emotion control (e.g., "I feel satisfied with the methods I use to reduce the stress of English reading."), and environment control (e.g., "When reading an English text, I know how to arrange the environment to make learning more efficient.").

The items of motivation are questions that asked participants their reasons for learning English and were categorized into the following seven subcategories: amotivation (e.g., "Honestly, I don't know, I truly have the impression of wasting

my time in studying English."), external regulation (e.g., "Because I have the impression that it is expected of me."), introjected regulation (e.g., "Because I would feel ashamed if I couldn't speak to my friends from English-speaking communities in their native tongue."), identified regulation (e.g., "Because I think it is good for my personal development."), intrinsic motivation – knowledge (e.g., "Because I enjoy the feeling of acquiring knowledge about the English-speaking community and their way of life."), intrinsic motivation – accomplishment (e.g., "For the pleasure I experience when surpassing myself in my English language studies."), and intrinsic motivation – stimulation (e.g., "For the "high" feeling that I experience while speaking in English.").

The items on reading strategies were categorized into the following four categories: adjusting strategy (e.g., "I read slowly and carefully when the text is difficult.), reasoning strategy (e.g., "I predict what is going on in the text"), monitoring strategy (e.g., "I check my overall understanding of the text."), and main idea strategy (e.g., "I read for the purpose of understanding the main idea."). For the amount of learning time, the participants were required to answer how much time they spent learning English (especially reading) in a week.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

First of all, the participants were divided into three groups according to their amount of English language learning per week (i.e., group A = more than 60 minutes, B = less than 60 minutes, and C = none of the time). To examine homogeneity of variance, the Bartlett Test was conducted. As the test showed homogeneity of variance ($p < .001$, in all three conditions), a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted in order to examine the effect of the amount of learning time on self-regulatory capacity, motivation, and frequency of the use of reading strategies in the three conditions. After two items were judged as "inappropriate items" by the results of a factor analysis and eliminated, the scores from each of the three categories were tallied. Table 2 shows the results of the analysis.

TABLE 2. The Result of a One-Way ANOVA

	A = More than 60 mins (n = 70)		B = Less than 60 mins (n = 41)		C = None of the time (n = 108)		F (2, 216)	Tukey	η^2
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Self-regulatory capacity	54.9	12.0	52.0	9.9	46.1	12.3	106.1***	C vs A	.50 (Large)
Motivation	64.7	11.7	9.9	13.1	54.0	14.9	31.6***	C vs A	.23 (Large)
Reading Strategies	63.3	11.2	59.2	9.3	54.7	13.6	33.6***	B vs C C vs A	.24 (Large)

Note. ***p < .000

Except in reading strategies, all mean scores for group A (the students who studied English for more than 60 minutes a week) were the largest, and those for group C (the students who did not study English at all) were the smallest. There were significant effects of amount of learning time for English language on self-regulatory capacity, motivation, and reading strategies at the $p < .000$ level for the three groups. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean scores of group A were significantly different than group C with the large effect sizes ($.23 < \eta^2 < .50$). However, group B did not significantly differ from group A and C in self-regulatory capacity and motivation.

DISCUSSION

As the results show, the students who studied English for more than 60 minutes a week reported higher self-regulated learning capacity, greater intrinsic motivation, and more frequent use of various reading strategies than those who did not study English at all. This is the answer to the three research questions of this study. It should be understandable that a significant difference appeared between group A and group C; however, much more consideration is needed to reveal the reason why no significant difference could be found (a) between group A and B and (b) between group B and C. One of the possible reasons for no significant difference between B and C is that there was no clear distinction between groups B and C. In other words, the group B students study English for very little time each week (15 minutes or less), which is very close to the zero minutes per week that group C students studies. A possible reason for no significant difference between A and B groups is that a continuous learning habit (routine work) might be a "necessary" and "sufficient" key for becoming autonomous EFL learners, not the amount of learning time itself. To develop learner autonomy in university students, we would like to suggest development of a foreign language e-learning system that is based on a self-regulated learning theory. It is proposed that students will naturally follow the cyclical phase model that consists of forethought, performance, and self-reflection phases as shown in Figure 1 (for details, see Zimmerman & Moylan, 2009).

However, as Sakai and Ono (2005) mentioned, only offering a self-learning environment to students would not be very helpful in supporting autonomous learning with an e-learning system outside the classrooms. Educators are now required to reconsider how they can be involved in their students' autonomous learning and how they can best encourage students to devote much more time to learning English. Considering that explicit goal-setting is one of the key characteristics of autonomous learners, one effective support could be to receive support from teachers in setting their goals in English language learning. Judging from the personal data of the participants in this study, the students who study English for the longest periods of time each week tend to set more concrete goals for English reading, such as "to foster a comprehension skill to read some academic journals," than the students who do not study for lengthy periods of time. In addition, it would also be beneficial for teachers to offer appropriate scaffoldings to help the students make a learning plan toward the goals they set. In fact, the Benesse Corporation (2012) survey showed that about 60% of

Japanese university students make their own learning plan (including when and what they do). Therefore, educators need to offer guidance in goal-setting and planning in English language learning to students.

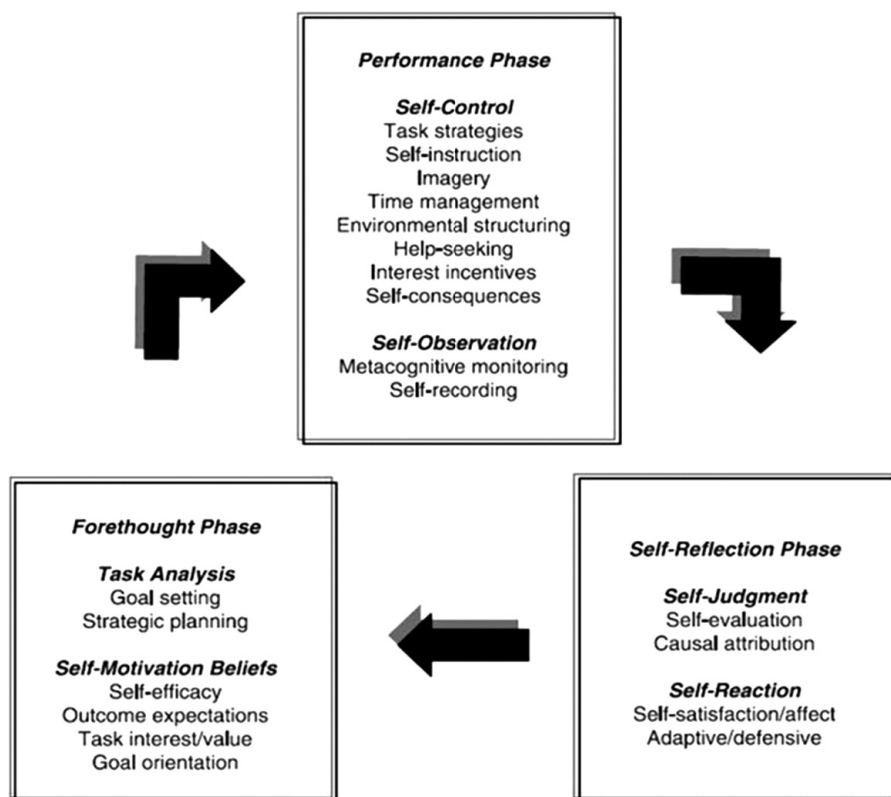**Figure 1. Current Version of Cyclical Phases Model of SRL.** (Adapted from Zimmerman and Moylan, 2009)

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Using Dynamic Assessment to Improve Skills in Written Composition

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Drawing from Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, a theory that suggests students need guidance in a learning process before they can problem-solve individually, Dynamic Assessment (DA) is a teaching strategy that offers students mediated guidance in their learning. This study investigates the impact of DA in an EFL composition course in Indonesia. Using a quasi-experimental design, students ($N = 30$) were randomly divided into two groups: a control group and an experimental group were taught using principals of DA. The pretest/posttest data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results showed that the implementation of DA is an effective pedagogic intervention in helping students develop skills in written composition.

INTRODUCTION

Assessment is defined as a variety of techniques and processes that include the activity of testing and measurement. Its function is to gather systemic information about an individual or a group of students based on the specific testing procedures (Alemi, 2015). Results of the assessment process are considered to be an important data point in shaping the trajectory of a student's career. Consequently, many students come to view assessment as an activity that causes much anxiety (Poehner, 2008). As an example, the results of national examinations can be used to determine admission to prestigious universities. Concerned mainly with results as opposed to skill development, students devote countless hours to study and memorization but are often unable to apply this knowledge in meaningful situations.

Some alternative forms of assessment have aimed to address this gap. Perhaps one of the most popular ones is Dynamic Assessment (DA). In an English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching context, the main purpose of DA is to give mediation and guidance to students during the testing process (Poehner, 2008). This method of assessment focuses on the relationship between testing and instruction. Its administration emphasizes the role of problem-solving in the teaching and learning process. The root of DA is Vygotsky's notion of the Zone Proximal Development (ZPD). The theory suggests that giving guidance or assistance is crucial to solve the problems that the students face (Kozulin, Gindid, Ageyev, & Miller, 2003). Guidance is given by teachers or peers before the students are able to solve the problems independently. The focus of the assistance here is to support the students' development during a period of time. Therefore, the emphasis is on the process, as opposed to the results, of acquiring knowledge.

Mediation in DA can be defined as the process that the students engage in to achieve the objective of the study (Shrestha & Coffin, 2012). It is an intentional cooperation and interaction between students and teacher to overcome the problems that occur during the administration of a test. In other words, DA views teaching and testing as a joint activity (Poehner, 2008). There are two methods of mediation in DA: the *sandwich format* and the *cake format* (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002). The sandwich format consists of three stages: pretest, mediation, and posttest. In this method, the mediation is between the pretest and posttest, hence its name, *sandwich*. This format can be applied to either individuals or groups. The cake format, on the other hand, is administered when the problem occurs during testing (Poehner, 2008). In this format, the teacher offers hints or leading questions to the students (Hessamy & Ghaderi, 2014).

DA consists of two approaches: interventionist and interactionist (Poehner, 2008). The interventionist approach applies mediation procedures as a form of guidance to create results that can be used to assess the students' performance for future tests. The interventionist approach emphasizes speed learning. This approach focuses on the amount of assistance students require to attain the objective quickly and efficiently. The interventionist type offers evidence of students' progress by quantifying their performance (Sadek, 2015). On the other hand, the interactionist type focuses on interactions between the teacher in the role of mediator and his/her students as test-takers (Poehner, 2008). The interactionist approach is more attentive to the discourse between the mediator and the test-takers (Sadek, 2015) and less to quantifying the ability of the students' improvement.

Several studies highlight the effectiveness of DA in the process of EFL teaching and learning. Lan and Liu (2010) studied the relationship between methodology and epistemology through DA. Adopting principals of DA, their study presented a framework or process of English writing instruction. It showed that the conversational way of teaching with DA plays an important role in increasing the students' competence and interest in writing. The study validates principles of DA and offers creative ideas for teaching students skills in written composition. Shrestha and Coffin's (2012) study examined mediation in the form of tutoring for undergraduate business students. The DA was administered by using open and distance learning through mediation. The study concluded that mediation has a positive contribution to helping students compose academic writing.

In a related study, Alemi (2015) compared principles of DA to self-assessment. The participants were twenty-two Iranian engineering students enrolled in an EFL writing course. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlational analyses, and a *t*-test. The results showed that DA helped the participants accurately assess their own writing and better understand evaluation criteria. Sadek (2015) conducted a qualitative study on the impact of DA on the writing of ESL learners. Less expansive in scope, six participants took part in a pretest, posttest, interviews, and observations. The result showed that DA has a positive impact on the content, language, and the organization of the ESL learners' writing. Both students and teachers reflected positively on the process of evaluation. Similar to the studies mentioned above, this study concludes that DA in ESL writing is an effective approach in English language teaching.

Hashemnezhad and Fatollahzadeh (2015) studied fifty Iranian students in a

quasi-experimental study to investigate the immediate and delayed effects of their writing performance. The study consisted of a pretest that was conducted by assigning students to write on two topics. A DA technique was applied to the experimental group whilst the traditional method was administered to the control group. Both groups then took a posttest. The results showed that DA was an effective teaching tool to improve the students' writing performance. In another study, Miao and Lv (2013) looked at DA in the construction of writing frameworks. The study integrated the sandwich method: pre-writing, mediation, and post-writing. This comparative study demonstrates the need to provide students with a framework in order to help them develop skills in organization and cohesion.

Based on these previous studies, it seems apparent that DA has a positive effect on students' writing skills development. The current study investigates the role of DA in the writing skills development of Indonesian EFL students.

METHOD

Participants

The participants in the study were 30 second-year students enrolled in an English Diploma Program at a public university in Indonesia. Their level of English writing proficiency ranged from lower-intermediate to advanced. They were randomly divided into two groups: a control group and an experimental group.

Instruments

Using a quasi-experimental design, data was gathered through a pretest and a posttest. The pretest was administered to both the experimental and control groups to determine the participants' current writing proficiency. The pretest consisted of one writing topic. Following the pretest, the teacher introduced a new writing topic, then allowed the students time to complete the writing task. During this time, the teacher provided feedback. After three sessions of instruction, a posttest was given. Similar with the pretest, the posttest included one writing topic.

Procedure

The study took place over a duration of four weeks. The control group and experimental group consisted of 15 students each (N = 30). In the first week, both groups were assigned to complete descriptive and procedural writing tasks as a pretest. In the second week, the students in the control group were taught using a traditional method in which the teacher only provided them with an explanation on how to write a descriptive text. Students were not given any mediation during the testing process. Next, they were asked to compose a descriptive text on a specific topic. During the process of writing, there was no interaction or mediation between the teacher and the students.

In the experimental group, the DA sandwich format was applied following the pretest. After being given instruction on descriptive writing, the students were given the test in the second week. During the test, students were given mediation, which included hints, explanations, prompts, suggestions, and leading questions. The teacher observed the students and identified specific students who were experiencing difficulty. The teacher intervened by providing corrections and offering suggestions for improvement. Towards the end of the class, the teacher asked the students to gather in groups and discuss the difficulties they experienced. These difficulties were evaluated to improve their next writing.

In the third week, both the control and experimental groups were given instruction on how to compose a procedure text. In the control group, the method was the same as in the previous week: The teacher administered the tests; there was no intervention. In the experimental group, however, the teacher offered mediation to the students. Slightly different than in the previous week, the teacher encouraged students to ask questions once they encountered difficulties. In the previous meeting, the teacher observed the students and attempted to identify common writing errors. In this meeting, however, the teacher not only observed the students but also allowed them to ask questions. Hints, suggestions, leading questions, and prompts were given by the teacher to different students. In the fourth week, a posttest was administered to both groups. (See Tables 1 and 2.)

TABLE 1. Treatment of Control Group

Week	Activity
1	Pretest (Writing Descriptive and Procedure)
2	Writing Descriptive
3	Writing Procedure
4	Posttest (Writing Descriptive and Procedure)

TABLE 2. Treatment of Experimental Group

Week	Activity
1	Pretest (Writing Descriptive and Procedure)
2	Writing Descriptive with Mediation
3	Writing Procedure with Mediation
4	Posttest (Writing Descriptive and Procedure)

Data Analysis

To avoid subjectivity, the results of the pretest and posttest were evaluated using an ESL Composition Profile. Two independent raters evaluated each result. The collected data was then analyzed using SPSS. A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of DA in the writing class.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 shows the paired-sample results for both the control and experimental groups.

TABLE 3. Paired-Samples Statistics

Group	Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	Posttest	74.8	15	9.12	2.35
	Pretest	68.2	15	5.52	1.42
Experiment	Posttest	85.8	15	5.88	1.51
	Pretest	73.2	15	7.07	1.82

These findings show that the mean score of the control group on the pretest was 68.2, while for the experimental group it was 73.2. The experimental group performed better than the control group. For the posttest, the control group's mean score was 74.8; the experimental group's mean score was 85.8. In comparing each group's scores from the pretest and posttest, it is apparent that DA had a noticeable impact on the writing performance of the students in the experimental group.

Table 4 shows the results of paired-sample t-test for both the control group and the experimental group.

TABLE 4. Paired-Samples t-test

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	6.566	7.247	1.871	3.509	.003
Experiment	12.533	4.493	1.160	10.802	.000

These results illustrate an improvement in the control group with a p-value of 0.003 ($p < 0.05$). In the experimental group, the p-value was 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This finding suggests both groups showed signs of improvement. However, a closer look at the data shows that the experimental group demonstrated more improvement. This suggests that DA is proven to be an effective pedagogic strategy in fostering improvement in the students' writing.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that argue in favor of DA. This success seems to be linked to the mediation and intervention processes of DA. DA helps students comprehend materials and performance standards. By doing this consultation, students are in a better position to produce quality work.

DA focuses on developing learning activities and helping students identify their learning needs (Shrestha, 2017). This identification is reflected in the mediation process when the teacher offered hints during the testing phase that took place in Weeks 2 and 3. During this time, the teacher was able to offer more specific advice, tailored to the learning needs of the students. In addition, this method also allowed the teacher to better understand the specific areas in which students required greater attention.

EFL writing is a complicated process that involves brainstorming, organizing, and drafting ideas. To navagate through these processes is a challenge for many

learners. The target language often has different and difficult structures and vocabulary items. To address these challenges, DA encourages each student to examine his/her own strengths in the writing process. By recognizing their limitations, DA provides students with the opportunity to become more independent in developing their skills (Alemi, 2015). Lastly, the implementation of DA effectively helps students to reduce their anxiety. Students often encounter the feeling of nervousness and anxiety during the assessment process. DA allows the teacher to motivate each student, which encourages them to feel more relaxed and confident during the testing process.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the effect of DA as a pedagogic intervention in the context of an EFL composition course at an Indonesian university. The findings reveal three valuable insights. First, DA can help teachers evaluate the students' comprehension of instructions given in class. Through interactive engagement with the students, the teacher was able to better understand his students' learning needs and abilities. Second, DA provides students with opportunities to assess their own skills and reflect on their progress. By knowing this, students were able to become more familiar with grammatical rules and make revisions in their writing. Lastly, DA helps students reduce their anxiety. Different from standardized exams, DA is a process-oriented method that encourages students to identify problems during the various phases of writing. These findings, taken together, further validate that DA can be an effective pedagogic intervention in helping EFL learners develop skills in written composition.

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Increasing Intercultural Empathy Through Literature: A Survey-Based Study of Narrative Literature in a University EFL Class

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Educators aiming at developing cultural awareness in the EFL classroom sometimes struggle with student lack of contact with cultural "others." The acquisition/development of empathic ability is a key concept in the field of intercultural competence (IC); research from psychology and medicine has shown that interaction with narrative literature corresponds to higher scores on instruments designed to measure empathy. This research builds on the results of a 2016 student survey on the topic of immigration, in which students demonstrated a lack of empathy and cultural awareness, in addition to areas where they demonstrated specific knowledge gaps. To address both areas, participants from the first survey were exposed to a one-semester curriculum consisting of narrative literature, after which they were re-surveyed. Results indicate that student interaction with literary protagonists is an effective methodology in addressing student lacunae, as well as improving student favorability towards immigrants, among other intercultural groups.

INTRODUCTION

At present, Japanese university EFL departments are attempting to introduce curricula aimed at facilitating cross-cultural communicative ability and intercultural competence (IC) through increased understanding and awareness of non-Japanese cultural practices, traits, and patterns of thought. The infrequency of student interaction with the small number of resident foreigners presents significant challenges to educators in discussing cultural difference in ways that engender understanding, in order to facilitate what Bennet (1993, 2004) referred to as a paradigm shift from an "ethnocentric" to an "ethnorelative" worldview.

The importance of increased cultural knowledge in facilitating intercultural competence has been well argued (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2004; Fantini, 2009; Hammer, 2012; Hymes, 1972) and comparative frameworks to help learners visualize cultural differences have been developed over recent decades (Hofstede, 1986, 1991; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Kluckhohn & Stodtbeek, 1961; Rokeach, 1973; Smith, Trompenaars, & Dugan, 1995); however, others such as Bok (2006) have been quick to point out the insufficiency of increased cultural knowledge when filtered primarily from a monocultural perspective. Stated rhetorically, can a person be considered interculturally competent if they are only capable of filtering information about "others" through the lens of their own culture?

The importance of empathy, or what Sercu refers to as "the ability to see the world through the others' eyes" (2005, p. 2), has long been recognized in the field of intercultural competence (Bennett, 1993; Fantini, 2009; Matveev & Merz, 2014). Deardorff (2006) found that over 80 percent of academics in the field included empathic ability as a component of IC, while Fantini and Tirmizi (2006) indicated empathy as one of the 15 attributes commonly appearing in 138 publications concerning intercultural competence. However, just as the field of IC lacks a unified definition of what intercultural competence is (Deardorff, 2006; Lapointe, 1994), no consensus exists within the field concerning the nature of empathy, or how it may be developed or applied to the acquisition of IC.

By contrast, psychologists have long understood the importance of empathy in clinical practice (Katz, 1963; Rogers, 1975; Wispé, 1986), and in addition to developing instruments for measurement (Hashimoto & Shiomi; 2002; Spreng, McKinnon, Mar, & Levine, 2009; Wang et al., 2003), have also conducted studies on the effectiveness of narrative literature for increasing empathic understanding through interaction with literary protagonists (Mar, Oatley, & Peterson, 2009; Ornaghi, Brockmeier, & Grazzani, 2014). Similarly, academics in the field of medicine have recognized the effectiveness of narrative literature in empathic development in physicians (Shapiro, Morrison, & Boker, 2004). Charon (2006) also reported the efficacy of having medical students work together with patients to compile illness narratives from the perspective of the sufferer, in addition to gathering medical histories – a practice now referred to as narrative medicine. Interestingly Henry-Tillman, Deloney, Savidge, Graham, and Klimberg (2002) found that didactic attempts to "teach" empathy were received negatively by medical students, who indicated displeasure at the inference that they were somehow lacking in sensitivity towards patients.

While there has been long-standing interest in utilizing literature in the foreign language classroom (Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Duff & Maley, 1990; Sage, 1987; Scholes, 1985; Young 1994) less attention has been paid its efficacy as a vehicle through which to deepen cross-cultural understanding and develop intercultural competence. Collie and Slater (1990) listed "cultural enhancement" as one of their four principle benefits of utilizing literary texts for language teaching, while Nance (2010) argued that engaging in autonomous learning through reading allows the student to critically consider the content in order to develop responses through writing and discussion. Carter and Long (1991) suggested a cultural model for teaching literature, where literature is used to promote cultural enlightenment, allowing students to encounter and "appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space, and to come to perceive traditions of thought, feeling, and artistic form" (p. 2). Similarly, Koritz (2005) noted the empathic effects experienced by students through exposure to the subjective experiences of literary characters, also noting that in addition to being authentic and interesting, literature provides a unique window into people and issues that students have not previously encountered.

Tasked with preparing a course titled Cross-cultural Communication B2 at a Japanese Prefectural University, Ostman (2017) conducted student surveys in the 2016 spring semester on a selected topic (immigration) in a student-centered attempt to ascertain student gaps in knowledge that the teacher might not be aware. In addition to identifying a series of student lacunae, results also revealed

student difficulty in imagining immigrant motivations and hardships, as well as the benefits they provided their adopted country. Although not an instrument specifically designed to test cultural sensitivity, some student answers revealed a lack of empathy for immigrants and their status/situation in Japan. (For full results, see Ostman, 2017.)

To address survey-demonstrated student lacunae and to develop student empathic ability, a curriculum consisting of narrative literature (autobiography/ biography) was provided to students, who were encouraged to engage in self-reflective perspective taking as well as small group and class discussions. Students were re-surveyed to measure changes in response, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of the course content.

METHOD

The methodology is reported in terms of the instrument under study, the curriculum employed, the survey participants, the data collection, and analytical procedures.

Survey Instrument

While the original survey consisted of 33 questions divided into three sections (student news habits, student knowledge/attitudes concerning immigrants, student knowledge/attitudes concerning refugees), the follow-up survey consisted of 10 questions from the second section (immigration). All follow-up survey questions regarding immigration were identical to questions from the original survey, and question order was maintained, although some questions originally appearing in the second section were excluded from the follow-up survey. All questions were composed in English, before being translated into Japanese in cooperation with a native Japanese speaker. All questions in the survey appeared in both English and Japanese.

Course/Curriculum

The curriculum was introduced in a course titled "Cross-cultural Communication B2," held from September 2016 through February 2017. The curriculum consisted of a series of first-person narratives, written anonymously by immigrants and posted on online blogs. Some accounts required changes in grammar and spelling; however, absent mistakes, texts were left unchanged. Text selection was based on three criteria: (a) the text clearly stated the immigrant's motivation for immigrating, (b) the texts made clear the activities of the immigrant in their adopted countries (the benefits of the immigrant to the country), and (c) the text included an example(s) of cultural misunderstanding and cultural acclimation challenges faced by the immigrant. Following each autobiographical account, students were required to answer a series of questions in paragraph form asking students to (a) analyze the cultural characteristics of both cultures involved (the immigrant's native culture and their adopted culture) and (b) consider the experience of immigration/cultural acclimation from the

perspective of the author. In the final month of the class, the first-person narratives included accounts by Japanese who had immigrated to North and South America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In two instances, the accounts were biographical as they were written by the children of the immigrants in question. In both cases, the criteria for text selection remained the same.

The role of the instructor was limited to discussion of the readings and the questions. No attempt was made to directly inform students on areas they had previously demonstrated lacunae (common motivations for immigrating, benefits provided by immigrants, benefits experienced by immigrants). Results of the first survey (completed by all students enrolled in the class) were not discussed.

Participants and Treatment of the Data

The follow-up survey was completed anonymously by 39 students at a Japanese prefectural university (The Prefectural University of Kumamoto) on February 9, 2017. The students were first asked to answer all questions in paper form, and all data was completed and collected under teacher supervision.

Students were given the option not to complete the survey and were told that by providing personal information (age, major, year of study, gender, date of survey) they were agreeing to make their answers available for academic research. All students provided consent. Student demographics are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Student Demographics

Age	19	20	21	> 21
	1 (2.6%)	36 (92.3%)	1 (2.6%)	1 (2.6%)

Of the 39 respondents, 10 (25.6%) were male, and 29 (74.4%) were female. All respondents belonged to the Department of English Language and Literature.

Students were told that the survey was intended to measure their understanding and attitude regarding the words *immigrant* and *immigration*, and were instructed to provide honest answers, as opposed to answers they might believe to be regarded as "correct." Students were instructed to complete all answers in Japanese; however, one student partially answered the survey in English. In this case, the answers were translated into Japanese with the assistance of a native Japanese speaker.

Informed consent was obtained for participation, and respondent identity was protected. Survey data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2010 and Microsoft Access 2010, as well as concordance software (AntConc ver. 3.4.4.0).

RESULTS OF THE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

Students were asked to respond to questions designed to measure different aspects of their knowledge, perception, and attitudes towards immigrants and immigration. Sections and topics of inquiry are listed in Table 2.

TABLE 2. List of Survey Topics

3.1	What words do students associate with *immigrant*?
3.2	Student definitions of the word *immigrant*.
3.3	What are the merits of immigration to the country?
3.4	What are the demerits of immigration to the country?
3.5	How do immigrants benefit by coming to Japan?
3.6	Does Japan need increased immigration?
3.7	A comparison of the two survey groups.

Note. Each topic is presented in detail in the corresponding sections below.

Identifying *Immigrant* by Word Association

Question 1 asked participants to perform word associations for the word *immigrant*, and provided two examples: chili pepper = red, spicy / Lexus = expensive, stylish. Answers were analyzed by searching for individual characters. Results are shown in Table 3 below:

TABLE 3. Word Associations for the Term "Immigrant"

No.	Frequency	Term	No.	Frequency	Term
1	8	poor	15	1	brave
2	4	poverty	16	1	Brazil
3	4	relocate/move	17	1	cool/stylish
4	3	America	18	1	employment
5	3	foreign country	19	1	Germany
6	3	refugee	20	1	hard/difficult
7	2	challenger	21	1	hardship
8	2	foreigner	22	1	Mexico
9	2	go away to work	23	1	money
10	2	job	24	1	North Korea
11	2	problem	25	1	suffering
12	2	transfer (jobs)	26	1	tough/suffer
13	2	Trump	27	1	worker
14	2	work			

Due to the small sample size, concordance software was used to identify words with a frequency of 1 or greater. Respondents most frequently associated immigrants with being poor/poverty, and the act of moving/relocating. Grouped according to theme, "poor/poverty" was the most frequent response (12), associations related to geographical location second (9), work-related associations (go away to work/job/transfer/work/employment/worker) third (8), and the association of immigrants with the terms *foreigner* and *foreign country* fourth

(5). Three students associated immigrants with the term *refugee*, indicating confusion regarding the differences between immigrants and refugees.

Defining *Immigrant*

Question 2 asked participants to provide a definition in Japanese for the word *immigrant*; out of 39 students, 38 provided a definition in sentence form. One student failed to provide any response. Answers were compared with the "simple definition" in Merriam-Webster's Dictionary (2016) for *immigrant*: a person who comes to a country to live there. Definitions were accepted if they demonstrated (a) an understanding of human movement between countries and (b) an understanding that the movement was done in order to live in the new country (see Ostman, 2017, for a full discussion of definition criteria and selection). Thirty-four students (87%) gave acceptable definitions, while 4 students (10%) gave unacceptable definitions.

Merits of Immigration to Japan

Students were asked how Japan would benefit from immigration. All participants provided answers, which were analyzed after dividing responses into four categories. Responses that indicated that Japan would experience benefits resulting from positive international recognition were grouped under "diplomatic benefits." Responses that indicated cultural benefits from cultural exchange, increased internationalization and globalization, etc. were grouped under "cultural benefits." Lastly, responses that indicated immigrant contributions to solving problems currently faced by the country (labor shortages/declining population/low birth rate) were grouped under "practical benefits." Two students responded that they saw no benefits to Japan. Some responses indicated more than one benefit relating to a single group or a combination of benefits from multiple groups. In such cases, each benefit was calculated separately. Participants provided a total of 68 benefits.

FIGURE 1. Perceived Benefits of Immigrants.

Although students saw a significant cultural and diplomatic benefit, practical benefits to the country were the most-frequent response.

Demerits of Immigration to Japan

When asked what the demerits of allowing immigrants to enter Japan, 36 of 39 students provided responses, which were analyzed after dividing responses into four categories. Responses that indicated that Japan would experience negative consequences due to differing immigrant religious orientation were grouped under "religious demerits." Responses that indicated negative cultural consequences due to friction between Japanese and immigrants were grouped under "cultural demerits." Responses that indicated a loss of civic order and increased criminal activity by immigrants were grouped under "demerits to civic order." Finally, responses that indicated a belief that immigration would produce negative consequences to the economy or to employment opportunities for Japanese were grouped under "economic/employment demerits." Some responses indicated more than one demerit for a single group, or a combination of demerits from multiple groups. In such cases, each benefit was calculated separately. Participants provided a total of 56 demerits.
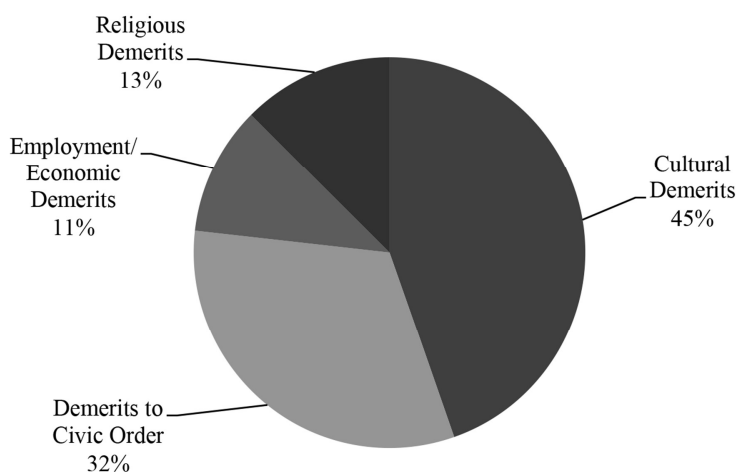
FIGURE 2. Perceived Demerits of Immigrants

Participants responded that the greatest demerits of immigration to Japan would be cultural, primarily due to cultural friction and the belief that incoming immigrant cultural traditions would degrade or alter existing Japanese culture. The belief that immigration would result in a loss of civic order, primarily due to increases in crime and terrorist attacks, was the second most frequent response. A smaller number of respondents expressed beliefs that immigrant religious practices would be problematic, while a slightly smaller number of respondents indicated a fear that allowing immigrants into Japan would decrease job opportunities for Japanese. No participant indicated that there would be no demerits for immigrants entering Japan.

Benefits for Immigrants Coming to Japan

When asked what the benefits would be for immigrants entering Japan, all 39 students provided responses, which were analyzed after dividing responses into four categories. Responses that indicated that immigrants would experience practical benefits from employment, technology, health care, and infrastructure were grouped under "practical benefits." Responses that indicated that immigrants would benefit from improved safety were grouped under "safety benefits." Responses that indicated environmental benefits from the cleanliness of the environment, air quality, and the climate were grouped under "environmental benefits." Finally, responses that indicated a belief that immigrants would benefit from Japan's delicious food, and the positive characteristics of her populace, were grouped under "cultural benefits." Some responses indicated more than one benefit for a single group, or a combination of benefits from multiple groups. In such cases, each benefit was calculated separately. Participants provided a total of 65 benefits for immigrants to Japan (see Figure 3).
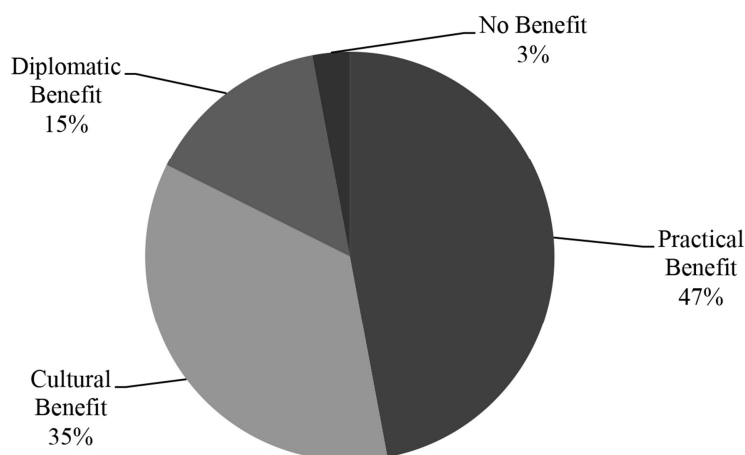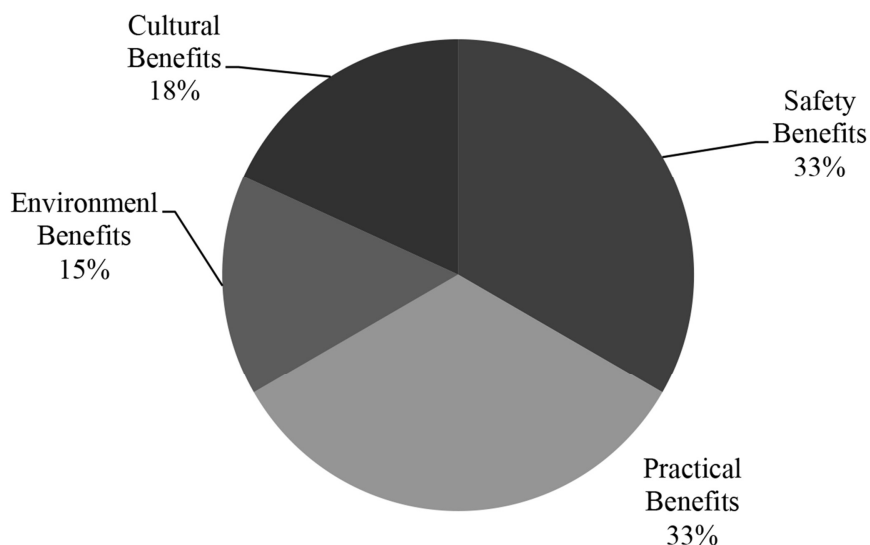

FIGURE 3. Perceived Benefits for Immigrants.

All participants indicated positive consequences of immigration for immigrants. Benefits to safety were the most frequent response, and the word frequency of the terms *civic order* (14), *safety* (7), *war* (3), *conflict* (3), and *peace* (1) indicate that participants perceived a reduction in danger as a major benefit for immigrants to their country. Practical benefits were provided with equal frequency, with words related to employment (work, job, employment, occupation, earn money) appearing 9 times. Additionally, participants indicated that immigrants would experience benefits from social support (3), Japan's technology (2), medical services (2), public infrastructure (2), and convenience (1). No participant indicated that access to Japanese education would be a benefit for immigrants. A third set of responses expressed the belief that Japan's environment would be beneficial for immigrants, while a final group of responses

indicated that Japan's culture, specifically the quality of its food and friendliness of its people, would be beneficial for immigrants.

Perceived Advisability/Need of Increased Immigration

Questions 9 and 10 asked participants to respond to the statements "Japan should increase the number of immigrants," and "Japan needs to accept more immigrants in the future." Responses are shown in Table 4 and Table 5, respectively.

TABLE 4. Japan Should Increase the Number of Immigrants

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Number	2	15	10	12	0
Percent	5	38	26	31	0
Avg. Attendance	15.0	13.9	14.1	13.4	0

TABLE 5. Japan Needs to Accept More Immigrants in the Future

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Number	3	23	7	6	0
Percent	8	59	18	15	0
Avg. Attendance	15.0	13.8	14.1	13.2	0

For the first statement, "agree" was the most frequent response, followed by "disagree," "neither," and "strongly agree." While 43% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Japan should accept more immigrants, the combination of "neither" and "disagree" formed 57% of answers, indicating respondent ambivalence and negativity to the advisability of increasing immigration into their country. By contrast, 67% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that Japan needs to increase immigration, compared with only 15% who disagreed that such a need existed. No student strongly disagreed with either statement. Interestingly, students who responded negatively to either statement self-reported attending fewer classes than students who responded favorably.

Comparing the Surveys

The original survey was completed in 2016 by 161 students at the Prefectural University of Kumamoto, and the follow-up survey in 2017 by 39 students from the Department of English Language and Literature, all of whom had completed the original survey. A discussion of the similarities and differences between the results of the two surveys follows below.

Comparing student word associations in both groups, the pre-course group most frequently provided the word *foreigner*, followed by *poor*, while participants in the follow-up survey group most frequently associated immigrants with *poor*, followed by *poverty*. Additionally, some terms were unique to the second group, including *challenger*, *brave*, and *cool/stylish*, indicating that while participants in

the second group associated immigrants primarily with poverty, some students also made positive associations. The reduction in the frequency of the words *foreign/foreigner* indicates that prolonged access to immigrant protagonists had the effect of reducing their perceived "foreignness."

Participant ability to correctly define the term *immigrant* dramatically improved in the second survey group (87% vs. 57%). As no "correct" definition was offered by the instructor (or included in immigrant narratives) this improvement can be attributed to prolonged student literary interaction with the lives of real immigrants. A comparison of perceived benefits for Japan from immigration of the two survey groups revealed some differences. Table 6 shows perceived immigrant benefits for Japan. While the first survey group saw the benefits of immigration in terms of increased cultural contact, internationalization, and globalization, the follow-up survey group (Group 2) responded that practical benefits to the country (providing labor, supporting population, raising the birth rate) were the primary benefits, with cultural benefits indicated at a significantly lower rate than the first survey group (Group 1). As each immigrant narrative outlined the activities of immigrants in their adopted countries, the increase in practical benefits can be easily understood. Interestingly, student belief that immigration would yield diplomatic benefits was significantly stronger in the second group. In both survey groups, 2 participants responded that there would be no benefits for the country from immigration. Differences were also seen between groups when participants were asked what the demerits from immigration would be for Japan.

TABLE 6. Immigrant Benefits for Japan

	Cultural	Practical	Diplomatic	Intrinsic	No Benefit
Group 1 (%)	58	36	4	1	1
Group 2 (%)	35	47	15	0	3

TABLE 7. Immigrant Demerits for Japan

	Civic Order	Cultural	Religious	Employment/ Economic	Don't Know
Group 1 (%)	26	39	7	25	2
Group 2 (%)	32	45	13	11	0

Table 7 shows perceived demerits of immigrants for Japan. Participants in the follow-up survey group saw immigrants as potentially more destructive to civic order and Japanese cultural than participants in the first survey group. Participants in the second group also identified immigrant religions as a demerit at a slightly higher frequency. However, the first survey group responded that immigrants would be potentially deleterious to the employment opportunities of Japanese at more than double the rate as the follow-up survey group. While immigrant narratives contained no examples of immigrant behavior deleterious to their host countries, each autobiographical account (as per selection criteria) contained examples of cultural differences, as well as the ways in which immigrants struggled to adapt. It is possible that exposure to immigrants facing

the challenges of cultural acclimation fostered in students the belief that such a process would be deleterious to Japanese society.

Participant responses in the two survey groups differed concerning the perceived benefits for immigrants coming to Japan. Table 8 shows the perceived benefits for immigrants coming to Japan. While the first survey group responded overwhelmingly that access to Japan's safety and high civic order would be the greatest benefit, the follow-up survey group saw practical benefits (employment, technology, product quality, etc.) as being equal to the benefit of entering a safe Japan. While minimal difference was seen between the two groups in the perceived cultural benefits for immigrants entering the country, the follow-up survey group responded that Japan's clean environment (water, air, cities, etc.) would be beneficial for immigrants at a much higher rate than the first survey group.

TABLE 8. Benefits for Immigrants to Japan

	Safety	Practical	Environmental	Cultural
Group 1 (%)	48	27	7	19
Group 2 (%)	33	33	15	18

Finally, students in both survey groups were asked to respond to the statements "Japan should increase the number of immigrants," and "Japan needs to accept more immigrants in the future." Table 9 compares responses between the two survey groups. The largest difference between the two survey groups regarding the first statement was in the percentage of participants who responded "neither" (−18%). The second largest change was in the percentage of participants who responded "strongly agree" and "agree" (+15% combined), while the percentage of students who answered "disagree" to the statement also increased (+7%); however, this increase was partially offset as no participants responded "strongly disagree" (−3%). In summary, the percentage of participants who responded "neither" decreased from the first survey group, resulting in increases in percentages of participants who agreed or strongly agreed, followed by a small increase (+4%) in the percentage of students who disagreed.

TABLE 9. Japan Should Accept More Immigrants

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Group 1 (%)	3	25	44	24	3
Group 2 (%)	5	38	26	31	0
Change (%)	+2	+13	-18	+7	-3

Compared with the first statement, changes in participant response between survey groups for the second statement were more pronounced. Table 10 compares responses between the two survey groups. When asked to respond to the statement indicating that Japan *should* increase immigration, 43% of participants agreed/strongly agreed, compared with 31% who disagreed that increasing immigration to the country was something the country should do.

When asked to respond to the statement indicating that Japan *needed* to accept more immigrants participants responded favorably, with 67% agreeing or strongly agreeing, compared with 15% who disagreed. No student strongly disagreed. Agreement rose 34% in the second survey group compared with responses from participants in the first, while disagreement decreased by 14%.

TABLE 10. Japan Needs to Accept More Immigrants in the Future

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Group 1 (%)	3	30	38	25	4
Group 2 (%)	8	59	18	15	0
Change (%)	+5	+29	-20	-10	-4

DISCUSSION

After analyzing the results of a 2016 student survey instrument designed to identify areas where students lacked knowledge and cultural awareness, pedagogical challenges emerged. To begin, while students demonstrated lacunae that could be directly addressed by the teacher (i.e., who an immigrant is, why they come, and how they benefit society), student responses also revealed a lack of empathy and awareness towards the challenges faced by immigrants. After reviewing positive results from the fields of psychology and medicine, in which narrative literature was shown to improve scores on instruments designed to measure empathy, a curriculum consisting of narrative accounts was introduced in a one-semester course, during which students were encouraged to reflect on and discuss the experiences of the immigrant authors through empathic exercises in perspective-taking.

At the conclusion of the semester, students were re-surveyed and the results analyzed for differences in order to (a) determine if the narrative literature administered throughout the semester had improved student's immigrant-related knowledge and to (b) consider the effectiveness on the narrative literature on student cultural attitudes and empathic ability.

Regarding student knowledge, results in the follow-up survey group revealed improved definitional correctness and a broader understanding of the practical benefits provided by immigrants, as well as the benefits that immigrants themselves enjoy in their new society. As no attempt was made to "teach" this information directly, the literary texts proved capable of improving student knowledge on a specific topic; however, in this case it is not possible to assess the effectiveness of literature compared with a traditional teaching approach.

Although the survey instrument was not designed to measure cultural sensitivity or empathy, but to ascertain areas of student lacunae, some measurements of the degree to which empathic narrative literature affected student attitudes, though limited, can be made. First, the decrease in the follow-up group of the word association of *foreigner* provided evidence that, to students, immigrants were no longer a uniform group of "others" but had become personalized through literary interaction. Additionally, unlike the first survey

group, four participants in the follow-up group provided positive associations, including *brave* and *challenger*, indicating recognition of the risks and challenges faced by immigrants.

Improved favorability in student response to the propositions that "Japan should and needs to increase immigration" (+15% and +34%, respectively) further indicates a change in student attitudes towards immigrants. Interestingly, students who reported attending the most classes indicated the highest favorability, while those who reported attending the least reported the lowest, further evidence that students who engaged more with immigrant protagonists experienced higher favorability to the prospect of increased immigration to their country. As a result, increased favorability towards immigration can be attributed to positive student interaction with the immigrant protagonists to whom they were exposed, via the curriculum texts.

Empathic narrative literature holds unique possibilities regarding integrating the development of intercultural competence into the foreign language-learning classroom. Future research directions include (a) a consideration of how narrative literature can be employed to satisfy the practical needs of language learners and (b) new methods for the employment of instruments specifically designed to measure empathic development.

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T.E.A.C.H. — Technology Education Academia Combined Here: An Examination of the Digital Literacy Issue for Undergraduate Students in Japan

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This paper provides a background to the need for student instruction in digital literacy and for a digital pedagogy to be adopted when teaching this type of content. As many university courses in Japan lack these classes, a detailed explanation of the causative factors for their relative absence from academia in Japan and a rationale for their inclusion are necessary. After such a background introduction of the educational technology issue in Japan, this report then highlights the digital literacy approach taken by the author in introducing this content into his classes. Particular attention is paid to the range and type of digital literacy tools and the actual techniques taught to contribute to creating a learning community of students as well as to the pedagogy and methodology that underpinned this approach. Finally, recommendations for the future implementation of these types of courses and content are given.

INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY IN JAPAN

In the period since the public popularity of the Internet in the 1990s, educational technology has been on an exponential curve of growth in terms of the range, power, and types of tools available. However, easy availability of technology has not always lead to its adoption by schools and universities in Japan, a country notorious for its rote-based learning (Rohlen & LeTendre, 1998, p. 7). Given the high numbers of universities in Japan on a per capita basis, 783 universities in a country with approximately 120 million people compared with the UK, with roughly half the population but only 163 universities (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2013; Tanikawa, 2013), very few make the world rankings. According to the latest Times Higher Education World Rankings the highest ranking Japanese university is the University of Tokyo at number 46 (down from 23 in 2013), followed by Kyoto University at 74 (down from 52 in 2013). That is only two universities in the top 200 according to the *Times*, (*World university rankings 2013–2014: Times higher education, 2013; World university rankings*, 2017) and not a good advertisement for the quality of Japanese education, given their numbers.

In 2003, the Economist Intelligence Unit conducted an e-Learning Readiness index and ranked Japan as being 23rd (Suzuki, 2009), shocking many in Japan and contributing to the changes that came as a result of the so called "Big Bang" in Japanese education under then Prime Minister Koizumi (Eades, Goodman, & Hada, 2005). This did not result in any major changes as by 2009 Japan was still

only ranked 22nd, this despite being ranked 2nd in 2007 in the Digital Opportunity Index, which measures digital connectivity of societies (International Telecommunications Union, 2007, p. 36). Even now non-Japanese employers (and some forward-thinking Japanese employers) frequently complain about the lack of information technology (IT) and information communication technology (ICT) skills in their newly hired, newly graduated Japanese employees (Otoshi, quoted in Bachnik, as cited in Eades et al., 2005, p. 276). Here, these corporations are seeing the results of the "blank slate" graduates preferred by traditional Japanese corporations in the recent past (Aspinall, 2010, p. 10; McVeigh, 2002, pp. 123–147). This has not prompted any major rush to improve as Japan has only stated it will introduce things like tablet devices in elementary schools by 2020 (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications [MIC] Japan, 2013) when that date was further away in the future than the length of time that iPads (the most popular tablet devices) had been in existence. So the education authorities seem more concerned with preserving the past than looking to the future, a position that Aspinall attributes to Japan being a risk averse society (Aspinall, 2010, pp. 12–17).

Traditionally the Japanese education model was referred to as "education/examination hell" (Haberman, 1988; McVeigh, 2002, Chapter 4). In the post-war period until very recently, most Japanese university students wanted to be hired by a prestigious (read "traditional") corporation, and if they achieved this, they were relatively satisfied, as employment with a Japanese corporation included generous working conditions and a job for life. However, to get hired by big name corporations meant they had to first gain admittance to a big-name university. What subjects were studied at university was relatively unimportant to employers compared to the actual rank and reputation of the university. So getting into a prestigious university was and still is all-important as *gakubatsu* (exclusive university cliques for students and former students from certain departments) had and still do have influence for graduates seeking jobs (Johnson, 1982, Chapter 2; Ramseyer, 2010, pp. 2–3).

To get into such a name university, students, in theory at least, had to pass the university's rigorous entrance examination. However, this was only rigorous in terms of the amount of data needed to be memorized to pass the test; critical thinking and creativity were not factors at all, and even today, this continues to be the case in these memory-centric entrance tests for the most part. In turn, a lucrative industry has developed whereby some *juku* (cram schools specializing in university entrance test preparation) have developed a reputation for preparing students to pass these tests for particular universities. However to avoid the competition of these difficult tests some students try to be accepted via the universities' admissions office (AO) route. This was only possible if they attended a prestigious high school and/or one that had an AO relationship with the university concerned. Lastly, there is the sports scholarship route, whereby athletically promising students can attend university irrespective of their academic suitability as they have the chance to raise the university's profile in the popular varsity sports circuit. The result is that in some universities as many as 50% of their students have not taken any kind of entrance test at all, and those that did have taken a test that values memory over ability (McVeigh, 2010, p. 166).

Therefore getting into these types of high schools was, and still is, an attractive option for many career-minded university students in Japan as the

numbers of school leavers entering university has grown from 23.6% in 1970 to 48.2% in 1998 according to a UNESCO report (World Education Forum, 2000). However getting into those schools was also a challenge and meant that students had to pass these schools' tests, and in turn this involved more *juku* work and of course graduating from a good junior high school and so on down the line to kindergarten, with the ubiquitous *juku* again involved. So this long and arduous process extended from kindergarten all the way to entering university.

University, therefore, was viewed as a rest period between the examination/education hell and the hard work that came afterwards as a corporate samurai *salariman* (a corporate businessman usually paid by monthly salary). As universities were seen as a place to have fun (Ellington, 2002, p. 142), students tended to focus more on their club activities at university rather than their studies. Indeed many students rely on the old-boy network of their university clubs to try to gain employment rather than their grades and qualifications. As part of this educational "simulation" (McVeigh, 2002, Chapter 6), universities were traditionally not expected to give too much work, or to try to shape the thinking or character of their students. That was seen as the domain of the employers and many Japanese employers preferred their newly graduated employees to be "blank slates" that they and they alone could mould, into the corporate image and the type of worker they desired (Urata, 1996). This was the "educational" model that was in place during Japan's so-called economic miracle period from the 1960s to the mid 1990s and afterwards. However that economic period is now over, and Japan's educational model needs to change as the demographic problems in Japan have meant that standards for the entrance tests and AO suitability levels have had to drop to enable many universities to stay in business. Even this has not been enough to stop 46% of universities operating at less than full capacity, and 40% of them are operating and making a loss (Tanikawa, 2013). However, in Japan old habits die hard.

Japanese universities in general now have a large number of older, tenured professors that are there until retirement age. Although this is 55 years of age for government employees (Aschwanden, 2004), it is 60 for universities and in some cases 65 now (Cyranoski, 2000), with 67 for part-time employees. Many of these teachers are not up to speed with modern teaching methodologies, pedagogies, and technologies as they were hired when such things were relatively unimportant, given the "blank slate" model in play when they were hired. Even now, it is not uncommon when walking down university corridors to still see paper sign-up sheets on professors' doors for students to use when requesting meeting times with their professors and supervisors, and they are mostly blank! Also, many more professors were never held accountable for the quality of their classes as under the old system this never mattered, and in many universities the teachers themselves hand out and collect the student satisfaction surveys in paper form, and teachers are responsible for handing them in to the office – a less than ethical practice. McVeigh covered much of this in detail when he talked about "simulated schooling" in reference to his time teaching at universities in Japan (McVeigh, 2002, Chapter 6). Others (Eades et al., 2005) also examine many of the diverse challenges facing Japanese universities in the 21st century, and for the most part, show how they are not rising to these challenges; and one of my own papers (Paterson, 2008) looks at how students can be treated as mere

commodities by many universities in the current economic and demographic climate in Japan, with little attention paid to teaching quality.

That this low quality of teaching is still ongoing is not just seen from insider teacher experiences like mine as even relatively recent generalist books on Japan mention this well-known phenomenon (Ellington, 2002, p. 142). It is further borne out by the many complaints regarding recent graduates coming from their employers in Japan. The OECD even remarked on this in the conclusion to their report on education in Japan in 2009:

> We believe that the pressures for continued change are unlikely to abate. For Japan's research universities, global competition for highly skilled graduate students and faculty will not diminish in the years ahead, and global league tables of research performance, however unwelcome, will not recede in importance. Demographic pressures now bearing hard on private universities and junior colleges cannot be deterred, nor can state intervention be expected to diminish the financial challenges they pose. New generations of students, more concerned about the link between their studies and working life and newly empowered by a shifting balance of demand and supply, may press tertiary institutions for wider flexibility in provision and greater relevance in teaching than they have heretofore. And, the nation's business establishment and political leaders appear to expect continued movement in the direction of greater agility, openness, and resourcefulness from its tertiary institutions. (Newby, Weko, Breneman, Johanneson, & Maassen 2009, p. 99)

These "new generations" of students are not enough in number to keep the universities in business as normal, so there is also a demand from universities for foreign students, yet in general, foreign students only make up around 3.3% of all students in Japan, less than half the OECD average (Newby et al., 2009, p. 80).

These university failings are particularly acute in the educational technology field as already described above (International Telecommunications Union, 2007). In addition some big-name universities still do not have a campus wide Wi-Fi network in place; some only have Wi-Fi in some rooms and in some buildings only, and frequently without any guest access. Other universities that do have a Wi-Fi network have less than robust ones, which are not suitable for large-scale deployment, whereby if many students use it simultaneously, the system runs slow, or crashes. This is the type of prevailing infrastructure that lead to Japan scoring so low on the e-Readiness Index (Suzuki, 2009).

DIGITAL LITERACY APPROACH

To date there has been a great deal of research conducted on the importance of digital literacy in the modern world (Jones & Hafner, 2012; Knobel & Lankshear, 2007; Kress, 2003; Lankshear & Knobel, 2008), and in the English-speaking world, there have been calls for formally integrating digital literacy into the curriculum at schools (Gee & Hayes, 2011), calls that the international schools in Japan seem to have heeded, while the universities have not. Furthermore, it is not just educational technology-minded teaching staff that are making complaints. I previously had conducted an action research project on

digital literacy classes while I was teaching at International Christian University in the English for Liberal Arts program, as ICU's own internal student surveys of graduating senior students showed prior dissatisfaction with their IT/ICT skills (ICU, 2005) and the general information literacy weaknesses of students in these areas has also been identified at other universities (Burke, 2012; Kolowich, 2011). Other ICU students (non-seniors) also rated their IT/ICT knowledge and satisfaction lower than all the other categories surveyed as confirmed by ICU's self-study and evaluation report (ICU Self-Study Committee, 2009) in a later survey, and these provided the impetus for me to start my research project in the area of digital literacy.

The importance of digital literacy for English language learners has, however, not attracted as much attention when compared with digital literacy in general, with the advanced English learners sector at university receiving even less attention. One of the few studies addressing advanced learners (not specifically English or university-based learners though) advocates "bridging activities" (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008) that combine language learning with new media and technology. So in response to this while teaching at ICU, I piloted the introduction of a course using these bridging techniques in my advanced English classes to examine students' reactions to this approach. This paper highlights my thought process behind that action research experiment as bridging activities have not been researched to any great degree in English in Japan, both because of the scarcity of such high-level English students in universities here, and the low levels of educational technology integration in education in Japan in general. In addition my students were *kikokushijo* (Japanese children who have received a substantial part of their education outside Japan) returnees for the most part, so they were very different from the vast majority of Japanese university students (and these are the type of internationally minded students that Japan needs to attract if their universities are to survive their demographic problems). As these types of students are a very under-researched group, especially in terms of their university experiences with educational technology content, this justified my research on the project.

Many educators have also written about collaborative or participatory-based learning (Lewis & Allan, 2004; Nicosia, 2013, Chapter 3), but these have not been addressing the case of internationally educated, advanced English language learners in Japan as my research project did. Here my research (in this case surveys and interviews) was designed to get feedback on the student reactions to these collaborative multimedia project-based work from just these types of students. The projects themselves were set up according to Salmon's five-stage model for blended learning (Salmon, n.d.). While this is a general design, I wanted to explore its suitability for internationally educated, advanced English language learners in Japan.

Overall then, the course I created and was researching aimed to utilize a modern digital teaching pedagogy along the lines of the "bridging activities" approach as advocated by Thorne and Reinhardt (2008) for Internet communication and tools for advanced language learners in general. However, I wanted to investigate how suitable this approach is for teaching internationally educated, third-culture, advanced English language learners in Japan. Therefore, the pedagogical approaches I used were those developed to leverage advances in

educational technology for teaching digital/multimedia content as these seemed best suited to the bridging theory.

There are four categories in the bridging approach (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008, pp. 536–566). These are "instant messaging" and "synchronous chat," and here Thorne and Reinhardt were more interested in the linguistic conventions used by students, whereas I was more interested in whether students used them at all, and if so to what extent, which tools and why. Thorne and Reinhardt also looked at "blogs" and "wikis" and were interested in whether students differentiated between types of blogs, and blogs and other reflective writing, and did not mention wiki's much except for citing Wikipedia as a model. By contrast, I was interested in how useful and interesting students found the act of writing a blog and reading others' blogs as part of a community of learners. I also examined their feedback on their collaborative efforts as part of their project was to build a collaborative multimedia website as an e-portfolio host for their coursework output. This leads into Thorne and Reinhardt's third category: "remixing." They describe this using an example of fanfiction quoting Black (2006, 2007, as cited in Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008, p. 565) as describing it as

> A practice by which enthusiasts of various media such as books, movies, television, comics, and video games borrow elements of these popular cultural texts, such as characters, settings, literary tropes and plotlines, to construct their own narrative fictions. Fans often remix these various media, combining multiple genres languages and cultural elements; for example, Black describes English as a second language learners inserting Japanese terms and Asian cultural references into Japanese animation or anime-based fanfiction that is written in English and set within a North American context. (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008, p. 565)

Here there were examples of this in one of the introduction videos my students made for their websites as they blended English language singing/song writing, human beat-box/hip-hop dancing, and *shamisen* (a traditional Japanese stringed instrument) playing in a musical piece that connected the three research themes of those students; namely, the negative effects of corporate influence on music in general, its changing of hip-hop style, and lowering of interest in traditional Japanese music due to U.S. cultural imperialism. These three students agreed to present this at an academic conference on educational technology in Japan with me in February 2014 (Paperless – http://paperless2014.weebly.com/) and gave permission for Google to use their website at the BETT (http://www.bettshow.com/) conference in London in January 2014, so giving the URL here poses no ethical problems. The video is on the landing page of their project site (https://sites.google.com/site/hiptomusic/). The fourth area Thorne and Reinhardt (2008) examined is "multiplayer online gaming." This played no part in my study as my course had no gamification component, as it was unlikely such a fun-looking component would have been accepted in my syllabus by the largely conservative minds of the Japanese university administrators!

My students, however, were not so conservative, being the so-called digital natives (Prensky, 2001), and although Prensky draws broad conclusions in his "digital natives/digital immigrants" thesis, and accordingly has been critiqued for not taking into account the older (immigrant) technology-capable researchers that built the Internet or the financial divide (rather than age) that underpins the

technology gap in many areas, his ideas do have some utility in terms of a generational approach to technology concepts rather than actual usage. For digital usage, work has been done on Japanese university students' computer knowledge and information literacy (Lockley, 2011; Murray & Blyth, 2011). Murray and Blyth found that students were much more experienced and proficient at using smartphones than computers (Murray & Blyth, 2011, p. 313). However, these were not internationally educated Japanese students, nor were they advanced English learners, they were *jun-Japa* students educated in Japanese schools that are low-tech to no-tech environments, as many ban the possession of mobile phones ("Ishikawa OK's kid cell phone ban," 2009), and non-English majors. So my course involved a group that has not been studied before in Japan (at least not in this way in this area) to determine their reactions to being taught digital/information/multimedia/visual literacy content using a digital pedagogy and as part of an online learning community.

As I recognized the importance of journaling by students as a reflective device (Finley, 2010), I started using online blog journals instead of paper-based journals to help address this "flipped learning" checking problem (Paterson, 2014, p. 4). In my approach, students posted blog entries with their reactions to the "flipped" readings or videos conducted at home, not just the class activities, and this has lessened the traditional paper journaling problems of timeliness (Paterson, 2014, pp. 5–6). These blogs had another benefit over paper journaling as it created an online community audience for the blogs, and this has been mentioned by students as being beneficial over the years I have been using this approach. This is an example of an emerging learning community (see the PLE section below) and, in this case, was a "Small Core of Active members – Closed Group" type of learning community (Lewis & Allan, 2004, p. 21) as the membership remained constant: the class members and me. So I wanted to expose the students' to being members of this 'community' and to have them sharing their blogs as this was new to most of them.

Building on blog usage, I adapted the Just-in-Time teaching approach to my course needs (Paterson, 2014, pp. 6–7). This is a theoretical teaching approach that borrows from the business/management/manufacturing theory of just-in-time production made famous by Toyota in the 1990s (Just-in-Time, n.d.), where supplies are only ordered when needed to maximize efficiency and reduce costs. The educational variation on this is for teachers to give comments and feedback "just in time" and when needed to maximize learning and memory retention. Therefore, I attempted to replicate this approach as much as possible in my course via blogs. In this way, I was using the blog journals to replicate the more hi-tech JiTT pre-class survey systems like i-Clicker (https://www1.iclicker.com/ student-response-devices) that were not suitable for my course, given the technology limitations at ICU.

With the blogs being public and shared, I wanted the other apps and tools to also offer a group function to emphasize the collaborative aspects of learning as I was aiming to examine the "community of learners" issue. Therefore, Google Apps and Zotero were featured prominently as they both possess these functions over and above their basic usage (Firth & Mesureur, 2010). These social aspects of the tools also enabled the students to contact each other and their teacher (me) at any time, and given the ubiquity of smartphones, they could be reasonably sure of

a quick response from each other and me. This is the Expanded Classroom (Shaw, 2013) where technology enables community-based learning to take place everywhere, essentially making the wired (or wireless) world the classroom if students connect for classwork via their community. "Expanding the classroom' seemed the obvious way to go as it would enable me to have greater contact with the students via email, online chat, Google Groups, and blog comments. These, then, are the overarching theories and approaches that underpinned the work I did in this research project, the pedagogical strategies I used, and the tools, techniques, and skillsets I covered for the purposes of evaluating how well the bridging activities worked for my (currently) relatively unique and under-researched type of students in Japan.

CONCLUSIONS

My initial research project was designed to examine how a relatively unusual group of Japanese university freshmen students – in this case, the *kikokushijo* advanced English language students in my course – reacted to a course covering digital content and taught using a digital pedagogy. More specifically, it was to also examine how they adapted and related to the idea of being part of an online learning community of enquiry (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lewis & Allan, 2004) and to what extent that impacted their learning experiences. In addition, this study also attempted to see if the "bridging activities" theory (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008) used for other advanced language learners was also relevant in this digital type course setting.

From detailed interactions with the students over a period of eight months (including interviews and surveys over and above coursework and blog reading), my students gave an overwhelmingly positive response to this type of class, content, and delivery. A few comments here from the anonymous end-of-course survey will help illustrate just how well they rated these classes:

Student Response 2 – the tech-tools are something we can use for a lifetime, thus, i think the classes were relevant for our education.

Student Response 4 – That was awesome!!!! There are times I think back on our classes and it's a major relief to know that I can actually contact anyone whenever I come up with a cool idea or sth [something]. It's like class is still presuming in your phone.

Student Response 6 – enjoyed every bit of it, it was so stimulating to be with many bright, talented, classmates, the content of the class was always pushing me which was great!

Student Response 9 – The collaborative learning using Google and other technological tools was very useful and enjoyable. I think that Rab should hold an independent class just on those things.

Student Response 11 – (these) classes were the only classes this term where I did not feel the urge to sleep during class.

Student Response 15 – Best classes I've taken in my life. Amazing quality, new insight, integrating technology, just fantastic classes.

Student Response 19 – I never thought classes could be this fun interesting, and challenging.

> Student Response 21 – These days, it should be NORMAL to have classes in rooms filled with computers. Technology plays a huge role in our lives today, and I don't see why it should be the same in classrooms.

Therefore, with technology playing a larger part of people's lives every day, especially in the younger generation's lives, education has to also evolve with these changes to remain relevant to succeeding generations of learners, as teachers cannot teach students the way they were taught and expect automatic student engagement to happen. Therefore, it is my recommendation that more universities in Japan implement these kinds of courses, and sooner rather than later, given how long it takes to get teachers up to speed on using these approaches and getting them able to use the tools properly. This is especially important if Japanese universities wish to attract internationally minded/ internationally educated students to offset the decline in student numbers in Japan due to the infamously low birth-rates in Japan. It is my prediction that this is indeed what will happen and some of the more forward-thinking Japanese universities are already starting this approach now.

So let me finish with this very apt quote:

> We need technology in every classroom and in every student and teacher's hand, because it is the pen and paper of our time, and it is the lens through which we experience much of our world. (Warlick, 2006)

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Audio-Assisted Versus Text-Only Extensive Reading Materials: Potentials and Student Preferences

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A number of studies have suggested that audio-assisted reading texts facilitate language learning (e.g., Brown, Waring, & Donkaewhua, 2008; Chang, 2009). However, audio-assisted reading texts have not been commonly used in Indonesian EFL classrooms, especially for extensive reading (ER) activities. Therefore, this study attempted to fill in this gap by investigating two areas of inquiry: (a) the potential benefits of the two different modes of ER materials; namely, audio-assisted reading materials and text-only reading materials and (b) students' opinions and preferences towards the two modes of ER materials. The findings revealed that both audio-assisted and text-only materials facilitated vocabulary learning. However, text-only materials outperformed audio-assisted materials in terms of facilitating reading comprehension. In analysis of student preferences, the students with a lower level of proficiency favored text-only materials, whereas the students with a higher level of proficiency favored audio-assisted materials.

Keywords: Extensive reading, audio-assisted texts, text-only, vocabulary learning, reading

INTRODUCTION

The importance of extensive reading (ER) for language learning and acquisition has been explored in a number of scholarly studies (Cohen, 2017; Krishnan, Rahim, Marimuthu, Abdullah, Mohammad, & Jusoff, 2009; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Renandya, 2007; Renandya, Rajan, & Jacobs, 2009). ER activities require students to read materials in the target language (Day & Bamford, 2003). In this case, students select their own reading material, then read it independently of the teacher. They read for general comprehension, overall meaning, and enjoyment. When they read extensively, they become fluent readers. It not only helps to increase their reading but also their oral fluency. In other words, students who read a lot develop positive attitudes toward reading and increase their motivation to study the foreign language (Day, 2003). Studies have indicated that ER increases the exposure level of the learner to the language, which also means enhancing the learner's general language competence (Bell, 1988).

In EFL classrooms across Indonesia, reading is often taught using short texts with close guidance from the teacher. The intention is to help students learn meaning, develop reading skills, and enhance their knowledge vocabulary and grammar. To accommodate this, reading has been constrained to written texts,

which limits the potential usefulness of audiobooks and scripted podcasts. To address this practice, this paper looks at the development of students' vocabulary by comparing two difference sources of input: audio-assisted reading materials and text-only reading materials. The second part of the study surveys student preferences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Extensive Reading

Extensive reading (ER; sometimes referred to as *sustained silent reading, pleasure reading*, or *free voluntary reading*) is an approach to second language (L2) reading instruction that aims to encourage students to engage in large amounts of reading. This approach has been described as "reading gain without reading pain" (Day & Bamford, 1998) with the intention of helping students become more fluent, independent, and confident readers (Day & Bamford, 1998). To select reading materials, Day and Bamford (2002) offer ten principals:

1. Students should be presented with materials that contain few or no unfamiliar vocabulary or grammar items.
2. There should be a variety of reading material on a wide range of topics.
3. Learners should be able to choose what they want to read.
4. Learners should read as much as possible.
5. Students should be encouraged to read quickly in order to improve fluency.
6. The purpose of reading should be related to pleasure, information gathering, and/or general understanding.
7. Reading should be individual and silent.
8. Reading should be its own reward.
9. Teachers should explain to students what ER is, why they are doing it, and how to go about it.
10. Teachers are encouraged to read the same or similar content as their students so that class time can be reserved for discussion.

There are many reasons why ER facilitates language development. It allows students to observe the target language in its natural context and see how it works in extended discourse beyond the language found in ELT textbooks. It builds vocabulary and helps students understand how grammar is used in context. ER also helps students to develop reading speed and fluency. In terms of affective factors, ER can help students build their confidence, encourage motivation, and foster a passion for reading. These benefits, taken together, develop language competence and can be used to foster autonomous learning (Maley, 2010).

Reading-While-Listening

Reading-While-Listening (RWL) is a new approach that uses audio-assisted materials. Originally developed as a means to help students with listening comprehension, (McMahon, 1983, as cited in Askildson, 2011), these audio-

assisted materials are now being used in conjunction with ER. The written texts are used to assist listening comprehension by giving learners more access to identify the letter–sound relationship. Learners are introduced to the spoken rate, rhythm, and the natural flow of the language (Chang, 2009). Studies on RWL have demonstrated gains in student satisfaction and listening comprehension (Brown et al., 2008; Chang, 2009; Chung, 1999; Woodall, 2010). Based on these studies, the benefits of RWL can be said to include the following:

1. It can appeal to audio-lingual learners.
2. It can alleviate pressure that comes with learning a foreign or second language.
3. It provides learners with input from more than one source.
4. It can develop fluency in all four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Reid (1971, as cited in Askildson, 2011) observed that students who were taught with RWL methods performed significantly better in reading and comprehension. This is supported by studies from other scholars including Blum, Koskinen, Tennant, Parker, Straub, and Curry (1995, as cited in Chang, 2009), which also showed that learners improved their reading fluency after learning through RWL. Another study done by Amer (1997, as cited in Askildson, 2011) illustrated that EFL students who were given RWL instruction outperformed those who were given only silent reading instruction. In addition to improving learners' language skills, Brown, Waring, and Donkaewbua (2008) reported that RWL made listening tasks more enjoyable for EFL learners.

RESEARCH METHOD

This project was designed as a classroom-based, mixed-method case study. The aim of the study was to explore the implementation of ER activities in a reading comprehension course in the English Department at Mulawarman University in Indonesia. In this study, 60 participants were randomly selected and divided into two different groups. Each group received different ER materials. The first group had text-only ER materials while the other group received audio-assisted texts.

The instruments used in this study included reading comprehension and vocabulary pretests and posttests. The other instruments were a questionnaire and an informal interview. The questionnaire and follow-up interview were used to find specific information regarding students' preferences of the different modes of reading materials. The research procedures were as follows:

1. The students in both groups were asked to do a pretest, which allowed the researcher to assess their level of vocabulary and reading comprehension.
2. The students in both groups were asked to read three levels of ER materials that ranged from "easy" to "moderate" to "difficult."
3. The students in both groups were asked to do a posttest.
4. The results of the posttests were compared to measure the potential

effectiveness of each mode of reading materials.
5. The students were asked to complete a perceived reading attitude questionnaire.
6. The students who had the lowest and highest scores were invited for follow-up interviews.

The quantitative data collected for this research was analyzed by using both independent and dependent *t*-tests to measure differences within and between the groups. The qualitative data from the interview was analyzed by using the Flow Model framework introduced by Miles and Huberman (1994). Their approach to qualitative inquiry seeks to identify patterns and trends in students' preferences.

DISCUSSION

Quantitative Findings

The data for the quantitative part of the study was gathered to discern whether audio-assisted materials and text-only materials had significant effects on student vocabulary learning and reading comprehension. The findings revealed that both audio-assisted and text-only ER materials facilitated vocabulary learning. Yet, the benefit for reading comprehension appeared to be significant in the Text-Only group but not in the Audio-Text (audio-assisted) group. These findings are illustrated in Figure 1.
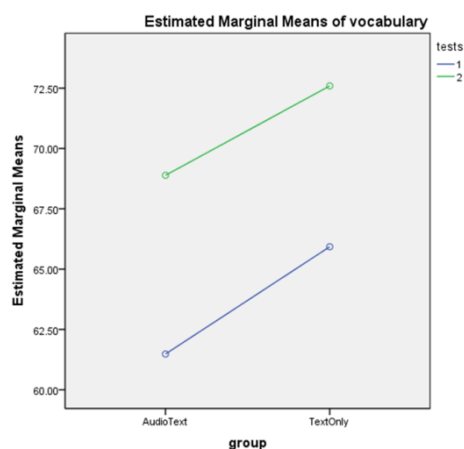
FIGURE 1. A Comparison of Vocabulary Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores.

A *t*-test was used to measure whether there was a significant gain in both groups. For the Audio-Text group, the value of *t* was 3.010 (*p* = .005). This indicates that there was a significant difference in their pretest and posttest results. For the Text-Only group, the value of *t* was 2.217 (*p* = .035). This also shows a significant gain after the intervention.

In looking at the reading comprehension results, the findings revealed that the

Text-Only group made a significant gain. The value of *t* was 3.832 (*p* = .001). The calculation for the Audio-Text group resulted in a *t* value of 1.900 (*p* = .067). This shows that there was no statistically significant difference between the results of their pretest and posttest. These findings are illustrated in Figure 2.
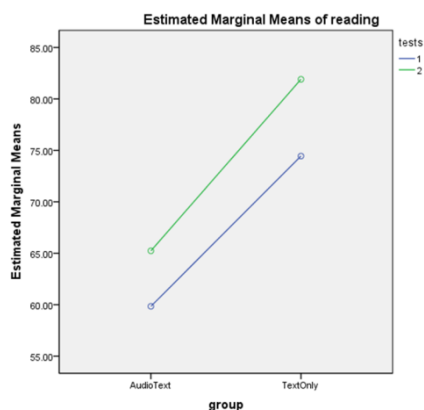
FIGURE 2. A Comparison of Reading Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores

When these results for both dependent variables (vocabulary and reading) were compared simultaneously (by using multivariate and univariate tests (i.e., Repeated Measures MANOVA), the results show no significant difference between the two groups in terms of their learning gains after the interventions: $F(2, 57) = .326$, $p = .723$, $\eta^2 = .011$.; Vocabulary $F(1, 58) = .031$, $p = .861$, $\eta^2 = .001$; Reading $F(1, 58) = .359$, $p = .551$, $\eta^2 = .006$). This suggests that both modes of ER facilitated positive gains.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative data explored the students' preferences on the two different modes of ER materials. All students from different proficiency levels in this group agreed that the audio helped them recognize sounds and pronunciation. However, the students with lower levels of proficiency in the Audio-Text group confessed that it was difficult to concentrate, while the more proficient students in this group felt the audio materials enhanced their comprehension.

This result was slightly inconsistent with the results of Brown, Waring, and Donkaewbua (2008), who reported that RWL was the most preferable learning mode for EFL learners. They argue that RWL made listening tasks more enjoyable for EFL learners. One explanation to explain this difference is that the students' level of listening comprehension was not included in the pretest in this study. Another factor to consider is that the students in this study listened to the audio texts on one speed, whereas students in the study conducted by Brown, Waring, and Donkaewbua (2008), could adjust the speed of the audio texts. These two factors could potentially influence students' comprehension and enjoyment of the audio texts.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings in this study, using audio-assisted materials for ER activities could help students learn vocabulary. However, when it comes to promoting reading comprehension, the findings in this study indicate that the use of text-only reading materials outperformed the use of audio-assisted materials. While more-proficient students found the audio-assisted texts useful and enjoyable, the less-proficient students found it difficult to concentrate. With this in mind, teachers considering this method would be wise to select audio-assisted texts that align with the students' level of proficiency. For the lower-level students, teachers can select materials with basic grammar and vocabulary, and may wish to reduce the speed of the audio texts. This, in addition to practice and repetition, are helpful suggestions to optimize the benefits of audio-assisted texts with ER materials.

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How Digital Feedback Makes a Difference in Writing Class

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Writing instructors often have a problem when it comes to designing an effective peer-to-peer review interface. Limited contact hours, learners' hesitation to offer criticism in a face-to-face peer-editing session, and writing complexity are the main factors for most EFL learners failing to make the most of peer-to-peer feedback situations. This study explores the benefits of using online discussion boards to meet this challenge. Feedback comments provided thusly facilitated substantive improvements in three important aspects: writing skills, critical analysis, and social interaction. The study, a part of a doctoral dissertation, involved 221 EFL students of a Korean university. Experimental group students used the online discussion board to provide feedback on their peers' first drafts of all four essays, the main part of a writing project, whereas control group students used the traditional method of paper-based peer feedback on the essays. Data was collected from learners' writing samples and peer feedback comments.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is generally considered to be a very challenging skill in academia. One of the potential reasons EFL writing is becoming a center of attention for many researchers is that EFL writing is going through a transformative phase that is due to the emergence of online technologies with educational potential (Salmon, 2013a). With the emergence of Internet technologies in all walks of human life, EFL instructors feel an obligation to incorporate online technologies into EFL writing instruction. According to Bennett (2011), 98% of East Asian students at the university level have at least periodic access to digital devices. Most students own some sort of smart device, whereas the rest have access to computers or a digital device at their school library. Of the various types of Internet resources, micro-blogging and social networking interfaces have made their way into ESL education the most (Bennett, 2011).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Integration of Technology in Korea

In Korea, one of the most technologically advanced countries in the world, the rate of mobile phones ownership is 111% according to the International

Telecommunication Union (2014). Furthermore, the penetration rate for smart phones among mobile-phone users in the whole country was 82.3% at the end of June 2015, while more than 97% of Korean university students possessed smartphones (Choi et al., 2015). In addition, an average Korean university student spends 3–4 hours per day using a smartphone for different purposes including browsing the Internet, reading news, or accessing social media (Choi et al., 2015). Following the statistics provided above regarding the emergence of digital devices in Korean society, it seems that incorporating these digital devices into EFL instruction by educating students about their potential usefulness for developing their language skills is a reasonable strategy as opposed to offering resistance towards the use of smartphones, considering them distractions to learning. With this greater investment of time associated to smartphones, social scientists in the EFL field (e.g., Warschauer, 2013) are convinced that EFL writing learners need to be encouraged to use digital devices for peer interaction, considering their potential to enhance EFL learning.

E-Learning in Higher Education

The ever-growing need for e-learning in the higher education context is bringing dynamic changes into academics and students' learning styles (Salmon & Angood, 2013). Warschauer (2013) claimed that one of the advantages of online discussion board communication is that everyone gets equal chances to participate and it keeps the dominant students from controlling the discussion, as can happen in face-to-face communication. Peng and Liou (2009) stated that EFL learners attempt to correct their mistakes through online discussion by giving and receiving formative feedback to the participants of the community. The usefulness of e-learning in second and foreign language acquisition demand practitioners to plan their classes carefully to meet the growing needs of modern language classrooms.

E-Learning Triggers Scaffolding

Salmon (2011) suggested that learners should participate more actively and promote human interaction and communication through the "modelling, conveying, and building of knowledge and skills" (p. 5). Salmon (2011) further insisted that online communication is founded on the idea of scaffolding, which enables learners to move forward gradually from "the known to the unknown" (p. 31). Salmon (2013) insisted that learners' autonomy is one of the most influential concepts in the EFL context that could be achieved if they become active online participants. This supports the goals of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) instruction in the EFL context as well. Salmon (2016) stated that digital technology has provided us with new and innovative ways of doing different things, which can enhance the imaginativeness of language teachers. This new culture within language classrooms supports the implementation of CALL.

Online Interaction Enhances Interpersonal Skills

Lundstrom and Baker (2009) insisted that besides the benefits of peer

feedback sessions themselves, there are many other benefits related to engaging in the process of providing and receiving feedback; for example, the process helps to develop negotiation of meaning, students develop meaningful interaction, they are exposed to a number of ideas, and they learn new strategies relating to the writing process. Students improve their peer networking in groups (Biggs & Tang, 2007) through constructive feedback, while also improving their writing skills and their feeling of autonomy (Lundstom & Baker, 2009). Ho and Savignon (2007) suggested that computer-mediated peer reviews might assist some shy students who are reluctant to comment on their peers in a face-to-face peer review session, by offering a place where they can independently express their peer feedback. Goh (2016) stated that learners' participation through online activities provides a platform for student-centered social interaction that offers lots of opportunities for target language learning.

RESEARCH METHOD

A mixed-methods approach was adopted for data collection and analysis. A quantitative research approach was largely utilized for the data analysis, which included surveys and analysis of participants' writing samples. However, qualitative research methods were used to interpret participants' interview data. In order to determine participants' motivation regarding writing, a five-point Likert-scale survey was used. Participants' writing samples were collected to determine the learners' writing improvement through a quantitative research approach as well. A comparison approach between a control group and an experimental group was adopted in which control group participants were provided with a face-to-face mode of feedback to their peers, whereas the experimental group participants provided feedback to their peers through the online discussion board. Data was collected in the form of learners' first and final drafts in both the first and fourth writing cycles. Essay writing samples from both the experimental and control groups were collected and rated by experienced raters to determine the amount of writing improvement. Peer review samples for both the first and fourth writing cycles were also collected as further data.

DATA COLLECTION

As part of the data collection process, attitudinal surveys were given to 221 participants, writing samples were collected from 20 randomly selected participants in both the control and experimental groups, and interviews were conducted with the same 20 randomly selected participants from each group. To determine whether the learners' improved their writing through the peer feedback provided on the discussion boards, writing samples were collected from 20 randomly selected learners in the control and experimental groups and later analyzed by two writing raters. Furthermore, in order to determine the usefulness of their online feedback comments, their online peer-feedback writing logs of these 20 learners were collected and analyzed.

RESULTS

Results showed that the control group students showed an average improvement of 13.1% and 14.9% on final drafts compared to the first draft during the first and fourth writing cycles, respectively, through peer feedback on their papers. Whereas, the experimental group students improved an average of 12.23% and 18.96% on their final drafts compared to the first draft during the first and fourth writing cycles, respectively, after receiving peer feedback through the online discussion boards. Hence, the experimental group students showed greater improvement on the final draft during the fourth writing essay than did the control group. Further, the results showed that the students in the experimental group received 22.9% more feedback comments than did the control group students in their fourth cycle. This also shows that experimental group participants' score improvement on the final draft in fourth writing cycle was greater than that of the control group learners'. In addition, it was noticed that experimental group learners sent and received more feedback comments through the online discussion boards than the learners in the control group. The data also showed that comparatively fewer feedback comments were provided on average by control group learners in the fourth writing cycle compared to the first essay. Conversely, experimental group learners posted significantly more comments (average +3.15 comments) for the fourth essay than for the first essay. An important aspect here to be noted is that the average final draft score for the experimental group (average score 82.5) participants in the fourth writing cycle was slightly higher than that of the control group (average score 81.9). As expected, the experimental group showed improvement; however, it seems that the improvement rate of the experimental group was not significantly higher than that of the control group. This could be due to some of the limitations of this study. Nevertheless, it can be interpreted that the students in the online discussion board setting enhanced their writing scores comparatively greater than did those in a face-to-face setting.

Additionally, the online discussion board peer-feedback language used was both more formal and more complex than the language found in the face-to-face discussions. It was found to be a general rule (or trend) in face-to-face peer feedback that learners felt a bit hesitant to directly criticize their peers' written production (Warschauer, 2013). Furthermore, the results do suggest that electronic discussion can create a good environment for fostering the use of more formal and complex language, both lexically and syntactically.

DISCUSSION

In order to maximize the benefits from online discussion board communication, it was found that there are several important factors that the instructors and the students needed to consider, including holding teachers' workshops and offering learners' feedback training sessions before starting the experiment. As Min (2008) and Liou and Peng (2009) mentioned, appropriate feedback training for learners enhances their motivation and peer-feedback

performance in an online discussion board setting. They feel well equipped and feel more confident communicating in an online setting with their peers. In addition, with some peer-feedback training, participants in the experimental group produced significantly better quality writing and obtained higher scores than those of the control group learners. As it has been noted, the experimental group learners' writing scores were slightly higher than those of the control group learners.

CONCLUSIONS

This study suggests that teachers to put traditional methods aside and take steps to help learners integrate with online resources to improve their writing. Another potentially significant aspect that distinguishes this study from earlier ones is its attempt to integrate students' EFL needs with their electronic devices. This study provides evidence of learners' positive attitudes, enhancement of their writing skills, and higher rates of incorporating peer feedback comments into text revision through online discussion-board communication. The format of this study and structured methodology suggests some important findings that support the propositions given below:

1. Most students show positive attitudes towards using computers for their writing development in the EFL context regardless of gender (male or female), computer skills (skills or unskilled at using computers or typing skills), and experience using computers.
2. There are many skills EFL learners' might gain through the use of computer-mediated communication (e.g., discussion boards, blogs) including feelings of autonomy, feelings of improvement (enhancement of learning), and an enhancement of interpersonal communication skills.
3. In addition to writing skills, students can also get a chance to enhance their skills related to the use of computers for EFL purposes, which could be a unique set of skills for some students to learn. Designing EFL classroom activities through the careful use of computers and requiring students to participate in electronic communication for classroom interaction, receive and provide peer feedback through online discussion boards, and scaffold each other through online discussion boards could provide learners with a new set of skills related to the use of computers for daily life purposes.
4. Most importantly, shy students can get a chance to gain confidence and courage while interacting with peers. The online interface provides students autonomy and equal opportunities to collaborate. This is not only helpful for their writing skills development but also for their social relationship development, possibly being beneficial for them to feel themselves as a part of the writing community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the above-mentioned findings of this study, a few recommendations are provided here that could help EFL teachers to enhance their students' learning if adopted carefully. First, online discussion board communication should be an essential part of writing class instruction as it can be used for writing class peer feedback purposes as well as providing learners a platform to demonstrate their writing skills for socializing. Second, in the present age, learners' electronic devices (e.g., smartphones, tablet PCs, computers) are part of their lives. It seems that EFL teachers could make great use of these electronic devices by incorporating them into the EFL instruction rather than considering them as a distraction in EFL classes. Third, in order to promote communicative language teaching (CLT) in EFL classes, teachers should encourage students to participate more in online discussion board communications, not only for peer feedback purposes but also for communicating with each other even outside of the classroom.

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A Review of the Research on Critical Thinking and Asian Students

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This paper provides a review of the research conducted on the issue of critical thinking and Asian students studying overseas. It begins by highlighting the broad nature of the term "critical thinking," which includes a wide range of both cognitive skills and psychological dispositions. Research shows that most of these skills and dispositions can be found in equal or greater measure in Asian culture and education, and that much of the difficulty Asian students are said to face with critical thinking when studying overseas can be put down to language factors. The paper advocates, therefore, a reframing of the debate on the issue, moving away from potentially misleading statements about criticality towards a more specific analysis of what assistance international students require when they enter Western universities.

INTRODUCTION

Over recent decades, the development of critical thinking (CT) has become an explicit goal of higher education institutions in the West. Students are expected not only to become knowledgeable in their chosen area of study but also to demonstrate abilities in analytical thinking, independent learning, creativity, and problem-solving (Halpern, 1999; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). The contention has been that, as a result of their cultural and educational backgrounds, such goals are particularly challenging for students from Asian nations (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991; Davies, 2013; Lee & Carrasquillo, 2006). As Paton (2005) has observed, "In an oft-heard expression of exasperation, academics in Australia claim that Chinese students do not partake naturally in critical thinking because of a perception of mere rote learning and the lack of overt participation in classroom discussions" (p. 1).

This paper examines this contention through a review of the literature on the topic of Asian learners and critical thinking. It begins with an explanation of how critical thinking is commonly defined, pointing out both its broad nature and its applicability to a range of different academic contexts. It then outlines the arguments made with regard to the difficulties Asian students supposedly have with CT. From there, it moves to an analysis of the evidence, reviewing studies on the relationship between Asian education and critical thinking, and on the impact of language proficiency on critical thinking and academic performance. It ends with recommendations for how the issue of Asian learners should be discussed in academic literature. It is hoped that by providing a more evidence-based analysis

of this important issue, the kind of measures required to support international students in their learning may become easier to articulate.

DEFINING CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking covers a broad range of academic and intellectual skills which are applicable to many different contexts. Halpern (1996), for example, defines it as

> thinking that is purposeful, reasoned and goal directed – the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihoods, and making decisions when the thinker is using skills that are thoughtful and effective for the particular context and type of thinking task. (p. 116)

Ennis (1987) sees CT as "reasonable, reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do" (p. 10), while Scriven and Paul (2003) argue that it is the "intellectually disciplined process of skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (p. 4).

Definitions of CT also typically include lists of dispositions that determine the degree to which people are willing to apply critical thinking to their studies and their everyday lives. Paul and Nosich (1991), for example, argue that "critical thinking entails the possession and active use of a set of traits of mind, including independence of thought, fairmindedness, intellectual humility, intellectual courage, intellectual perseverance, intellectual integrity, curiosity, confidence in reason, the willingness to see objections, to enter sympathetically into another's point of view" (p. 5).

Three significant points emerge from these definitions. The first is the fact that CT covers a wide range of abilities, including not only skills of argumentation, such as inferencing and evaluation, but also those of problem-solving and decision-making. CT is not confined, therefore, to the types of academic tasks carried out mainly in the humanities (typically essay writing and discussion); it extends also to the sciences. Siller (2001) notes, for example, that the "development of students' abilities to think critically about engineering problems and design projects is an important educational objective" (p. 108). The second point concerns the relationship between critical thinking and general intelligence. While most conceptions of CT separate the concept from raw academic ability, it is clear that intellectual competence is a key ingredient in carrying out the tasks CT is associated with. Indeed, studies have indicated a strong correlation between abilities in problem-solving and scores in math, science, and reading, indicating that general academic ability is a powerful predictor of other cognitive skills (OECD, 2014). The third point is that, contrary to the popular idea that CT is apparent most often in cut-and-thrust academic debate, most conceptions of CT actually emphasize the importance of collaboration and listening. Facione (1990), for instance, includes "open-mindedness regarding divergent world views," "understanding of the opinions of

other people," and "fair-mindedness in appraising reasoning" (p. 13) as significant CT dispositions. This collaborative element of critical thinking, aimed at arriving at truth, rather than simply winning an argument, is of relevance when we consider ideas about Asian cultural values and their impact on CT.

ASIAN VALUES AND CRITICAL THINKING DISPOSITIONS

It has become almost axiomatic within Western educational institutions that Asian students lack the critical thinking skills required for tertiary academic study. Davies (2013) argues that critical thinking and analytical skills development for international students have emerged "as top priority concerns" for Australian universities, while Egege and Kutieleh (2004) observe that Asian students "are generally perceived to be non-critical in their approach to academic texts and are considered to lack an understanding of the requirements of analysis and critique" (p. 78). These weaknesses are usually attributed to the students' cultural and educational backgrounds. Culturally, Confucian principles of deference toward authority are said to work against the skeptical and questioning attitudes expected of university students. Educationally, the widespread use of teacher-centered and exam-driven learning means that Asian students are unprepared for studying independently or carrying out original research. Gieve (1998) argues that inculcating Asian students into Western classrooms "may require a wholesale reorientation of students' cultural norms, values, beliefs, and attitudes" (p. 128).

In light of these claims, one would expect to find that Asian students show a marked disinclination towards applying principles of CT in their academic lives. In fact, however, studies of CT dispositions amongst university students have not revealed any significant differences between Asian and Western learners. Tian and Low (2011) conducted a widespread review of research on Chinese learners and critical thinking and found that, although some learners did not have positive dispositions towards CT, most gained similar scores on tests such as the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory as their Western counterparts. A number of other studies, including Jones (2005), Manalo, Watanabe, and Sheppard (2013), McBride, Xiang, Wittenburg, and Shen (2002), O'Sullivan and Guo (2010), Paton (2011), and Tiwari, Avary, and Lai (2003), also found that Asian students tended to have positive views on critical thinking, rejecting conformism and rote learning, and embracing the importance of original and critical thought. Paton (2011) concluded that "the depth and variety of thought shown in the [Chinese] students' responses indicate a remarkable level of critical thinking, which would seem to belie the strident claims by those such as Atkinson (1997) that critical thinking is the preserve of Western culture" (p. 36).

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Owing to difficulties in collecting sufficient sample sizes, there have been very few direct comparisons of critical thinking skills made between sets of learners in specific countries. In their review of research on Chinese learners, Tian and Low

(2011) could find no studies that directly tested the abilities of Mainland Chinese students, never mind ones that included a comparative element also. From the few comparative studies that have been made, it is hard to draw the conclusion that Asian students suffer in comparison to Westerners; if anything, the opposite appears to be true. A Stanford University study recently reported that Chinese freshmen on science and engineering programs had CT skills that were two or three years ahead of their peers in Russia and the United States, as measured on the Halpern Critical Thinking Assessment using Everyday Situations (Hernandez, 2016). Using the same test, Hau, Halpern, Marin-Burkhart, Ho, Ku, and Chan (2006) found that Chinese students in Hong Kong scored significantly higher than their counterparts in the United States, though they acknowledged that the Hong Kong students were recruited from a selective institution.

On a larger scale, the PISA tests conducted under the auspices of the OECD also offer some comparative data through the recently created problem-solving test, which was designed to evaluate learners' ability to solve "unstructured problems in unfamiliar contexts" (OECD, 2014, p. 44). As well as occupying the top places in the math, science, and literacy, students from Asia also scored significantly higher on the problem-solving test, with students from Singapore and Korea at the top followed by Japan and China. *The Financial Times*, in a report entitled "Countries that Excel at Problem-Solving Encourage Critical Thinking," stated that "critics of Asian education systems attribute their success in math and science to rote learning.... But the OECD's assessment suggests that schools in East Asia are developing thinking skills as well as providing a solid grounding in core subjects" (Vasagar, 2014, p. 2).

CRITICAL THINKING AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

There is, therefore, little evidence that supports the conclusion that Asian students lack critical thinking skills or dispositions, as they are conventionally defined and measured. So what can account for the difficulties they appear to face in adapting to academic life at Western universities? One very obvious answer is language proficiency. The Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. State Department ranks Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese, and Korean as the most difficult languages for English speakers to learn, given the differences in syntax, morphology, and expression. It follows, then, that for Asian students the reverse is likely to be true. The kind of academic tasks that learners are required to undertake at university, particularly in the humanities, are loaded with significant linguistic demands. Essays, for example, require students to read, synthesize, and assimilate large amounts of often complex academic material and from there to create a coherent and original argument. The advantages that a native speaker has over a non-native speaker are fairly clear.

Indeed, there is ample evidence showing how significant a handicap language proficiency is when it comes to academic performance. In a comparison of note-taking skills between L1 and L2 students in Australia, Clerehan (1995) reported that the L2 students' notes were much less comprehensive than those of the L1 students. She attributed this to their language proficiency, stating that L2 students are at a "huge disadvantage" (Clerehan, 1995, p. 145). Manalo and

Uesaka (2012) found that a lower proficiency in L2 limited the ability of students to use diagrams when explaining information, and Takano and Noda (1993) observed that speakers of Japanese performed less well on a calculation task when they carried it out in English, while native speakers of English did less well when doing the task in Japanese.

In terms of critical thinking itself, there have been similarly clear-cut findings. Clifford, Boufal, and Kurtz (2004), for example, found that verbal comprehension scores in SATs correlated positively with results in CT tests, while in a study of South African nurses, Grosser and Nel (2013) discovered "significant correlations between academic language proficiency and making inferences, as well as between academic language proficiency and critical thinking as a general competency" (p. 1). In comparisons between performances in L1 and L2, Floyd (2011) observed that Chinese students scored significantly higher in the Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal in their native language than in English, a finding that was also borne out in studies by Lun, Fischer, and Ward (2010) and Manalo, Watanabe and Sheppard (2013).

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has attempted to address the issue of Asian students and critical thinking. It has argued that, given the broad range of skills included under the umbrella of critical thinking, including problem-solving and scientific analysis, it is hard to find empirical evidence proving the assertion that Asian cultural and educational attitudes have a significantly negative effect on CT dispositions and skills. In fact, the relatively few studies based on measurable evidence appear to show that the opposite is true. Many of the difficulties Asian students face when they study at overseas universities can be traced back to the difficulty of carrying out linguistically demanding tasks in a foreign language. Greater sensitivity to the problems posed by L2 academic study could allow them to make the transition to Western universities more easily.

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Digital Flashcard Study Methods:
Teacher-Led vs. Independent Study

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Vocabulary study is a necessary part of language education that teachers often assign to students as independent work. This study focused on the use of digital flashcards to assist with vocabulary learning. While research supports the use of digital flashcards in language education, there is a paucity of research regarding the efficacy of independent study versus teacher-led flashcard study. This quantitative study took place over 12 weeks. Participants were beginner-level university students divided into three groups corresponding to the type of digital flashcard instruction they received: independent, teacher-led, and control. A paired *t*-test analysis of performance on a vocabulary exam administered pre- and post-treatment led us to the conclusion that teacher-led flashcard practice is a more effective method than independent study for increasing vocabulary knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary study is essential for improving language skills. English language exams such as the TOEiC and iBT TOEFL require students to possess a working vocabulary of 4000–4500 words to be able to score 95% or higher (Chujo & Oghigian, 2009). Additionally, students in the Republic of Korea must have advanced English vocabulary knowledge if they hope to achieve a high score on the College Scholastic Aptitude Test (Kwon, Lee, & Shin, 2017). However, there is little research on how widely implemented flashcards are as a language study method in the Republic of Korea. The focus of this research is the efficacy of flashcard study methods, specifically independent versus teacher-led study, and their impact on vocabulary test scores. This paper seeks to further the body of research on flashcard-based vocabulary instruction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Flashcards are an established form of effective vocabulary study (Basoglu & Akdemir, 2010; Komachali & Khodareza, 2012; Kornell, 2009; Nation, 2001; Nist & Joseph, 2008; Tan & Nicholson, 1997). One study found that 62% of students surveyed listed flashcards as one of the learning strategies they used on a regular

basis (Hartwig & Dunlosky, 2012). A study done in 2008 found that the majority of students preferred digital flashcard study to using paper (Nakata, 2008). There is a good chance that most students today are, in fact, using digital flashcard applications.

Smartphones are now ubiquitous and will very likely become integral tools in the language classroom. In recent years, more and more language learning applications and websites can be seen boasting their ability to assist with and sometimes substitute for language classes. One of the better-known examples, Duolingo, has had their smartphone application installed over 100,000,000 times on Android devices alone (*Duolingo: Learn Languages Free*, 2018). In addition to being able to create and practice flashcards, most applications offer their own lists of premade vocabulary. Many flashcard applications have additional features such as activities, games, and alarms to account for what research has shown to be effective methods of memory training (Green & Bailey, 2010; Wissman, Rawson, & Pyc, 2012).

Vocabulary testing has its own difficulties as there is still a debate on proper assessment. "Informed guessing" occurs when students use prior knowledge to choose an answer even though they are not confident it is correct. This is an important strategy for taking tests that penalize incorrect responses (Nation, 2012). The inclusion of an "I don't know" option discourages "informed guessing" and leads to more accurate assessment of student vocabulary knowledge for tests that do not penalize incorrect responses (Lucovich, 2014; Zhang, 2013). Pretests and posttests should be structured very similarly and test identical terms to get an accurate sense of student progress (Schmitt, 1994).

METHOD

Participants

The participants of our study were freshman students enrolled in a required first-year English course. There were six classes, which were grouped based on their mean pretest scores so that each group had similar total averages. There was a total of three groups: two experimental and one control.

Procedure

The experiment was conducted over the course of twelve weeks in a single semester. During the first week, the students took a 100-item multiple-choice vocabulary pretest. In order to discourage guessing, we included an "I don't know" option for each item on the pre- and posttests (Zhang, 2013). As the goal of our assessment was to assess improvement, we followed previously established guidelines and made simple multiple-choice tests using vocabulary lists available to all students (Schmitt, 1994). After the pretest, the class averages were determined, and the highest and lowest scoring classes were combined to create the three different groups with similar mean pretest scores.

The digital flashcards were introduced to the test groups following the pretest. For this study, we elected to use the application Quizlet as it has a feature that

allows teachers to monitor student progress. As the semester progressed, the items present in the new lesson were added together with all items and studied in one sitting. This method, known as "spacing," is more effective than studying groups of items separately (Kornell, 2009). During each of the following ten weeks, ten items from the pretest were introduced through the standard course curriculum. By the eleventh week, students were introduced to all 100 items. The posttest consisted of the same 100 items organized in a different order from the pretest. It was administered during the twelfth and final week of the study.

The first experimental group was the teacher-led flashcard group. For these classes, the teacher went over the vocabulary together with the students using the flashcard app until all items were understood. This was determined by whether every student in the class could respond correctly to the item in question. If students were unable to respond with the correct corresponding definition, the item was added back into the mix until all items were correctly identified. The second experimental group was the independent flashcard study group. Students in this group were required to join an online class set up by the instructor. Students were then instructed to follow the same method of flashcard study as the teacher-led group and practice their vocabulary until they could correctly identify all items in one sitting. Students were required to complete this study once per week. Their progress was monitored through the app's teacher function. The two control group classes received no extra vocabulary instruction outside of the regular course curriculum. Any students who did not complete both the pretest and posttest were omitted from the study.

Data Analysis

We compared the pretest and posttest results of each group using a paired *t*-test to determine the *p*-value. Our null hypothesis for each experimental group was "increased vocabulary study through digital flashcards outside of the standard curriculum would not affect student posttest scores." Our alternative hypothesis was "increased vocabulary study through digital flashcards would affect student posttest scores."

RESULTS

TABLE 1. Pretest and Posttest Means with Standard Deviations and Paired *t*-Test Results

	Teacher-Led (25 Students)	Independent Study (9 Students)	Control (25 Students)
Pretest Mean	71 ± 16.01	71 ± 12.06	72 ± 17.66
Posttest Mean	90 ± 8.46	88 ± 10.53	76 ± 14.53
p-value	0.000006	0.005	0.08

After omitting students who did not take both the pretest and posttest, the teacher-led group had 25 students, the independent study group had 9 students, and the control group had 22 students. A summary of the groups' mean pretest and posttest scores as well as the *p*-values from the paired *t*-tests can be seen in

Table 1. Figure 1 presents the mean scores of each group on the pretest and the posttest.

An analysis of each group's *p*-value was done using paired *t*-tests to determine the effect of digital flashcard use on vocabulary learning. We set alpha at 0.05. A *p*-value of less than 0.05 meant that the results rejected the null hypothesis and instead supported the alternative hypothesis. As can be seen in Table 1, the *p*-values for both experimental groups were less than 0.05, which led us to reject the null hypothesis. Statistically speaking, teacher-led vocabulary teaching and independent study of vocabulary both led to a significant increase in posttest scores compared to the control group.
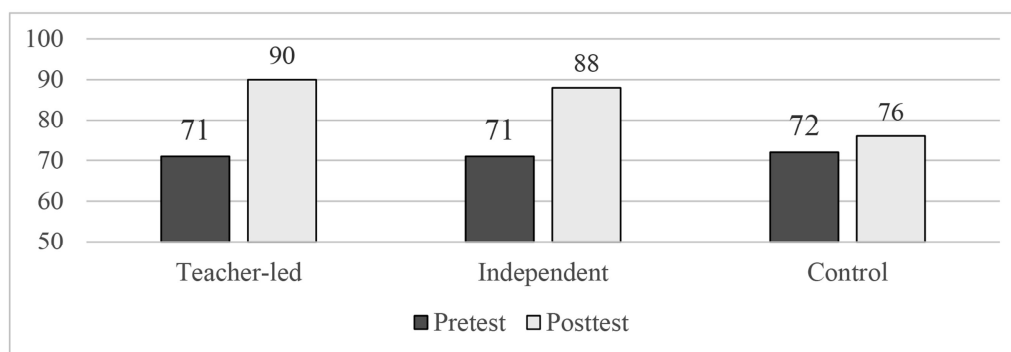
FIGURE 1. Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores for Each Group.

DISCUSSION

Limitations

The most significant limitation of this study is the number of participants. The teacher-led and control groups each had 25 students, but the independent study group only had nine participants complete the study. Another limitation is the scope of the vocabulary test. While we added ten new items each week and tested 100 vocabulary items, most high school and university students encounter many more new vocabulary words each week. A final limitation is the age of the participants. As our students were all university freshman, it is difficult to say these methods would yield similar results for younger students.

Implications

Both experimental treatments resulted in improved scores on the posttest. This supports the idea that increased exposure to vocabulary directly correlates with an improvement on vocabulary assessment tests. Practically speaking, with a little additional preparation before a course, teachers will be able to boost their students' scores on any vocabulary-heavy exam. Furthermore, the teacher-led instruction group was reportedly easier for the instructor to manage as they did not have to monitor individual student progress each week. If an instructor

encounters a particularly motivated student, setting them on the path of weekly independent flashcard study should be a suggested vocabulary study strategy.

This study leaves the door open for follow-up research to further explore and refine our findings. First of all, the same study could be replicated using the same methods with a larger number of participants. Second, additional questions could be included with the posttest to gather qualitative data on student opinion regarding flashcard study. Third, a study into the efficacy of a digital flashcard application's additional activities and games could prove promising for educators looking to integrate MALL into their curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Students who spent time studying with the digital flashcards outperformed their peers who were given no additional vocabulary instruction. Both independent and teacher-led flashcard study proved to be effective methods of improving vocabulary test scores. The teacher-led method requires less time to implement as it does not require teachers to monitor whether or not students complete flashcard study outside of class. The data collected supports the integration of flashcards into language classes. This is especially true for students planning to take vocabulary-heavy language examinations.

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Student Perceptions of Bilingual Children's Storybooks

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As a part of the National Literacy Movement in Indonesia, the study aims to describe elementary school students' perception on (a) the practice of English learning and storybook reading in the classroom and (b) identify criteria of bilingual child storybooks for language learning. The participants were 146 elementary school students in urban and rural areas of West Java, Indonesia. Designed as mix-method research, the quantitative data included Likert-scale questionnaires while the qualitative data included interviews that were coded by replicating methods introduced in Creswell (2014). The findings revealed positive perceptions on the criteria of integrating a character-based story into a bilingual storybook.

INTRODUCTION

As a part of the National Literacy Movement in Indonesia (see for example, Ahmade & Yulianto, 2017), reading literacy is essential for child development. Literacy is no longer limited to reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Bainbridge & Chawner, 2012). It includes the ability to cope with multimodal texts in which each genre has its own stages or schematic structure (Eggins, 2004). Bearne (2009) argues that texts depend on spatial cohesion. The cohesion in moving image texts is often created by a variety of visual effects such as repeated motifs, close-ups effect, and mid-to-long shots; choices of setting, color, placing, and intensity of light; sound effects and refrains, and repetitions of these effects to support the text (Bearne, 2009). Therefore, reading requires more than a process of memorizing words or letter sounds. For this reason, the implementation of literacy needs to provide more spaces for children to explore their world by considering multimodality theory.

BACKGROUND

The birth of educational empowerment in Indonesia owes its origins to literacy. For instance, Raden Ajeng Kartini (1879–1904) gained recognition from her writings on sympathy towards locals, woman empowerment, and criticism of colonialism (Yudiono, 2010). Ki Hajar Dewantara promoted literacy through a Javanese educational movement called Taman Siswa. Though these contributions are helpful, the development of literacy learning in Indonesia has not reached its full potential. In 2012, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO) reported that the Indonesian reading index was 0.0001, meaning that there is only one person out of one thousand people who has the ability to comprehend written texts (Anggraini, 2017). The 2011 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), an international assessment of reading literacy for children, reported that Indonesian children ranked 41st out of 45 countries (Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Drucker, 2012). In another study, Indonesian students ranked 64th in the 2015 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA; OECD, 2018). A more recent study by Central Connecticut State University reported Indonesia to be the second-least literate nation in a study comprised of sixty-one countries (CCSU, 2016). Taufiq Ismail, an Indonesian poet and activist, accurately described the lack of interest in reading among Indonesian youth as *tragedi nol buku* or "the zero book tragedy" (Irsyad, 2015).

To address this issue, previous scholarship on this topic has been mainly concerned with how students perceive different English teaching strategies and approaches, but it has neglected to adequately understand whether such strategies are effective from a student's perspective. One explanation for this gap in the literature is that many children lack access to bilingual storybooks in Indonesia. Consequently, many ELT teachers are unclear on what exactly constitutes an effective storybook for young learners. Whether these books can be an effective tool in addressing literacy issues mentioned above remains unclear. Drawing from the perceptions of young learners, the purpose of this study is to identify bilingual storybook criteria necessary for literacy development and language learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Child Storybook Criteria for Reading Activities

Researchers have developed criteria involving multimodality features in storybooks to help children understand the meaning of English texts. Smallwood (1988) points out three aspects: (a) whether the storybooks help meet the curriculum, (b) whether the content is appropriate, and (c) whether the illustrations enhance the reader's ability to understand and interest in the book. Storybooks usually contain two types of text, visual and verbal. When these texts tell the same story, they will support a context for language learning (Mourao, 2009). For example, Salas, Lucido, and Canales (2002) and Mart (2012) suggest characters should own authenticity without being stereotyped. They have to be equivalent to physical, social, and emotional attributes. For the setting, consistency is required in either a historical or contemporary setting. Whiteshide (2007) argues that the illustrations, gender roles, and information should be accurate and reliable. The selection should also incorporate authentic interaction between characters within a cultural group or between two or more cultural groups. It goes without saying that an objective for including members of a "minority" group should be a deliberate one. For context extension, the criteria include comprehensible input and language that is at the right cognitive and linguistic level for the language learner, so that the output is more structured (Steinbeck, 2008). The selection of culture should promote reflection, critical analysis, and response. In sum, the language, content, the visual and moral

lessons of the stories should be given prominent evaluation in designing storybooks for children.

Bilingualism in Storybooks

To help teachers select appropriate bilingual storybooks, Brown (2004) claims that children's literature should provide students exposure to new vocabulary presented in context with illustrations. Brown encourages teachers to provide repetition of keywords and phrases that students can master and to provide a sense of accomplishment. Additionally, teachers can help their students discover the differences among languages, and thus, improve their metalinguistic skills (Robertson, 2006). Another factor to consider is whether the additional language is at the same reading level as the English text (Salas, Lucido, & Canales, 2002). In a study of Chinese storybooks, Huang and Chen (2016) found inconsistencies in the level of Chinese compared to the level of English in the books, which limited the effectiveness of the storybooks. As noted above, Indonesian bilingual storybooks are rare, so the findings of this study could lend a valuable contribution to the literature.

METHOD

The participants (N = 146) included rural and urban Indonesian students enrolled in English classes that followed the National Literacy Movement curriculum. As a mixed-methods study, the data was derived through three methods: observational analysis, a survey, and semi-structured interviews. To investigate the students' perception, quantitative data was gathered from a Likert-scale questionnaire adapted from Ockert (2005). Data from the questionnaire was analyzed statistically using Microsoft Excel 2010. The 20 questions in the questionnaire were calculated using descriptive statistics to measure central tendency. For the qualitative section of the research, the interview data was transcribed and analyzed following the methods introduced in Creswell (2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results presented in this section focus on two central themes: (a) English learning and story reading practice in the classroom and (b) character value criteria of bilingual storybooks for children.

English Learning and Story Reading Practice in the Classroom

The data was presented in 10 items consisting of positive and negative views of English learning and storybook reading in the classroom. The data was analyzed using a two-point Likert scale: 1 = yes, 2 = no. The language in this questionnaire was simplified to accommodate the students' level of English.

TABLE 1. Participant's Perception on the English and Story Reading Practice in Their School

No.	Questions	Mean	Yes (%)	No (%)
1	Do you find learning English at your school to be fun?	1.10	90.4	9.6
2	Do you learn English at school only from a textbook?	1.78	21.9	78.1
3	Has your teacher ever read a storybook in your class?	1.60	34.9	65.1
4	Has your teacher ever told a (fairytale) story in your English class?	1.65	40.4	59.6
5	Have you ever read a storybook together with friends and the teacher in the class?	1.12	87.7	12.3
6	Do you like reading English storybooks?	1.29	70.5	29.5
7	Do you like reading English picture storybooks?	1.09	91.1	8.9
8	Does your teacher ever use a bilingual storybook in your class? (For example, Bahasa and English)	1.43	56.8	43.2
9	Do you want your teacher to teach you English by using a bilingual storybook?	1.29	70.5	29.5
10	If your teacher uses a bilingual storybook, does it encourage you to read more?	1.12	87.7	12.3

As shown in Table 1, the findings reveal that a considerable majority of respondents expressed positive perceptions on the practice of English learning and storybook reading in the classroom. With a mean of 1.10, the majority of the respondents (90.4%) found English learning in their school to be fun. At the same time, however, the mean value of 1.60 reveals that most of them (65.1%) had never experienced story reading in the classroom before. In fact, 59.6% of the participants reported that they had never heard their teachers tell fairytales. This is consistent with testimony from a rural area student:

> We learn from worksheets only. We usually answer multiple-choice questions on the worksheet. We do not have any reading activity before starting the lesson in the morning. Reading stories is fun. The story can be interesting. Reading textbooks are only used for memorizing. [Translation from interview, female fifth-grade student from rural area school, March 18, 2017]

Although the National Literacy Movement is well intended in theory, findings in this study suggest that there needs to be improvement in the way it is being delivered in practice. As this excerpt shows, this student did not have an opportunity for daily free reading activities; instead her English class as comprised mainly of memorizing and multiple-choice answer worksheets. In contrast, their perception of storybook reading is high. Most of the participants reported that they liked reading storybooks in English (70.5%) and storybooks with pictures (91.1%). This result indicates that teachers would be wise to provide students more opportunities for storybook reading.

Character Value Criteria of Bilingual Storybooks for Children

The data presented in Table 2 includes ten items consisting of positive and negative views of bilingual storybook criteria and character values. The data was

analyzed using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, and 4 = strongly disagree.

TABLE 2. Participant's Perception on the Character Values Criteria

No.	Statements	Mean	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
1	The storybook used in the classroom was written in bilingual language (e.g., English and Indonesian language).	1.79	31.51	60.27	6.16	2.05
2	The characters in the bilingual storybook are familiar (e.g., a farmer, a grandfather, a school student, etc.).	1.77	36.99	52.05	8.22	2.74
3	The characters in the bilingual storybook are original (e.g., not a character taken from a commercial TV series or cartoon movie).	2.10	32.88	32.88	26.03	8.22
4	The stories in the bilingual storybook are short.	2.50	16.44	24.66	51.37	7.53
5	The bilingual storybook includes local culture values.	1.60	51.37	39.73	6.16	2.74
6	The bilingual storybook helps students learn how to make friends.	1.62	47.95	43.84	6.16	2.05
7	The characters in the story are not gender biased (e.g., a female character is not portrayed only for sweeping, washing dishes, doing laundry, etc.).	1.99	29.45	50.68	10.96	8.90
8	The bilingual storybook helps students learn the importance of keeping the environment clean.	1.50	58.22	36.99	1.37	3.42
9	The bilingual storybook helps students learn introspection and self-reflection.	1.95	34.25	44.52	13.70	7.53
10	The bilingual storybook helps students learn responsibility.	1.45	60.27	34.93	4.79	0.00

With a mean of 1.79, Item 1 revealed that the majority of respondents (60.27%) responded that storybooks used in the classroom included both English and an Indonesian language. The majority of the respondents (52.05%) agreed that the characters were familiar figures such as a farmer, a grandfather, or a school student. Illustrations, gender issues, and the subject culture should be authentic and original (Whiteside, 2007). By using familiar characters, storybooks can have a stronger appeal to the students. Yet, at the same time, respondents reported that bilingual storybooks lacked original characters: 26.03% and 8.22% disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively, on the notion that bilingual storybooks included original characters. This suggests that students may prefer storybooks with more contemporary characters from television or popular culture.

For local culture integration, the results from the questionnaire demonstrated positive perceptions from the respondents: 51.37% of respondents strongly agreed that storybooks should incorporate local culture aspects. The following response illustrates one participant's perspective to further validate this observation:

It will be fun, because we can know the local culture around us. I like [the] book about food and traditional dances, like the *merak* dance. There is also a storybook about Sundanese food. We can learn about people. I strongly agree because it has been common for girls to do that (house chores, cooking, etc.), so it will be a great help. [Translation from interview, female student from an urban area school, April 4, 2017]

In addition to cultural integration, respondents also identified character values as an important criterion of bilingual storybooks. As shown in Table 2, 47.95% of students strongly agreed that storybooks helped them form friendships in the classroom. Equally important, 80.13% of the students reported that storybooks should include issues, such as gender bias. Themes should promote bilingualism, promote multicultural awareness, and address a common topic (Huang & Chen, 2016). Consistent with this observation, the responses viewed that having a story where girls do the house chores was familiar. The urban area female student in the interview above said that "it will be a great help." *Help*, in this case, refers to assistance from male members of her family with the house chores. Storybooks that include this criterion would be a positive example for the children. A sizeable majority either strongly agreed (34.25%) or agreed (44.25) that storybooks help students learn through introspection and self-reflection. Lastly, most of the respondents (60.27%) strongly agreed that the bilingual storybooks should integrate values of responsibility. In an interview, one respondent claimed that "being responsible is a good behavior," meaning that responsibility values should be specifically integrated into the story. In conclusion, multicultural awareness, gender equality, self-reflection, social interaction, and values of responsibility are important criteria to consider when choosing storybooks for young children.

CONCLUSIONS

For the National Literacy Movement, activities to promote reading literacy usually take place before the class begins, often not lasting longer than ten minutes. In general, the bilingual storybook has to provide an adequate story that students can read in this limited time. To save time and money, several stories could be compiled into one volume. For this new policy, the criteria of bilingual child storybooks for reading literacy are varied in many aspects. Students also considered values of multicultural awareness, gender equality, self-reflection, social interaction and values of responsibility as important criteria. Further research in a larger context could shed light on understanding the relationships between these criteria.

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Student Perceptions of Bilingual Children's Storybooks

Emergent Culture in a Language Exchange Community

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This study examines the topic of small cultures through an analysis of a conversation in a language exchange group. Using symbolic interactionist theory, I explain how a group constructed shared attitudes by describing the concept of drugs of terms of action as well as the implications of attitudes and perspective taking for inclusion in a group.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Any teacher who has been asked to teach a class about culture knows the difficulty in addressing such a complex topic. To me, one of the most interesting aspects of culture is the topic of values and how they arise. Psychologically, these can be called attitudes (Bohner, 2011). This study examines how attitudes are negotiated and converge in group conversation. In other words, this article examines how members of a group created "culturally shared memories and evaluations of the world" (Echterhoff, Higgins, & Levine, 2009, p. 515).

This study draws much of its inspiration from Holliday (1999). In this article, the author describes two contrasting notions of culture. In the commonplace sense of the word, called "large culture," a culture comprises the essential qualities of a group of people organized into nations, language groups, or ethnicities (Holliday, 1999, p. 241). Thus, one can speak of "Korean culture" and "American culture." The other sense, which Holliday contrastingly calls "small culture," indicates the culture of relatively small social groups, such as a group of classmates. In this sense, culture is less a set of essential attributes and more a collaborative process of meaning-making (p. 248). This study, then, is motivated by the calls of Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman (2004) and others (e.g., Chiu & Hong, 2006) for a process-oriented analysis of culture.

In this paper, I examine the negotiation of attitudes in a small language exchange group. Psychologically, an attitude, simply defined, is an evaluation of an object, including people, things, groups, and ideas (Bohner, 2011, p. 392). However, there is some disagreement among psychologists regarding to what extent it can be said that consistent attitudes exist in individual minds. Although some psychologists view attitudes as relatively stable states held in memory (e.g., Petty, Brinol, & DeMarree, 2007), others (e.g., Schwartz, 2007) see attitudes as constructed in situations.

The constructionist view of attitude aligns with Blumer's (1969) critique of the study of attitudes. From this point of view, the attitude that an individual expresses in a discussion is merely an "initial bid" (Blumer, 1969, p. 97). More

important than what an individual may, to whatever extent, carry an attitude in mind is the process of interpretation and definition through which meaning is created (Blumer, 1969). This notion of contextually shifting meaning is consistent with modern social constructionism, as well, in which meaning is seen as contextual (Burr, 1995, p. 63). Considering this background, the present study has explored the following questions:

1. How do members of a group discuss and converge on attitudes?
2. In other words, how does a shared small culture arise from social interaction?

PARTICIPANTS AND METHODS

This paper is an analysis of a conversation between four participants I recorded and transcribed: "Hyeyoon" (Korean woman), "Jimin" (Korean woman), "Taeho" (Korean man), and "Alice" (American woman). (All names have been changed for anonymity.) These participants were members in a weekly language exchange group in Korea, which met as part of a language school. Outside of these weekly meetings, the participants did not know each other well or spend much time with each other. Each week, Hyeyoon, the group leader chosen by school management, selected a topic for discussion, and members of the group were provided with a list of questions based on the topic. On the day of this study, I distributed handouts on a topic of my own choosing: drugs (see Appendix A). I selected this topic to encourage disagreement among members of the group. During the talk, I was present in the room, participating in a different group discussion, and the group was left to manage the talk themselves, with Hyeyoon acting as group leader.

FINDINGS

After examining the data, the picture which emerged was that members negotiated their attitudes toward concepts through defining the properties of these concepts by talking about action, and that these attitudes had implications for being accepted by other group members. In this study, I found several different kinds of action by which the concept of drugs was described by members of the language exchange group. Below are some excerpts of speech in which the speaker described being the actor in a situation. In the following excerpt, Hyeyoon responds to question 3 on the handout: "Are coffee and chocolate drugs"? (See Appendix B for transcription conventions.)

Hyeyoon: I think no. (mm) (2)
Taeho: but this the truth!
Hyeyoon: yes!
Taeho: and not not drugs@
Jimin: kind of food.
Hyeyoon: but it contains caffeine!

Alice: uh huh
Hyeyoon: I think that is not a drug cuz I drink a coffee every day and eat
            chocolate everything
Alice: @@
Hyeyoon: i eat chocolate everything! i really like chocolate!

Here, Hyeyoon indicates that the concepts of coffee and chocolate cannot be categorized as "drug," because, based on her self-described actions of eating chocolate and drinking coffee, to do so would indirectly categorize her as a drug user. Later, however, Alice went on to list their addictive properties from her firsthand experience.

Alice: last month I tried to stop eating chocolate,
Hyeyoon: mm mm?
Alice: but I started getting headaches every day.
Hyeyoon: o::h.
Alice: I yeah. and so I started eating chocolate again@@

This conversation continued with more discussion about the adverse effects of chocolate and coffee (Hyeyoon: "one day I didn't drank didn't drink a cup of coffee, in the morning? at that day, I feel very not calm down"), though Jimin denied that they should be classified as drugs ("uh I think too. I love to chocolate@@@ and coffee [...] it's not drugs, like"). At the end of the conversation, Alice maintained a distinction between coffee, chocolate, and drugs, claiming that "it's not still not the same" since, hypothetically, someone consuming chocolate or coffee would "have to eat way more than like with alcohol and cigarettes." After a four-second pause, the members seemed to have exhausted the discussion, or were perhaps unwilling to pursue the debate in further depth, so Taeho changed the topic ("ok next?"). So in the end, the members agreed that chocolate and coffee share with drugs the property of addictive, though they are not as harmful and therefore a somewhat different category.

Another kind of action used to describe the concept of drugs was hypothetical or possible action. For example, Jimin mentioned that "illegal drug (2) mm. is dangerous drugs. such as when we: take some drug? we might uh (2) we might act @@ in a way that do do harmful others." By describing the act of using illegal drugs as potentially leading to harm, Jimin indicates a negative attitude toward illegal drugs. They also told anecdotes about actions they observed or heard about. Near the beginning of the group discussion, Hyeyoon brought up her experience observing drug use.

Hyeyoon: before— uh before I went to uh Ger— uh— Europe, I think I thought
            drug is really really bad for humans health?
Alice: mm.
Hyeyoon: but after— after: came back in Korea, (1) my min— my think— my
            thought is little bit changed
Alice: mm
Hyeyoon: so not really bad— bad one, (just) if someone: need to have— need to
            have a drug? i think it's (1) ok. (8) (how about you)
Taeho: in Korea uh the drug program is (1) uh not serious?

Alice: mm.
Taeho: other— other than drinks

Here, Hyeyoon is citing her experience to support her claim that drug use is not as bad as she had previously thought, based on her observations in Europe. After stating her attitude toward drugs, eight seconds of silence pass, and she attempts to elicit the opinions of the other members, her quiet tone seemingly indicative of a lack of confidence. Taeho responds tangentially, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with her question. This lack of engagement with Hyeyoon's relatively accepting stance toward drugs seems significant. Why are the other members reticent? Perhaps they were not sure what to say. On the one hand, if they agree with Hyeyoon, they accept her as a member of the group. (I observed that in this conversation, overall, there was far more agreeing than disagreeing). Yet because her stance, which opposes the attitude that the other members listening to her might expect of their peers about drug use, agreeing here could risk some loss of acceptance from the other members of the group. At this early point in the conversation, the members had not clearly established a set of shared norms, so taking either stance would be risky. Insofar as talking about action is a way of expressing an accepting or rejecting attitude toward that action, attitudes are used to describe and create norms about the actions considered acceptable in the group versus the unacceptable actions that could jeopardize one's relationships with other members. The following passage further illustrates the relationship between actions, attitudes, and in-group status.

Alice: but this is me just being close minded. because I also don't like people who go there <to a hookah bar> either.
Hyeyoon: mm:.
Alice: so like if I knew people who went there? like then I just don't talk to them anymore.
Hyeyoon: mm.
Alice: so that's kind of how I feel about marijuana too. like if it were made legal it wouldn't affect me. because I don't do it now. never have done it. Wouldn't associate with anyone whether it was legal or not. so it doesn't matter@ to@ me@
Hyeyoon: @@

Here, the act of using a hookah or marijuana is, for Alice, unacceptable, and she explicitly states the out-group status of such practitioners. Attitudes towards practices, therefore, imply attitudes toward practitioners. Because of this, members have to be aware of others' perspectives about acceptable actions, since when they talk about their own actions and attitudes, their membership in the group is as stake. When members of a group understand other members' perspectives, they can position themselves as moral, be more likable (Pinel, Long, Landau, Alexander, & Pyszczynski, 2006), and fit in.

One of the ways people position themselves to fit in with a group is social tuning. Social tuning means taking the audience's attitude into account and adjusting a message to fit (Bohner, 2011, p. 409). Incidentally, when people do this, the attitudes they have stored in memory can be affected by the saying-is-believing effect (Higgins & Rholes, 1978). According to this idea, the

evaluations of an object that research subjects express and later retrieve from memory are affected by the evaluations they communicated to an audience. So it could be inferred that how the members talk about the concept of drugs in this conversation could carry over to another conversation. In the excerpt below, we can see social tuning by a slight revision of Hyeyoon's stance toward alcohol use.

Hyeyoon: so it's very important to: (1) control the limitation
Taeho: mm.
Hyeyoon: i think. (2)
Jimin: uh i think so.
Hyeyoon: mm.
Jimin: that is too difficult.
Hyeyoon: yes! It's really difficult!

If Hyeyoon would have responded differently in the last line, such as by saying, "it's not difficult," this could suggest to Jimin that Hyeyoon sees her as potentially breaking a norm, as being someone who cannot control herself when drinking alcohol. Thus, in expressing a contrary attitude, there would be a risk of putting distance between herself and the other group member. However, she gives an agreeable response, taking the other member's perspective into account.

As the talk went on, members were able to refer to the common ground that had been established. Below is an example of a member of the language exchange group affirming an aspect of the concept of drugs that had been previously explored by the group. The question from the handout was "What are some very dangerous drugs and are any drugs not dangerous?"

Hyeyoon: well (4)
Alice: hmm.
Hyeyoon: I think (2) almost all kinds of drugs is very dangerous for people but like chocolate or coffee?
Alice: mhmm.
Hyeyoon: it's (1) not really dangerous.

After some initial hesitation, Hyeyoon settles on responding with the previously described attitude the members of the group seemed to agree upon. In a limited way, by mentioning this attitude again and reinforcing it, she is building up a norm in the group's small culture. This follows Sperber's (1996) observation that "those representations which are repeatedly communicated and mentally transformed in the process will end up belonging to the culture" (p. 88).

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has been an examination of how aspects of a small culture emerge from group talk. A small culture comprises the "understandings connected with group cohesion" (Holliday, 1999, p. 248) that members actively use "to form rules and meanings in collaboration with others" (Holliday, 1999, p. 248). These understandings depend on perspective-taking. The importance of perspective-taking has been noted by many researchers of culture. Socialization depends on

perspective-taking (Blumer, 1969, pp. 76–77). It "makes a group or society" (Gillespie & Cornish, 2009, p. 42) and is the "mark of cultural knowledge" (Shaules, 2015, pp. 159–160) that "allows people with diverse cultural backgrounds to understand each other" (Chiu & Hong, 2006, p. 323). As social creatures, perspective-taking is crucial to our existence (Baumeister, 2011). In the conversation analyzed here, members shared perspectives by describing the concept of drug in terms of action. This allowed them to bring their opinions into alignment as a fairly unified attitude toward drugs and, further, to describe actions as acceptable and unacceptable by group standards.

There was also a quickness to agree among members and a reluctance to explore a topic in depth. I speculate that because the members in this group did not know each other outside their weekly language exchange meetings, they were not confident in their understanding of their peers' perspectives.

How free a student of English might feel to express ideas could depend on how much confidence they have in understanding others' perspectives. In the talk I analyzed, the pauses and the topics that were not explored in depth could be attributed to an uncertainty about the other members' perspectives; that is, a lack of cultural knowledge. As English teachers, we could empower our students to express themselves by helping them understand the perspectives of other people. Min (1993) contains some examples of things Americans sometimes do that could be hard for Koreans to understand (and vise versa), such as "Praise their family members in public" (p. 122). In a class with an objective to teach American culture, a discussion why some Americans do this and those other perspectives about politeness could help expand students' cultural knowledge about different ideas of politeness.

The study is limited in that it is an analysis of one conversation. In the future, more examination of perspective-taking, not only by looking at more conversations, but also through interviews and other kinds of data, could expand on the findings presented here.

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APPENDIX A

Conversation Handout

Drugs

"Without them (psychedelics [환각제]), I might never have discovered [발견하다] that there was an inner landscape [경치] of mind worth exploring [탐험하다]."
— Sam Harris, writer and neuroscientist [신경 과학자]

"All drugs are a waste of time. They destroy [멸하다] your memory and your self-respect [자존심] and everything that goes along with with your self-esteem [자아 존중감]. They're no good at all."
— Kurt Cobain, singer of the band Nirvana

What Are Drugs?
1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word "drug"? Give some examples.
2. Are alcohol and cigarettes drugs?
3. Are coffee and chocolate drugs?
4. What is the difference between a "legal [적법한] drug" a "prescription [처방] drug" and an "illegal [불법한] drug"?
5. What are some very dangerous drugs? Are any drugs not dangerous?
6. Read the quotations above. What's your opinion?

The Law
7. Why do people start to use drugs?
8. Are some legal substances [물질] more dangerous than illegal substances?
9. Should some legal substances be made illegal?
10. Should some illegal substances be made legal?
11. Some states in the US have legalized marijuana consumption. What is your opinion?
12. Should doctors be allowed to prescribe marijuana for sick people? Why or why not?
13. How should society deal with drug users and sellers?

Employment
14. Professional athletes [프로 운동 선수] have to do drug testing. Some companies also do drug tests on employees. What's your opinion?

Adapted from *Drugs: Conversation questions* (2017, August 17)

APPENDIX B

Transcription Conventions

Adapted from Bucholtz (2007, p. 804).

.	end of intonation unit; falling intonation
,	end of intonation unit; fall-rise intonation
?	end of intonation unit; rising intonation
–	self-interrupted intonation unit
underline	emphatic stress; increased amplitude
@	laughter
:	lengthened syllable
(1)	pause, measured in approximate seconds
( )	phrase spoken more quietly than the speaker's surrounding utterances
< >	transcriber comment

Does Being "Globally Minded" Facilitate English Learning in University Students?

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In a program designed to motivate and globalize young freshmen, ten first-year university students were selected from four hundred to take part in an eight-day language and culture course held at a university in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in September 2017. Two aspects of the program were evaluated: (a) the progress students showed in their English language ability and (b) their attitude, awareness, and acceptance of globalization. The first was carried out by conducting pretests and posttests of conversational language ability. The extent to which students had become globally minded was similarly assessed by an instrument based on measuring foreign language anxiety, which evaluated avoidance tendencies, interest in international vocations or activities, communication apprehension, and changes in perspective after visiting a foreign country. Results show that students who took part in the program showed a significant short-term increase in English communication skills, and a greater willingness to be aware of other foreign cultures and languages.

BACKGROUND

From 2013, the Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT) has been both consciously and actively trying to improve the English ability of Japanese students from elementary school through to university. In a report published the same year, MEXT (2013) noted that "amid ongoing globalization, the development of students' proficiency in English, a common international language, is crucial for Japan's future." In another report (MEXT 2014), they also added that "in order to promote the establishment of an educational environment which corresponds to globalization ... MEXT is working to enhance English education." This has resulted in educational institutions making concerted efforts to improve perceived English language ability of students and greater access to monies aimed at increasing globalization through overseas exchanges and study programs.

In such an environment, beginning in the 2016 academic year and continuing in 2017, Hokkaido Information University (HIU) implemented a new short-term study-abroad program aimed at motivating and globalizing young freshmen. From the annual 2017 intake of four-hundred first-year university students, 10 were selected and given the opportunity to take part in an eight-day language and culture course held at a university in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Students were selected from the top two English classes based on five criteria; placement test scores, written composition, interviews, teacher recommendations, and attendance records. Of those chosen, 6 were male, 4 were female, and ages ranged from 18

to 19, with a median and modal age of 19 and mean of 19 years 1 month. The cost was largely covered by the university and a quasi-governmental grant, but students also contributed approximately 30 percent of the cost.

Two aspects of the program were evaluated: measurable changes in the participant's English language ability and differences resulting from changing perceptions related to elements of global awareness. The former was carried out by administering pretests and posttests of conversational language ability. The test used was the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview – Computer (OPIc), a computer-administered test that typically takes 30 to 40 minutes. Student changes in terms of their global awareness were similarly assessed by a pilot survey administered both before and after the program, which investigated students' intercultural avoidance tendencies, interest in international activities, and communication apprehension. Results indicated that half of the students who took part in the program demonstrated a significant short-term increase in English communication skills. Similarly, almost all participants exhibited a greater awareness of foreign cultures and languages.

DEFINITIONS

The idea of globalization or "global mindedness" is a much bandied-about expression. While MEXT reports (2013, 2014) do not seem to explicitly define what they mean by the term, much of the language or rhetoric found in reports uses such phrases as "with an eye to the year 2020 in which the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games will be held" (MEXT, 2014), equating globalization with showcasing the country as international on the world stage. Furthermore, in an earlier outline published in 2013, "Five Recommendations on the English Education Reform Plan Responding to the Rapid Globalization," the word *global* only appears five times from beginning to end.

The Global Awareness Society, an academic organization based in North America that publishes a peer-reviewed journal, sees the goals of global awareness as "promot(ing) awareness of the diversity of cultures," "enhanc(ing) our understanding of the political, economic, social, demographic, technological, and environmental issues" and "promot(ing) mutual understanding and appreciation for one another" (GASI, 2017). The Japan Association for Global Competence Education (J-AGCE), established in 2013, stresses English in globalization, noting "the world has become globalized, ... but while progressing towards such globalization, English proficiency is lagging behind" (Takeuchi, 2017, p. 1). Katsumata (2016, p. 1) poignantly adds, "the problem (for educators) has moved from "'how to enhance intercultural understanding and intercultural communication skills' to 'being active rather than passive.'"

Taking elements from the two bodies, we define "globally minded," as expressed in this paper, as being aware of diverse cultures and being willing to actively improve and enhance understanding of issues uniquely relating to countries other than one's own.

RESEARCH METHOD, INSTRUMENTS, AND PARTICIPANTS

From a total of four hundred first-year students, 10 students were chosen from the top two English classes (around 60 students) based on five criteria: class placement test scores (first-year classes are streamed), written composition (motivation for wanting to participate in the program in Malaysia), interviews (conducted in English), faculty recommendation (either of two English teachers whose classes the students are enrolled in, or homeroom teacher), and attendance record (students with poor attendance records being disqualified). Six male and four female students were offered the chance to participate in the program, all of whom accepted. The program was conducted at University College Sedaya International (UCSI) in Kuala Lumpur, and lasted eight days, from September 3 to 11, as per the requirements of the sponsoring quasi-governmental body, JASSO (the Japan Student Services Organization, established by MEXT). JASSO covered 70 percent of the airfare cost, with the remainder (classes and accommodation) being covered by HIU and the students.

Two aspects of the program were evaluated: (a) the progress students showed in their English oral proficiency and (b) their attitude, awareness and acceptance of globalization. The first was carried out by conducting pretests and posttests of conversational language ability. The test used was the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Oral Proficiency Interview – Computer (OPIc) test. The online test typically takes 30 to 40 minutes and assesses the functional language ability of the subject taking the test by evaluating their performance over a series of language tasks against specific criteria. The OPIc has seven proficiency levels, from Novice Low to Advanced Low. (Higher levels are not available online.) It is easily administered due to being available online and taking less than 40 minutes. The OPIc was administered as a pretest approximately one month before departure, and the posttest was administered within three weeks of students' return.

The extent to which students had become globally minded was evaluated by a pilot survey designed to measure students' self-reported attitudes (posture) toward foreign countries and their perceived anxiety toward communication in a foreign language. The instrument was designed for a separate short-term exchange program at HIU (Rian, in press), and while it is an in-progress work, parts of it were thought to be relevant to the Malaysia context as well. The survey examines students' self-reported tendencies to approach or avoid interacting with foreign culture, their interest in international vocations or activities, and their perceived apprehension toward communicating in a foreign language. This survey was administered both before and after the program in paper format. Students responded on a 5-point Likert scale: "strongly agree," "agree," "neither agree nor disagree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree."

Rian's (in press) instrument includes four categories adapted from previous survey instruments and combines the four fields into one survey. Each of the four categories contains six Likert-style items that investigate (a) intergroup approach and avoidance tendencies, (b) interest in international vocation or activities (adapted from Yashima, 2002, 2009), (c) communication apprehension in the interpersonal conversation context (Nakamura, 2012), and (d) communication apprehension in the oral presentation context (adapted from (McCroskey, 1997).

The instrument is an amalgam of previous research, with slight adjustments to language and answer format. Rian consistently uses a five-point format, including a number of reverse scored items (similar to Yashima, 2002). Questions from each category are appropriately mixed in a 24-item questionnaire, with negatively scored (reverse-coded) items interspersed. Results will be discussed below.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

English Oral Proficiency

There are seven levels in the Oral Proficiency Interview – Computer (OPIc) test. From lowest to highest, they are Novice Low, Novice Mid, Novice High, Intermediate Low, Intermediate Mid, Intermediate High, and Advanced Low. Higher-level tests can only be taken orally. Results from the short-term study program, covering the bottom four levels, can be seen in Table 1.

TABLE 1. OPIc Pretest and Posttest Scores

No	Pretest Date	OPIc Pretest	OPIc Posttest	Posttest Date
1	Aug 10th	Novice High	Novice High	Sep 28th
2	Aug 10th	Novice High	Novice High	Sep 28th
3	Aug 10th	Novice Low*	Novice Mid	Sep 28th
4	Aug 10th	Novice High	Novice High	Sep 28th
5	Aug 10th	Novice Mid*	Novice High	Sep 28th
6	Aug 10th	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Low	Sep 28th
7	Aug 10th	Unregistered***	Novice High	Sep 28th
8	Aug 10th	Intermediate Low	Novice High*	Sep 28th
9	Aug 10th	Novice Low*	Novice Mid	Sep 29th
10	Aug 10th	Novice Low**	Novice High	Sep 29th

It can be seen that of the 10 participants, 5 performed better in the posttest than in the pretest. The number of asterisks (*) next to the level in the OPIc pretest column indicates how many levels the student's English result improved. Conversely, the number of asterisks next to the level in the posttest column indicates the number of levels the student's English ability declined. It can be seen that three students each improved one level, one student improved two levels, and one student improved three levels. The unregistered score means the result was too low to rank. Of the 10 students, one student performed worse in the posttest than in the pretest, scoring one rank lower than originally tested.

Global Mindedness

Students showed significant changes in each of the categories evaluated. Table 2 shows the items listed in the questionnaire. They were originally drafted in English, and then translated to Japanese and back-translated to verify accuracy. Columns A, B, C, D, and E, respectively, represent the number of respondents who chose

"strongly agree," "agree," "neither agree nor disagree," "disagree," or "strongly disagree." The first number in each column represents the score from the pretest, and the number immediately after represents that obtained in the posttest.

TABLE 2. **Student Values and Perceptions on Global Awareness and English**

No	Item	Category	A	B	C	D	E
1	I want to make friends with international students studying in Japan.	(i)	7/6	1/3		2/1	
2	I would feel very nervous conversing in English with a new acquaintance.	(iii)	8/2	0/3	1/4	1/1	
3	I would talk to an international student if there were one at school.	(i)	2/2	1/6	6/2	1/0	
4	I would enjoy having a conversation in English.	(iii)	1/2	3/8	4/0	2/0	
5	I want to work where many people from other countries work.	(ii)	1/2	0/3	6/3	1/2	2/0
6	If I tried to have an English conversation, I would be at a loss for words.	(iii)	4/3		3/5	3/2	
7	I plan to live in Japan my whole life.	(ii)	4/1	1/0	3/7	2/2	
8	Giving a presentation in English would make me terribly nervous.	(iv)	6/4	2/1	2/4	0/1	
9	I'm interested in doing volunteer work overseas.	(ii)	2/2	4/4	0/2	3/2	1/0
10	I am not afraid of participating in an English conversation.	(iii)	1/0	1/7	3/3	2/0	3/0
11	Even the idea of giving a presentation in English makes me afraid.	(iv)	4/1	1/2	2/2	3/4	0/1
12	I don't think what's happening overseas is related to my daily life.	(ii)		1/1	0/2	7/4	2/3
13	If I gave a presentation in English, I would quickly lose my calm.	(iv)	5/2	3/1	0/5	2/2	
14	I want to participate in local volunteer activities that help foreigners living in Japan.	(i)	1/1	1/4	6/3	2/2	
15	I'd like to try working in a foreign country.	(ii)	1/1	5/5	2/2	2/2	
16	I would not mind speaking in English before a group.	(iv)	1/0	0/4	2/5	1/0	6/1
17	I wouldn't mind sharing an apartment or room with an international student.	(i)	4/4	4/4	1/1	0/1	1/0
18	I am not afraid of giving a presentation in English.	(iv)	1/0	0/3	2/6	4/1	3/0
19	I try to avoid talking with foreigners if I can.	(i)	2/0	1/3	4/4	3/0	0/3
20	Even the idea of having a conversation in English makes me nervous.	(iii)	3/0	2/3	3/4	2/3	
21	I would be confident if I had a conversation in English.	(iii)		1/1	2/4	3/3	4/2
22	I'd rather not have a job that sends me overseas frequently.	(ii)		4/0	1/7	5/2	0/1
23	I would be confident if I gave a presentation in English.	(iv)			4/4	3/6	3/0
24	I would feel somewhat uncomfortable if a foreigner moved in next door.	(i)		2/0	3/1	2/5	3/4

Note. A = Strongly Agree, B = Agree, C = Neither Agree nor Disagree, D = Disagree, E = Strongly Disagree

Lowercase roman numerals represent the four questionnaire categories: items that (a) are responses investigating intergroup approach and avoidance tendencies, (b) represent interest in international vocation or activities, (c) refer to communication apprehension in interpersonal conversations, and (d) explore concepts of communication apprehension in a presentation context. Further simplifying Table 2 by grouping "agree" and "strongly agree" together, and doing the same for "disagree" and "strongly disagree," enables tendencies and changes to be more easily seen, as noted in Table 3.

TABLE 3. Student Values and Perceptions on Global Awareness and English – Simplified

No	Item	Category	A	B	C
1	I want to make friends with international students studying in Japan.	(i)	8/9		2/1
2	I would feel very nervous conversing in English with a new acquaintance.	(iii)	8/5	1/4	1/1
3	I would talk to an international student if there were one at school.	(i)	3/8	6/2	1/0
4	I would enjoy having a conversation in English.**	(iii)	4/10	4/0	2/0
5	I want to work where many people from other countries work.**	(ii)	1/5	6/3	3/2
6	If I tried to have an English conversation, I would be at a loss for words.	(iii)	4/3	3/5	3/2
7	I plan to live in Japan my whole life.**	(ii)	5/1	3/7	2/2
8	Giving a presentation in English would make me terribly nervous.	(iv)	8/5	2/4	0/1
9	I'm interested in doing volunteer work overseas.	(ii)	6/6	0/2	4/2
10	I am not afraid of participating in an English conversation.**	(iii)	2/7	3/3	5/0
11	Even the idea of giving a presentation in English makes me afraid.	(iv)	5/3	2/2	3/5
12	I don't think what's happening overseas is related to my daily life.	(ii)	1/1	0/2	9/7
13	If I gave a presentation in English, I would quickly lose my calm.	(iv)	8/3	0/5	2/2
14	I want to participate in local volunteer activities that help foreigners living in Japan.	(i)	2/5	6/3	2/2
15	I'd like to try working in a foreign country.*	(ii)	6/6	2/2	2/2
16	I would not mind speaking in English before a group.	(iv)	1/4	2/5	7/1
17	I wouldn't mind sharing an apartment or room with an international student.	(i)	8/8	1/1	1/1
18	I am not afraid of giving a presentation in English.	(iv)	1/3	2/6	7/1
19	I try to avoid talking with foreigners if I can.*	(i)	3/3	4/4	3/3
20	Even the idea of having a conversation in English makes me nervous.	(iii)	5/3	3/4	2/3
21	I would be confident if I had a conversation in English.	(iii)	1/1	2/4	7/5
22	I'd rather not have a job that sends me overseas frequently.	(ii)	4/0	1/7	5/3
23	I would be confident if I gave a presentation in English.*	(iv)		4/4	6/6
24	I would feel somewhat uncomfortable if a foreigner moved in next door.	(i)	2/0	3/1	5/9

Note. A = Strongly Agree or Agree, B = Neither Agree nor Disagree, C = Disagree or Strongly Disagree

Items 4, 5, 7, and 10, marked with double asterisks (**), especially seem to show significant changes. Conversely, some items such as numbers 15, 19, or 23, marked with a single asterisk (*), did not exhibit any appreciable change, other than the degree of agreement. This result is expected, as it seems unlikely that all items would undergo changes based upon student responses.

The volume of data in both Tables 2 and 3 makes it slightly difficult to appreciate changes recorded in the questionnaire. However, a more simplistic expression of the listed 4 items (4, 5, 7, & 10) as histograms allows a better visualization of the changes. See Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4.
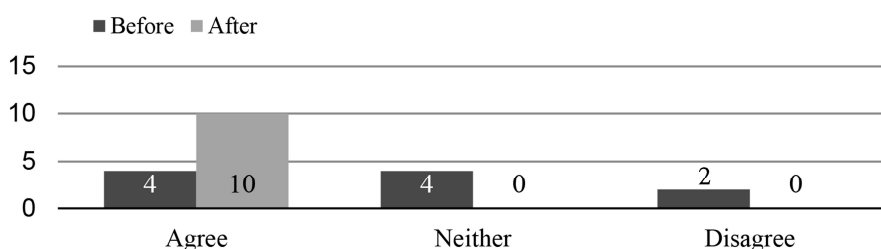

FIGURE 1. Change in number of participants agreeing or disagreeing with item before and after program: "I would enjoy having a conversation in English." [Item 4]

In Figure 1, showing data concerning Item 4, it can be seen that after the program had concluded, all participants agreed with the proposition that they would enjoy having a conversation in English, while less than half had previously agreed with this item. Significant changes affecting communication apprehension (Category 3) have occurred in this case.
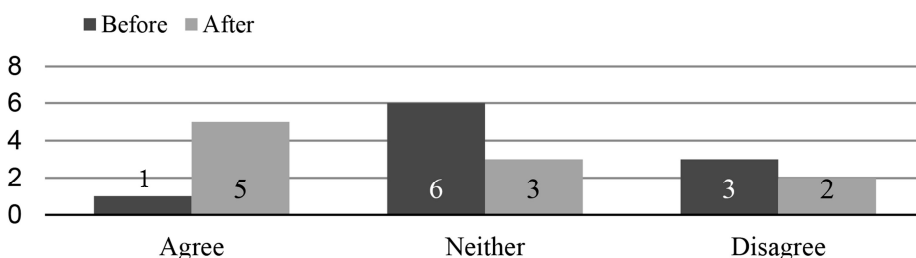
FIGURE 2. Change in number of participants agreeing or disagreeing with item before and after program: "I want to work where many people from other countries work." [Item 5]

Figure 2 (Item 5) shows changes in student interest concerning vocational opportunities, a Category 2 item. While only one student agreed that they wanted to work in an international setting prior to commencing the program, upon returning to Japan, half of the participants agreed with the proposition. The number disagreeing also decreased.

Figure 3 (Item 7) also investigating international vocations or activities from Category 2, was designed to elicit student opinions concerning their willingness to live and/or work abroad. While the number of students disagreeing with the proposition remain unchanged, where half had initially agreed that they planned

to live their whole life in Japan, that number was reduced to just one student, with the majority being uncertain about where they might want to live in the future.

Before **After**

Figure 3. Change in number of participants agreeing or disagreeing with item before and after program: "I plan to live in Japan my whole life." [Item 7]
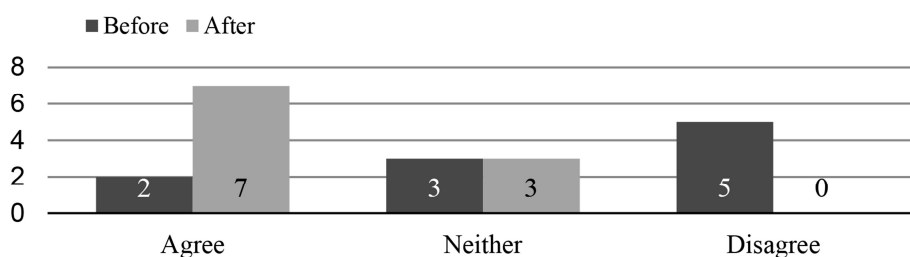
Before **After**

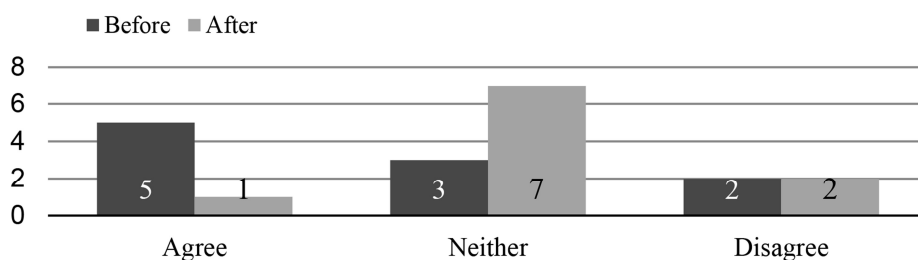**Figure 4.** Change in number of participants agreeing or disagreeing with item before and after program: "I am not afraid of participating in an English conversation." [Item 10]

Figure 4 (Item 10) shows that while half of the participating students initially admitted experiencing fear or reluctance in participating in an English conversation, the majority of students disagreed with the proposition after the program. Furthermore, none still maintained their initially perceived fear, in this negatively scored, Category 3 item.

Limitations and Avenues for Further Development

There are a number of potentially problematic areas concerning this study if it is taken out of context. The first concerns the size of the sample. While a small sample does not necessarily affect the validity, it conversely does not allow broad claims, such as "short study trips are shown to improve foreign language skills and improve global awareness." The evidence implies that students participating in such a program show improvement in English skills and think more about countries other than their own, but a more rigorous study with larger numbers and a robust instrument are needed to make more generalized statements.

The 24-item survey instrument is a work in progress and has undergone several iterations. While it is based on previous statistically validated instruments, it needs to be statistically validated as a whole and with a larger number of responses. Items may also need to be further modified.

It should also be noted that the Likert scale has been shown to yield ambiguous results. As Clason and Dormody (1994) argue, a Likert scale with an odd number of choices allows respondents to often take a "soft" or guarded choice rather than committing to agreeing or disagreeing. In the case of this study, that does not appear to be the case as no "neither agree nor disagree" response represents more than half of the total when the cumulative response number is considered, (e.g., Item 2 has 13 "agrees," 2 "disagrees," and 5 "neither agree nor disagrees").

While the OPIc is a valid test, it is not as widely used as other more well-known standardized tests to measure English language ability of non-native speakers, such as TOEFL, TOEIC, or IELTS. Students may experience nervousness when taking tests, which may also affect results. Furthermore, while the fact that it is online is convenient, it is unclear whether the test can be regarded as having the same accuracy as an interview. A treatment of this is beyond the scope of this paper but should be considered in future research.

Students may also yield better language results because of being motivated by other extrinsic factors, such as gaming, blogs, or video channels. There are many variables that need to be considered.

CONCLUSIONS

It appears that students who took part in the program became more motivated to learn, improved their English language speaking skills, and showed an increased tolerance to and understanding of other cultures. While the Malaysia program discussed here is new and hosts only a small number of participants, the results obtained by the OPIc oral proficiency test and Rian's (in press) pilot survey are, tentatively, valid indications of how short-term exchange programs can positively affect student attitudes toward engaging with international communities and help students to become more "globally minded." The author hopes to continue the research with larger samples.

THE AUTHOR

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Using Survey Data to Improve an Academic Writing Course

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This article describes an action research project carried out at a national university corporation in Japan. In order to improve the content of an academic writing course, the opinions of faculty members who function as graduation thesis advisors were solicited. Through a survey, teaching points that were considered important but not generally mastered by students were identified. The course plan was then changed to place more emphasis on these teaching points.

INTRODUCTION

Research on second language (L2) learning and teaching has produced an extremely diverse body or literature, which often draws on other fields such as linguistics, psychology, or brain science. Theoretical research connected to historical scientific disciplines tends to garner the most prestige, but such research is often difficult to apply to concrete learning situations. Further, there are dozens of competing theories of second language acquisition, and it is in no way clear which of these are accurate representations of the language learning process.

Action research (sometimes referred to as "teacher research") offers an alternative. It has been defined as "a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out" (Carr & Kemmis, as quoted in McDonough & McDonough, 1997, pp. 26–27). In the context of L2 learning and teaching, this can be exemplified as a practitioner identifying an issue to be examined, developing an action plan, obtaining results from the plan's implementation, analyzing the results, and finally, taking action to produce a more effective learning environment. Hubbard and Power (1999) claim that quality teacher research is "a natural extension of good teaching" (p. 3). Freeman (1998) argues that teacher research can help "redefine research," and make it a "central part of teaching" (p. 5).

THE ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

The author conducted an action research project at a national university corporation in Japan. The goal of the project was to help better prepare students in an academic writing course for the graduation theses which most of them

would be required to write in the following year. Surveys were distributed to faculty members who would later act as graduation thesis advisors for most of the students. The goal was to identify areas that the faculty members saw as important and for which students as a group were seen as relatively less proficient. The course plan would then be altered as necessary to give more emphasis to these areas.

The course was Academic Writing 2, offered in the second semester for third-year students and above. Most of the students enrolled in the course were majoring in the American and British Studies, which required them to write a graduation thesis in English the following year. Academic Writing 1, a similar course, is offered each year in the first semester, but it is not a prerequisite for Academic Writing 2. Thus, the class role for Academic Writing 2 contained both students who had taken Academic Writing 1 and those who had not.

The textbooks used in Academic Writing 1 (Chin, Koizumi, Reid, Wray, & Yamazaki, 2012) and Academic Writing 2 (Chin, Reid, Wray, & Yamazaki, 2012) were analyzed and the teaching points covered were compiled into a list. This list was then organized into six areas: organization, style and voice, mechanics, grammar, using sources, and content. Next, the teaching points were inserted into a survey that asked participants to rate the importance of the teaching points as well as to indicate the general level of their acquisition or mastery by students. Of the six faculty members who were asked to participate, five responded. The survey is attached as the Appendix.

SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The data from surveys were tallied and average response values were used to create four-quadrant graphs. These graphs were in turn used to identify teaching points that were (a) seen as important by the respondents and (b) seen as points that students had generally not mastered. Figure 1 shows the average response values for teaching points in the area of organization.
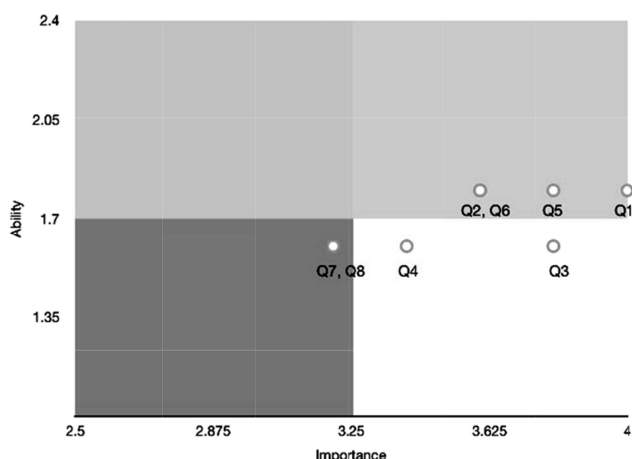
FIGURE 1. Average Response Values for Teaching Points (Organization).

Teaching points seen both as important and not generally mastered by students appear in the lower-right quadrant. The teaching points from question 3 (Q3) and question 4 (Q4) appear in this quadrant. The teaching point for Q3 is paragraph unity, and the teaching point for Q4 is topic sentences. The teaching points in the area of voice and style appear in Figure 2, and the teaching points in the area of mechanics appear in Figure 3. In these two areas, none of the teaching points appear in the lower-right quadrant. This indicates that on average, there were no teaching points in these areas that were seen as both important and comparatively under-acquired.

The teaching points for grammar appear in Figure 4. Here, Q14, avoiding sentence fragments, appears in the lower-right quadrant. Figure 5 shows the distribution for teaching points related to using sources. Here Q21, evaluating sources, and Q24, paraphrasing, appear in the lower-right quadrant. Finally, Figure 6 shows the average response values for teaching points related to content. The teaching point for Q32, avoiding overgeneralization, appears in the lower-right quadrant in this figure. Table 1 shows the six teaching points that were identified as candidates for further emphasis in the Academic Writing 2 course.
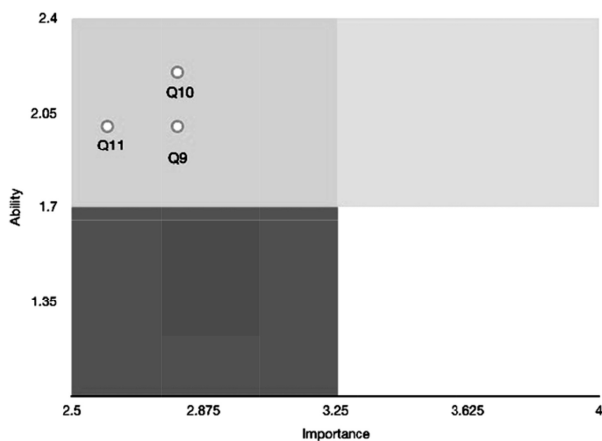
Figure 2. Average Response Values for Teaching Points (Style and Voice).
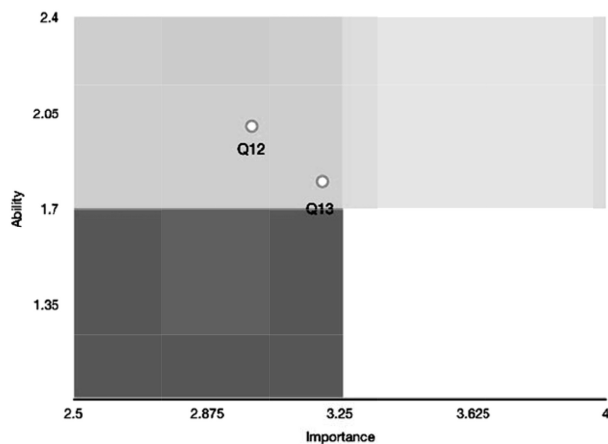
Figure 3. Average Response Values for Teaching Points (Mechanics).

FIGURE 4. Average Response Values for Teaching Points (Grammar).

FIGURE 5. Average Response Values for Teaching Points (Using Sources).
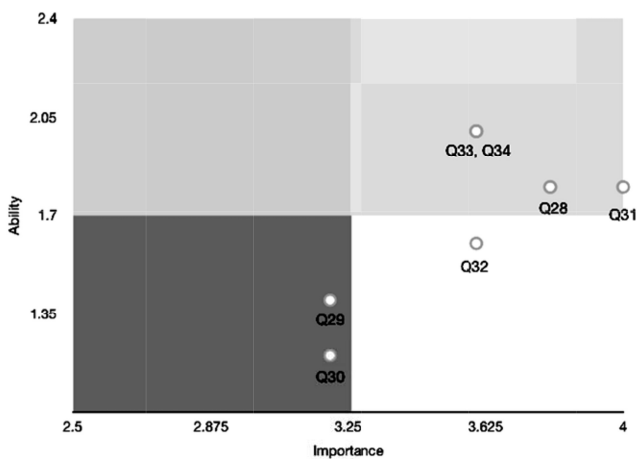
FIGURE 6. Average Response Values for Teaching Points (Content).

TABLE 1. Teaching Points Identified for Extra Emphasis

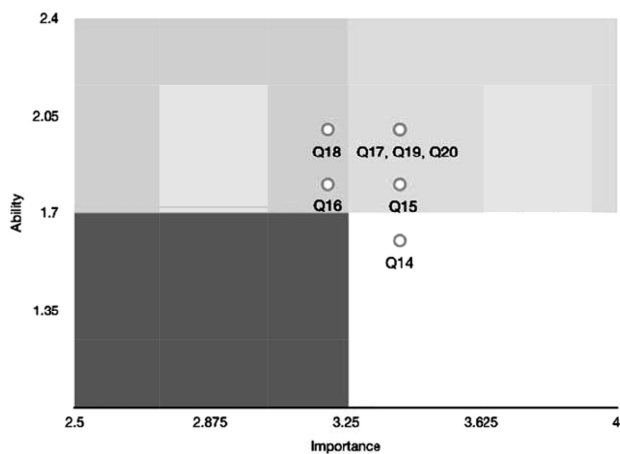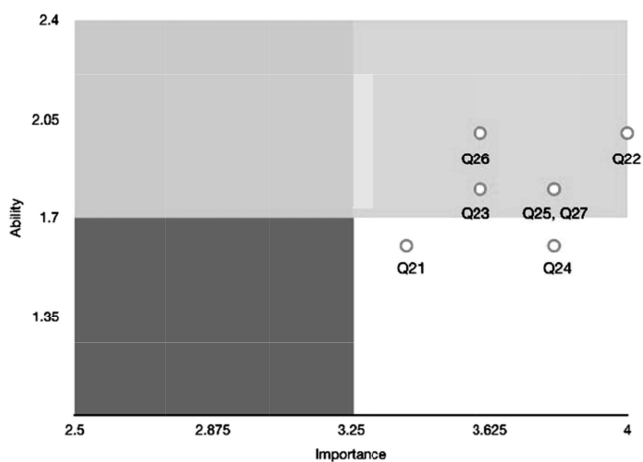| Survey Item	Teaching Point	Average Importance Value	Average Ability Value
Q3	Paragraph Unity	3.8	1.6
Q4	Topic Sentences	3.4	1.6
Q14	Avoiding Sentence Fragments	3.4	1.6
Q21	Evaluating Sources	3.4	1.6
Q24	Paraphrasing	3.8	1.6
Q32	Avoiding Overgeneralization	3.6	1.6

ADAPTING THE COURSE

The course was altered to further emphasize five of the six teaching points that were identified as candidates for more instruction. Extra review was done in the areas of paragraph unity, topic sentences, avoiding sentence fragments, and evaluating sources. In addition, one essay writing assignment was removed from the syllabus, and a test focusing primarily on the above five points was administered.

The issue of fostering students' ability to evaluate sources effectively (Q21) is a complex issue. The textbook used for the course (Chin, Reid, et al., 2012) presents questions that a student can use to consider the appropriateness of potential sources (pp. 32–33). While helpful, these questions alone do not prepare students to evaluate sources for an academic writing assignment. Students need to understand the differences between popular sources, news sources, and academic sources. Having found sources that are acceptable, ideally, students then should deal with the content in a critical fashion, identifying bias and assumptions, evaluating logic, comparing ideas between texts, and so on. Unfortunately, such critical reading skills are not emphasized adequately in second language textbooks (Urick & Veinot, 2007). Rather than attempt to deal comprehensively with this teaching point within the Academic Writing 2 course, the author decided to increase the content on critical reading skills in other courses that involve more reading and are available to the same group of students. From a practical viewpoint, dealing with critical reading in a substantial way was deemed impossible in the Academic Writing 2 class.

CONCLUSIONS

Although it is likely that the action research project outlined above resulted in positive changes to the course in question, there are limitations in accurately identifying areas for additional emphasis. For this project, average values were used. It is possible that some respondents had strong ideas about the importance of teaching points and students' acquisition of them that were not reflected in the average values. Indeed, the disciplines of the five respondents were diverse, including literature, linguistics, history, and culture. It would not be surprising for

each instructor to have a unique perspective on students' needs and abilities, influenced by the common practices of the discipline to which they belong. However, if the project was not necessarily successful in addressing each instructor's perspective individually, teaching points were identified that a plurality of respondents saw as important and under-developed in students. Because these weaknesses were addressed with greater emphasis in the course, students were given a better opportunity to acquire the abilities they will apply to the process of writing a graduation thesis in English.

THE AUTHOR

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APPENDIX

Teacher Survey

TABLE 1. Teaching Points Identified for Extra Emphasis

Area		Item	4	3	2	1	a	b	c
Organ-ization	Q1	Essay/research paper structure							
	Q2	Thesis statement							
	Q3	Paragraph unity							
	Q4	Topic sentences							
	Q5	Writing an outline							
	Q6	Summarizing							
	Q7	Using transitional expressions (ex., first, however, for example)							
	Q8	Using conjunctive adverbs (ex., hence, conversely, nonetheless.)							
Style/Voice	Q9	Avoiding subjective language							
	Q10	Avoiding casual language							
	Q11	Avoiding emotional language							
Mechanics	Q12	Capitalization							
	Q13	Punctuation							
Grammar	Q14	Avoiding sentence fragments							
	Q15	Avoiding run-on sentences							
	Q16	Using parallel structure (in lists)							
	Q17	Subject−verb agreement							
	Q18	Using correct tense							
	Q19	Using the correct form of words							
	Q20	Using active and passive sentences appropriately							
Using Sources	Q21	Evaluating sources							
	Q22	Avoiding plagiarism							
	Q23	Using quotations							
	Q24	Paraphrasing							
	Q25	Summarizing							
	Q26	Using citations in text							
	Q27	Writing a bibliography							
Content	Q28	Providing support for a position							
	Q29	Introducing counter-arguments							
	Q30	Refuting (or rebutting) a counter-argument							

Content	Q31	Cohesion (in general)
	Q32	Avoiding overgeneralization
	Q33	Avoiding redundancy
	Q34	Avoiding vagueness

Make two marks in each row.

1 - 4 express the importance of the item for students writing graduation theses under your direction: 4 = very important, 3 = somewhat important, 2 = not so important, 1 = not important.

a - c express the ability, in general, of 4th-year (and above) students you have worked with on graduation theses: c = most students have adequate ability in this area, b = some students have adequate ability in the area, a = a few or no students have adequate ability in this area.

Second Language Phonology: Are Constraints Psychological or Biological?

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This research study seeks to determine whether there are any measurable correlations between integrative motivation and perceptions of native-like L2 production. Seventy Japanese L1 students at an English-medium Japanese university were surveyed to measure relative affect towards English-speaking cultures and peoples, as well as students' relative willingness to integrate into said cultures. The top and bottom scorers were asked to participate in recorded English language interviews that were analyzed individually by a panel of English L1 judges for degree of "foreign-ness" in terms of pronunciation, intonation, and grammar. While no correlation was found with accent or grammar, the results find that higher levels of integrative willingness did correlate with more native-like sentence-level intonation thereby suggesting that some limited connections between integrative willingness and L2 phonology exist.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout human history, the need to trade, negotiate, and communicate with outside groups has driven people to study and acquire foreign languages. During this time, it has passed down into common wisdom that "children learn better than adults." While this phrasing will invariably invite quick correction by linguists, who will correctly quickly point out that adults enjoy a much higher rate of initial learning due to their higher analytical skills and background knowledge (Saville-Troike, 2012), what people generally mean when they make the above assertion is to point out the commonly observed phenomenon that, unlike child-learners who often master the L2 to the point of being indistinguishable from natives, adults often, despite great time and effort expended in learning, will speak the L2 with a heavy, discernable accent, and oftentimes even display frequent variations from native-norms in syntax, grammar, and word-choice. In 1967, Eric Lenneberg proposed the existence of a "critical period" (CP) during which humans needed to be exposed to input in order to properly develop their L1. It has been further speculated that CP could account for the "foreign accent" observed in most L2 speakers who had not begun learning the L2 before a certain "cut-off age." The CPH offered a rational-seeming scientific explanation for this phenomenon.

While many researchers accepted the CP hypothesis (CPH) uncritically, especially as supporting evidence of its role in L1 development began to mount, including, most famously, the tragic case of "Genie" (Curtiss, 1977), some researchers began to find problems which the CPH framework could not address,

especially regarding L2 development. This trickle of dissenting voices eventually grew louder, and today, there is a wide and varied body of arguments against application of CPH to L2 learning, but most of the arguments can be condensed into two ideas: (a) researchers have been unable to agree on a single "cut-off point" after which L2 learning to native-level fluency becomes impossible, and (b) the wide-scale existence of "late L2 learners" who, nonetheless, manage to perform in the native range in controlled testing. Due to these unexplained questions with CPH, it bears taking a closer look at young and old L2-learners to try to ascertain any common factors between successful L2 learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Critical Period Hypothesis in SLA

The idea of a "critical period" wherein certain brain developments have to take place within a certain time frame during childhood has been well documented in the animal kingdom, such as in the imprinting seen in chickens, ducks, and geese (Hinde, 1974, as cited in Flege, 1987). There have been a number of studies to support the idea that, indeed, there seem to be maturational restraints on people's ability to learn an L2. Bley-Vroman (1990) asserts that child and adult L2 acquisition are altogether different phenomena: that the learning processes are different to each. He brings up several points to fully demonstrate that the L2 learning processes of children and adults differ to such an extent as to suggest different neurological processing. Among them, he claims that adults' very lack of L2 learning success is evidence for different learning/processing between children and adult learners. Indeed, he goes as far as to assert that "success" in late L2 learning is so rare as to be considered as an anomaly. He notes differences in the degree of attainment, in the course of learning, and in learning strategies between adults and children. He also proposes that the variation in adults' L2 learning goals, the general correlation between age and proficiency, and the absence of fossilization in children (whereas it is prevalent among adult learners) are all highly suggestive of sizeable differences in child and adult L2 learning processes.

There is much anecdotal evidence suggesting that age impacts both initial rate of L2 study (wherein adults perform better) and ultimate attainment (wherein children tend to dominate (Cook, 1986; Krashen, Scarcella, & Long, 1982; Saville-Trokie, 2012). Saville-Troike (2012) catalogues the relative advantages of younger versus older learners and finds that while younger learners enjoy such advantages as higher degree of brain plasticity, fewer social inhibitions in learning and using the L2, weaker L1 group identity, and the likelihood of receiving more simplified input from caretakers (as speech to children tends to be simplified, anyway), this is matched by comparable advantages for older learners, among them greater real-world knowledge, analytical, and pragmatic ability, a higher learning capacity, and the ability to make use of metalinguistic knowledge of their L1. Research has found a strong negative correlation between the age of the learner and the L2-learners' ultimate attainment. Johnson and Newport (1989) made the quintessential case for an L2-CP in a study of Chinese and Korean

immigrants to the United States which showed positive evidence for maturational constraints in late L2 learners. In a test of grammaticality judgments, they found a linear decline in performance after an age of arrival (AOA) of 7 years old continuing to 17 years of age. After this "window of opportunity" closes (i.e., for those with AOA of more than 17), however, the distribution of performance was random.

Not everyone holds fast to the CPH as originally proposed, however. There have been numerous proposed changes to the hypothesis. Seliger (1978) and Long (1990) proposed that different aspects of SLA may be affected at different times in childhood development – in effect, a multitude of mini-critical periods (i.e., one for L2 phonology, a separate one for syntax acquisition, and so on). Newport (1990, 1991, both as cited in Birdsong, 1999) claimed that child learners are aided by their cognitive *immaturity*, which allows them to focus on smaller sections of input, as opposed to adults who often face, due to their enhanced memory and processing skills – not to mention higher societal standing – more complex utterances of input to decode. Additionally, there have been methodological critiques across the body of CPH research that calls many of the results and fundamental assumptions into question. Abrahamsson and Hyltenstam (2009), in a review of prior CPH research, found that reports of nativelike performance have varied considerably due to inconsistencies in test design and definitions; this critique has been echoed by others (e.g., DeKeyser, 2013). While Birdsong (2005) openly questioned which linguistic behaviors could be used to potentially falsify or verify CPH, DeKeyser (2012) has shown that the preponderance of studies have limited themselves to defining native-likeness via measures of pronunciation and grammar, which is problematic, not least of all because of the high degree of fluctuation found in these measures by L1 speakers, themselves. Attempts to measure L2 learners by a native-speaker standard implicitly accept that L1 speakers have uniform mental functions of grammar and pronunciation, thereby implying a similar level of success in L1 acquisition. Dabrowska (2012) astutely notes that this assumption should not be accepted uncritically, as L1 competence is subject to a high degree of individualism and is far from uniform.

Successful Late Learners

It must be acknowledged that there are some people who, despite starting well past all theorized ages of onset for the critical period, nonetheless manage to successfully master L2 syntax and phonology becoming, for all practical and non-technical intents and purposes, indistinguishable from natives. The only question is how many people like this are there out there. CPH adherents necessarily suppose the number to be low. Bley-Vroman (1990) declares that they are mere statistical outliers (i.e., practically non-existent). Others are more generous in their figures: Selinker (1972, cited in Birdsong, 1999) posited around five percent. To support the idea of natural maturational constraints on second language acquisition would naturally lead to dismissing the idea that late-learners could successfully master L2 (especially phonology) to the native-speaker level with any degree of frequency. Indeed, Long (1990) points out that CPH (as applied to L2 study) could be completely falsified simply by producing "learners who have demonstrably attained native-like proficiency despite having begun

exposure well after the closure of the hypothesized sensitive periods" (p. 274). Since that time, however, researchers have been finding high rates of immigrant-learners who test in the native range across different skills. Birdsong (1999) cites multiple studies, such as Van Wuitswinkel (1994, as cited in Birdsong, 1999) where 8 of 26 subjects tested in the native range for grammaticality judgments. In Birdsong's own (1992) study, 6 of 20 subjects tested within the range of the native controls. Bongaerts (2005) surveys more studies wherein subjects performed within the range of native controls. Most notably, tests measuring phonological accuracy also produced both surprising rates of success and of learners' age of arrival (AOA) into the L2-speaking environment. A sentence reading test conducted by Bongaerts, Mennen, and Van der Slik (2000) noted that one of the participants who tested as indistinguishable from natives in his command of Dutch (L2) was an American *whose AOA was 21!* A native-sounding participant in a Moyer (1999) German word reading study had not been exposed to the language until the age of 22, yet tested in the native range *across all tasks*. Birdsong (2005) claims that he personally has found no task involving L2 learning or production that certain late learners cannot still perform within the native-like range. He does admit, however, that he has of yet to see late L2 learners performing at a native level in L2 processing tasks (e.g., parsing and lexical retrieval tasks). Thus, it may be possible that CPH holds true for *language processing* but not production or learning. Birdsong calls for more and deeper investigation into this issue to clarify whether this might actually constitute evidence of a constraint.

Potential Alternative Approaches to CPH

While we can clearly see a steady degradation in L2 learning potential as learners' AOA increases, which clearly suggests a form of "maturational constraint," the absence of a defined "cut-off" point after which L2 learning to native-like levels becomes impossible, combined with the presence of successful late L2 learners calls into question whether this observed maturational effect could possibly be purely biological. An alternative hypothesis that will be explored in this paper is whether integrative motivation (i.e., the extent to which one develops L2 proficiency corresponds directly with one's willingness to identify and to be identified with the native-speaking populace of the L2) could explain the prevalence of foreign-sounding L2 production by adult learners. As it is theorized that self-identity becomes increasingly tied to our L1 and L1 community as we get older, such a hypothesis would have the advantage of corresponding with and explaining the linear decline in L2 ultimate attainment corresponding with AOA observed to continue throughout the learner's lifetime, as well as providing an "exception clause" for those truly motivated individuals who manage native-like attainment of L2 despite being well past commonly accepted age(s) of onset of CP.

The Role of Motivation in L2 Learning

Motivation is notoriously difficult to measure or quantify. Reports on motivation are almost invariably taken from self-reporting, which prevents any

real objectivity. Despite these shortcomings, there is an almost endless supply of studies demonstrating strong links between high motivation towards the L2 and L2 populace on the part of learners and high performance in L2 learning. Hashimoto (2002) found that motivation and willingness to communicate in the L2 could be used as predictors for L2 use, and ultimately for L2 attainment. Learner anxiety and perceived competence correlated strongly with willingness to use the L2. Munoz and Tragant (2001) determined that motivation *type* may be somewhat dependent on the age of the learner, with younger learners displaying higher levels of intrinsic motivation, and older learners' higher levels of extrinsic motivation. They also found that L2 performance statistically correlates positively with motivation. In a study on Japanese learners of English, Norris-Holt (2001) suggests that it is integrative motivation that correlates most with long-term, sustained L2 learning success. Wu (2004) drew upon Gardner's work in motivation in attempts to isolate and quantify different motivations for high school students in Hong Kong studying English as their L2. He showed concern that the survey verified and reinforced previous findings that Chinese learners respond more to instrumental motivating factors than to integrative ones (which correlate with a higher degree of L2 proficiency) when it comes to L2 study. He calls for teachers to be sensitive to the motivations of Chinese students and to particularly strive to increase the students' integrative motivation "by enhancing their positive attitudes and correcting their negative stereotypes towards English-speaking countries and people as well as the English language itself." Integrative motivation can come from both internal (e.g., a strong feeling of connection to the TL) and external (e.g., language policies designed to force/coax minority populations to take on the language, culture, and values of the majority population) sources, but they must be accepted completely by the learner and followed by opportunity to interact with the L2 community (i.e., receive input). Certain factors, such as the age of exposure to the L2 (i.e., the AOA) are likely to affect the learner's willingness to identify with the L2 native-speaker community.

The Role of Integrative Willingness

Integrative motivation – the desire to become part of the L2 speech community – may well play a sizeable role in accounting for differences between child and adult L2 learners. The problem inherent to operationalizing a test to this hypothesis is that it can be extremely difficult to measure integrative willingness. Most learners *think* they want to become part of the L2 speech community, *but not at the expense of altering their L1 identity*. Scully's (2002) study of Japanese acquisition by Filipino brides in Japan makes this point. All participants (both those with high L2 proficiency and those with low) scored highly on an acculturation assessment model and professed desire to fully integrate into life in rural Japan. The actions of the less successful learners belied their words, however, as field studies revealed that they made little effort at L2 use outside of the home, and most spent their free time *talking to each other in their L1*. Only the two most successful learners seemed to be making inroads to communication with the larger community. Ultimately, there seemed to be significant social, cognitive, and emotional influences at work. A study on CP effects on pronunciation by Moyer (1999) demonstrates the effect of integrative

motivation. The high test results of one participant, who exceeded the test range so much as to be considered native (therefore becoming a statistical outlier for the purposes of the study), were attributed during interviews to an integrative desire (i.e., wanting to be fully integrated as a member of the L2 community). Bongaerts et al. (2000) found the performance of two exceptional test subjects in a study of L2 speakers of Dutch to be consistently rated as indistinguishable from native speakers. The participants both exhibited strong motivational/integrational factors. Both had married Dutch women, had raised children in primarily Dutch-speaking homes, etc. This seems to be a rather consistent pattern. In most cases of L2 speakers' speech performance being rated in the native range, wherein researchers have speculated on cause, strong integrative factors have been present.

THE PRESENT STUDY

If there is any sort of direct link between integrative motivation and L2 phonology (and other markers of native-likeness vs. foreignness), such should be demonstrable via a correlation between higher integrative willingness and better L2 performance. The following pilot study was conducted in order to measure and identify any effects of integrative willingness on perceptions of foreignness in L2 speech production by Japanese students of English.

Method

Subjects

Seventy Japanese college freshmen at an English-medium university in northern Japan took part in the original survey canvassing. Both survey data and speech samples were collected within the first two weeks of the students' first semester in university. All survey data was anonymous, but marked with student numbers which only classroom teachers would be able to identify with the students' names.

Materials

The survey was a 25-question, 5-point Likert-scale survey with questions taken from the Attitude Motivation Test Battery (Gardner, 1985) adapted to be more specific to the Japanese university context. The questions were chosen to measure affect towards the target language native-speaker population, attitudes towards language study, and degree of affiliation to L1 culture. In addition, the survey asked several open-ended questions to determine whether the respondents had traveled abroad, and if so, where, for how long, and in what capacity (i.e., tourism, study, etc.).

Procedure

Surveys were distributed by classroom teachers during a required English speaking/listening course (part of the English foundations program, required at the university for all incoming freshmen) and collected on the same day. The time chosen to distribute and complete the survey was at the discretion of classroom

teachers; however, all surveys were returned to the researcher within the first two weeks of class. Students were instructed that they didn't have to complete the survey if they didn't want to; however, response rates were high – well over 90%. A total of six students enrolled in the surveyed classes failed to respond; however, it's equally plausible that any or all of them were absent when the survey was distributed. Audio samples were collected as part of a class assignment. All students were recorded while engaged in both an interview (scripted questions) and free conversation with their instructors, one-on-one. The original intent of the assignment was to allow students to compare their speaking ability at the end of the semester with that at the beginning in order to better permit them to track their developmental progress. Students would meet with instructors via individual appointment to make the audio recording, but all such recordings were conducted during the first two weeks of class.

Completed surveys were analyzed first according to questions on prior experience abroad. Any surveys indicating travel to or residence in English-speaking countries in excess of 10 days were placed aside for separate analysis. All survey questions were divided into two categories: (a) measures of low integrative willingness (LIW; e.g., questions regarding preferences for L1 and L1 culture) and (b) measures of high integrative willingness (HIW; e.g., questions indicating positive feelings towards English and English-speaking culture). The combined scores for the two categories were calculated separately, and then LIW was subtracted from HIW to attain a unified integrative willingness (IW) score. Mean and standard deviations of the IW were calculated, and a total of 7 students whose IW score was at least 1 standard deviation above the mean and another 8 students whose IW score was at least 1 standard deviation below the mean were identified. The student numbers of these 15 students were sent to the contributing classroom teachers to request the relevant audio samples, which were then turned over to the researcher.

Six university-level English teachers, all native speakers of the language, and none having taught any of the participating students, were recruited to judge the speech samples. They listened to all 15 speech samples and rated each one on a 5-point Likert scale according to three criteria: (a) degree of foreign pronunciation (i.e., phonological distortions in L2 production), (b) degree of foreign intonation (i.e., pitch, tone, stress, and other suprasegmental speech features), and (c) grammatical competence (i.e., degree of accuracy in grammar production). In order to increase interrater reliability, all scores by individual raters were converted to Z-scores, and then the mean scores (of all 6 raters) of each of the rating categories were calculated for each student. The degree of correlation between the students' individual IW scores and the mean rater scores in each category of evaluation were calculated with Pearson's r.

RESULTS

Given the small sample size, alpha level of 0.10 was assigned. Still, no significant correlation between IW and perceptions of foreign pronunciation were found: $r = 0.119$, $n = 15$, $p = 0.696$. Similarly, no relationship between IW and grammatical accuracy was discernable: $r = 0.110$, $n = 15$, $p = 0.672$. The criterion

of intonation, however, revealed a small but significant correlation: $r = 0.473$, $n = 15$, $p = 0.0748$.

DISCUSSION

The results seem to indicate that, while integrative motivation is far from being the sole determiner of degree of accent, there nevertheless seems to be some measurable interplay between learners' attitudes towards the target language and target language culture and the relative accuracy of their own L2 speech production. Surprisingly, however, the relationship seems to be restricted to suprasegmental aspects of phonology, as both phoneme-level accent features and grammar appear unaffected by integrative motivation factors. While the effect is limited in scope, such would still be well enough by itself to produce qualitative differences in L2 production, as compared with that of L1 speakers, and may well play into perceptions of foreign accent.

STUDY LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study has serious limitations in scope, which require more testing before generalizing the results to a broader populace. First, as all subjects were Japanese college freshmen, any L1-specific or culturally specific traits impacting results would be masked by homogeneity of subject background. Additionally, as all subjects were students at an English-medium university, both their L2 proficiency levels and their affect towards L2 culture and peoples were atypically high for Japan. As such, this selection bias produced a much thinner range of IW response than would probably be collected in a more random survey sampling.

Ultimately, while this study neither proves nor disproves the applicability of CPH to L2 study, it does expand our understanding of forces potentially exerting influence over ultimate attainment in L2. Demonstrating a linkage between perceived foreign accent and integrative motivation is an important step in resolving the mysteries surrounding accent. While the findings suggest that such integrative willingness is perhaps one of many factors affecting perceptions of foreignness in L2 speech, with more study, hopefully a clear picture will emerge of the causal factors behind the common fossilization of foreign accents.

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Techniques and Activities Reports

Utilizing Learner Interactions to Strengthen Vertical Integration Within a Language Program

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A well-designed curriculum will facilitate smooth and logical progression between the component courses and years of an English language program. Nevertheless, it can be easy for a program to become fragmented and compartmentalized with little sense of connection between classes or continuity throughout the whole. However, by creating and assigning tasks that require first- and second-year students to engage with their third-year counterparts, teachers can build links between learners at different stages of their university careers and language development, and also offer them an early insight into their language learning futures. This paper introduces several such tasks, through which students in different year groups were able to engage with each other in English and strengthen connections between the content and goals of their various English courses.

INTRODUCTION

Rodgers (1989) defines the concept of curriculum as encompassing "not only what pupils learn, but how they learn it, and how teachers help them learn, using what supporting materials, styles, methods of assessment, and in what kind of facilities" (p. 26); in other words, curriculum design and development covers all aspects of teaching and learning, and therefore entails much more than simply the sum of the content of the individual courses making up an EFL program. Nevertheless, the content of the constituent courses, comprising the "language items, ideas, skills and strategies that meet the goals of the course" (Nation & Macalister, 2011, p. 7) is clearly an essential element of a curriculum, and organizing this content effectively is one of the key challenges of curriculum planning. One of the most influential concepts in this respect has been the "spiral curriculum," proposed by the educational psychologist Jerome Bruner (1960), who saw learning as a cumulative process in which knowledge and skills need to be revisited and built upon in order to be internalized and truly learnt. While Bruner's ideas were developed in general education, they have since become mainstream in the world of English language teaching, as a perusal of any multi-level textbook series will make clear. Subsequent studies of vocabulary acquisition have supported the importance of repetition in language learning, specifically, with Nation (2001) reporting that research indicates it may take up to 16 meaningful encounters with a new word until it has been learned.

Thus, how to ensure the necessary repetition of language and spiraling of content is something that must be taken into account during curriculum planning.

Yalden (1987) notes that, when planning an individual course, "though separate modules can be prepared to treat various aspects of language, they have to interact with each other for language to be produced and exchanges of meaning to take place" (p. 101). This can certainly also apply to a language program as a whole, especially one in which individual classes focus on specific language skills, and as Finney (2002) notes, building interactions into a language program must be part of the process of curriculum development at all stages, from initial planning to evaluation and reform. In theory, therefore, a coherent, integrated curriculum will facilitate the repetition and reinforcement of learning objectives, which is necessary for language acquisition.

In reality, however, while maintaining robust and meaningful connections between individual courses within a program is highly desirable, it is not always easy to achieve. In a large-scale program such as that described below, learners may take classes from ten or more different teachers over the course of their studies. Unless those in charge of the program are able and willing to exercise a very tight degree of control over what goes on in individual classrooms, it is inevitable that the different teaching styles, experiences, and preferences of the teachers involved will result in some divergence between what the curriculum planners envisage being taught (and learned) and what actually is. Unser-Schutz (2016) identified weak links between the EFL courses in a program as one problem leading to student dissatisfaction, albeit in a program in which individual teachers were responsible for selecting their own textbooks. However, even in a highly centralized and coordinated curriculum, it remains possible that the students themselves are not always aware of how the different courses they take relate to one another. The skills learnt in a first-year course may be directly applicable to the targets of a third-year one, but in the intervening time this relevance can become lost to learners. For these reasons, even the best-designed curriculum can become fragmented in practice, and learners may end up with the sense that they are taking a series of discrete and unconnected courses, rather than seeing each course as a component of an integrated whole. The remainder of this paper reports on an attempt to build additional linkages into an English language program through the use of tasks designed to connect students at different stages of their university careers with each other.

CURRICULUM OUTLINE

TABLE 1. An Overview of the English Curriculum

1st Year (Both semesters)	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	CALL	English for Study Abroad
2nd Year (Both semesters)	Business English A	Business English B	Introduction to Business in English	Elective Course	Elective Course
3rd Year (First semester)	Project English					

Compared to many curriculums at Japanese universities, the program I currently teach in has a relatively strong focus on English, with graduation requiring 30 English credits.

As shown in Table 1, students take six English classes per week in their first year and five per week in the second year. These are year-long courses but are designated as "1" and "2" in the first and second semesters, respectively. Students complete the program by taking one English course in the first semester of their third year. During this time, there is a gradual progression from skills-based English for General Purposes courses towards English for Specific Purposes courses focused on business-related issues. The four courses shown in bold in Table 1 are usually taught by foreign teachers, either native English speakers or those with native-level English ability. The remainder of this paper will focus on these courses and explain how, in order to avoid the problems of fragmentation outlined above, activities intended to build links between these courses were designed and implemented. These activities center around the course students take in their third year, Project English, a brief explanation of which follows.

Project English

In order to be eligible to take Project English, students must achieve either a TOEIC® score of 550 or a TOEFL® score of 480 in their second year. In the three years that the course has run so far, roughly two-thirds of the student body has achieved this target each year. Students are divided into six unstreamed classes of between 20 and 30, all of which are taught by a native English-speaking teacher. Within the class, students work in groups of three or four for the entire semester, and in these groups, work on a business-themed project that is carried out in two stages. Each group chooses its own theme and submits a detailed proposal to the teacher, whose approval is needed to proceed with the project. Examples of themes from 2017 are listed below.

Example 1: Exporting Japanese sake to Vietnam
Example 2: Improving the Japan Racing Association's negative image
Example 3: Changing the Japanese working system

Stage One of the project requires groups to create a poster to be displayed publicly on campus for a two-week period. Although not a strict requirement, these posters generally focus on some kind of business-related problem or opportunity that groups have identified and researched. In Stage Two of the course, groups develop their themes further, usually by proposing solutions to the problems, or strategies for exploiting the opportunities, and at the end of the semester make an oral presentation as a group to their peers and teachers.

When Project English first ran in 2015, I naturally encouraged students from all my other classes to go and look at the Stage One posters during the time they were on public display. However, I soon realized that, more than just being of general interest to students, these posters actually represented an excellent learning resource, and that by creating specific class activities based around these posters, I could create vertical links in the curriculum that could benefit students in various ways. Thus, I developed a homework task for three first- and

second-year courses (Writing 1, Speaking 1, and Business English B1), each of which comprised 10% of the grade for the course. These tasks required those students not only to view the posters but also to interact with the students who made them. They are described in more detail below.

THE THREE TASKS

Task One: Poster Report (Writing 1)

Of the three tasks, that for the Writing 1 course is the most simple, and is unlike the other two in that the interaction that it creates between students is one-way only. As homework, students are asked to browse all the posters, choose the one they are most interested in to read carefully, and then answer the following questions in as much detail as possible:

1. What interested or impressed you about the poster?
2. What parts of the poster do you think should be changed? Please explain.
3. What else did you want to learn about this project?
4. Can you think of any ways that this group could expand or improve their project?
   Please write down any advice or suggestions you have.

After students submitted this form, I anonymized it and passed it on to the Project English group that made the poster for them to read and consider.

Appendix A shows an extract from a report on a poster titled *Overseas Expansion of Muji*. While the English is, of course, not perfect, it is clear that the author has taken the time to read and consider the content of the poster in depth and has provided detailed, thoughtful, and generally well-written comments. In her answer to Question 1, she praises several specific points of the poster design, including the fact that it was "similar to Muji's" – reflecting the fact that the students who created the poster had made the effort to use the same colors and fonts as Muji, the company, does. It is also important to note that rather than simply praising the design in aesthetic terms, the author also explains specifically how it helped her to read and understand the content of the poster ("[it] makes me comfortable and patient to read the whole thing," "as a reader I was guided by the titles of each part"), thus providing concrete positive feedback for the Project English students. As a learner, understanding what you have done well and why is important for two reasons: Firstly, it enables you to repeat successful strategies in the future, and secondly, it creates positive feelings towards the learning process and stimulates motivation.

As well as the positive feedback in her answer to Question 1, in her response to Question 3, the report's author also offers some useful advice regarding how the Project English group could proceed with their project. By giving her insight as a Chinese student studying at a university in Japan, she was able to offer a perspective on the project that its creators may not otherwise have considered, as well as a specific suggestion as to an additional point that the group could research in preparation for their final presentation in Project English (further

reasons for the success of Muji in China). Rather than simply getting feedback and suggestions from a teacher, the multiple viewpoints afforded by this kind of peer evaluation can thus offer learners a greater variety of paths forward.

Task Two: Project Discussion (Speaking 1)

In the Speaking 1 course, each student (or sometimes, in order to balance numbers, a pair of students) was allocated a partner from my Project English class. Students then received a more detailed version of the following instructions:

Step One: Email your Project English partner to arrange a meeting.
Step Two: Before the meeting, find their poster and read it carefully.
Step Three: Meet at the poster and discuss the project in English for ten minutes.
Step Four: Email your partner to thank them for their time.
Step Five: Submit the recording of your conversation for evaluation.

This was perhaps the most challenging of the three tasks, as students were required to discuss a fairly complex subject in English with a person they had never met before. Bearing this in mind, I thought carefully about my pairings of students and tried to give people partners I thought they could work effectively with in terms of both English ability and personality. It was also stressed to all participants that this activity was supposed to be a discussion, not a Q&A-style interview, and that questions, comments, and responses should be flowing in both directions – skills we had been working on in the Speaking 1 course. Students recorded their discussion on their smartphones and submitted the sound file for evaluation.

Appendix B shows a transcription of a four-minute section of a discussion between a Speaking 1 student and a Project English student about a poster on the topic of "Changing the Japanese Working System." For the sake of readability, some repetitions and hesitations have been omitted.

Firstly, several features of this sample indicate that the students concerned did not attempt to either script or rehearse their conversation. In Turn 3, Student A confirms her understanding of her partner's answer; in Turn 6, Student B asks Student A to repeat her question; and in Turn 9, Student A interrupts Student B's answer in order to give further explanation of her question. Rather than simply a homework task to be completed, it thus seems that this pair treated the activity as an opportunity for genuine exchange of views and engaged in a meaningful conversation in English.

Also interesting is that in Turn 5, Student A seeks to link what she has read about on her partner's poster with what she has learned elsewhere, through introducing the concept of "Premium Friday." This is a Japanese government initiative that attempts to deal with the culture of excessive overtime in Japanese companies, but it was not mentioned on the poster. Thus, rather than focusing only on the poster itself, Student A has thought more deeply about the topic and introduced a related point that may be something the Project English students could then investigate and integrate into their final presentation.

Task Three: Email Evaluation (Business English B1)

This course, taken in the second year, focuses on spoken and written communication in business-oriented settings, including writing emails for business purposes. In order to further practice these skills, the task set in this course was to send an email to a Project English group of the student's choice (all Project English posters included contact details). In the instructions given, students were asked to do the following:

1. Please begin and end your email correctly and explain why you are writing.
2. Explain why you are interested in this poster and what you liked about it.
3. Ask as many questions as you can about the content of the poster.
4. If possible, please give some suggestions about how this group could continue their project.

Appendix C shows an email written regarding the poster about "Japanese Working Style," mentioned previously. The names of both the author and recipient have been changed. It can be seen that this student has carefully followed the instructions outlined above. The author begins with an explanation of the purpose of the email, followed by the reason why he selected this particular group to write to. These two opening paragraphs are both polite and detailed, clearly outlining the context of the communication in appropriate English. The author then goes on to ask questions and make suggestions about the project, before concluding the email in a professional manner. As with the example poster report, through pointing out the effectiveness of the background information, this email has given the Project English group detailed and specific positive feedback. Furthermore, the author has offered three concrete suggestions regarding aspects of the poster that they felt were either unclear or could be expanded upon, suggestions that could assist the Project English students in the next stage of their project.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

Building deeper links between first-, second-, and third-year courses in the ways described above has had several benefits for both teachers and learners. For the third-year students taking Project English, their work has reached a wider audience than it would otherwise have done, with the students who read and commented on their posters offering a different perspective than that afforded by teacher feedback alone. Given that the posters represent the half-way point of the projects these learners are working on, this feedback offered immediate practical benefits, with the first- and second-year students frequently giving concrete suggestions regarding directions in which the projects could be developed. Moreover, midway through the course, all Project English students were required to take part in a poster session, in which they each spent 45 minutes discussing their posters in English in a public setting. The Speaking 1 discussion activity was carried out a week before this, and therefore provided an excellent opportunity for these students to gain confidence in answering questions about their projects.

Finally, by talking with younger students in English, the third-year students were afforded an opportunity to reflect on their own progress since entering university.

As for the first- and second-year students, they too gained the chance for their written work to be read by someone other than their teacher. As Hyland and Hyland (2006) note, teacher response to written work, while important, does not always provide learners with an authentic sense of audience; peer readers, on the other hand, are often freer to concentrate on the content of the work, unencumbered by the need to respond to its form. Clearly, this is a closer approximation of the writer–reader relationship outside the language classroom. In this way, all three tasks offered a chance for students to put into practice the skills they had learnt in class in a more realistic context. Additionally, through closely and carefully reading and responding to the Project English posters, the lower-grade students were able to gain a preview of the type and standard of work that would be expected of them later in their university careers. The transition from high school English classes, which in Japan often prioritize receptive skills, to the focus on output and critical thinking skills demanded at university can be challenging for many students, so the opportunity to see how far their "near peers" (Murphey & Arao, 2001) have progressed can be highly motivating and help them to visualize their own potential progress.

Finally, for all participants, integrating these courses through required tasks has provided an opportunity to meet students from a different grade, share knowledge, learn from each other, and enjoy a meaningful interaction in English with a person they did not previously know – a somewhat rare occurrence in a university English program, where most interactions are with familiar faces, be they classmates or teachers. Speaking and writing in a foreign language, especially at lower levels of proficiency, is an inherently face-threatening activity (Dörnyei, 2001); moving beyond the comfort zone of the classroom is thus a necessary first step if learners are ultimately to make use of their language skills in the real world.

Despite the benefits outlined above, challenges remain: both in terms of implementing and refining the three tasks discussed, and broadening the scope of this system to cover more of the curriculum as a whole. While each task has value both as a stand-alone activity and as a method through which to reinforce linkages between curricular elements, each also has weaknesses in its current form.

As noted, the poster reports in Writing 1 are essentially a one-way interaction, with no mechanism to ensure that the third-year students who receive them either read or think carefully about their contents. Although it seems likely that most do, it may be beneficial to develop some kind of follow-up task to encourage this.

In contrast, the discussion task undertaken by the Speaking 1 students has the greatest potential to generate meaningful two-way interaction between students of different year groups. In many cases, such as the example given in this paper, it appears to be successful in doing so; in others, however, students' conversations follow a strict question–answer pattern, with first-year students failing to either comment on their partners' answers or ask them follow-up questions. Spending more time in class preparing students to take part in the discussions could help to maximize the value of this activity.

The email task in Business English B1 falls some place between these two

cases. Although it is in theory a two-way interaction, in practice not all Project English students reply to the emails they receive. One way to deal with this would be to set the writing of a reply as an assessed piece of work for these students. Doing so, however, would necessitate a fixed-partner system to ensure that all Project English students received emails, which in turn would remove the element of choice from the second-year students when choosing a poster to comment on.

Finally, in order for the use of tasks of this kind to promote curricular integration at a larger scale, it is necessary to extend their usage to other teachers. As one of the program coordinators, I have encouraged my colleagues to use the three tasks in their classes, with some success. While in theory it would be possible to make all three tasks compulsory elements of the curriculum, in practice this entails taking a decision about the extent to which it is desirable to centrally control what individual teachers do in their classrooms – something which, at the university level, is not necessarily straightforward. Moreover, the tasks described at present serve to create links between only a limited number of courses within the overall program. Clearly, there is scope to develop similar activities relating to those courses not currently covered, as well as the possibility of creating similar horizontal linkages.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, creating and assigning tasks that require first- and second-year students to engage with their third-year counterparts is one way that teachers can offer students an early insight into their language learning future as well as help to build links between learners at different ages and language proficiencies. Through the tasks outlined in this paper, students in different year groups were able to engage with each other in English and build connections between the content and goals of their various English courses. This type of vertical integration within a program can benefit all parties: while younger students can begin to conceptualize what they can achieve, older students are afforded a chance to reflect upon how far they have already come.

THE AUTHOR

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APPENDIX A

Example of Student Work: An Extract from a Writing 1 Poster Report

1. What interested or impressed you about the poster?

The first time when I saw this poster, I was surprised that the style of its overall design was similar to MUJI's, which was clear and simple. A design like this poster makes me comfortable and patient to read the whole thing.

The group used the graphs very well to make the reader understand their ideas of the poster. And they really did some research. Like the USA market research they did, really hooks me, and makes me want to dig deeper.

What I like this poster best is that every part in it is placed well. From the introduction to the discuss part, as a reader I was guided by the titles of each part and understand the theme step by step.

3. What else did you want to learn about this project?

I want to know the detailed reasons why MUJI is so successful in China. My friends in China are really fond of MUJI and they always ask me to bring 50 pens of MUJI when I return China. Just because the price in Japan is lower than that in China. And if this group do a research about it, it will be easier to compare the market between China and America.

Also, as a student of International business, I wonder to know more the business strategy of MUJI. It's interesting for me to know the secrets about such a successful company. How it could be loved by so many people in the world. Expect the good quality and comfortable design, are there other reasons make the success of MUJI?

APPENDIX B

Example of Student Work: An Extract from a Speaking 1 Discussion

(1) A: Why the...why the other country doesn't have much over work you think?

(2) B: Ah, I think because they have different thoughts from Japanese people. For example in Germany I think their...their thoughts are like work, their life are separated, but in Japan I think the work and life is somehow connected, so that's why it affects the workstyle in other countries.

(3) A: So you mean like overworking is related to their culture...their cultural background?

(4) B: Yeah, their culture, their thoughts.

(5) A: OK. Maybe last question, OK. Last week I learn about, I searched about Premium Friday. The end of month, on Friday the end of month, like, the employees go home, and work until 5 o'clock or something and make the time for family or for shopping or other things. And, it's not all Japanese companies do, but some of them try to do. And what do you think about it? Like Premium Friday will be the good influence to overworking, you think?

(6) B: Ah, you said...could you say the question again?

(7) A: Ah, do you think Premium Friday will be the good solution to solve the overwork?

(8) B: Ahh. I think it's not a good influence to solve the overtime work, because...

(9) A: I thought like, until 5 o'clock...like...they say they work hard until 5 o'clock and all of them can go home, so it's like kind of different culture from original Japanese thinking, so like...new idea...people got the new idea, so I thought their mind will be changed a little bit I think.

(10) B: But I think it's still only one time of the month, so I think they are still not used to this custom. And I think...I think this policy, this rule are made by government. But I think why...the purpose of this policy is because the government wants the people to buy something more and they want the people consume something more, so that doesn't really connect to the solution of overtime work.

APPENDIX C

Example of Student Work: A Business English B1 Email

Dear Ms.Tanaka

Hello. My name is Shota Yamada. I'm a second grades student. I major in business and in the international business course in university. I'm writing this e-mail to you because I am taking a Matt's class; Business English B1. In this class, we learn about Business English such as conversation, e-mail, and presentation. This time, we were assigned the homework that we try to write and send business e-mail to someone indeed about a poster.

The reason why I chose your poster is that your topic is the closest problem for me. Our carrier of work will start soon, and I think this is very serious current problem for us. So, we should think profoundly about the problem and tried to find solution.

In my opinion, your poster is good because it is easy to understand. You use background information. I found why you chose this topic through the reading of background information. This is very effective way to make audience understand the main topic. What is more, I believe that your future plans will make this presentation interesting more because I suppose that comparing something is very good way to figure out something.

I have some questions for you. First, what do you want to tell us in the graph of "Employees' perceptions of their boss's view on overtime work"? I think this graph is a little bit difficult to understand because this graph doesn't have longitudinal unit label, so I suppose that you should add it. In addition, you also should add small conclusion about the graph like the outcomes or things you got from by creating the graph.

Second, I also want to ask you about graph of "The current policies". It is possible to say the same point with first one. Furthermore, the connection between the graph and problems or solution is little bit weak, so it's should be better if these points are revised.

Thank you for reading and I hope your success of presentation

Your sincerely,
Shota Yamada(Mr)

Second grades student in international business course

Transforming the Writing Process with Collaborative Learning and Cloud-Based Applications

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Among technological innovations with the potential of transforming the educational landscape, cloud-based applications are considered one of the most promising. These online tools are designed to enhance efficiency in productivity by integrating communication and collaboration options that allow users to work together on shared documents, spreadsheets, and so on. There is much potential in the utilization of cloud-based applications in education. These platforms may complement L2 learning, particularly in situations that necessitate collaboration, immediate feedback, and peer learning. This article will detail relevant studies and provide a description on ways of implementing cloud-based applications for L2 learners; specifically, a systematic approach incorporating collaboration and immediate peer feedback in writing assignments in an EFL intermediate-level university class in Japan.

INTRODUCTION

Students enrolled in writing classes at the tertiary level are typically given composition assignments that involve working in solitude for the duration of the writing process. During the course of completing such assignments, the process writing approach may be applied with the aim of achieving a gradually improved composition, often a procedure that involves feedback from the instructor and multiple revisions from the student. There is certainly variability in the degree of interaction between instructor and student throughout the writing process, but the objective of these back-and-forth exchanges is to achieve a gradually improved version of the written product. Founded on a developmental process of teacher–student corrective feedback, the framework of the process writing approach has remained consistent but inanimate, in many cases, in regard to the utilization of information and communications technology (ICT). The systematic structure of the approach is not necessarily an area of concern; rather, sole reliance on traditional mediums throughout the developmental writing process may be severely limiting to L2 learners in a time when ICT applications have become readily available and offer much potential in enhancing the learning experience. Until fairly recently, logistical barriers have often been one of the culprits in hampering the potential of collaborative writing activities. The physical restrictions of turn-taking while writing a shared document are conceivably demanding within the traditional paper medium. Fast-forward to the Web 1.0 era of the Internet, and the back-and-forth exchanges of email reduce delay but maintain the traditional turn-taking format. In the current Web 2.0 environment, simultaneous interaction is viable and offers

change beyond the limitations of a turn-taking format. Multiple parties are now able to collaborate on shared documents and to do so simultaneously. The arrival of cloud-based applications into the realm of education may provide the keys to unlocking obstacles that have impeded the student learning progress for decades. Specifically, these applications offer the means for students to collaborate on shared documents without restrictions in terms of time or location. Additionally, cloud-based applications provide users with a continual channel of communication – an essential tool while engaged in collaboration.

In an attempt to explore the feasibility of using an online communicative platform for a collaborative writing project, relevant studies involving collaborative writing will be discussed along with a description in using an online application suite for a semester-long collaborative writing project.

COLLABORATIVE WRITING

Studies examining aspects of collaborative writing have found some promising results in terms of the quality of writing. Shehadeh (2011) observed that collaboratively written works were superior in content, organization, and vocabulary in comparison to those written individually. In another study examining a group of advanced ESL learners, Stoch (2005) found that essays written collaboratively had a higher level of grammatical accuracy that those done in isolation. Mulligan and Garofalo (2011) had similar results in their student and described student essays written collaboratively as being more carefully organized, richer in content, and containing fewer basic errors than those written independently. In a study on low-intermediate ESL learners, Nelson and Murphy (1993) concluded that peer assessment responses were similar to those of trained raters in identifying organizational, development, and topic sentence problems.

A number of studies have examined aspects of socialization and peer feedback. Villamil and De Guerrero (1996) state that the utilization of social skill sets such as accountability, cooperation, and community are crucial in the peer feedback process. Likewise, Smith and MacGregor (2009) highlight the importance of social skill utilization in areas involving decision-making and conflict management. Swain (2000) describes communicative aspects of the peer feedback process as consisting of collaborative dialogue between interlocutors engaged in a problem-solving process in order to achieve a writing task. In a later study, Swain (2006) introduced the term "languaging" to describe the exchange of thoughts, knowledge, and ideas that occur among collaborators during the course of the writing process.

In several studies examining aspects pertaining to student collaboration regarding student interaction and quality of feedback, some areas of concern have been mentioned. In a study conducted by Coyle (2007), some students felt uncomfortable in exchanging written work with other students. Likewise, Murau (1993) found that the participants in her study felt uncomfortable and even embarrassed in showing their work to others, although the peer feedback received was considered helpful. As for aspects concerning the feedback received, Connor and Asenavage (1994) have described peer input as being predominantly surface-level responses. Zhang (1995) presents another concern in that students

tended to have a distrust in the peer feedback received from one another and had a preference for feedback from their teacher instead. The suspicions of those students seem not unfounded as Ferris and Hedgcock (2014) revealed that the peer feedback in their investigation was often incorrect. In addition to these concerns, the element of social interaction may influence the effectiveness of peer feedback. According to Nelson and Murphy (1993), learners who were perceived as having interacted collaboratively were more likely to have their comments utilized in written drafts rather than those who were perceived as being less sociable. Adding to these concerns, Mendonca and Johnson (1994) found that only a small portion of suggestions by peers were actually included in the final written draft. It should also be noted that the integration of modern technologies does not necessarily equate a positive impact in the educational environment. In fact, Zheng and Yano (2007) contend that technology often results in complications for learners and teachers alike. These studies have raised some critical concerns to consider. The findings from these different studies vary quite a bit from one another. This is not unexpected if one were to consider the variability in terms of setting, participants, and implementation of the collaborative writing projects. Nevertheless, foresight into potential pitfalls and benefits in collaboration may be helpful in both the planning and implementation stages.

GROUP INTERACTION

In the collaborative writing process, Ede and Lunsford (1990) identify three distinctive features that consist of the following: (a) substantive interaction through all stages of the writing process, (b) shared decision-making and responsibility for the written product, and (c) the creation of a written document. In addition, the framework of the writing process in the drafting and revision stages adds the element of negotiation. Participants continually interact throughout these processes and contribute to planning, generating ideas, and deciding on aspects such as vocabulary, text structure, editing, and so forth. In the collaborative writing process itself, Storch (2004) has expressed concern about the pairing of individuals in groups. She lists four characteristics in interactional collaborative group relationships: collaborative, dominant-dominant, dominant-passive, and expert-novice. Pairs that included students with collaborative and expert-novice characteristics tended to negotiate collectively and utilize shared knowledge. Pairs that included students who exhibited dominant-dominant and dominant-passive forms of behavior often failed to transfer shared knowledge with one another. Storch recommends careful monitoring, especially at the early stages of collaborative writing projects. She also advises teachers to change student pairs if dominant-dominant and dominant-passive characteristics are observed in groups. In regard to the frequency of changing groups, McAllister (2005) simply advises the use of permanent groups instead since this may have more benefits to learners. In her observations of collaborative writing and interaction among students in both permanent and changing groups, she concluded that those in permanent groups tended to offer each other more detailed feedback as time progressed while those in changing groups tended to make superficial comments.

In the implementation of the collaborative writing project itself, Cote (2006) recommends a gradual introduction to students with assignments first in the revision of sample essays, providing models of written work, and having reflective discussions on the writing and revision processes. Additionally, Cote recommends that teachers provide clear guidelines and an editing checklist, and to closely monitor the writing process from beginning to end. In another study on collaborative writing but with the inclusion of an online component, Bikowski and Vithanage (2016) recommend that teachers should be supportive throughout the writing process and help students realize the long-term benefits of such tasks. In addition, they recommend that teachers should provide students with a clear rationale from the beginning, allow them the freedom to choose topics, allot time for reflection about the collaborative process following completion of the activity, and also identify personality types to ensure cohesion in groups.

CLOUD INTEGRATION

The means of integrating ICT in an effective manner into learning is dependent on a structured plan that involves preparing students adequately, having achievable objectives in the utilization of the technology, and ensuring that the technology is a contributing element rather than a burden (e.g., Wang & Woo, 2007). As such, the initial course of action required ICT skill development in the use of several cloud applications that were to be utilized throughout each phase of the writing assignment. Among several cloud-based systems that enable immediate and direct communication for the submission of feedback along with productivity tools, the Google Suite for Education was selected for use in the class. In comparison to other available cloud platforms, Google Suites offers more variety and versatility, and therefore was deemed most suitable for the purposes of the class writing assignment. The applications within the education-based version of Google Suites include the following: Gmail, Drive, Calendar, Vault, Sheets, Forms, Docs, Slides, Sites, and Hangouts. In addition to these applications, the Google SNS platform, Google Communities, was utilized as a shared communication medium with all students in the class. Several brief training sessions were integrated into the initial weeks of the course to assist in student development of the cloud-based applications to be used in the collaborative writing activity.

As for the applications within Google Suite for Education, a brief description of the relevant use in the class assignment will follow. As for Gmail, it will generally involve direct communication. The cloud-based storage application Drive offers the option of both user-storage capabilities and ease of accessibility in shared-storage content. The use of Calendar in this project may not necessarily have a groundbreaking impact on L2 learning; rather, it may offer some convenience for students to plan collaborative scheduling sessions, and the instructor could highlight critical deadlines for students to meet. The application Vault is mentioned since it is a standard application within Google Suite. It is primarily an archiving tool that will be of importance for organizing data for future research. Although it is an important application for the purposes of research, it will not be used by students in the class. Likewise, the spreadsheet application Sheets will be limited to instructor use in maintaining class records

and managing research data. The survey application Forms was utilized for its feedback capabilities, allowing the instructor to periodically assess progress and receive student input. The word processing application Docs would obviously be central in any writing-based assignment. Students were required to utilize this application to submit a weekly writing assignment. The instructor's class website was created in Sites, a Google-based platform. This was beneficial for ease in embedding Google Suite applications on the website, eliminating any potential compatibility issues. As for Slides, the application was limited to classroom presentations by the instructor. Additionally, its sharing and embedding options were utilized to distribute the presentation content to students via Communities and Sites. In regard to Hangouts, the multifaceted video-conferencing, phone, and chat application was introduced in class, but its use among students was optional. Still, students were encouraged to utilize this application with expectations of improving communication channels, establishing a collaborative element in learning, and strengthening aspects of peer learning.

In regard to the activity itself, a multifaceted approach was utilized to provide learners with maximize exposure to ICT technologies in such a way as to promote collaborative learning with cloud-based applications. As previously mentioned, utilization of the Google Suites for Education applications were integrated into the project in full. As for providing instructions and details to students about the activity, there were some concerns about ICT awareness. As such, the structure of the activity was organized into stages that included preparation, implementation, and feedback. As a means of promoting compliance during the preparation stage, directions and required steps were provided to students via several communicative mediums, such as Google Communities, Sites, Docs, and in-class explanations using Slides. The utilization of multiple communication applications may seem extreme to convey information about an activity; however, the extent of misunderstandings justifies this precaution. An added element of the activity that would ensure student compliance in preparation of discussions and draft writing were the requirement to upload notes and an outline before each class. Students were required to write notes in Docs and submit the documents via Drive. The optional element of collaboration was encouraged at this stage, and some of the students worked with their peers to prepare for the discussion activities as well as the draft notes.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

As for the implementation stage, the basic framework consisted of students working in both groups and then in pairs. Students were placed in groups consisting of four students. The group participants were randomly changed in each class. Although this arrangement contradicts McAllister (2005) in her preference for permanent groups, the multi-faceted layout of the activity with weekly group discussions and ICT integration in an EFL setting equate a remarkably different type of writing assignment. In short, students worked in pairs to participate in L2 discussions and were later allocated time to begin working on drafts of preassigned topics. As for topics, students were given a weekly list of four topics for group discussion and were also required to submit

brief notes and outlines of each topic via the cloud applications. During the discussions, students were encouraged to take notes and to brainstorm ideas for writing. At the end of each discussion session (10–15 minutes), students were given a brief period of time (5–7 minutes) to write draft notes containing key information. As for the weekly writing assignment, students had to choose one topic from the discussion sessions. Students rotated partners in groups and discussed topics for the allotted time each week. This procedure was repeated with the groups until everyone had an opportunity to work with one another. Following each timed discussion, students submitted feedback via Google's survey application, Forms, about the discussion and had the option of submitting comments as well. This arrangement was suitable in ensuring compliance in the discussion activities while obtaining feedback on the suitability of topics. For instance, based on student feedback, the instructor would be able to adjust the difficulty level of topics or even receive ideas for writing topics.

In the first several weeks, students were gradually introduced to each of the cloud-based applications during class, receiving hands-on training before beginning the collaborative writing assignment. Once students had an adequate grasp in the utilization of these applications, the collaborative writing assignment was initiated. In the ensuing months, students would participate in assignments that required thorough planning, continual monitoring, and frequent adjustments. The weekly group discussion sessions provided students with a brainstorming medium to develop and share ideas for the writing assignment. At the conclusion of the weekly group discussions, students would be randomly assigned a partner to work on a shared topic. In the event that pairs were not available, groups of three would be assigned. Student writing would be conducted via the Google cloud application Docs with students sharing the document with each other and with the instructor as well. The inclusion of the instructor was vital for assisting students in need and ensuring compliance in completing the assignment. The feedback mechanism included several applications; however, the integrated "comments" tool within Docs was frequently used by students throughout the production stages. The use of the survey application Forms was vital in ensuring an equal distribution of work among partners. Essentially, students were required to submit feedback on their contribution to the assignment and that of their partner. Since student contributions were a portion of the assignment grade, there was an incentive to complete the assignment together.

DISCUSSION

Based on instructor observations, the weekly assignments resulted in gradual improvements in writing output for students – in terms of both quality and quantity. In comparison to individual writing assignments, the collaborative writing assignments revealed slight improvements overall in areas evaluated: content, organization, grammar, and mechanics. Although there were some exceptions to these improvements, collaborative cloud-based writing seems to offer much potential. However, it should be noted that observations of chat logs and interview inquiries revealed limited use of online communication tools. Aspects such as English proficiency, cultural behavioral norms, personality types, or

unfamiliarity in using Google Suites may have limited the communication component. In interviews, several students indicated that their lack of confidence in L2 writing was the reason for their limited participation in the assignment. A few students mentioned being uncomfortable in using ICT. Additionally, several other students indicated apprehension in working with others. As one study found, accustomed routines and norms of Japanese group behavior may lead to reluctance in communicating beyond the in-group (Peak, 1991). Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the overall consensus from participants in regard to the helpfulness of the writing project was overwhelmingly positive. Moreover, many of the students stated that the cloud-based applications helped them to gain a better grasp of technology.

The aim of the collaborative cloud-based writing assignments were essentially three fold: enhancing ICT awareness, promoting collaborative learning, and improving the written product. In general, these goals were met. The extent of ICT integration in the assignments mandated student familiarity in using cloud-based applications. The students felt that this was a positive aspect of the assignments. As for the collaborative learning element, it was a central component in the assignments, but its use beyond group discussions was questionable. Based on feedback gathered in Forms and student interviews, collaboration in pairwork was promising but an area of concern in some instances. As mentioned earlier, a number of students indicated reasons ranging from insufficient L2 skills to technophobia as culprits that limited their participation in the writing assignments. Preventative steps should be taken to minimize such potential interference. Language instructors must be prepared to continually adjust and adapt assignments in each class setting. As noted by Kessler, Bikowski, and Boggs (2012), collaborative technologies have reached a point of rapid change, and teachers must adapt to these changes to use them more effectively in class and to guide their students.

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Ten Ways to Produce Amazing Classroom Board Work

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This article focuses on how to improve a teacher's usage of the board in class. It begins by discussing why a teacher might wish to improve the quality of their board work; it argues that poor quality board work leads to a weakening of communication between teacher and student, and that this elevates the risk of a student not being able to successfully learn the material presented. Ten techniques are then presented to help a teacher improve the quality of their board work, with concrete examples illustrating each technique. All techniques emerged from discussions and workshops with several generations of Korean English teachers on an in-service teacher training course and, as such, have a practical basis, while also taking into account the constraints and issues teachers have with creating effective board work, for example, suffering from a lack of resources or artistic skills.

INTRODUCTION

Almost every classroom comes equipped with a basic whiteboard or chalkboard, which most teachers use to some extent or another. However, many teachers have not had the chance to deeply reflect or improve on the quality of their board work. This article has been written so that more teachers can consider how improved board work makes teaching practice more effective.

Ten simple, practical techniques for better board work are presented in this article. The topic was inspired by a lesson in a government-organized in-service teacher training course delivered in part by the author. The reflections and expertise of the trainee teachers as well as the author form the basis of the content presented in this article. As such, the techniques offered here are based in solid, proven practice and ongoing reference will be made throughout this article to the insights and observations gained from the trainee teachers as well as those from the author. Of course, while the author is confident of the usefulness of the techniques outlined, the potential for ongoing improvement and expansion of the content of this article is both acknowledged and encouraged.

WHY IMPROVE OUR BOARD WORK?

We must first consider some conceptual foundations. During discussions on the aforementioned course, the following three propositions were posited:

1. That once a teacher begins to use the board, it becomes a part of the

learning process and the learning experience in the class.

2. That many teachers use their boards to present information that is vital to the learning process or the learning objective in the classroom.

3. That most teachers have not enjoyed the benefit of training in efficient usage of their boards nor have they reflected deeply on the quality of their board work.

And so:

4. Taking into account propositions 1–3, there is a risk that a students' successful learning could be threatened by a teacher's inadequate board work.

Boards, like any classroom asset used during class time, are a living part of the teaching and learning process. In the case of boards, the most common usage seems to be to communicate information to students. In addition to this, many trainee teachers reflected how they used their boards for information that was highly important – error corrections, difficult grammar points, problematic spellings, and so on; and so we can understand our boards to be not just tools for communication but as *critical communicators* for learning and for student success.

However, almost every teacher who participated in the training course noted that training in how to use boards effectively was completely lacking in training courses they had taken before; that in fact, the author's workshop was the first chance they had ever had to reflect upon or to improve the quality of their board work. It was agreed that this neglect had led to an inability for teachers to be able to adequately judge the quality of their board work.

There is thus a strong basis upon which we can justify our previous assertion that a student's learning could be threatened by a teacher's inadequate board work. Efficient communication between teacher and student is a foundation of successful learning. Incomprehensible writing, a lack of visibility for students at the back, writing overly long blocks of text – all of these demonstrate poor communication. If we are not monitoring the quality of the communication we create through our board work, we are creating a gap in our understanding of our classroom practice. The risks are simple: What if we are not communicating well with our boards? What danger does that present to the student who is trying to learn our material? It is no different to speaking over-complicated English towards students who cannot understand us. We might be fortunate and our students might just about understand, but that is not a risk any professional teacher should deem worth taking.

Therefore, while even the most effective board work cannot be considered the sole method towards unlocking successful teaching, we can argue that the improvement of a teacher's board work is a task worth undertaking. As such it is imperative that we both critically reflect on our board work and arm ourselves with techniques to help us utilize our boards to their full potential.

GUIDELINES AND CONSTRAINTS

Resources, time, and artistic abilities are not always in abundance for teachers, and so the techniques in this article adhere to certain guidelines that accommodate these limitations. The guidelines were designed to reflect the general reality for most teachers in their schools. Therefore, each technique presented in this article is achievable with a realistic amount of resources, namely

1. An average-sized board, no more than two meters in length and 1.5 meters in height.
2. No more than three different colors of chalk or board markers;
3. No more than five minutes required to complete.

In addition to the above points, no great degree of artistic ability is required to carry out any technique. Many trainee teachers, as well as the author, acknowledged this as a key limitation in their practice and special effort was made to mitigate this impediment without diluting the quality of the techniques.

THE TECHNIQUES

While the techniques are presented here as discrete items, the accompanying pictures (available in the Appendix) demonstrate how they overlap and flow together in real board work. The techniques have been divided into *preparatory techniques*, which should be planned for and implemented before the teacher begins their class; *in-class techniques*, which describe in closer detail the board's appearance during the class, and *longer-term techniques*, which cover techniques that should be implemented over a lengthier period of time. Examples of techniques 3–9 can be found in the Appendix; all other techniques are self-explanatory.

Preparatory Techniques

1. Plan your board before you go in.
Simplest of all, plan the board work while making lesson plans. No great detail is needed, but a basic outline is useful. A key strategy here is to ensure there is always some free space left on the board, so that unexpected teaching points such as difficult spellings might be written down without the board becoming cluttered. Considerations for planning should include all relevant items planned for, such as page numbers and learning objectives, as well as space for unplanned items – for example, questions that may come up in class that need writing down.

2. Remember line of sight, size, and legibility.
The fact that we can see all the board doesn't mean that every student can see all the board. It is important for every teacher to identify which students have a more limited line of sight and then design their board work accordingly. Glare

from sunlight or classroom lighting can also cause issues with visibility. Finally, it is also important that teachers write large enough and legibly enough for each student to see. For obvious reasons, this is particularly pertinent in large classrooms. A key strategy here is simple: The teacher needs to go out into the depths of the classroom and check.

In-class Techniques

3. Use a consistent language of color.

This refers to the use of color to indicate certain items during a lesson. For example, in a picture of a game explanation a black marker might be used for "basic" markings, such as stick figures denoting students; a blue marker might be used for showing movement or action, such as where a student should move to during a game; and a red marker might be used to highlight rules or important things to remember, such as "Use only English." Whatever the teacher's choice, consistency in color usage from lesson to lesson (and indeed semester to semester) is absolutely essential, to help students learn this "language of color."

4. Highlight possible learning issues using a consistent method.

Every class has certain linguistic items that cause common problems for students. The teacher should identify these before the lesson and highlight them in a specific way on the board: by using capitalization, underlining, writing them on a specific place on the board, or even using a specific color. One teacher, for example, drew a "crazy face" next to whichever items they thought the students might find problematic during the course of the class. Whatever the teacher chooses, there should again be consistency in how they do so in order to help students pick up on which parts of the content the teacher wants to draw attention to.

5. Stay consistent with conceptual locations.

Board work should be carefully planned and arranged; a haphazardly-created piece of board work looks at best amateurish and at worst incomprehensible. Different sections of the board can be set aside for certain items. For example, everyday administrative matters such as textbook page numbers could be located on the right-hand side (at the top for maximum visibility), while target language would always be central (an easy place to focus on), with extra space for error corrections could be located on the left (clearly marked so that students know what that part of the board means for their learning). It is also once again essential to be consistent from lesson to lesson with regards to where a teacher chooses to place certain items in order to allow students to "catch on." One example of this was when the author located his "class points" section on the far left of the whiteboard, leading students to learn that any sudden movement to that area either signaled something good – or something bad!

6. Use pictures and humor.

Some students, especially those with a low proficiency level, find it hard to follow some items on the board; it is too easy for teachers to write language that is simply too difficult for students to understand. One solution is to use more

pictures on the board, and while artistic talent is not a prerequisite for drawing effective pictures, the ability to create a simple doodle – particularly a humorous one – certainly comes in handy and is not difficult to master. For example, "rock, paper, scissors" can be rendered easily as a picture; the flow of a game is more easily rendered using a visual flowchart than with pure writing or bullet pointing; and an important rule can be accompanied by a stick-man wearing sunglasses with a mean "Terminator" expression to ensure the importance of the rule hits home.

7. Go beyond the pen.

There are a multitude of things that can be done with a board, and it is engaging for a student to experience something beyond writing and pictures. For example, items can be hidden using cloaks suspended from the top of the board, real items can be taped onto the surface (candy bars universally seem to elicit an energized reaction from students when teaching about food), or it can be used as a board surface for a game. It is a useful idea for teachers to "think outside the box" when utilizing the board.

8. Ask "What can I not write?"

Teachers often write too much on the board. This, in turn, leads to students over-focusing on the board and not the teacher themselves, which leads to frustrations for the teacher and a possible weakening of communication between teacher and student. A board should be used as an aid to a teacher's classroom delivery, not as a crutch. While some amount of writing is acceptable, this should only augment the teacher's act of teaching rather than being an absolute duplicate of what the teacher says during the lesson. In short, knowing what should *not* be written is just as important as knowing what *should* be written.

Longer-Term Techniques

9. Use reusable materials.

Teachers often do not have enough time to create effective board work – 5-10 minutes was deemed typical by the trainee teachers – and as a consequence their board work can end up being created in too much of a hurry, which in turn can lead to a lower quality of board work. One remedy is to create reusable materials for certain items of board work that can be reused again and again; for example, target language, pictures to represent vocabulary, little stick men to represent student groupings, and so on – the list is extensive, and many trainee teachers found themselves amazed at how much board work could be converted into reusable materials. One useful tip is to have a good folder to keep all your reusable materials in, and to organize it well.

10. Tell students about your board work.

Being open with students about how the board is being used is a simple method of improving the impact of the board work. For example, having a consistent location for problematic language items is useful, but it to fully maximize the efficacy of it students need to notice it; and the best way for that to happen is to tell them. In the experience of many teachers, such transparency

had a noticeable effect on students' ability to keep track of how the board was being used, and it was suggested that "earlier is better" in terms of choosing when to talk about the subject with students.

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

These techniques should not be viewed as a panacea to cure any problems a teacher might have with communicating their lesson content, nor should they be considered an exhaustive inventory of board work techniques. As previously mentioned, there will always be room for improvement. However, experience has proven the worth of these techniques to multiple teachers working across a wide variety of contexts. In fact, from the extensive work in practicing, reflecting on, and improving board work, both the author and the teachers working with him came to a new appreciation of the role of boards in the classroom. Indeed, boards are more used and more useful than we give them credit for; they are truly one of the great workhorses of the classroom.

Board work does not have to be difficult or over-complicated; most of the above techniques are easily perfected so long as the teacher takes the time and effort to implement them consistently. Similarly, it is thus hoped that readers will look upon this aspect of their teaching with a similar spirit of patience and reflection, and go back to their classrooms willing to work at improving their board work. In the experience of the author and his trainee teachers, such labors are hugely beneficial.

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APPENDIX

Example Board Work 1: Illustrating Techniques 3, 4, 5, & 7.
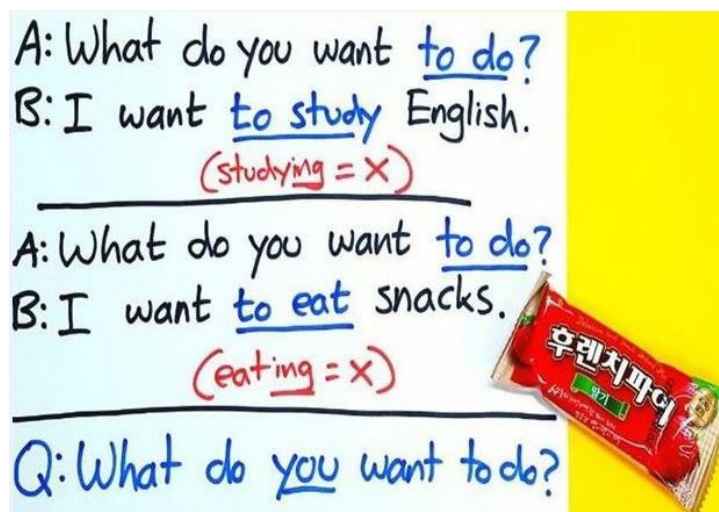
This example illustrates the use of a "language of color" as well as the highlighting of possible learning issues using a single method, using black to write "normal" language, blue to indicate language that requires special focus, and red to draw attention to possible errors that students might make. Conceptual space is also outlined, with the concept question designed to be consistently located at the bottom of the dialog. Finally, while not to scale, the pinning of a real-life snack is a useful visual aid for the second dialog.

Example Board Work 2: Illustrating Techniques 6, 8, & 9.
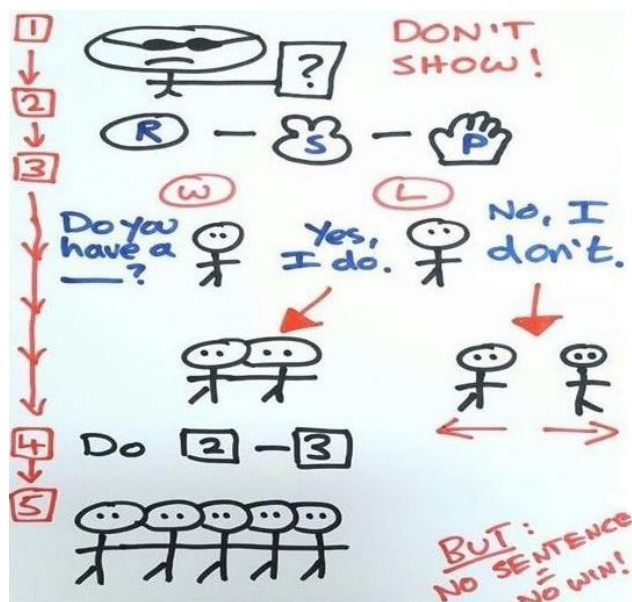
This example illustrates the use of pictures and humor, particularly with regards to the "Terminator" figure and the use of a flowchart to help visualize the flow of a game. Many of the pictures here could be made from reusable materials, such as the stick figures, the "rock, paper, scissors" images, and the flowchart numbers. This, in turn, assists the teacher in being able to write less while showing more.

Dabbling in Dogme: Teaching an English Conversation Class Textbook-Free

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This paper discusses the planning and teaching of a listening and speaking class at a Japanese university taught without the use of a standardized coursebook. The course design was influenced by the three main precepts of a Dogme approach to language teaching. Firstly, classes were conversation-driven and attempted to maximize interactive opportunities. Secondly, lessons were materials-light as no textbook was used, and finally, efforts were made to explore any emergent language that arose during class time. It was found that teaching without a textbook provided greater flexibility to design a curriculum that responded to the students' needs, interests, and current events; and allowed for greater student involvement and engagement in influencing the direction of the class and maximizing interaction opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

This paper will discuss the teaching philosophy and approaches taken in planning the curriculum for a new elective listening and speaking course for students studying at a Japanese university. One of the most important decisions made in the planning stage was to teach without a standardized coursebook. This was a difficult decision as textbooks provide a tried-and-tested syllabus with inbuilt structure, detailed teaching procedures, clear units for time management, and also help to cut down on the teacher's lesson preparation time. However, it was decided that a book-free classroom would provide greater flexibility to the curriculum, allowing classes to deal better with the students' interests, as well as current events, and afford greater opportunity for the teacher to respond to the language needs of the students. A textbook-free approach also relieves the burden of completing predetermined tasks that can sometimes feel repetitive and inauthentic in their language. Finally, it removes the obligation felt to extensively use the core text in class simply due to students having paid for the books regardless of the individual merits of the activities they contain.

BACKGROUND

Class Context

The core listening and speaking classes at the university are compulsory English courses for all undergraduate students. Students from all disciplines must

complete four semesters of English classes. The course referred to in this study is a new Listening and Speaking class that was born out of the desire to offer a variety of elective courses for students who have already completed the core program in order to continue to improve their communication skills. However, being a new program, it was a complete unknown how many students might enroll in the course, and what level of English these students might have. As a result, the curriculum required a great deal of flexibility to respond to the needs of the students when these factors became more apparent in the first week of the program. Therefore, the teachers on the program were given freedom to teach the course in their own style. The course lasted for 15 weeks, meeting for one 90-minute class a week, then was repeated with new students in the second semester.

Dogme ELT

The rationale for the creation of Dogme English language teaching, as conceived by Scott Thornbury and Luke Meddings, was based on a perceived overdependence of teachers on manufactured materials that were considered lacking in relevance to the students' real needs and interests, and are often culturally bland in their content (Thornbury & Meddings, 1999). However, it is important to recognize that its creators did not see it as a new teaching method offering a fixed formula for success, but as Thornbury has explained, "Dogme is more an attitude, or a set of beliefs and values, whose realization in practice will vary from person to person and from context to context" (Thornbury, 2009). As a result, it has been dismissed by some teachers as simply "winging it, elevated into an artform" (Thornbury, 2005, p. 3). However, this cynicism fails to appreciate that although Dogme is not a method per se, as an attitude towards learning priorities it can be accommodated within a variety of existing methodologies. For example, a Dogme approach can be supported by communicative language teaching methodology, as it prioritizes purposeful communicative opportunities. Therefore, the course in this study took a theme and function approach to individual lesson topics. Dogme also shares many values with the principles of task-based language teaching (Long, 2015) so some of the classes were taught around completion of a central communicative task. Finally, the concept of encouraging learner autonomy (Benson, 2011) is also highly compatible with a Dogme approach that likewise claims students are most engaged by content they have self-selected. Therefore, students were given the responsibility to discuss at the beginning of the semester the topics they wanted the course to cover, and class content was student-driven based on their needs and interests. Furthermore, a Dogme approach is particularly apt in a Japanese teaching context to counterbalance the traditional grammar-focused learning style students have previously experienced and to increase opportunities for genuine communication (Christensen, 2005).

It was hoped that the adoption of a Dogme approach would help free the class of third-party materials and empower the teacher and learners. This approach is underpinned by three main precepts. Firstly, classes should be conversation-driven, with the teacher taking every opportunity to encourage interaction and make the classroom a social environment. Secondly, lessons

should be materials-light, with the learners helping to generate class content that directly responds to the students' needs. Finally, the teacher should utilize every opportunity to focus on emergent language, recognizing that knowledge should be constructed by the group rather than transmitted by the teacher (Thornbury & Meddings, 2009).

METHOD

Planning the Curriculum

It was a difficult choice to rule out using a textbook. As a coursebook can be time-efficient, cost-effective, minimize preparation time, and should be written by experienced teachers who have carefully planned the staging of the activities. However, textbooks often are unable to respond to the real needs of the learners, due to the bland content and inauthentic language they use in an attempt to appeal to all. Furthermore, over-reliance on them can reduce the opportunity for both teachers and learners to use their initiative and be creative in class. As one of the founders of Dogme, Meddings suggests, "We use coursebooks because they make it easy to get from 9 o'clock to 10 o'clock, not because they are a good way to promote learning" (Meddings, 2004, para. 16). Therefore, he envisions, "The answer to materials overload is to generate your own and, more importantly, to allow and encourage students to generate their own" (Meddings, 2004, para. 24). Essentially, this involves streamlining lessons to only include relevant topics and activities that specifically target the learners' interests and needs.

In the first semester, the curriculum topics were designed to be flexible and negotiated with the students. The students spent the first class doing getting-to-know-each-other activities and the second class on activities that required them to negotiate and make choices culminating in a final discussion of what they hoped the curriculum would cover. To facilitate this, they were provided with a list of 20 topics each with a corresponding function, similar to the units you might find in many communicative coursebooks (e.g., The Future – making predictions, Health – giving advice, Social Issues – agreeing and disagreeing). The advantage of negotiating the topics over a coursebook was that it allowed classes to focus on only the topics the students were interested in and discard the others. The students were then asked to choose their top ten topic preferences to study and were also given the opportunity to add their own topic choices and activities they hoped the class would include. This data was then collated to include the most popular options in the outline of the course. This approach allowed for a great deal of flexibility in designing the curriculum and promoted learner autonomy in allowing learners to take charge of what was going to be learnt. However, this curriculum framework received negative feedback from management as it was considered to not be specific enough to upload on the system for potential review by the Ministry of Education (MEXT), therefore the method for choosing content and curriculum outline was adapted in Semester 2.

In Semester 2, I was asked by management to lock in the ten topics of the course in the online curriculum based on the topic choices that had been studied in the previous semester. Therefore, in the opening classes we took a different

approach to discussing preferences. Firstly, the students were surveyed and asked to rate how they felt about the preassigned topics, whether they were not interested, interested, or very interested, then discussed possible alternatives that may be transferred in to replace the least popular elements. They were also surveyed using a needs analysis that asked them to rank how important each skill or situation was for them (e.g., giving a presentation, practicing role-plays, or discussing opinions) by marking each as not important, important, or very important. This helped the teacher not only plan the topics for each class but also develop a framework of activities that students might find most beneficial. Students were also provided the opportunity to add any more items of interest or importance that they didn't think had been covered by the survey. Both formats in Semester 1 and Semester 2 were able to stay true to the three main tenets of a Dogme approach as classes were conversation-driven, materials-light, and attempted to deal with and respond to any emergent language.

Conversation-Driven

Firstly, the classes attempted to be conversation-driven. This required trying to select topics and activities that were purposeful, interesting, and relevant to the students' everyday life. This was achieved by selecting curriculum topics that were co-authored by those in the class, as participant-generated ideas can be considered more relevant and interesting for students. Furthermore, in line with a Dogme approach, it was decided that no prerecorded listening activities would be conducted in class (Thornbury, 2000). However, learners were provided with a list of useful online listening resources that they could access at home and encourage to exercise their autonomy in taking charge of their own progress. This allowed the creation of a classroom dynamic, based solely on speaking and real-time listening, that encouraged the interaction of all participants in the room to talk about topics of interest with each other. The teacher then could take a facilitator role and provide the necessary scaffolding that encourages talk and extends conversations.

Materials-Light

Secondly, planning for the classes strived to be materials-light in the sense of minimizing the amount of handouts or slides used in class, and instead endeavored to be rich in activities and ideas to cater to the potential changing direction of the lesson. Although a Dogme approach is often considered anti-coursebook, Thornbury has outlined a template for a possible Dogme coursebook that would among other things be high on interactivity, low on text, grammar-light, non-linear, and listening-free (Thornbury, 2005). But no such book was found that matched this format, so it was considered better to allow the students to help decide what topics to include in the curriculum. Therefore, the content was learner-generated based on student needs with the students encouraged to express themselves. This was considered preferable as not having a coursebook allows resources to be exploited fully, with space for students to reflect on learning, without the burden of having to cover a fixed amount of pages or activities. Although originally the Dogme approach championed the tech-free

classroom (Thornbury, 2000), the revised "Dogme 2.0" recognizes that improvements in tech available in everyday classrooms can offer greater benefits to student learning than was previously possible when Dogme was first realized (Vickers, 2009). Therefore, the teacher utilized tech when appropriate to share images or video, and to gather student responses and contributions through an online student response system.

Many of the activities used in class were based on or drew inspiration from the examples contained in *Teaching Unplugged* (Thornbury & Meddings, 2009). These could be characterized by features such as starting out small and building conversations, or creating new texts collaboratively with pen and paper, and using boardwork to deal with emergent language. Activities often used sentence starters, prompts, diagrams, and non-verbal stimuli such as objects, images, people, or news stories to try to generate discussions and keep conversations topical or grounded in the real world and daily activities. Often classes would culminate in a final product or outcome task such as a role-play activity that would demonstrate and consolidate the language that had emerged during the lesson. However, it was often difficult to plan how long activities or tasks might take, and necessary as in the spirit of Dogme to allow space to deviate from planned materials. Therefore, this approach requires teachers to be materials-light but resource-heavy, with many potential activities to choose from based on the direction and pace of the lesson. At the start of class, the initial conversation activities would allow the learners to generate useful language that the teacher would help them to explore and extend in follow-up tasks. Although every effort was made to embrace a Dogme philosophy, it was from the perspective that Dogme doesn't have to be an all-or-nothing approach and materials or activities, whether constructed or pre-existing, would be chosen based on their potential benefit for the students.

Emergent Language

Finally, in keeping with a Dogme approach it was considered important to optimize language learning affordances through direct attention to emergent language, that is, to pick up on what students were trying to say and help them to say it better. This was done by either immediate reformulation or involved taking notes for personal feedback or post-activity boardwork. For example, when the students wrote and discussed questions related to food, the teacher would make a note of types of food and the adjectives used to describe them and then use these examples to build and elicit more ideas from students to include on the board. The students then used this scaffolding to construct a menu listing food items, with ingredients and descriptions, and then used their menu to help them construct and perform a role-play of a customer dining at a restaurant and the waiter serving them. This approach may be considered doing more with less, taking every opportunity to extend and exploit activities for further review and progression, rather than less with more, that is, excessively using supplementary materials and following a to-do list of things that must be covered. In essence, taking the time to recognize and rework emergent language helps prioritize the quality of learning over the quantity of materials covered.

DISCUSSION

The main perceived benefits of a Dogme inspired approach was the affordance of greater opportunities for classroom interaction, both between students and between students and the teacher in comparison to other listening and speaking classes, in which the pressure to cover the book may act as a barrier to authentic interaction. Furthermore, the students benefited from helping to generate activities that matched their language learning needs. Finally, there was the added benefit of greater flexibility for the class to follow an unplanned direction and respond to the interests and contributions of the students. This ultimately appeared to be more enjoyable for students than when their contributions are glossed over in an attempt to save time to cover all the materials assigned.

However, there were a few drawbacks to this approach. Firstly, there was an increase in planning time, not only having to plan the lesson outline, but also in attempting to anticipate the possible directions the lesson could take and what suitable activities might match the changing or emerging learning goals. This also added additional stress for the teacher in attempting to anticipate the direction and pacing of the class and ensuring that there was sufficient activities to fill the available time. Furthermore, in an effort to allow potential divergence and opportunity to follow lesson tangents, repeating the same class didn't necessary mean the same materials or activities could be used the following semester. Another drawback to this approach was the lack of specific measurable learning outcomes, which meant student contributions and progress were difficult to assess. In the end, assessment was based on active participation in activities, homework tasks, review quizzes, and due to the small class size, the teacher was able to listen in and assess individual contributions during pair or group work. However, with a larger group this method of assessment would prove difficult. Finally, in shunning pre-existing materials, it sometimes can feel like the teacher is trying to reinvent the wheel, when there are many worksheets available to deal with a well-established topic. However, overall I feel the students benefitted greatly from the bottom-up approach to materials generation and engaging in the cognitive processes necessary for considering their own questions, mapping their pre-existing vocabulary, and extending their understanding, fluency, and accuracy through increased interactions with each other.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Dogme was a useful approach to consider in the context of this class, as it provided substantial flexibility to achieve the general aim of improving communication skills. However, it is important to recognize that Dogme is not a fixed dogma or set of rules to abide by, but is a useful starting point when considering the best communicative activities and methods available. Ultimately, this approach should encourage flexibility and expression rather than suppress it. Therefore, teachers shouldn't feel guilty incorporating outside materials or technology that fits the learning needs of their students as long as they still keep the class conversation driven with the flexibility to engage with and explore

emergent language and emergent interests.

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Digital Literacy for Modern Students

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In language classes, students are usually exposed to English in the form of carefully selected textbooks and graded readers. Outside of class, they have access to a wide variety of sources on the Internet, with a huge range of levels and formats. Traditional classroom activities do not fully prepare students for accessing information online. Part of the role of a modern teacher, then, should be to help students learn how to find and evaluate digital information. This paper introduces a simple "3R" method to guide L2 students through the process of searching for and evaluating online information, using three main questions: Is this information relevant? Is it reliable? Is it recent? This technique can form a foundation of digital literacy for students who are learning to navigate the modern digital era.

INTRODUCTION

The Internet is becoming increasingly more important in the modern world. More and more, information is found on news sites, business is conducted through commercial and financial websites, and interpersonal communication occurs via a host of messaging and social networking services. Navigation of this array of online resources requires a set of skills that are often referred to as *digital literacy* (or *digital literacies*). Eshet-Alkalai (2004) surveyed a variety of sources, concluding that digital literacy involves "a growing variety of technical, cognitive, and sociological skills [needed] in order to perform tasks and solve problems in digital environments" (p. 93). According to Walton (2016), the term has achieved buzzword status in higher education, with different institutions defining digital literacy in various ways. However, locating and evaluating online information was an integral part of the definition for almost all the programs that Walton surveyed.

Classroom instruction on digital literacy began in the mid-1990s, when programs began focusing on the "*critical evaluation* of sources and information found on the World Wide Web" (Ostenson, 2014, p. 34). In his review of these instructional methods, Ostenson stated that the abilities students need to develop include searching skills, such as the ability to use keywords and identify relevant search results, as well as critical thinking skills, which are necessary to evaluate the credibility of sources. Many programs use flowcharts and checklists to guide students as they learn to evaluate online information. Ostenson argued that these systems are sometimes overly restrictive; however, one study he helped to administer found better results in students' ability to judge websites while using a checklist than while using a strategy-centered approach, supporting the idea that

evaluative tools (such as flowcharts and checklists) can be effective learning aids.

Many universities base their website evaluation guidelines for students on a set of five criteria proposed by Kapoun in 1998. He developed a set of questions to evaluate the *accuracy*, *authority*, *objectivity*, *currency*, and *coverage* of a web source. These questions were based on a similar set used to determine the quality of traditional print sources. He advised having students evaluate two to four example websites, chosen to include sites of both good and poor quality, to familiarize themselves with the use of those questions. His goal was to provide "a quick but comprehensive set of criteria" for students to use in their online research (p. 522).

Kapoun's (1998) website evaluation criteria were designed for first language students, but online resources are also important in the foreign language classroom. The Internet is a valuable source of authentic learning material for students, capable of greatly increasing their access to comprehensible input. Increasingly, language teachers are using online sources in class or asking students to find information on the Internet. However, Hafner, Chik, and Jones (2013) claimed that mainstream classroom teaching is still focused on traditional textbook or conversational instruction. They argued that "the kind of reading, writing, and communication that occurs in online, digitally mediated contexts demands a different set of skills from those traditionally taught in language classrooms" (p. 813). In other words, in order to successfully navigate the resources available online, L2 students need specific instruction in digital literacy.

There are many guides and checklists online to introduce students to digital literacy. However, the majority were designed by colleges, universities, and research institutions – again, often based on Kapoun's (1998) criteria for website evaluation – and are aimed at students with a native level of English ability. There is a need, therefore, for a leveled version that takes into account the specific challenges faced by L2 students. This paper introduces a system that was developed to guide Japanese university students through the process of finding and evaluating information online.

SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION ONLINE

The first step of finding information online is learning how and where to search. Students may be unaware that their geographic location and browser history affect the results of a web search, even if the search terms are the same. In fact, not only do the results differ but the search predictions that appear when typing the search terms are also different. Figure 1 compares the results generated by a simple keyword search for "newspaper" in the US version of the search engine Google with the results of the same search using Google Japan and Google Korea. In the Japanese version, many of the top search results are Japanese-English dictionary sites, while the top US results are a mix of sites about newspapers and news headlines. A search using the Korean version of Google yields a third set of results, which appear fairly similar to those from Google Japan.
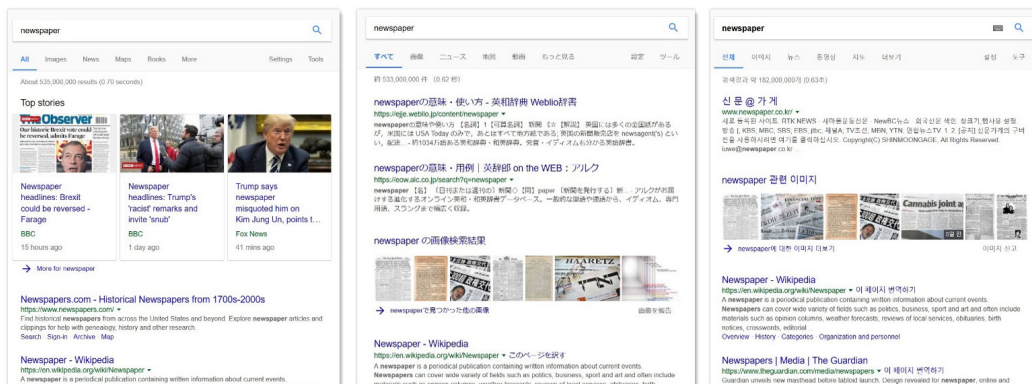
FIGURE 1. Search results comparing the US, Japanese, and Korean versions of Google. US search results are on the left, Japanese results are in the center, and Korean results are on the right. Search date: January 14, 2018.

Given these differing results, it follows that, when searching for information in English, it is often useful to use an English-language search engine. However, Google and other such sites will automatically redirect traffic to the local country-specific version. To bypass this automatic redirect, it is possible to access the search settings on Google and select a specific country from which to display search results. (It is also possible to simply change the language of the local version of Google into English, which will give results that are different from both the local version in the local language and the English version in a different country.)

Once students are aware of the affect that region and language settings can have on search results, the next step is to discuss how to search for information. Some students will be familiar with keyword searches, but others may not be. Important points to introduce include selecting key words to use as search terms, trying synonyms or rephrasing search terms if the results are unsatisfactory, and using quotation marks to search for an exact phrase or string of words. Students may also find it helpful to pay attention to the search predictions that appear when a word or phrase is typed into the search field; these can sometimes provide useful suggestions for phrasing or vocabulary.

One activity that allows students to practice searching in English is a Google race. After students have opened a search engine and set the region and language, the teacher provides a short list of interesting questions that can be answered with a quick Internet search. (See Appendix A for a list of sample questions.) Students work in pairs or small groups to find the answers to these questions, competing against the other groups to quickly find the information. This allows them to build skill and confidence in their ability to search for information in English.

EVALUATING WEBSITES

After students have generated a list of results, the next step is to select a website and decide whether or not it is appropriate for their research. To do this,

they can consider the "3Rs": Is the website relevant? Is it reliable? And is it recent? These three questions allow students to consider many of the same points as Kapoun's (1998) 5-topic system, but in a somewhat simplified form and with more emphasis on determining the main focus of the source, a task students may find more difficult in their L2. The flowchart in Figure 2 shows some of the questions that students should consider for each section. A discussion of each step follows, along with suggestions for classroom activities that can help students understand and learn how to apply each skill.

Is it RELEVANT?

Does this site have information that you need?

- Scan for keywords related to the information you want. Don't read everything - just check quickly.
- Are the articles on the site mostly facts or opinions? (For research, you usually want facts.)

Yes!

Is it RELIABLE?

Is the information on this website true? Can you trust it?

- Look at the URL, copyright, and "About Us" information. Who made this page? What is its purpose?
- Is there an author?
- Does it explain where the information is from? Are there sources?

Yes!

Is it RECENT?

Is the information old, or is it still current?

- Scan the website for dates. Look at the top and bottom of the page. (Don't use the copyright date!)
- If there are no dates, look for other clues:
  - ➢ Does the website talk about current events or old news?
  - ➢ Do links to other sites work? (Broken links are a sign of an old page.)
  - ➢ Does it look old? (Low-quality graphics, etc.)

FIGURE 2. **Evaluating Websites:** Finding Relevant, Reliable, and Recent information.

Is It Relevant?

The first point to consider is relevance. Before investing the time to read the contents of a website in-depth, students should scan for keywords and main points. This includes looking at pictures and captions, reading headings and subheadings, and possibly even clicking through the various sections of the site. Students may find that a source which initially looked promising has a different focus than expected. It is also good to check that the information presented is

factual and not simply an editorial stating the author's opinions, unless the student is searching for an opinion piece.

To allow students to practice this first point, the teacher can set a sample research goal, then introduce two websites that could conceivably come up in a keyword search related to that topic. One site should be relevant to the research goal, the other less so. A simple example could be a comparison of a site about the osprey (a kind of bird) versus a site about the Osprey (a kind of aircraft used by the U.S. military). Depending on the research goal, one site will be relevant, the other will not. For a more challenging example, students could be given the goal of researching tourism statistics in a particular country or region. One site could have advice for tourists visiting the country, while the other aggregates information about the tourists who visit. In this scenario, the second site would be more relevant for the research topic.

Is It Reliable?

When students have found a relevant website, the next point to consider is reliability. A good place to start is the top-level domain (TLD) in a site's web address. Ask students to think about familiar TLDs such as .com, .edu, and .org; they may not realize that each is an abbreviation (of *commercial*, *education* or *educational*, and *organization*, respectively). Looking at the TLD can give clues as to the purpose and reliability of a website. For example, .com sites are often used by companies, most likely with the goal of making money via advertising or sales; .org and .net sites are used by both commercial and non-profit or special interest groups; .edu sites are used by educational institutions; and .gov sites are used by the government of the United States. Among these, .edu and .gov are sponsored TLDs, meaning their use is restricted to verified educational and governmental organizations. (See Postel, 1994, for a description of the original TLD structure.) There are also country-level domains used for educational and government sites, such as ac.jp and go.jp in Japan or ac.kr and go.kr in Korea. It is important to note that non-restricted TLDs like .com do not automatically indicate that a site is unreliable but that students should carefully consider other factors in order to decide whether or not to trust the information.

Aside from checking the TLD, students have several other options to help determine reliability. The most obvious is prior experience; is the site owned by a well-known organization that the student knows and trusts? If the site name is unfamiliar, then the student can check for an "About Us" page, which should have information about the owners of the site and their goals. It is also helpful to check the copyright information, which will often indicate whether the site is run by a corporation, non-profit organization, or other type of group. With this information, students can make a more educated guess as to the motives and possible bias of the site owners.

Students should also look for an author and any information about his or her expertise, as well as checking to see if there are sources given for the information on the page. Additionally, it can be useful to introduce the concept of corroboration at this point. If there is doubt about a site's reliability, students can either check the reliability of the site's sources or search for another site on the same topic and compare the information.

To practice this second point, the teacher can introduce a few websites with different TLDs; for example, a .com site, a .edu site, and a .org site. Ask students, in small groups, to identify the TDL and discuss the probable purpose of each site (for example, making money or sharing information). Next, have students identify the authors and discuss what it means for site reliability if there is no author given (while the lack of an author is not necessarily a sign of an unreliable site, a credentialed author adds to reliability). Then, ask them to check the owners or publishers of each site using the copyright information, "About Us" page, and any other available information. Finally, ask students to rate how much they trust the information on each site. They can choose a percentage on a scale of 0 (no reliability) to 100 (complete reliability) and discuss any differences of opinion. Higher-level classes should be able to complete this activity as a class discussion, while lower-level classes would benefit from scaffolding via a worksheet or checklist for each step of the discussion.

Is It Recent?

The final point is the shortest and most straightforward: How old is the information on the website? Many sites will include a date. If there is no date, students can look for other clues. For example, if links to other sites are broken, the site is probably out-of-date; low-quality graphics can be another sign of age. Other information and news on the site can also indicate how recently the page was updated. For example, if the site discusses events that occurred several years previously, there is a good chance that is when it was last updated.

One potential pitfall for students here is confusion between the content date and the copyright date; it is important to be sure students are aware of the difference. It is also important to note that, depending on the subject, finding recently published information may not be critical. For example, information about the life of a historical figure is not likely to change, while information about popular tourist destinations should be updated regularly to remain current.

To practice this point, the teacher can ask students, in pairs or groups, to look for the content dates on several sites (perhaps revisiting the sites discussed in the previous activities). If a site has no date, they should make a guess about whether or not the information is current. Students can also brainstorm two lists – topics where finding recent information would be important versus topics where current information would not be critical – or look at a list of provided topics and divide them into the two categories.

Activities for Controlled Practice

To review all three points, create an example research goal and choose two or three websites on the topic. Ask students to follow the flowchart in Figure 2 (higher-level classes) or fill out a checklist or worksheet (lower-level classes) to decide if each site is relevant, how reliable they think it is, and whether or not the information is recent. Then, looking at all the information, they can choose the best site for the research goal. Appendix B contains an example of this activity.

Other possible activities include setting a research goal and giving students a

short amount of time to find sites on that topic. Then ask students, in groups, to discuss the sites and determine if they are relevant, reliable, and recent. They can choose the best site in their group and explain their choice to the class, rank the sites from best to poorest, or simply list the sites they believe pass the evaluation. This could also be done as a homework activity, where students find a site at home, then explain and discuss their selection during the next class period. With this sort of practice, students develop their abilities and confidence in website evaluation.

CONCLUSIONS

In the modern world, learning to evaluate online information is critical, not just for L2 students but for everyone. The curriculum described here is highly adaptable: Activities can be modified according to student needs. They can be briefly introduced in a single class period or covered in-depth over several days. The lessons can be used in a variety of different class types, serving as an introduction to the topic of untrustworthy news sources for a discussion class; helping students search for authentic and interesting material in a reading class; aiding in the search for sources and supports in a writing class; even forming the basis of a course on research methodology, culminating in a presentation or paper on the findings.

Moreover, the development of digital literacy is useful outside of the classroom. Students can apply the same techniques to research personal interests; digital literacy can facilitate independent learning via the Internet. Also, learning to evaluate websites involves the development of critical thinking skills. The techniques students learn can even be applied in their native language.

The 3R method provides a streamlined and simplified method of website evaluation, suitable for a variety of student levels and class topics. As the Internet becomes increasingly more important in everyday life, teaching students the skills they will need to navigate the modern digital world becomes a more critical issue. This technique can be a simple and easy way to begin digital literacy instruction in the L2 classroom.

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Appendix A

Example "Google Race" Questions

(Used with students in Nagoya, Japan, during October 2017)
1. What team will the Seattle Seahawks play against on December 24th?
2. Where was Justin Bieber born?
3. What is FOMO?
4. Where will the artist Jackson Browne play on October 21st?
5. What is a "Helianthus annuus"?

Appendix B

Example Activity

Links (shortened so that students can enter them more easily)
Site 1: tinyurl.com/MarsArticle1
Site 2: tinyurl.com/MarsArticle2
Site 3: tinyurl.com/MarsArticle3

Worksheet

Goal: You want information about missions to explore the planet Mars.

	Site 1: Space.com	Site 2: Nasa.gov	Site 3: Wired.com
Find keywords. Is this site relevant?	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Who is the owner/publisher? What kind of site is it? What is its purpose?	_____ a. Commercial b. Government c. Informational d. Non-profit	_____ a. Commercial b. Government c. Informational d. Non-profit	_____ a. Commercial b. Government c. Informational d. Non-profit
Do you think it's reliable?	Yes / No / Maybe	Yes / No / Maybe	Yes / No / Maybe
Find the content date. Is the information recent?	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Is this the best source for you?	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

A Pedagogy of Care and New Chances

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How do we show a caring learning environment that never gives up on the learner? The author articulates different kinds of theories, methods, and practices that help her everyday teaching practice to be inclusive and safe. Opportunities for silence, multimodal learning, and counter-storying all fit into a practice of inclusion and care. Inclusive silence is a way to welcome quiet time as honored and "listened to." Music, movement, and silence in response to videos, art objects, and realia are curative and restorative modalities, giving learners space to pull things apart without falling apart. Counter-storytelling, an example of social justice pedagogy, is a means of exposing and critiquing dialogues that often go unchallenged. How these methods come to life as well as how they fit into broader theoretical frameworks will be shared with examples of student work and teacher planning artifacts and journals. Silence, counter-storying, and multimodal artifacts are types of advocacy that encourage learner transformation and celebrate their own performative learning. This dialogue is a chance to talk with other educators concerned about making safe spaces within the competitive English gatekeeping system.

Let's leave behind positivism, it no longer serves humanity. Instead, let's critically challenge ourselves and our thinking, our systems, our institutions, our structures. Let's construct knowledge together with ethical foundations that serve all people, our home of Earth, and all organic inhabitants. Let's fully commit to participatory learning ideologies and slow down and grow together. In thinking about the framework for my pedagogy, the methods and practice of my teaching, I focus on lifelong education, especially for adults who get left behind from successful enfranchised early-education experiences. Getting locked out of education sets up a life of precarity within a context of globalization. How do we make spaces of safety and hospitality for those locked out of traditional education? How do we show a caring learning environment that never gives up on the learner?

One thing globalization doesn't do well is reflection and reflexivity. Quiet time or silence is not honored or listened to. In Stein's (2007) *Multimodal Pedagogies in Diverse Classrooms Representation, Rights, and Resources*, she talks of silence and shame.

It may be that there is a place for silence – an inclusive silence which allows for positivity and presence of being, rather than absence. This silence acknowledges that there are things which are unspeakable, which cannot be said. This kind of silence acknowledges human beings' right to silence in the context of power

exercised by teachers in placing students under obligation to speak. In this sense, students can be offered a choice of silence, in the same vein as a choice to speak. What is being suggested is an ethics of pedagogy in relation to children's rights to dignity and choice concerning how they wish to communicate their meanings in classroom spaces. (p. 95)

Here in Korea, I too have to help my young adult learners interact in a language that has probably at some time in their life marginalized them, locking them out of their hopes. Time to stop and reflect is part of the full circle of learning; reflection is a type of reciprocity that we often rob ourselves of. We focus on inputs and outputs, but time to digest, look again, play some more, be quiet with, and reflect is important. We need to go into the pieces that are not obvious about the input and output. We need a discursive space to practice reflexivity – to see where we are biased and betrayed, sometimes by our own enthusiasm to solve a problem. We need time to reflect on our and others' biases as well as our own ossified learning patterns. We need time to dig up our own fossils and get inspired to de-fossilize our practices.

When teaching, I like to have activities that are meditative. Multimodality serves this well. Incorporating music, movement, silent thinking about video, art object, or any realia are all modalities that are curative and restorative as well as provide learners with space to pull things apart without falling apart.

Multimodality also gives us some flexibility with time. We don't have to be in the same room, doing the same thing in order to learn from each other when incorporating different modalities into learning experiences. Expressiveness and literacy take so many forms, and we can now capture and share them through many mediums and social media. We can appropriate and massage artifacts. We can respond and critique them, and learn to look at life from other perspectives. Stein (2007) shares, "Multimodality, conceptually, offers the opportunity for exploring multiperspectivity, different viewpoints, narrations, and translations which constantly change what the object 'is'" (p. 143). This multiperspectivism is a manifestation of cosmopolitan literacies, how we make the global local to our everyday experiences and lives, which exist for all adult learners. Adult learning theory says to bring these rich experiences into the classroom, the project. Multimodalities are more interactive and more equitable in exchanges, re-centering traditional classrooms around the learner instead of the teacher.

Silence and multimodality set a resource-rich stage for counter-storytelling. "Counter-storytelling is a means of exposing and critiquing normalized dialogues that perpetuate racial stereotypes" (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004, p. 27) and, in the case of this study, contradicts cultural and religious stereotypes. "It is a valuable tool for making heard voices that may not be heard in the mainstream context" (Roy & Roxas, 2011, p. 522).

This practice focuses on authenticity, risk-taking, and transformation. Sharing our stories is an opportunity to develop proper distance. People may or may not know how best to interact respectfully; it's a dance of negotiation. Having opportunities to storytell implicitly helps the learner to thoughtfully listen to others' framing of common contexts as well. Stein encourages playfulness in storytelling through different modalities. This not only gives a chance for learners to tell their stories but for the audience as listeners to develop their repertoire of

social semiotic interpretation. Proper distance or how learners gauge their relationships with others symbolically and proximally (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2014) is a rich way to collectively construct knowledge by sharing multiliteracies in multimodal artifacts.

Pedagogies of social justice talk back, counter-storying, to mainstream power structures. Stein (2007, p. 139) explicitly shows how the students, as story-makers, control the representation of their lives in "Shack Life," where boundaries between inside and outside of school collapse, opening up opportunities for social justice and rights discussion. In today's world globalization – civilization has done much to collectively increase our life lines and quality of life, and enrich us with a cross-fertilization of multiple cultures. While civilization and globalization are power systems and structures that help us collectively, we have enough resources to make sure that all people (and nature as well) can fit into these systems regardless of where they are in their learning path. Inclusion needs to be built into our teaching pedagogies. Opportunities for silence, multimodal learning opportunities, and counter-storying all fit into a practice of inclusion and care.

Location matters. Learners who are caught outside traditional learning institutions can be pulled into sharing their story through a method of inquiry, which is a stance of learning regardless of setting and formal power networks. Their very position outside of the system gives them a critical vantage point to help interrogate our systems and structures. Epistemic privilege, "unique knowledge of historically minoritized identities" (Campano, Ghiso, & Welch, 2016, Chapter 1, section Literacies of Immigrant Youth…, para. 1), treats change as a constant context; precarity pushes this upon the learner. Inclusion is a chance to honor that which mainstream has made marginal and to celebrate the learner and their unique viewpoint. My teaching methods organize resources for suboptimal environments through a variety of collaborative techniques regardless of financial resources and social capital access. By creating safe environments to encourage and support risking-taking, the cathartic adventure of developing new skills can help learners, often locked out of traditional education spaces, to have the fortitude to sustain relationships resourcefully. Self-advocacy within a supportive, caring environment gives confidence to learners to celebrate their own performative learning.

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Spaced Learning: A Time to Remember

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This article will provide information regarding the research, philosophy, and practical application of the Spaced Learning approach to teaching and learning. It will also encourage teachers to discuss and plan how they may adapt their own classes to embed Spaced Learning. Spaced Learning theorists hail from the arena of neuroscience, psychology, and education, and have attempted to build on the theories of Ebbinghaus. They have been successful at identifying specific learning procedures that minimize Ebbinghaus's forgetting curve. The consequences of this are that students can have up to 80 percent retention rates.

The article will describe the classroom procedure for Spaced Learning and discuss the positive findings of Kelley and Whatson (2013) and the Monkseaton School staff who collaborated in the research and application of the "Spaced Learning" teaching approach successfully across the curriculum using experimental and control groups. Monkseaton is a school located in an urban area of the North East of England. The article will also explain why the Spaced Learning approach is a viable option for English teachers. Finally, the article will suggest the problems and caveats of the Spaced Learning theory and class room procedure.

INTRODUCTION

Spaced Learning, a recent teaching innovation based on neuropsychology and educational research, has been revolutionizing classrooms and teaching styles. Teachers are adopting the alternative teaching styles and lesson structures provided in a bid to enable students to better remember lesson content. A team of teachers at a rural High School in the North East of England collaborated with a team of researchers to carry out action research on the teaching approach of Spaced Learning. The approaches were developed by Paul Kelly and based on theories drawn from the results of studies in neuroscience.

According to Kelley and Whatson (2013), the Monkseaton High School Spaced Learning research team was able to provide information on the practical application of the Spaced Learning approach and its potential for use with all students aged 14–18. Monkseaton High School applied Spaced Learning theory across the curriculum in GCSE English, GCSE Biology, AS Psychology, GCSE Science, and GCSE History classes and used control and experimental groups. It is my belief that the Spaced Learning approach could be used in any classroom where deductive or massed learning is taking place (Bradley & Patton, 2013).

It is possible to see a use for Spaced Learning in the teaching of the core content found at the start of English modules, as well as in writing classes where

sentence structure is being taught. It is also possible that an increase in the long-term memory of students could have an effect on the accuracy of the English produced by students because the correct lexical chunks, grammar, and sentence structures provided by teachers would be retained longer. Thus, Spaced Learning could be an appropriate way to teach vocabulary, lexical chunks, and idioms. The fast pace of the Spaced Learning approach could also increase the amount of core content delivered in English classes.

Kelley and Whatson (2013) and their research team also assessed the academic potential of all of the students before the research was conducted. The staff at the high school, although novices at Spaced Learning, were highly motivated to raise motivation and to improve grades, learning styles, and student focus, particularly for their socially disadvantaged students who traditionally have achieved less well than those found in establishments in more middle-class areas. The school staff was described by Kelley and Whatson as working cohesively and consistently when utilizing this method of teaching. Kelley and Whatson suggested that it took a high level of motivation and consistency from the teaching teams involved to utilize the Spaced Learning teaching approach in the school environment. Kelley and Whatson (2013) have reported that the results of their action research have established that Spaced Learning can increase a students' ability to remember facts and concepts, and this correlates with an increase in the students' grades in formative, summative, and value-added assessments. It was particularly recognized as being useful in delivering content in high-stakes examinations.

THE ORIGINS OF THE SPACED LEARNING APPROACH AND RELATED NEUROSCIENTIFIC THEORY

Climbing on the back of Ebbinghaus and his notions of "spaced out" learning (Ebbinghaus, 1913), Spaced Learning theorists have provided an optimal class structure and procedure for students to remember language and concepts. The neurological theories that the Spaced Learning teaching approach is based on arose from a discovery about the brain that was published in 2005 by R. Douglas Fields in the *Scientific American*.

According to Fields (2005), the method works on the basis that if we keep stimulating the same neuron, for example if we study a concept for a long period, the neural pathway ceases to have an effect in strengthening the memory. Whereas, if we stimulate the same neural pathway at intervals, it strengthens and provides information that the information learnt is important. Fields (2005) reported that his team revealed the process by which long-term memories are formed, and perhaps more importantly for teachers, the process by which they may be created. In addition to this, Fields (2005) maintained that the biological origin of a memory is a pathway of cells linked together within the brain (Fields, 2005). Fields team was focusing on finding out how each cell is "switched on" and makes its connections with other cells.

Field's (2005) experiments eventually were able to pinpoint the way in which the brain's cells are stimulated that causes them to switch on and develop links

with other cells to forge memories and develop stronger memories. Fields has argued that the breakthrough came when his team started to realize that time was the important factor. The timespan of the stimulation (learning event) was argued to be not critical in forming a memory. It was the gap between the stimulations that was considered to be paramount in memories being formed and strengthened.

According to Kelley (2007) and Kelly and Whatson (2013), Spaced Learning is similar to our normal mode of learning. Any sensory act can be stored in our short-term memory. If we carry out these acts repeatedly they can enter our long-term memory (Fields, 2005). Kelley (2007) and Kelley and Whatson (2013) argued that Spaced Learning is significant because it utilizes neuroscientific research, which enables the process of long-term memory construction to take place very quickly. The researchers maintained that the approach worked well enough for students to cover and retain a whole subject module's content in approximately an hour (Kelly, 2005; Kelly & Whatson, 2013).

THE SPACED LEARNING CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

Kelly and Whatson (2013) described the Spaced Learning lesson as consisting of three generally fast-paced "inputs" divided by 10-minute breaks.

During the 10-minute "distractor" breaks, the students engaged in simple activities, such as dribbling a basketball or playing with modeling clay. It is important to avoid stimulating the memory pathways that are being formed during the breaks. Thus, the activity must have nothing to do with what the students are learning (Kelley & Whatson, 2013). The most effective way of doing this is to carry out a physical activity requiring the use of our fine motor skills, such as juggling.

Activities like this use parts of the brain such as the cerebellum that are used when a person conducts activities that require balance and movement. Thus, the parts of our brains that solve problems, make decisions, and record sensory information are largely avoided. According to Kelley and Whatson (2013), the motor skills activities are used because they are not conventionally found during the content delivery part of the Spaced Learning lessons.

As a result of this, the pathways are being allowed to "rest" and ultimately form stronger connections. Other types of activities teachers may exploit include origami, paper-cutting activities, musical chairs, play-dough modeling, light aerobics, and ball-handling games (like dribbling a basketball). It is important that the "distractor" activities are enjoyed by the students. I have employed the dribbling of a basketball activity with some success with my psychology students. This activity was chosen as the class was already fond of the activity. In a girls' school English lesson, my students opted to learn how to crotchet as the break activity. In both situations the results were encouraging.

Kelly and Whatson (2013) suggested that the first input is a lecture in which the teacher presents a large quantity of information, typically supported by a PowerPoint presentation. It is easy to see how the core delivery of grammar concepts, new sentence structures, lexical chunks, or new vocabulary could be presented in the 20-minute initial delivery.

The second input focuses on recall, so students might be presented with the same PowerPoint presentation, now missing many key words, or they might carry out simple grammar exercises using the formulae presented in the first input. In the second input it is easy to see how the English content can be delivered in much the same way as the biology subject content that was the focus in Kelley and Whatson's (2013) research. The PowerPoint presentations or worksheets could contain cloze procedures, puzzles, or jigsaw activities. In addition to this, the same PowerPoint presentations with blank spaces over appropriate verbs, lexical chunks, or vocabulary items could be used.

The final input focuses on understanding; thus, students should carry out a task that applies the knowledge or skills they have just acquired (Kelley, 2007). This section of the procedure lends itself to English teaching as it seems to follow the presentation, practice, perfection format.

Kelley (2007) has argued that this process of rapid structured repetition, separated by short breaks, embeds the information in the long-term memory and follows the learning theory extended by Fields and his team. Thus, repeated stimulation of the same neural pathway demonstrates its importance to the brain and makes it easier to locate when you need to access the information stored within it. In a sense, the brain is recording the amount of times the information is used and required, to prioritize and ascertain the information's importance. The more time the information is registered in the brain, the more chemicals are produced to strengthen the memory.

Thus, a long time spent reviewing the same information will produce a low-level response as it is counting the individuals need to remember the fact as one learning instance. The 10-minute breaks away from the information provide a gap in time to make the brain feel like it is a new information sequence. The fact that information is being considered up to three times in the lesson means all the information deserves a high priority, and as a result, a strong memory is formed. The following are descriptions provided by Kelley's original research participants. These student comments provide a very vivid and persuasive picture of the experience of learning after a Spaced Learning session:

> The lessons are very compressed. For example, the review of my whole Biology unit was completed in about 12 min. The nervous system, diet deficiencies, hormones and the menstrual cycle, drugs, and defence from pathogens all whiz by on slides shown at the dizzying rate of 7–8 per min. During the 10-min breaks we get physical, rather than mental, activities like basketball dribbling and teamwork games. So what happens inside your head during Spaced Learning that is different from what happens during a traditional lesson or review session? I can only answer for myself. I love rock climbing. You always have to be aware of what comes next, but you can't consciously think about it. For me, Spaced Learning is a bit like my climbing. I don't try to learn; I don't write anything down, and I don't review. It just seems as if I am seeing a movie in my mind that I have already seen before, and my understanding of the information presented becomes more precise – clearer – when I see it again. In the end, I am left with a movie in my head of the lesson, just like my memory of a climb. (Kelley & Whatson, 2013, pp. 8–9)

> My first experience of Spaced Learning came in March 2007 when my class re-took our science exams from November 2006. We only had a one hour Spaced

Learning review session (which had four months of work condensed into it from the summer before). Most of us did better on the exams after an hour of Spaced Learning review, even though we did no studying at all. I went from an A, B, and C to straight A's and an A+. It was amazing. (Kelley & Whatson, 2013, p. 9)

PROBLEMS AND CAVEATS OF THE SPACED LEARNING APPROACH

Kelley (2005) has noted that current evidence about the success and uses of the Spaced Learned approach is limited as it does not directly explore the use of Spaced Learning in all subjects or with students outside the 13–15 age range. The testing method was limited to high-stakes tests of a National Curriculum course in the specific context of school education. Kelley and Whatson's (2013) findings should be explored in relation to different experimental designs, different contexts, with different level groups, subjects of different ages, and with other forms of assessment used as measures of learning (Kelley & Whatson, 2013).

Another issue with the Spaced Learning approach is that it does not conform to many cultures' expectations of learning, consequently despite offering a mode of teaching that can raise memory retention and scores, Spaced Learning might often be rejected by staff and students because the 10-minute "distractor" sessions could be viewed as not connected to serious scholarship. This may necessitate the implementation of parent, teacher, and student education about the benefits of Spaced Learning before it can be utilized effectively in any class. Moreover, the method may be seen as time-consuming because of the special class materials that need to be prepared for its implementation.

Further to this, it could also be argued that more research should be carried out on how Spaced Learning interacts and supports other types of memory enhancing teaching approaches.

Additional research on the "distractor" activities would be beneficial; for instance, are teachers really limited to using the fine motor skill-driven activities or could simply using parts of the brain that are not used in content delivery such as listening to music, singing, or reading aloud on the topic be a viable option?

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it could be argued that the "Spaced Learning technique," with its strong neuroscientific foundations and systematic approach, has great potential as a teaching approach. However, currently it could be argued as being best suited for application at the start of modules, chapters, or units to introduce new information. It would also give the impression of being a very effectual way to review content.

Current education theory suggests that students need a degree of information and facts before they can delve deeper into a subject area and respond in a critical manner. Spaced Learning offers an excellent method for students to gain this informational foundation in a short time, thus, leaving them time to enter into their explorations of academic subjects or even English classes with a secure

foundation and confidence. Finally, it could be suggested that Spaced Learning is one of the most exciting teaching approaches to have appeared in recent years.

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Strategic Considerations for Maximizing Metaphors in the Classroom

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Multiple authorities) recognize metaphor as a fundamental strategy to promote deeper, more durable learning (see Marzano, Pickering, & Pollack, 2001; Womeli, 2009). This article will briefly describe the process leading to a deeper interest in metaphor as a pedagogical strategy as a result of a professional "critical incident" (Farrell, 2014) several years previously. Following this, the author will provide a general theoretical justification for the use of metaphor in the classroom. The author will provide a sampling of classroom activities that he has found useful in his particular teaching environment that combine a mixture of expert recommendations and a sensitivity to the unique teaching context of the author. Finally, a variety of factors for choosing which metaphor-based activity to employ at a given time in an instructional unit will be addressed.

INCENTIVE TO INCORPORATE METAPHOR IN MY TEACHING PRACTICE

2005 was a pivotal year in my formal education. I began my teacher training program. During that year, I had two amazing and exceedingly competent teachers. One teacher would often prompt students to engage in short reflections and keep repeating on the need and value of building links with prior knowledge and deeper connections. Another teacher would often begin his classes with analogies; for example, he elaborated on the parallels between an American football quarterback and a classroom teacher. Though, at the time, I scarcely realized the significance of the methods they were using, I now realize that both teachers were attempting to utilize learner's previous experience and the power of metaphors, which have a connection to learners' prior experiences.

In this article, I wish to address primarily the why and how of metaphor. While the use of metaphor has long been advocated by leading scholars in the field of education, I did not consciously give much attention to deliberately employing it as a teaching strategy until about two years ago. It took a "critical incident" to help me understand the many possibilities of using metaphor in my classroom. Farrell (2014) defines a critical incident as "any unplanned and unanticipated event that occurs during class, outside class, or during a teacher's career but is vividly remembered" (Farrell, pp. 72–73).

Specifically, I became aware of deficiencies in student comprehension of conceptual knowledge that I had attempted to teach to students. At my present school (high school level), I am required to teach students about the basic five paragraph persuasive essay structure (Folse, Vestri Solomon, Clabeaux, 2010).

Following one lesson, which I "felt" went well – dealing with a framework for organizing a body paragraph – I, in the subsequent lesson, started class with a series of recall questions about the components of and appropriate sequencing for composing a body paragraph. Many students knew the conceptual labels for the components of a body paragraph, but were unable to specify where exactly in a body paragraph, each component specifically belonged. For example, students would at times claim that a transition sentence should follow a topic sentence – which was the opposite of what I had previously instructed students to do. Thus, I hypothesized that if students would engage in more elaboration about the features of the components of body paragraphs, perhaps they would be able to have a firmer understanding and, furthermore, be able to better articulate that understanding. Hence, my newly discovered interest in metaphor as a tool to get students to elaborate more on the concepts that they have already superficially comprehended.

WHY METAPHOR?

Metaphor, as a pedagogical tactic, has broad scholarly support. Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2001) in a well-known publication labeled it as one of the top nine most effective research-supported pedagogical strategies. Wormeli (2009) draws on his personal experience in justifying the use of metaphor in instruction: "Looking back over the instruction in my classroom...I realize that the most effective lessons, the experiences students cite years later, involved some kind of reinterpretation of content – a metaphor or analogy...metaphorical thinking that enabled our curricular dexterity improved my teaching and my students' learning." For me, the key words are "reinterpretation of content." If students are able to reinterpret content, it implies they are engaged in elaborative processing of the content and are also likely to experience a degree of surprise once being led to reinterpret the learning content. Surprise equals emotions, which has long been implicated in learning (Helgesen & Kelly, 2015). Hence, it is clear that in many respects metaphor is, as Wormeli claims, a "power tool for teaching any subject."

If metaphor is used as fodder for further classroom discussion, additional benefits become apparent. Saucier (as cited in Dantonio & Beisenherz, 2001), reflecting on his classroom experience, notes that often during classroom discussions, students would have difficulty expressing their ideas. Saucier does not see this as a problem, per se; rather, he feels it is a necessary part of the process of gaining a deeper understanding of concepts that students are studying. Saucier states, "I believe that this state of frustration is the leading edge of learning. If you can get students to periodically exist in a state of frustration and, in addition, get them to 'work' their way out of that state of mind, they are making progress, pushing that leading edge" (p. 211). I have personally witnessed such moments in my professional practice when students have to justify an analogy or explain a simile I have provided related to a particular concept under study. I will provide examples below.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Thus with these theoretical justifications in mind, I consciously attempted to make better use of metaphor in my classroom. In the fall of 2016, I decided to retool my lesson plans related to instruction for writing a five paragraph persuasive essay. Utilizing the conceptual framework for writing a five-paragraph essay provided in Folse et al. (2010), I will describe what learning activities I devised using metaphor for the purposes of teaching a body paragraph and the justification for selecting such activities.

First, for purposes of clarity, I will review the framework for a body paragraph found in Folse, et al. (2010). Essentially, students needed a topic sentence, a series of supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. Folse et al. believe both a topic sentence and concluding sentence require a main idea (similar to the content of the thesis in an introduction) and a controlling idea (similar to the content of one item in the essay map). Folse et al. recommends that the main idea and controlling idea of the concluding sentence should be paraphrased from the preceding topic sentence.

With this framework in mind, I was able to devise a series of activities utilizing metaphor. One activity served as an introductory activity prior to actually presenting the content to the students. I asked students to reflect on a key similarity about the very beginning of a TV show and the very end of a TV show in Korea. This was somewhat riddle-like in nature, but a handful of students recognized the correct answer, and if they didn't, I would guide them through a series of questioning techniques and hints (for example, what's the first thing you hear when a TV show begins in Korea?) to the correct answer: that the TV shows both begin and end with theme music, much like a body paragraph should begin (topic sentence) and end (concluding sentence) with a reference to both the main idea and controlling idea.

As a review activity, I set up a series of tasks that promoted deeper forms of elaboration on content that students had already encountered in class. I provided learners with a series of prompts related to the topic of body paragraphs and five-paragraph essays. After priming learners with a series of worked examples (see Clark, Ngyuen, & Sweller, 2006), I challenged students to answer questions incorporating metaphor, for instance: How is an introduction like a book? There was room for ambiguity in student responses, and learners would have to justify their answers in small group discussions. Examples include "How is an introduction like a sitcom?" Learners were capable of providing divergent, yet clearly logical responses, such as "Both have creative elements (i.e., humor in the sitcom, creativity in the "hook") or "The three items in the essay map are similar to a subplot." While facilitating, I would use deliberate question prompts to promote further elaboration by students, such as the QuEST framework described by Dantonio and Beisenherz (2001). Typically, I would cap such discussion prompts after three. An effective strategy for me to promote more creative thinking and build learner confidence to complete the task was starting very simple for the first prompt; for instance, "How is a five-paragraph essay like a book?" Learners can often generate something like "There is a clear beginning, middle, and end to both." Though when I introduce the third prompt, I try to "stretch" learners to make connections that are not so apparent on the surface.

For instance, how is a body paragraph like the K-pop group Sistar (chosen to create a small degree of personalization, which Helgesen and Kelly (2015) claim as one of their seven "brain-friendly principles"). Students were able to make a wide variety of connections, many of which I did not perceive until listening to input from my students. For example, according to one student the main singer of the group is like the topic sentence, as she is often out in front and is the most memorable. The three remaining members are like the supporting sentences (of which Folse et al. recommend there be at least three).

The list of possible activities making use of metaphor is very broad. I will share two more activities described by Womeli (2005) that I have used in class.

First, let's look at "Human Statues." This activity is simple, yet it makes use of a variety of well-established learning principles such as kinesthetic involvement (see Helgesen & Kelly, 2015). Provide a group of 3–4 students with a key term or concept, and students then need to convene in their groups for approximately 10–15 minutes and devise some way to represent that concept in a "statue form." For example, a small group of students could form a bridge, this could be a symbol for a transition. The teacher can extend this activity to promote further elaboration by both the presenters and the other learners in the class. For instance, instead of having the presenters merely explain their logic, the learners can take time to guess what the correct answer is, and the teacher can prompt each guesser to justify his/her conjecture.

Wormeli also describes an activity called Concrete Spellings. In this activity, learners are given a key term/concept and need to spell it out in a fashion that has some larger connection to its meaning. Staying with the term transition, the learner could spell introduction on a road signifying the beginning of a journey. Again the teacher can prompt further elaboration to help learners further encode their learning.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR USING METAPHOR

There are a variety of considerations that a teacher needs to take into account prior to utilizing activities that make use of metaphor in the classroom. A series of questions that I have found useful in lesson preparation include the following:

- Where in the lesson will the teacher use the activity; will it be prior to introducing the key concepts of the lesson or as a review activity?
- What specific concepts will the teacher use a metaphor-based activity for?
- If a review activity, will there be a formal summative assessment or will it be an activity for getting students to elaborate further on the concepts?
- What metaphors are more likely to connect with students?

The last point requires further elaboration. Teachers in most instances come from a different generation, and in many ESL/EFL settings a different background and culture from their learners. Hence the metaphors a teacher generates may not connect too well with their learners. Hence, a teacher needs to find a way to become aware of the metaphors students will be more likely to connect with. One simple and concrete way is to administer surveys soliciting information on

students' background and interests. After administering surveys to students, I personally became more aware of student interest in webtoons and was subsequently able to incorporate references to webtoons in learner materials. The Appendix contains an example modified and inspired from Womeli (2009).

CONCLUSION

Metaphor has long-been recognized as a useful pedagogical tool. Teachers have many ways to utilize metaphor in the classroom. If you want your learners to make deep connections with content knowledge, and if you want your learners to be on the frontier of their personal conceptual understanding, then you need to get further acquainted with metaphor. As Aristotle said millennia ago, "The greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor."

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APPENDIX

Sample Student Interest Survey

Name (This is NOT an anonymous survey): _____

List your three favorite places to visit both in Korea and outside. The answer can be specific or just a city.

In Korea	Outside of Korea
1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.

How many siblings do you have? _____

List your top five favorite hobbies and briefly explain why you like them.

Hobby	Reason you like it
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

What do you like to do most when you have free time? Please briefly explain why.

What	Why
1.	
2.	
3.	

List your favorite of the following:

TV	Movies	Websites	Music
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

What are your 3 favorite books of all time? Why?

Book	Why
1.	
2.	
3.	

List two individuals you admire, alive or dead, and briefly state why you admire him or her.

Who	Why
1.	
2.	

**Use the back to share anything else you would like your teacher to know about you!

Preparing Students for IELTS with Weekly Video Journals

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Due to the increasing interest in study abroad, preparing students for the IELTS test has become an educational goal for students, educators, and institutions around Asia. Preparing students for the speaking portion of the IELTS is a major difficulty associated with this goal. This article discusses the development and implementation of a method for helping students prepare by asking them to record video responses to IELTS prompts and providing them with meaningful feedback about their responses. Furthermore, this article discusses the results of a one-year trial of this method with a small group of Japanese university students, based on student feedback and observations made by the instructors.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout Asia and much of the world, students of English often hope to study abroad in English-speaking countries. In order to do so, most of those students will be required to take the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) test to determine whether their English language capabilities meet the requirements of their desired university. Because of this requirement, many students, instructors, and educational institutions have made IELTS preparation an educational focus (Hayes & Read, 2004). While much of students' IELTS preparation can be completed outside of normal classwork, preparation for the speaking portion of the test generally requires students to engage in face-to-face interviews that can be difficult to arrange for large groups. This article discusses an activity that was developed by the author and a fellow instructor for dealing with this limitation, using timed video recordings and written feedback provided by the instructors. Specifically, the article explores the development, implementation, and initial results of a weekly IELTS video journal activity that was trialed over the course of a single academic year.

CONTEXT

The weekly IELTS video journal activity discussed in this paper was used with a group of first-year tourism and hospitality majors at a small private university in rural southern Japan. Specifically, the students were members of an intensive English program and participating in a speaking skills class with roughly thirty members. As of this writing, the intensive English program faculty is comprised of

three native English-speaking instructors and three Japanese English instructors, and the speaking skills class is team-taught by two of the native English-speaking instructors. The speaking skills class includes about three hours of class time per week spread over two days and an additional two hours of homework. The speaking skills class is a part of a suite of four classes that includes a writing class, reading class, and academic skills class. In total, students in the intensive program have about twelve hours of English classroom instruction and about eight hours of homework per week. As a part of the aforementioned intensive English program, students are required to study abroad on two separate occasions. First, students in the program take EFL classes in an English-speaking country for one month in the summer of their first year. This one-month study-abroad experience has no language requirements for participation. Second, all students in the program must study abroad for one semester, about four months, in an English-speaking country of their choice. At this point, they will have participated in the program for about nine months. For this second study-abroad experience, the students will either participate in further EFL classes or regular academic study, based on their IELTS band scores. Upon returning to Japan after their second study-abroad, students complete their major in a mixture of English and Japanese classes.

PURPOSE

At the most fundamental level, the purpose of the weekly IELTS video journal activity was ensuring that students in the intensive English program were properly prepared to participate in the speaking portion of the IELTS test. At all of the partner universities that the students in the intensive English program can attend for their semester study abroad, IELTS scores are used to place students in regular academic study as well as determine the starting English level of students taking EFL classes. In general, most of these universities have an IELTS score requirement of 5.5 or 6.0 in order to take academic classes while studying abroad. The instructors in the intensive program hoped that proper preparation for the test could result in more students taking academic classes or being placed in higher-level EFL classes during their study-abroad semester. For several years prior to the development of the weekly IELTS video journals, the instructors prepared students by conducting mock-interviews during and outside of class. While that provided students with a basic understanding of the speaking portion of the IELTS test, follow-up interviews revealed that many students felt under-prepared for the test and dissatisfied with their speaking scores. Based on this feedback, the instructors began to consider methods of expanding the amount of IELTS practice available to students. As a part of this consideration, the instructors decided on three requirements for a new IELTS activity. First, the activity would need to resemble the speaking portion of the IELTS test as closely as possible. Second, the activity would need to use a minimum amount of class time since the curriculum left little room for additional activities. Third, the activity would need to include a significant amount of meaningful feedback to encourage student growth. Given these requirements, the instructors decided that an existing weekly video journaling activity that was already part of the

curriculum could be repurposed to serve as IELTS practice.

CONCEPT

An examination of the existing video journaling activity revealed that it would need to be modified in order to meet the requirements set forth by the instructors. The instructors had been using a weekly video journaling activity based on a modification of the activities discussed by Watkins (2012) for several years to provide students with consistent active speaking practice, improved noticing, and feedback. While the existing weekly video journal activity already met the requirements for class time and feedback, the instructors realized that the activity did not accurately reflect the speaking portion of the IELTS. In order to meet this requirement, the instructors identified three elements that needed to be changed in the activity. First, the types of questions would need to be changed to match the types of speaking prompts that are common in the IELTS test. Second, a time limit of one minute for considering the prompt and around four minutes for responding to the prompt would need to be imposed to match the IELTS speaking portion (IELTS, n.d. c). Unfortunately, the inclusion of time limits meant that the activity would need to be monitored in class by the instructors. As such, the activity could not be confined to homework and would need to use a small portion of class time. Using the existing weekly video journal activity as a base and making the necessary changes to accurately reflect the IELTS, the instructors created an activity that they hoped would provide students with frequent IELTS speaking practice and meaningful feedback about their progress while still allowing enough time for other classroom activities.

PROCEDURE

The process followed by the instructor and students in this activity can be most conveniently understood as a cycle divided into four distinct phases: recording, transcription, feedback, and review.

During the recording phase, students were divided into pairs and given a speaking prompt. The instructors prepared these prompts based on examples found on the IELTS website (IELTS, n.d. b). In order to replicate the IELTS experience as closely as possible, the students were given a printed copy of the prompt that they were allowed to reference while answering the questions and on which they were allowed to take notes. After receiving the prompts, students were given one minute to consider their response to the prompt, which all students did at the same time. After the one minute of thinking time, students moved in pairs to separate areas to record their responses to the speaking prompt. The student in each pair who was waiting to respond filmed the speaker with the speaker's smartphone. Each student in the pair was given between five and ten minutes to record their response. The time limit was gradually shortened by the instructors as the students became more comfortable with the activity. To ensure that students didn't accidentally exceed the allotted recording time, the instructor

usually required that the pairs return to the classroom briefly between the first and second students' response times. Since all pairs were doing this activity at the same time and on the same schedule, all pairs finished at roughly the same time. In general, this phase of the activity took between fifteen and twenty-five minutes of class time. After both members of the pair finished recording their responses, they used their smartphones to upload the recordings to their personal YouTube accounts. Usually, the students did this outside of class to save time.

After uploading the videos to YouTube, the activity moved into the transcription phase. Students generally completed this phase independently as homework. As such, it didn't require the instructor to use any class time except for initial training in the early part of the semester. In this phase of the activity, students used the captioning feature of YouTube to transcribe their responses. In order to do so, students needed to use a computer rather than their smartphones. While it is possible to transcribe the video by simply watching the video and writing down everything they said in a notebook, this proved to be much more difficult and prone to errors than using the captioning feature that is built into the YouTube interface on the computer. Google provides a detailed explanation of the captioning process within the YouTube help site (YouTube, n.d.), which the instructors used to teach students the captioning process. It is important to note that students were required to transcribe the response in its entirety and without any corrections or omissions, which includes Japanese utterances, hesitations, self-corrections as well as filler words and sounds. This requirement was based on a similar requirement suggested by Yue (2013) to improve noticing and had the added benefit of ensuring that the instructors could easily comment on those types of errors during the feedback phase. When students completed transcribing their responses, they were required to print their transcripts and submit them to the instructor. Moreover, they were also required to submit a link to their YouTube video to the instructor.

Once students had submitted their transcripts, the activity entered the feedback phase. During this phase, the instructors reviewed the transcripts while viewing the recorded responses. When reviewing the responses, the instructors identified both successes and difficulties that the student experienced with pronunciation, fluency, coherency, vocabulary, and grammar. Specifically, the instructors focused on the key features listed in the band descriptors for the IELTS speaking test (IELTS, n.d. a).The instructors made notes of these successes and difficulties as well as advice for improvement directly on the transcript submitted by the student. After the feedback had been recorded, the instructors returned the transcripts to the students.

Upon returning the annotated transcripts to the students, the activity moved to the final review phase. By and large, this phase required the use of some class time in order to be most effective for students. At the beginning of this phase, the instructors provided the whole class with some general comments about the responses. More often than not, there were some successful points and points in need of improvement that applied to many members of the class. The instructors discussed these points and provided suggestions for improvement. After the instructor had provided general feedback to the class as a whole, the students proceeded to review the notes on their transcripts while viewing their video. They were asked to take notes on the feedback they received and ask questions about

and feedback that they didn't understand or wanted clarification about. As a general rule, this phase took between twenty and thirty minutes. After the students had finished reviewing the feedback, the cycle usually began again with a new topic.

RESULTS

Given the broad nature of the intensive English program within which the weekly IELTS video journal activity was initiated, it was nearly impossible to determine the precise effect of the activity on the speaking band scores of students. The overall curriculum for the intensive English program is constantly being modified by the instructors in order to better meet the needs of the students. Without consistency in other elements of the overall curriculum as well as other activities in the speaking skills class, isolating the specific effects of the weekly IELTS video journals on students' band scores would have been incredibly difficult. Moreover, students within the intensive program only take the IELTS once, at the end of their first year, so no baseline IELTS level was ever established prior to participating in the activity. With this in mind, the instructors decided to focus on student responses to the activity and instructor observations to determine the effectiveness of the activity.

As of the writing of this article, the first group of students who participated in this activity have not yet taken the IELTS test and will be doing so soon. After students have taken the test, the instructors plan to interview the students to ascertain what effect they believe the weekly IELTS video journals had on their performance in the speaking portion of the test. The instructors intend to report students' posttest responses in future publications about this activity.

Currently, the instructors have conducted pretest interviews with students to discover whether they believed they had been adequately prepared for the speaking portion of the test. In general, students reported that they felt concerned about the test and specifically about the speaking portion of the test. On the other hand, students responded positively about their preparation for specific elements of the speaking portion of the test. For example, most students responded with positive answers when asked whether they understood the types of questions that are common in each part of the speaking test. Moreover, many students responded positively when asked if they knew how to respond to those different types of questions. Furthermore, most students were able to provide a list of speaking skills that they were actively working to improve based on the instructors' feedback.

In addition to student responses, the instructors made observations about student development based on the submitted video responses. To learn about student growth patterns, the instructors compared videos made by the same students at intervals throughout the activity. The instructors discovered several significant changes in the student responses over the course of the activity. First, the instructors observed that students' responses were denser in later videos, which is to say the videos contained more ideas in the same amount of time. This trend was true across all students participating in the activity. Since fluency and speaking extensively are a part of the IELTS speaking evaluation (IELTS, n.d. a),

the instructors hoped that this would result in speaking band score improvements. Second, the instructors observed that students hesitated less during their responses to later prompts. This trend was true to a greater or lesser extent among all participating students and corresponded with a positive feature listed on the official IELTS band score descriptors (IELTS, n.d. a). Finally, the instructors observed that students became more lexicographically ambitious over the course of the activity. Possibly in response to feedback provided by the instructors, many students tended to use more sophisticated transitional phrases as the activity progressed. Furthermore, most students used a broader set of vocabulary to express their thoughts in later responses. The instructors believed that this change in linguistic range could result in an improved speaking band score based on the features listed on official IELTS documentation (IELTS, n.d. a). Although their vocabulary growth should not be attributed to this activity, students' willingness to employ newly acquired words and phrases in a speaking context may be partially related to the weekly IELTS video journal activity.

Unfortunately, the relatively positive results that were observed and reported do not come without significant difficulties. The first challenge associated with the implementation of the weekly IELTS video journal activity was training students to complete the steps of the activity correctly. Since the activity required students to make extensive use of their smartphones and YouTube, training students to complete the first two phases of the activity without any errors required several class periods at the start of the activity as well as occasional reminders about the correct procedure. The second challenge presented by this activity was providing timely and meaningful feedback. Initially, as the title of the article suggests, the instructors intended for the activity to be completed on a weekly basis. The instructors quickly discovered that providing written feedback for each student was extremely time-consuming. To ease their feedback burden the instructors elected to make it a biweekly activity. Despite this change, the instructors still failed occasionally to provide feedback in a timely manner. As a result, the instructors are still actively investigating methods of streamlining the feedback process.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the weekly IELTS video journal could never function as a complete replacement for face-to-face interviews, the results recorded by the author, based on an initial one-year trial, indicate that the activity may be a useful tool to prepare students for the speaking portion of the IELTS test. The activity developed by the author and a fellow instructor can be divided into four phases: recording phase, transcription phase, feedback phase, and review phase. The design of these phases allows instructors to move a substantial portion of IELTS speaking practice outside of the classroom while allowing students to practice more frequently. With the popularity of the IELTS test growing dramatically in Asia and the rest of the world (Cambridge Assessment English, 2013), the author believes that the weekly IELTS video journal activity could help many teachers deal with this growing demand.

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Small Talk Is Big Talk: Teaching Phatic Communication

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The term *small talk* often carries connotations of triviality and inconsequentiality and stands in contrast to "big talk" (i.e., "serious" talk with concrete goals, outcomes, and purposes). The assumption that small talk is meaningless may be widely held but is actually mistaken. Small talk (or *phatic* communication) serves a vital social function, and it suffuses "big talk." Being able to engage in phatic communication is a vital skill but one that many L2 learners struggle with, in part because the social, interpersonal, and context-bound nature of small talk may render it unsuitable for the institutional demands of formal education contexts. This paper outlines some features of small talk and suggests practical classroom activities developed to improve students' small talk abilities.

INTRODUCTION

The inspiration for this paper came from a blog post by Kathy Gottberg, an online lifestyle maven and founder of the website SmartLiving365.com, called *Small Talk, Big Talk, and Meaningful Conversation* (Gottberg, 2015). In the blog post, Gottberg derides small talk as something unimportant, obligatory, and loathsome instead preferring big talk, that is to say, meaningful conversation.

Gottberg's definition of small talk boils down to whether or not she likes the person that she is talking to. If they are passionate about something she is interested in, it's big talk. If her interlocutors want to talk about something she is not interested in, it's small talk. Her dismissal of small talk parallels our experience with language teachers who also find small talk unimportant and fail to teach it in their language classrooms.

Historical Influences in the Language Learning Classroom

Learning a second or foreign language is a widespread feature of many formal education systems, both at the present time and historically. In the European context, the study of Latin was deemed a necessary component of education programs for many centuries. The fact of the matter was that no person since classical antiquity was a native speaker of Latin, and therefore the study of Latin was done primarily with reference to the written form of the language. The prestige of the classical texts further reinforced this privileging of the written form

of the language in formal study with the concomitant orientation to the production of grammatically perfect sentences, well-structured paragraphs, and the ability to translate texts from one language into another. The whole process eventually became codified as the grammar translation method, and this methodology was applied in later centuries to learning modern languages. The fact that modern languages are living languages with a speech community who use the language to conduct all of the mundane social activities of daily life was not really seen as having any bearing in how language should be taught. The bifurcation between the two views of language is symbolized by the formal educational institution known historically as a *grammar* school, and the question that is used in daily discourse to inquire about someone's proficiency in a foreign language is "Do you *speak* English/French/Korean?"

In addition to the institutional bias towards the written form of a language, with its rigid grammar, fixed spelling, and modes of formal composition, there is also the notion that the field of academia that is most relevant to language learning is linguistics, and since the 1960s, this has often meant generative linguistics, which at the outset stated its disdain for the "corrupt and degenerate" language of quotidian utterances (Chomsky, 1965). However, at about the same time, there emerged another view of language, which had its roots not in linguistics but in sociology. The ethnomethodological studies of Harold Garfinkel had a direct bearing on the establishment on the discipline of Conversation Analysis, which primarily sees language as a means by which persons conduct social action rather than as a means to make grammatically well-formed propositional statements about the world.

This paper aligns with this sociological view of language, suggesting that the term *small talk* is a misnomer, carrying unwarranted connotations of superficiality and triviality. Not only is small talk not superficial and trivial, this paper seeks to highlight the centrality of the social uses of talk with concomitant implications for foreign language learning.

Definitions of Small Talk and Big Talk

Although the term *small talk* is widely understood in non-specialist terms, what exactly constitutes small talk is by no means fixed, nor is the contrast with the opposite form of talk, "big talk," fully realized. Small talk is also often negatively viewed in common with other pragmatic aspects of language (see, for example, the negative evaluations taken toward discourse markers in Campbell-Larsen, 2017).

Holmes and Wilson (2017) categorize human speech into six functions: "expressive, directive, referential, metalinguistic, poetic, and phatic" (p. 294). This list is not definitive, as Holmes and Wilson point out other linguists use different labels, nor is each function equal in terms of importance or commonality. Of these six categories, big talk is primarily referential as it refers to information that is being transacted via speaking from one person to another. Therefore, it is through so-called big talk that things get done. Small talk, on the other hand, is primarily phatic, that is, communication for social purposes. This kind of talk is primarily for building and maintaining social relationships. Transactional communication is for transferring information. Phatic communication is for social

bonding.

Furthermore, the term *small talk* seems to place itself in opposition to so-called "big talk." It is important to realize that the two genres of talk are not mutually exclusive. Transactional talk is suffused with orientations towards social understanding, and even the most social of talk is still replete with speech acts that accomplish things such as requests, offers, information exchanges, and so on. The two genres interpenetrate each other, giving an Escher-like interactional topography of seamless shifts between the two genres of speech. As noted by Cheepen (2000),

> Analysts (and indeed dialogue participants) are, in general, able to categorize without too much difficulty the primary goal of a dialogue as either transactional or interactional. It is rare, however, in the case of human–human discourse, to find a dialogue that is purely one form or another. (p. 288)

Instructional Issues with Small Talk

The classroom is usually conceived of as a space where a transfer of knowledge takes place, from the knowing teacher to the unknowing student. The roles, rights, and responsibilities of teachers and students are tacitly understood by all participants in the institutional activity known as a "lesson." The canonical activities of second/foreign language learning classrooms involve either student passivity in response teacher speaking (lecturing, explicating, etc.) or, if the students are active participants, student performance of activities at the behest of the teacher in ways that are rigorously prescribed. The goal-driven nature of language lessons and the power asymmetries that exist between teacher and students would seem to be at odds with the nature of phatic communication as outlined above, which is expressly non-goal-driven and orients towards suspension or mitigation of status differences between participants. Indeed, Seedhouse (2004) suggests that conversation cannot occur as part of an L2 lesson and, therefore, many language teachers and indeed many language textbooks are dismissive of small talk and do not make it a pedagogical priority.

Additionally, just as Gottberg (2015) states, small talk is often perceived by non-linguists and non-language educators as being something uninteresting and unnecessary. They refer to it as "purposeless chatter" (Hendricks, 2007, p. 12) or "the lowly stepchild of real conversation" (Fine, 2003, p. 4). And it's not just laypeople that are dismissive. Many linguists have a dim view of small talk, classifying it as "talk which is aimless, prefatory, obvious, uninteresting, sometimes suspect, and even irrelevant" (Coupland, 2000, p. 3) and consequently not worthy of analysis, let alone teaching to students. Both of these professional and non-professional views of the triviality of small talk influence the language classroom.

Another factor contributing to a lack of emphasis in the language classroom is that phatic communication is often seen as nothing more than a series of greetings and salutations. These kinds of formulaic expressions are a crucial part of phatic communication, but it also includes "more expansive personally oriented talk" (Holmes, 2000, p. 56). Small talk is more than just "hello," "goodbye," and "how are you," but many language teachers feel that outside of giving the students

a list of greetings to memorize at the beginning level, there is nothing to teach.

Finally, the overwhelming emphasis in language education is on literacy and not on speaking skills (Bygate, 1987). In addition to the historical reasons elucidated above, this may be in part because, as Campbell-Larsen and Romney (2017) note,

> Anyone who is literate in his or her native language is assumed to be able to speak it fluently. The assumption that high standards of literacy in L2 must translate into matching levels of spoken ability is a tempting, but actually erroneous, assumption. A learner with high levels of reading ability may have very limited conversational abilities. (p. 24)

Therefore, when speaking is taught, it is often in the form of literate-like formal genres of speaking, such as presentations or debates, which are seen as more prestigious, with phatic communication being trivial and inconsequential (see Campbell-Larsen & Cunningham, 2009). If a student can give a presentation or participate in a structured debate, then certainly they can have a meaningless conversation.

All of these factors combine to prejudice language teachers against teaching phatic communication. However, as Nation (2013) emphasizes, "Learners need to develop the skill of making friendly conversation in a foreign language, and this should be a regular part of the speaking course" (p. 29).

Characteristics of Small Talk

Small talk is social talk and has some characteristic components. The topics of small talk are overwhelmingly personal, concerning the experiences, interests, opinions, and beliefs of the participants or the current situation in which participants find themselves. It is not primarily necessitated by any practical task, and the talk is for the participants, not for any outside audience (Cook, 1989). Topics are not fixed but may be changed by the participants, either overtly or by the process known as stepwise transition (see Jefferson, 1984). The talk will likely involve some elements of self-disclosure (see Hargie, 2017) although the level of such self-disclosure may be influenced by the level of established intimacy or by cultural factors (see Iwata, 2010, for a study of lower levels of self-disclosure by Japanese speakers). Lack of space prevents a full discussion of all of these issues here so the next section will focus on an area of small talk that is particularly influenced by the exigencies of the language classroom: questions.

One of the primary speech acts is the question-and-answer adjacency pair, and language learners must be able to produce intelligible questions in the target language. This often manifests itself as extended teaching of the various forms of question structures, such as the syntax of *wh-* and *yes/no*-questions, formatting negative questions, tag agreement in tag questions, and so on. However, the underlying concepts of question-and-answer sequences are often unelaborated. Not all question-and-answer sequences are the same interactional acts.

The basic schema is the transactional, or referential, question, where the questioner is in an epistemic minus state and thinks that the interlocutor is in an epistemic plus state. The purpose of the question is for the questioner to come

into possession of the desired information. Implicit within this schema is the notion that the questioner has the right to ask the questioner and that the interlocutor is able and willing to supply the requested information. Asking a policeman for street directions, asking a clerk to relate the cost of an item, or asking a family member what they want for dinner would be examples of transactional questions.

A second kind of question is the display question, often found in classroom interactions. In this schema, the questioner, the teacher, already knows the answer and the expectation that the interlocutor, the student, knows the answer is not assured. The purpose of the question is for the student to display to the teacher's satisfaction that he or she has understood the question and can produce an answer that is both propositionally and linguistically correct (according to the teacher's criteria). The answer is open to evaluation by the teacher. These two question types, transactional and display, are the default question schemas for language learners (see Yamazaki, 1998). There is, however, a third schema, prominent in small talk: interactional questions.

Interaction questions are asked for the purpose of promoting progressivity and creating a social relationship between the interactants. The main purpose is not to obtain information. Rather, interactional questions suggest possible topics for further talk, to demonstrate understanding of and interest in ongoing talk, to encourage speakers to elaborate on their ongoing talk, and so on.

Failure to differentiate interactional questions from the other types of questions can lead to pragmatic failure and preclude small talk from taking place. A question such as "What did you do last weekend?" asked by a police officer to a suspect is different in intent to the same question asked casually between friends. Responding to the question with "I stayed in all weekend" will not be considered sufficient in the small talk situation and may be interpreted as unfriendly and dismissive.

One way to indicate that a question is interactional in nature is to structure it as part of a question string, for example, "What did you do last weekend? Did you go out or anything?" Such a question string, especially marked with the general extender "or anything," indicates the interactional nature of the question to the recipient who is being invited to disclose their weekend activities or answer on another topic. "I stayed in all weekend. Actually, I'm saving money because I'm planning a trip to Hawaii this summer" would count as an adequate response to the interactional question, but not to the policeman's transactional question. Similar indicators of interactional intent are questions with exemplar answers such as "Are you interested in any winter sports – you know, like skiing or snowboarding or anything?" and questions embedded within self-disclosure sequences such as "I really like Thai food and Mexican food. How about you? Do you like spicy food?" Helping learners move beyond an understanding of questions as only ever transactional or display in nature, which may be their only experience of questioning in the target language, is a vital first step in promoting phatic communication.

ACTIVITIES FOR IMPROVING SMALL TALK

The following are two teaching activities that promote phatic communication. While not necessarily appropriate for all teaching and learning situations, they stand as examples in contrast to the typical transactional speech acts commonly taught in language classrooms.

Create a Space for Conversation

The canonical view of classroom interaction is that all participants must attend to the institutional nature of classrooms, where all talk is geared towards learning. This learning may be interpreted as gaining new vocabulary and grammar, or brushing up on existing grammatical, lexical, or pronunciation abilities, either actively through speaking and writing, or passively through reading and listening. Such activities are those that are usually mandated by the institution and wholly, or in large measure, controlled by the teacher. Specific activities are selected by the teacher with onset, duration, and termination likewise controlled by the teacher, as are other such issues as group membership, and the goal of the activity. The teacher retains the right to evaluate the activity and his or her role is usually one of non-participant. These factors all preclude the occurrence of naturalistic interaction, which is spontaneous, non-goal-driven, not subject to evaluation by a non-participant, and administered and controlled with respect to topic and turn-taking et cetera by the participants themselves.

The teacher can make clear to the learners these differences between classroom interaction and naturalistic, spontaneous interaction and, based on an understanding of these differences, institute a period in each lesson termed "student talk time," or STT, where students are not directed to perform any activity or use any particular vocabulary or grammar but are left to engage in small talk with their partners. No topic is given, no handouts, or other materials are distributed. Group membership is left to the students to administer and, once students become habituated to STT, no particular signal is given by the teacher to signal onset other than falling silent or moving to some unobtrusive place in the classroom. No time limit is set, and time used for the activity can vary lesson by lesson. The teacher may join in conversations as a participant if this is not too intrusive, but learners retain the right not to be imposed on. No evaluation is given and the students can talk freely among themselves. In the authors' experience, early occurrences of STT feature confusion, silence, and swift reversion to L1. But as the activity continues lesson by lesson, students come to align with the activity and understand the goals and benefits of such a period of using the language for phatic rather than institutional goals.

Model Conversations

A common feature of language learning materials is the scripted dialogue. Unfortunately, however, many of these dialogues do not resemble actual conversations as the teacher/writer, in an attempt to grade the language to a level appropriate for a language learner, removes many of the naturalistic features, including most, if not all, of the phatic elements. It is unusual to find dialogues

with socially oriented questions, discourse markers, or expanded turns as discussed above. For example, a typical dialogue written around the question "What kind of music do you like?" might look like this:

    A: What kind of music do you like?
    B: Pop music.
    A: Who is your favorite pop singer?
    B: Selena Gomez.

In a conversation for transactional purposes this is fine. The information has been exchanged. However, unless someone is creating a dossier about their speaking partner, this would be an unusual conversation. Instead, a more social conversation might look like this:

    A: Recently, I've been listening to classical music, you know, like Mozart and
       Beethoven. What kind of music do you like?
    B: Well, it depends on my mood, I mean I sometimes listen to classical, but I
       guess that I mostly listen to pop music.
    A: What, like One Direction and stuff?
    B: Ah...no. Not really. I mean more like Selena Gomez.
    A: Oh, okay. I got you.

A second issue with scripted dialogues is that they are often used in a very simplistic manner. The students simply read them out. This may, in fact, be because the dialogue is so simple that there is nothing much else to do with them. However, if the dialogue is sufficiently rich in phatic elements, teachers can ask the students to analyze them. For example, teachers could ask students to compare both the scripted dialogues above and answer these questions:

    Which dialogue do you like better? Why?
    Which conversation seems more "real"? Why?
    What do you think is the biggest difference between the two?
    What do you notice about the questions?
    What do you notice about the answers?

By doing this kind of analysis, students are able to activate their higher-order thinking skills, and better recognize, understand, and hopefully, employ phatic communication elements.

However, the dialogue above may be too linguistically complex for many students and they might need a simpler example. Instead of the having students compare two dialogues, they could first be taught a conversation structure like:

    A: Pre-question answer + QUESTION
    B: ANSWER + Extra information

And then be asked to discover the structure in an example conversation like this:

    A: I like classical music. What kind of music do you like?
    B: I like pop music, I mean I like Selena Gomez.

By answering questions like these:

1. Underline the pre-question answer.
2. Draw a box around the question.
3. Draw a circle around the answer.
4. Double underline the extra information.

Next, the students could be given a blank template to fill in their own information and ideas that could then be used as a basis for practice. The template could look like this:

A: _____. What kind of music do you like?
B: _____, I mean _____.

Once again, despite the language level of the second example being quite low, students are still being exposed to more naturalistic English with phatic elements included, and they are asked to not just parrot an example, but to use their higher-order thinking skills to understand and recognize the structure of the adjacency pair.

CONCLUSION

The most important thing for language teachers to keep in mind is that small talk, that is to say, phatic communication, is an important, integral part of human communication. It is more than just formulaic greetings; it cannot be separated from so-called big talk, that is, transactional, referential communication; and it must be taught to EFL learners.

It is important that language teachers be aware of how English works interactionally. Students need to be given realistic models to analyze and emulate, and finally, students need to be given space to talk freely and practice their small talk.

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Human Intelligence vs. Artificial Intelligence: A Case of SLA

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With the digital age come Google Translate and application software for basic conversation in English. Many Japanese university students turn to Google Translate for help with their writing assignments, and their speaking skills are limited to basic conversation on familiar topics with formulaic expressions that the computer can already be programmed to do. This paper describes a CLIL course designed to help second-year students at a Japanese university learn to write English sentences on their own and to develop thinking skills so that they can talk about things that the computer can never be programmed to do. The course reflects the changes that are underway in Japan with the introduction of English at the elementary school level and the policy of teaching English in English. The changes, which will allow students to cognize English directly, are timely as researchers in artificial intelligence continue to make progress in natural language learning.

INTRODUCTION

Many English programs at Japanese universities focus on basic conversation that the computer can already be programmed to do. Many students also cannot write English sentences and tend to use translation software to help them with their English writing assignments, without being aware of the quality of the translation. The availability of translation software and other computer programs that give an impression that they can understand natural language raises some questions for second language acquisition (SLA).

In this paper, two questions are raised: (a) "How good can the computer be at learning natural or human language?" and (b) "What should be our approach to second language acquisition in a digitalized and globalized world?"

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a subfield in computer science that focuses on developing a computer program to perform tasks that require intelligence when performed by humans, such as analysis, problem-solving, game-playing, vision, locomotion, and speech (Charniak & McDermott, 1985; Jordan & Russell, 2001; Bostrom, 2016).

Research in AI has led to a new area in computer science, called *machine learning*. It is a subfield in computer science that gives the computer the ability to learn without being explicitly programmed.

Natural language processing (NLP) is a subfield in AI that focuses on developing a computer program that deals with natural (human) language. The ultimate goal of NLP is for humans to be able to communicate with the computer through natural language. Natural language learning (NLL) is the subfield of NLP devoted to using machine learning mechanisms for processing natural language.

NLL is somewhat comparable to second language acquisition (SLA) if we consider a programming language to be the first language of the computer and a natural language to be its second language. Thus, AI researchers are our counterparts. However, our students and the computer are quite different.

Human Cognition and the Computer

A major difference between humans and the computer lies in the fact that we are cognizers, and that the computer is not. We cognize; that is, we perceive, become conscious, think, and understand through our senses.

The computer is basically programmed by humans to carry out a task. It does not know or understand anything about the task it performs. Even the computer that can learn without being explicitly programmed is unlikely to be able to acquire or understand natural language the way we do.

Understanding natural language requires extensive world knowledge and commonsense facts that only humans have. Some knowledge is in the form of facts that can be explicitly represented so that the computer can access them. Some knowledge is unconscious and cannot be explicitly represented (Chiraporn, 1990).

Human Cognition and First Language Acquisition

The word *cognition* refers to the mental process of acquiring knowledge through thought, experience, and the senses as well as knowledge acquired through the process. Human cognition includes knowledge of language. However, language is a unique part of cognition.

First language acquisition (FLA) researchers divide cognitive development in children into non-linguistic cognitive development and linguistic cognitive development (Bowerman & Levinson, 2001). Through non-linguistic cognitive development, we develop general knowledge of the world. Through linguistic cognitive development, we develop our first language(s).

Because the development of our first language takes place concurrently with our development of the general knowledge of the world, we tend to look at the world through our first language. We tend to think that we "think" in our first language and map a second language onto it through translation.

We are primarily cognizers, not speakers or users of our first language. We do not "think" in any language. Our non-linguistic world knowledge is language-free.

It can be mapped to any language. This is why we can acquire any language as long as we let go of our first language and map our second language directly to our language-free knowledge of the world.

Our language-free general knowledge of the world is at the heart of our cognition. Important as language (first or second) is, it would be meaningless without our language-free general knowledge of the world – the non-linguistic part of our cognition. The meanings of words in all the languages of the world are grounded in it (Yumitani, 1997).

However, each language carves up the reality of the world differently, resulting in a unique lexicon. No two words from two different languages mean exactly the same thing.

MACHINE TRANSLATION AND PATTERN MATCHING

A major research area in NLP is machine translation (MT). The goal of MT is to develop a computer program that can do automatic translation from one natural language to another. There are many MT programs in use around the world with varying capabilities and purposes. However, it is unlikely that there is a computer program that can do a fully automatic high-quality translation of an unrestricted text. The amount of general knowledge required for the computer to understand words in an unrestricted text would be staggering if we are conscious of all the knowledge and if the knowledge can be represented in a form that the computer can access.

For many programs, "translate" may be a misnomer because they are based on pattern matching. A program that seems to "translate" a sentence from one language to another may just match preset sentences in the two languages together.

ELIZA, the first computer program that gives an impression that it can communicate with humans using natural language, is based on pattern matching (Watz, 1982). It matches some words that we use to some preset sentences in its system and uses those preset sentences to respond to us. It also uses some stock responses. Many programs in practical use today are likely to be based on pattern matching, and we should know that is how they really work. It is not that the computer can understand us.

AI RESEARCHERS AND ESL TEACHERS

AI researchers have been more successful than ESL teachers in teaching grammar. They have successfully installed a grammar-checking program in our wordprocessors. We have not been able to install the core grammar of the English language in our students after six years of formal education. Moreover, they cannot apply knowledge procedurally to learn grammar of a new word (i.e., how to use it) from context. They cannot use knowledge procedurally to monitor their own output.

However, as far as meaning is concerned, the grammar-checking program understands nothing of what we write. As cognizers with vast non-linguistic

knowledge of the world, our students have potential to learn and understand any natural language while the computer still cannot.

AI researchers will continue to improve the natural language skills of the computer. We need to help our students develop their potential. They can use the computer as a tool, but they need to know what they can do that the computer cannot.

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Second language acquisition (SLA) of English is a very broad field since it includes acquisition of English as a second language (ESL) as well as acquisition of English as a foreign language (EFL). The line that distinguishes between ESL and EFL is getting blurred in the globalized world with pockets of native speakers of English everywhere around the world and easy access to native-speaker input through the media.

EFL learners can now cognize English the way ESL learners do, and they must be encouraged to do so more.

With more and more young learners starting to learn English, the line between FLA and SLA is also getting blurred. Young learners can readily cognize English without being taught. Older students need to be taught, but they must be trained to cognize also.

With students' tendency to rely on translation software, we do not only have to teach students about what we can do and what the computer cannot, but we also have to re-assess our goal in English education.

ASSESSING OUR GOAL IN ENGLISH EDUCATION

If our goal is to teach students basic conversation, do we need six or eight years? Is it our goal to teach students to be able to translate from L2 to L1? Is it our goal to teach them grammar to pass an English grammar test at school? Is it our goal to teach them to read English and be able to answer multiple-choice comprehension questions and then just forget about them?

Is it our goal to teach students to be able to use the language in all four skills with unrestricted domains, not just for greetings, shopping, ordering food at a restaurant, etc.? If this last goal is our goal, we need to remind students that they are cognizers and that they are cognizing every second of their life. We also have to teach them how to cognize English as well as provide them with the necessary input and opportunities to practice.

PARADIGM SHIFTS IN ENGLISH EDUCATION IN JAPAN

There was a paradigm shift in English education in Japan two decades ago from the grammar-translation approach to the communicative approach, which is still being practiced. Now there is a new paradigm shift, which focuses on

introducing English at the elementary school level and teaching English in English at all levels. (Fujiwara, Naka, & Terasawa, 2017; Saito, Torikai, Otsu, Erikawa, & Nomura, 2016.)

The First Paradigm Shift

With the first paradigm shift, communication skills, particularly speaking and listening skills, are introduced and emphasized. At the university level, although they have good reading skills and know much about English grammar, with speaking, most students start like beginners. They start with basic conversation.

With basic conversation, the content is limited to situational dialogs, that is, dialogs about situations that students are already cognitively familiar with and can do without thinking in their L1. They do not have to cognize anything. They do not learn anything new cognitively through English. The language is also limited to formulaic expressions that they can memorize and use without any change or with only a slight change. It is the kind of language that the computer can be programmed to do based on pattern matching. Most students who have not had much chance to speak English throughout junior high school and high school do not mind that they are not being challenged cognitively. Some may even find situational dialogs and formulaic expressions challenging. The question is "What have they achieved after eight years of formal English education?"

Moreover, with the introduction of speaking and listening, students have less time to develop reading skills and knowledge of grammar that used to be their strong points. With good declarative knowledge of grammar aimed for grammar tests, good students are capable of writing grammatical sentences. With their knowledge of declarative grammar weakened, many students can no longer write grammatical sentences in English.

Also, the focus on translation from Japanese to English remains at Japanese schools after the shift to the communicative approach. It does not help students develop ability to write in English or think in English.

The Second Paradigm Shift

The second paradigm shift involves introducing English in elementary school and teaching English in English at all levels.

In introducing English in elementary school to learners young enough to cognize English and acquire it naturally, SLA is becoming more like FLA. These young learners can eventually develop into bilinguals of Japanese and English provided that they are given sufficient input and the teachers are fluent enough and understand what they are doing.

The emphasis on teaching English in English will help stop students from translating and allow students to continue cognizing English directly throughout, enabling them to think in English and to communicate in English without translating back and forth between English and Japanese.

However, it is still not clear how this second paradigm shift will be achieved. There are many questions such as whether elementary school teachers can teach English at all and whether junior high school teachers can teach English in English.

CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING (CLIL)

Amidst all these questions about how to implement the second paradigm shift, an approach seems to emerge as a choice for introducing English to elementary school children: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). We have used CLIL in our university courses.

CLIL combines cognition, language, and culture. The best way to understand CLIL is to look at the 4Cs of CLIL (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2012):

1. Content (subject matter)
2. Communication (language learning and using)
3. Cognition (learning and thinking process)
4. Culture (developing intercultural understanding and global citizenship)

Content

In our CLIL courses, students read an authentic book, either non-fiction or fiction. For a non-fiction book, we have used *Steve Jobs: The Man Who Thought Different* by Karen Blumenthal (2012). For a fiction book, we have used *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J. K. Rowling (1997) and *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (Rowling, 1999). The content of these books is in unrestricted domains, cognitively familiar and unfamiliar, real and imaginary.

Communication

Students are taught how to apply their knowledge of grammar procedurally to discover the grammar of a new word, particularly verbs in context. They also practice using the new words in their own sentences in class discussions and presentations.

Cognition

Students are taught to represent their understanding of the content in the form of pictures, collections of feelings, and mind maps labeled with English words instead of translation into Japanese. They are taught how to use the representation of their understanding of the content to think in English, to do discussions, and to give presentations without notes.

Culture

Culture in CLIL has to do with development of intercultural understanding and global citizenship. However, if students can think in English connecting it directly to their non-linguistic general knowledge of the world, they have already gone beyond intercultural understanding and global citizenship. They have gotten in touch with their humanity.

The new intercultural understanding they need to develop is that between humans and the computer. Becoming aware that we are primarily cognizers and

that the computer is not yet a cognizer (or whether it ever will be) is truly crucial in the world where a computer is being developed to become more like us.

CONCLUSIONS

Two questions are raised in this paper. The first question is "How good can the computer be at learning natural language?" The answer is that it cannot be good enough yet since it is still unlikely to understand word meanings the way humans do. However, AI researchers will keep trying to improve on its natural-language skills. As for the second question, "What should be our approach to second language acquisition in a digitalized and globalized world?" with more access to English through globalization, EFL will become ESL, and SLA will become FLA. Our students should be able to speak in English on any topics that they are interested in. They can use translation software to go shopping in Italian or French if they want to.

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Workshop Reports

Using Prior Knowledge: A Workshop for Designing Task-Based Lessons

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The objective of this workshop was to offer native-speaking and Korean instructors of English a culturally relevant lesson design strategy for Korean EFL learners. To this end, research studies by both Korean and foreign scholars on motivation, the social-linguistic factors influencing learner behavior, and communicative competence were discussed. The combination of these circumstances was used to generate motivational task-based lessons applicable to primary-, secondary-, and tertiary-level classrooms. Designing task material to a specific indigenous audience was the result of several studies that determined the existence of ethnicity-based learning preferences and an inclination towards material that mirrors the L1 culture. Therefore, Korean students, as a result of all things historical and ethnological, have a unique set of prior knowledge perspectives. These particulars were used by the presenter and workshop attendees to construct information-gap activities where existing cognitive concepts were matched to the instructor's English input.

INTRODUCTION

This workshop opened with a brief discussion on how the instructor-centered approach, making its way out of most mainstream education institutions, remains an integral characteristic of the Korean education system. Cultural and habitual practices have slowed the adaptation of learner-centered classrooms. Korean instructors of English have only recently found the resolve to balance their traditions with the demands of the present and future (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). The presenter then initiated a conversation involving EFL instructors who design amusing lesson plans that motivate and educate, not merely the latter, discovering the simplest of strategies to engage learners and get them participate; fit the lessons to their interests; and make them captivating (Gentner, 2010). Participants had the opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences in designing well-received lesson plans. The opening talk concluded with an overview of the international EFL market, where the bulk of EFL tapes, textbooks, and other forms of study are constructed on the educational standards and preferences of Anglo-American learners.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Participants were presented with a research-supported rationale for

incorporating this novel design strategy into lesson plans. One of the main criticisms of the Western-centered EFL textbook industry is its assumption that learners in every corner of the world consider, consult, and comprehend life in a like-mined fashion. Korean learners are exposed to a considerable amount of American and European accomplishments, entertainment, and technological achievements in their class material (Roh, 2001). Tasks may, however, be more compelling and discernible if Korean learners could draw upon aspects of their own culture through the medium of English. In this manner, the class would not be faced with the dual challenge of decoding a second language and deciphering its cultural ethos at the same sitting. Since learners already possess a decidedly sound familiarity with Korean culture, constructing Korean-themed tasks would keep learner focus on the language itself, with their understanding of national culture available to assist in their comprehension of the English narration.

From a motivational perspective, if a proactive learner-centered approach is not part of the agenda and a more stirring method of delivering English language material implemented, learners will likely continue to generate interest amongst themselves, typically in a form that separates them from the lesson and disrupts the dynamic of the class (Chang, 2006). Instructors of English, both foreign and national, are steadily being held accountable for their learners' lack of drive and progress. Remarks, both candid and unceremonious, are putting administrators and educators on the defensive. Most young learners in Korea begin a strict academic regiment shortly after elementary school. The natural inclination for amusement and distraction finds these young learners, at frequent intervals, drifting away from the instructor's lesson and towards their phones, game boys, iPads, and light-minded conversations that provide a measure of relief (Huer, 2009). In English-learning institutions, students are learning a conflicting and inconsistent foreign language teeming with alternative values, assumptions, and attitudes that challenge a student's ability to maintain a focus (Shin, 2016).

DESIGNING ORAL NARRATIVE LESSONS

The presenter's analysis then moved to the topical configuration of lessons and their positive influences: principally, that students are exposed to a number of learning scenarios that require a scope of cognitive operations. Where a typical instructional classroom focuses on the memorization of words, sentences, and their patterns, the task-based classroom requires the use of various mental and physical processes (Vasilopoulos, 2008). The yawn of tiresome drilling is set aside and short-term memory objectives shelved by these creative and engaging activities. The most common technique for information-gap instruction is the oral narrative style. Mixing the auditory oral-narrative with Korean-based content relates to what is described as subsumption, a component of the advanced organizer theory. A dialogue followed on the argument put forward by psychologist David Ausubel (1960) that claims learning is dependent upon the kinds of collateral, descriptive, and combinatorial processes that arise while receiving information, a significant process in learning since new input is paired to stored ideas in the existing cognitive structure on a concrete, non-verbatim

basis. Cognitive structures mirror the repertoire of all learning experiences. Loss of specific memories occurs when particular details blend with non-essential others and lose their unique qualities. The use of an advanced organizer in oral narrative tasks sets in motion the use of top–down processing by which learners link new information to what they already know.

The presenter described and then gave examples of what a learner experiences when oral narrative tasks are underway. Attendees were processing the new information in two interdependent methods. In top–down processing, learners reflect on past experiences as well as comb through their mental storage facilities where they mix and match data to make assumptions. In bottom–up processing, learners network their knowledge of grammatical rules and lexical items to paint a mental picture of the matter under discussion. For EFL learners, the processes of listening to English speech involves selecting known vocabulary for quick storage, saving cloudy vocabulary items for future scrutiny, and discarding unfamiliar vocabulary, all of which happens in an instant (Kim, 2014). Learners are not processing every word or utterance in the interest of grasping the meaning of the discourse. In effect, learners are making use of the top–down process to construct a plausible interpretation. Only afterwards do learners engage the bottom–up process to validate their reasoning. Those who have background knowledge of the topics at hand will be familiar with the content of these tasks in their Korean cultural and socio-linguistic conscious (Kim, 2002). In this approach, the instructor is not introducing new ideas, but rather rousing their recollections and instigating a series of remembrances and retrospections. What is new is the linguistic code representing the details of these items of familiarity.

PRESENTING TASKS

After participants observed the presenter's construction of sample lesson material and concluded the dialogue on the reasoning behind the selection of these particular task types, the first stage of attendee pair/group task construction collaborations began. A phonetic bingo sample card was presented to each pair/group that required the addition of words containing some of the most difficult phonemes for Koreans to get their tongues around. Words with fricatives, consonant clusters, and phonemes that are absent in their L1 made up the majority of selected words. An open discussion followed as to how this style of phonetic rehearsal is a more engaging way of drilling students on accurate vocabulary pronunciation than the standard speak-and-repeat style. Participants were then asked to work in pairs where they discussed, collected, and compared some of their own vocabulary items (e.g., *fresh*, *months*, and *theme*) to place into a template.

In the second stage, the presenter offered oral narrative-type English synopses of popular Korean films. The use of falling and rising intonations combined with alterations in tone and pitch demonstrated how an instructor can employ a variety of suprasegmentals to add importance to certain words and emotion to specific situations. Participants formed into pairs and devised a movie synopsis of their own before rehearsing how best to articulate the oration of each particular film. Several volunteers agreed to step to the front of the group and provide a sample

film narrative for others to identify. One such sample saw an attendee give an English account of the Korean movie "*A Taxi Driver.*"

In stage three, the oral narrative style of delivery was again utilized for a Korean song lyric information-gap activity. Exhibitions of K-pop, Trot, children's songs, animation songs, and how lessons involving lyrics could be developed were discussed by the presenter. The introduction of this task type was preceded by a discussion on the relevance of lyrical music to memorization and its significance to the second language classroom. The workshop participants then translated a Korean song into English in a pair/group setting while discussing when and where to alter the normal articulation patterns. Due to time constraints, only one volunteer presented a sample of how their interpretation of the activity would be realized. Lyrics from the song "Gangnam Style" were translated by one individual to English and read to the attendees.

In the final stage, the presenter displayed examples of how Korean-themed oral narrative material could be altered to reach various proficiency levels. The folk tale "Heungboo and Nolbu" was discussed at the novice and then the pre-intermediate level to show how one story could be altered to fit a specific proficiency level without changing the meaning. A second tale, "The Lazy Boy Who Became a Cow," was depicted in both the past and present continuous tenses to demonstrate how one story could be modified to target a specific grammatical item.

CONCLUSIONS

The workshop concluded with a few closing remarks on how initiating a culturally sensitive communicative task-based approach in the Korean EFL classroom may assist in solving a number of issues faced by both learner and instructor. The tasks unveiled during this workshop serve to enhance the learner's impression of English and inspire language learners to delve into the many amenities of the world's language. The information-gap activities offered participants thought-provoking activities involving missing content that incites the use of a variety of linguistic and psychological instruments to identify the subject matter. Lesson plans designed with learner attitudes and preference considerations go far in stimulating classrooms that remain burdened by scripted curriculums focusing on assessment-based learning that often leave the classroom with reserved, unexpressed, and uninspired learners.

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Dialoguing on Transformational Literacies: Global Digital Citizenship and Cosmopolitanism

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Two social justice SIG members share a dialogic interaction around their teaching contexts. One teacher shares how digital global citizenship helps learners to be safe, savvy, and ethical in face-to-face interactions as well as during online exchanges. The presenter will share examples of implementation from across the globe. Another educator shares her research about cosmopolitan literacies, how students make the global local. Cosmopolitan literacies are ways and expressions of the global world in our own local context. The presenter shares multimodal artifacts from a university context to deconstruct learners' expressions of cosmopolitanism. Join us as we discuss the many ways we can help one another prepare to re-design our ways of co-constructing a just society.

RATIONALE

As a conference medium, dialogue, according to TESOL International Association, is defined as a "peer-to-peer facilitated session on a hot topic in TESOL. Proposals should include an overview of the issue(s), sample discussion topic(s), and a clear indication of audience involvement. Proposal should reflect strong, up-to-date knowledge of topic(s)." In an intentional and ongoing effort to meet the needs of all participants while exploring new ways to structure delivery of content, the KOTESOL International Conference planning committee introduced the concept of "dialogue" sessions. This format engages attendees and creates an atmosphere of interaction. Increasingly, conference presentations are more social and conversational in nature (Somlai-Fischer, 2017). The theme of the 2017 KOTESOL International Conference created an exchange of ideas amongst members in the Social Justice (Critical Educators in Korea) Special Interest Group. The following article describes the content of one of the presentations given as a dialog between two educators. Their dialog shared how social justice and constructivism imbue their teaching practice by engaging with the meaning of global digital citizenship and the enacted cosmopolitan literacies of Korean students.

INTRODUCTION

Issues of constructivism and social justice encourage teachers and learners to unpack who they are for others. By explicitly outlining the teaching context of the presenters, who both teach at universities in Korea, the dialog began with self-introductions that help the audience to understand how the presenters positioned themselves in topics of the dialog: global digital citizenship and cosmopolitan literacies.

As a teacher, Maria uses constructivism as a framework for her classroom. She is a middle-aged, white, American woman teaching Korean university double majors in their non-native language of English. She approaches her teaching, her learning, her students, their learning, and their study time together as something made together collaboratively. People have different knowledges and skills to bring to the table to help themselves and each other (for example, peer learning is an important element of class learning). This shared process elicits students' existing expertise while learning new ways to think about things in life and society. A scrapbook with materials and references of her teaching and living experiences in South Korea is available on her blog: *koreamaria.typepad.com/gwangju*.

In this presentation Maria shared about her teaching context. Maria's learners are 95 Korean university students studying public administration and social welfare at a private Korean university. This mandatory course is the fourth of six required courses in English in their major. Their English production varied from false beginner to proficient. The four sections studied were unleveled; each section had a variety of learner levels, and all learners were South Korean.

James is a middle-aged, white male teaching first- and second-year students at a small private university in the city of Yongin in Gyeonggi Province. The school desires to equip the students to be global citizens with an understanding of the fourth industrial revolution (Schwab, 2015). He continues to build an online collection of resources and documentation of opinions, which can be found at *jamesgrantrush2.blogspot.com*.

For this presentation, James focuses his dialog around an online civic exchange. The primary example he used for global digital citizenship comes from an experience that started within the home but quickly spread throughout the elementary and high school divisions of a K–12 international school. This story started in South Korea, blossomed during the fall of 2012 in Shanghai, China, and culminated in a major undertaking in February 2013. A sincere gesture of a fifth-grader compelled a community of digitally equipped, civic-minded people to transform lives for students, educators, and communities in China and Liberia. In addition, James referenced examples and discussed details from numerous locations, grade levels, and situations.

COMMON FRAMES: CONSTRUCTIVISM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Maria and James were able to collaborate on this presentation because they grounded their values and teaching practices in two frameworks: constructivism and social justice pedagogy. Constructivism is a collaborative theoretical frame

that works for both James' attention to concepts and practices of global citizenship and Maria's welcoming of local expressions of global ideas in her students' cosmopolitan literacies. Social justice pedagogy with its focus on criticality is the other framework that both presenters gravitated towards in creating spaces for learners that engage with global concepts.

Constructivism

Radical in its focus on the learner, constructivism places the learner in rich environments and requires the learner to be responsible for their own learning process. Constructivism is a theoretical answer to how to best cope with the ever-changing technological environments that students study in. It is a synthesis approach encouraging collaborative learning and nontraditional approaches to problem-solving (Seels & Richey, 1994).

James first heard of constructivism while taking graduate classes for a master's degree in educational technology. The program was designed for a global community using digital tools, also known as Web 2.0 tools, to work together though physically located around the world. The program itself was an example of constructivism where participants created personal projects. These artifacts prompted further discussion and deep learning.

These tools, such as wikis and video-creation, were introduced as part of the lessons on Web 2.0 tools (Fractus Learning, 2016) and also gave him the opportunity to consider constructivism as a current and relevant term for pedagogy. One of the professors proclaimed the wiki to be an adult-like version of a sandbox, where participants interacted by trying, testing, and playing (Holden, Dorfman, Weisserman, Kupperman, & Siebenthal-Adams, 2016). This way of thinking about shared learning spaces demonstrated how creativity is fostered while working with constraints as participants immersed themselves in the playfulness of learning all while co-constructing meaning from the experience.

Social Justice

Social justice is often broadly defined with a variety of examples. It can be understood locally and used globally (Dolan-Reilly, 2013). For James, there is a strong desire to use education as an opportunity to make our global village into a community of critical thinkers who are inspired to do "just" acts of service throughout their spheres of influence (Treetop Commons, 2014). James looked back at his early years of schooling in Flint, Michigan, through his years of undergraduate learning at Concordia University in Wisconsin, and especially at his experience working at Concordia International School Shanghai for the foundations of his current understanding of the term "social justice." The last of those places, Concordia Shanghai, provided an opportunity to discover more about the method of service learning as explained by Cathryn Berger Kaye. That school year, not only did he receive specific training from Kaye, but he was also able to work within an environment that fostered a sincere approach to service. This combination of theory and training led to a truly special experience that he cherishes as an authentic act of social justice.

Maria sees working within and against systems as a type of social justice

pedagogy. This methodology is important to understand learners' educational and cultural experiences.

> While "critical" language teacher education puts the focus squarely on societal inequities often based on difference vis-à-vis race, class, gender, language, dis/ability and ethnicity, and calls for educators (and indeed everybody) to understand how positioning within those categories leads to inequitable distribution of goods and resources, including education, a social justice turn highlights teachers' responsibility to serve as agents of social change." (Hawkins, 2011, p. 2)

The chapter, "Social Justice and Education," by Adams (2014) in *Routledge International Handbook of Social Justice* is helpful to see a wider perspective on both historical and current influences in social justice and education. Maria sees the unique context she and her learners are in as an additional case study in the differing thoughts and perspectives of social justice. Social justice terminology helps to understand human rights traditions, social movements, migrations, and globalization, which are topics of discussion in the course work done by students.

Definitions of Global Digital Citizenship and Cosmopolitan Literacies

James shared his definitions on global digital citizenship and how it scaffolds learners for dynamic online spaces. Maria discussed her definition of cosmopolitan literacies and how bringing in a learner's experience can help create community and to better understand distant others. Both presenters grounded themselves in constructivism and social justice, but their focus on the learner differed. James focused on creating safe spaces and guiding rules to navigate unpredictable online spaces. Maria focused on bringing the global to her learners. She intentionally designed the lessons to give them space to interrogate and question how distant others and global ideas were meaningful to them in their local experience.

Global Digital Citizenship

Digital citizenship is a way to prepare students, and all technology users, for a society full of technology. Ribble (2017) gives further explanation by stating, "It is the norms of appropriate, responsible technology use" (para. 1). To give further explanation, the concepts have been categorized into nine themes and refined into three main principles. The nine themes are access, commerce, communication, literacy, etiquette, law, rights and responsibilities, health and wellness, and security (or self-protection). These themes are then broken down into the principles of *respect* (etiquette, access, law), *educate* (literacy, communication, and commerce), and *protect* (rights and responsibilities, health and wellness, and safety). When adding "global" to these various terms, the semiotic domain, shifts to a new awareness of these themes and principles. These terms have nuances and implications that create different understandings throughout the cultures of the world (Prinsloo & Baynham, 2008).

A metaphor to help explain how stages of training for digital citizenship can best be understood is to think of learning to drive. The basic, but huge, responsibility the students must be taught in the ways of online behavior is akin to driver's training because there are layers of understanding based on the learner's experience, access, ability, and overall exposure to "roads of life." It is helpful to consider the Internet as an "information superhighway" and therefore training is necessary to ensure that learners are engaged citizens who are aware of their responsibility to society. Just as it is when one is driving a vehicle, there is a need for safe, critical thinking, and respectful behavior when being active online.

Cosmopolitan Literacies

Understanding the different literacies at play in a language learning situation is an important re-positioning away from traditional power, identity, and agency hierarchies, especially for English language learning contexts. Cosmopolitan literacies center situated and cultural competencies of the learner as important resources and affordances instead of limitations or problems for language learning.

Cosmopolitan literacies are local experiences of globalization (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2014; Vasudevan, 2014). Maria's learners are Korean, yet they are doing their coursework in English, their non-native language, a clear demonstration of cosmopolitan literacies – Korean, English, and even "Konglish" are repertoires that the learners draw upon. Exploring not just language choices but learners' expressions of feeling towards other cultures and people, through language as well as through other multimodal artifacts, is an opportunity to understand critical cosmopolitanism, the learners' thoughtful engagement of global topics to make meaning within their everyday, local lives (Delanty, 2006; Kurasawa, 2011). The learners display a critical stance towards their cosmopolitanism, as does Maria as teacher in her use of social justice pedagogy. As Delanty (2006) explains, "Cosmopolitanism concerns processes of self-transformation in which new cultural forms take shape and where new spaces of discourse open up leading to transformation in the social world" (p. 42). Maria and her students are in face-to-face situations of cosmopolitanism, seeking to communicate and connect with each other. These study experiences transform both teacher and learners. "Cosmopolitanism ... has a critical role to play in opening up discursive spaces of world openness and thus in resisting both globalization and nationalism" (p. 43) helps to show how we are globally entwined – teacher and student nationalities differ, the language of instruction is the learners' non-native language, in-class discussion concerns global topics. Class space is given to interrogate boundaries translinguistically and multimodally. This inquiry is very important performative space as many cultures have a penchant to essentialize the "other." In Kurasawa's (2011) "Critical Cosmopolitanism" in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Cosmopolitanism*, critical cosmopolitanism is considered important to the learning context because "it questions the 'self-evidentness' of categorical dichotomies commonly employed to hierarchically divide parts of humankind from each other (savage/civilized, 'East'/'West', etc.), as well as exclusionary discourses grounded in essentialized group characteristics (racism, ethno-racial nationalism, 'cultural separatism' and religious

fundamentalism, amongst others)" (p. 269). Learners and teacher navigate and negotiate meaning through English as well as visual modalities, allowing them to make global or "other" ideas relevant to their local experience, empowering them as cosmopolitan agents who seek to express their identity in community with others.

EXAMPLES OF COSMOPOLITAN LITERACIES AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

In order to better understand the definitions and concepts of global citizenship and cosmopolitan literacies, the presenters shared examples from their teaching and research.

Cosmopolitan Literacies

To elicit students "funds of knowledge" (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992), Maria assigned two poster projects: Value Shield and Super Hero Power. The Value Shield project required five different personal values using English words, short sentences, and visuals such as pictures, graphics, and even pictures with animated GIF files. Students made another poster with a super power that they display in their life. This was an assignment for learners to see their everyday actions as powers that help their community. Learners use some English as well as visual representations to navigate meaning in their non-native language. Regardless of the English level, these visually rich posters helped explain personal values while also building rapport with classmates.

Learners also made a pecha kucha video on a current topic in our area of study. These videos covered topics in public administration and social welfare. Often the learners would research and present on social issues important in Korea but also in other countries. Learners had a chance to learn about global issues while making them relevant to their local experiences through group discussions and written group summaries of their discussion.

The learners needed to bring in a wide array of literacies to navigate these assignments: languages (English, Korean), and visual and media literacy, but also interpersonal project management, research skills, and academic discourse (both verbal and written). These artifacts that the students made were stored on their student blogs. The blogs were portfolio spaces that served as a reflective prompt to further inquire into their language learning experiences and their experiences navigating meaning with topics or cultures that seemed distant or irrelevant to them.

Global Digital Citizenship

The primary example of global digital citizenship started with a fifth-grader, a 10-year-old American living in China, and resulted in a playground being built in Liberia, Africa. In this guided learning experience, children took the lead as global activists who used the digital tools available to research, network, and learn the necessary information. These young citizens accomplished the noble and extraordinary goal of getting a modern playground shipped from the U.S.A. and

having it installed in Liberia. Although it began as an out-of-school project of interest, it quickly became a part of lessons, projects, and activities throughout the daily educational landscape at the school. This act of "just doing the right thing" was transformative for everyone involved, especially the learning community. A high-ranking Liberian senator responded to the initial email sent by the 10-year-old and was instrumental in helping co-construct a new reality for the young people of this specific village in Liberia. Ultimately, there was an opening ceremony that included a number of local and national officials demonstrating the best of a representative government. Even the vice-president of Liberia at the time, Joseph Boakai, came to recognize the efforts, congratulate everyone involved, and invite the young citizens to speak at a formal congressional meeting.

SEMIOTIC DOMAINS AND MULTIMODAL DESIGN

Maria talked about how she draws on semiotic domains for meaning-making that will empower learners in global and media-saturated situations. Multimodal design was a key component for James to understand how to best set up learning environments for learners to navigate online space safely.

Unpacking the diverse elements of visual and kinesthetic artifacts is a practice that articulates classroom and student work to an external audience. By encouraging Korean and English, Maria uses a flipped class approach to maximize learners' translanguaging skills. The classroom and homework artifacts require English production; out-of-class project work can be done in Korean. This space for translanguaging helps to even out the disparate English skill level of the learners. Each group will have participants that might not have the best English proficiency, but group work will require other skills – research, visual storying, project planning, video production – so learners can experience reciprocal mentoring.

Stein's (2007) *Multimodal Pedagogies in Diverse Classrooms: Representation, Rights and Resources* is a resource that provides a succinct incorporation of semiotic meaning and practices that have helped Maria to improve her feedback on student work.

> A multimodal theory of communication holds that meaning is made, always, in the many different modes and media which make up a communicational ensemble. A multimodal approach to teaching and learning characterises communication in classrooms beyond the linguistic: language, in speech and writing, is only one mode of communication among many. Other modes can include image, space, gesture, color, sound and movement, all of which function to communicate meaning in an integrated, multilayered way. In a multimodal approach, all modes of communication drawn on in the making of meaning are given equal serious attention. (p. 1)

The above quote helps Maria to remember the nonverbal aspects of her learners' communication that sometimes get forgotten as she focuses on whatever "rubric" she has decided upon for a learning event.

While Stein's social semiotics helps Maria to understand learner work,

Jenkins, Purushotma, Weigel, Clinton, and Robison's (2009) participatory culture, where students aren't consumers of lessons, but rather producers or co-creators themselves, helps Maria to position media and methodology in her teaching practice of multimodality. Additionally, Jenkins et al.'s list of needed skills in New Media culture underpins the staging of learning experiences for her students. Judgment, collaboration, negotiation, appropriate appropriation, transmedia navigation, networking, play, performance – all these "skills" are scaffolded in lessons and can be deconstructed as to their impact on learners' power, agency, and identity as well as her own as the teacher. From these lessons plans, social semiotics shows how learners' multimodal expressions manifest their multiliteracies as transformers, not just users. "Social semiotics fundamentally challenges the idea of closed, stable systems of representation in which human beings are users of systems, rather than active transformers of semiotic resources" (Stein, 2007, p. 2). Multimodality is a key component to opening the communication playing field within the suboptimal structural problem that I and my learners face – a classroom of peers with different English proficiencies.

While Maria focused on semiotic domains of cosmopolitanism, James focused on multimodal design. Training the learner-user is a multimodal design practice that is important for teachers to invest in. Drawing on previous media and contexts that are in society is a helpful way to think about design for global digital citizenship practices.

Similar to the training of a driver and the regiment of exercises as described in a workout program are two rich contexts to help think about design for digital spaces. Design needs to scaffold the lessons that pertain to the student's access and ability. When driving the car, the risks and dangers are more obvious due to the physical handling of the car and the amount of information available regarding safe, appropriate use of the vehicle. When working out, there are also physical and social implications for weight or exercise training. When discussing digital citizenship, the layers of understanding depend on the amount of education learners have encountered regarding the use of technology and the practice of being a citizen in society. Moreover, students will likely have had online experiences, but, for young learners especially, these instances may not have required them to engage in commerce, regularly use encrypted passwords, or consider the legal realities connected to working and being online. It is necessary for learners to become fully aware of their responsibility as digital citizens, or rather citizens who are using digital means to participate in society.

WRAPPING UP THE DIALOG

This dialog was a chance for the presenters and the audience to think about their roles in co-constructing a just society by using transformative literacies. By making the global local and assisting learners to understand their role in online society by learning what it takes to be a global digital citizen, creating just classrooms is one way to practice how learners and teachers alike can help shape a just society.

As committed professionals who desire to be examples of lifelong learning, Maria and James found the process and the end results to be a worthwhile

endeavor. The experience of collaborating on this dialog for the conference was a many-month experiment for both Maria and James. The Korea TESOL network brought them together to learn more about their interests in global citizenship and cosmopolitan literacies through comparison and contrast. When making the visual presentation using Prezi, they explored academic discourse markers as well as visual design practices. The visual design tapped into semiotic domains of visual literacy so the audience was clear about the differences in content. The presenters sought to construct knowledge together by sharing experiences in order to challenge status quo expectations of what global education looks like.

THE AUTHORS

Maria Lisak teaches in the Public Administration & Social Welfare Department at Chosun University in Gwangju, South Korea. Originally from the United States, she has been teaching in Korea for 21 years. She designs and teaches an English language course for Korean university sophomores in administration and welfare. Her masters in instructional systems technology and her current work on an EdD in Literacy, Culture and Language Education through Indiana University help to set up her classroom for learners to have socially insightful experiences that help empower them to meet the challenges of our world.

James G. Rush, II teaches in the Liberal Arts Department at Luther University in Yongin, South Korea. He was born in Flint, Michigan, in the USA and is fiercely proud that the city has a history of contributing signif cantly to the world regarding education (community schooling concept) and social justice (worker-rights/unions within the auto-industry, fair-housing, and most recently with water-rights issues). His master's degree in educational technology laid a foundation formalizing the ideas of "fail fast" and "rapid prototype" solutions for addressing issues and learning deeply. He strives to inspire students to serve while realizing their potential.

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Panel Discussion Reports

Experience and Employment Challenges in "Today's" Korean ELT Higher Education

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For non-white NESTs, including Korean NESTs, NNEST foreign passport holders and Korean NNESTs, the job market is challenging with the white native speaker as the model. This article describes the content of a conference panel session aiming to share the experiences of Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs marginalized by the white native speaker model. The discussion highlights a variety of experiences that reveal not only the NEST–NNEST dichotomy, but how encultured the white native speaker model is in Korean ELT that it can go unnoticed or is accepted as the issue appears to be too ingrained in society to change. The article serves to raise awareness of the employment struggles of Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs, but also to suggest ways forward to increase awareness and work toward change.

INTRODUCTION

The struggles of Korean non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) and non-white native English-speaking teachers (NESTs), including Korean NESTs, as well as other NNEST foreign passport holders have been extensively discussed (Aplaugh, 2016; Grant & Lee, 2009; Oh & Mac Donald, 2012a, 2012b) with respect to the hegemony of the white native speaker model. However, the discrimination against Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs continues to be an ongoing issue in Korean ELT. For example, Korea NNESTs are frequently limited to teaching grammar and test-prep, while white NESTs teach speaking and culture. Korean NESTs may be given conversation and writing classes that are commonly provided to white NESTs, but their classes are perceived differently than if taught by a white native speaker. Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs are also often on a lower pay scale and may have an increased workload compared to white NESTs (Choe, 2008). Non-white NESTs, such as Korean NESTs, may not be perceived as real NESTs and be required to negotiate their native-speaker legitimacy among white NESTs and employers.

Recent Korean governmental policy changes (Lee, 2010; Park, 2010) have further impacted employment opportunities for Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs as the policies have taken affect. In 2013, a revised higher education policy

dictated the number of permanent/tenure-track positions for institutions, forcing contingent Korean NNESTs to question the longevity of their jobs. The government has also recently been restructuring policy to account for current low birth rates and the reduced prospective university student enrollment. With decreasing university enrollment, there is also a reduction in the need for NEST positions at universities, putting Korean NESTs up against white NESTs to compete for employment. This has generated an even more fiercely competitive ELT employment market within higher education.

This article aims to share the experiences of Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs in Korean higher education framed within the literature regarding the white native speaker model within the current higher education context in Korea. The experiences show a variety of challenging and, at times, insulting experiences that highlight the NEST–NNEST dichotomy still prevalent in Korea. The article's discussion aims to raise awareness of the employment struggles of Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs to contribute to the larger discussion within Korea, and globally, with ELT to inform more equitable employment practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Long-Standing Perceptions

White NESTs from inner-circle countries (Kachru, 1992) have long been generally accepted as the ideal linguistic and cultural model (Lippi-Green, 1995; Mahboob, 2005), and Korea is not an exception in having adopted this model. From one perspective, like other countries, Korea struggles to break from the fallacy of the superiority of the white native speaker model. In fact, Korea's hiring practices, similar to many of its neighboring Asian countries, still predominantly operates based on the perception that the white native speaker, even if untrained, is superior to a trained NNEST. Korean employers as well as students and their parents prefer not only NESTs but in particular seek white inner-circle NESTs as English teachers (Chang, 2005), based on the linguistic, social, and cultural attributes of these speakers. It is this sociolinguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) they possess that makes them more desirable that NNESTs.

Therefore, in spite of Korean NNESTs possessing professional qualifications and extensive teaching experience, white NESTs, academically qualified or not, are the preferred English instructor model (Choe, 2005; Park, 2010). In many cases, Korean NNESTs do possess employment leverage with respect to test prep classes and grammar instruction (KICE, 2010). Non-white NESTs (e.g., African-American NESTs and Korean NESTs among others) struggle to legitimize their English language proficiency and teaching experience based on sociocultural perceptions of particular ethnic groups and foreign-born Korean NESTs, who are perceived as not possessing an ideal variety of English and the desired sociocultural capital, even when a monolingual inner-circle English speaker (i.e., opposed to being proficient in a heritage language in addition to English as a first language).

Scholars have explored the role and perception of untrained white NESTs in Korea. In one study, Kim (2006) examined students' expectations of NESTs, while Choe (2008) questioned Korean NNESTs' perception regarding the distinction

between NNESTs and NESTs. Oh and Mac Donald (2012a) examined the dynamic role of race in Korean mothers' preference for English teachers. Oh and Mac Donald (2012a, 2012b) also examined Korean mothers' strategies for their children's English education. Among other research on Korean parents and NEST and NNEST issues, Chang's (2005) investigation on Korean parents' preference in selecting English teachers for their children found that Korean parents favor a white NEST. In addition, it highlighted that parents valued NESTs and NNESTs differently, depending on the child's age and the language skills being taught. This research, as a result, revealed the instructional division prevalent between NESTs and NNESTs in Korea and also revealed that while ethnicity and nationality possess an important role, but the individual's linguistic and cultural attachment are more highly valued.

Recent Policy Changes

The fallacy of the white NEST has presented challenges in securing employment for Korean NESTs and Korean NNESTs for decades. However, the recent changes in policy in Korean higher education are presenting another facet of employment obstacles for Korean NESTs and Korean NNESTs, just as a consequence of social demographic changes. There is no calculated action to limit any particular group's employment opportunities, but the supply and demand changes in the Korean ELT higher education market are still impacted by the already prevalent assumptions regarding white NESTs, non-white NESTs, and NNESTs. This presents further changes for Korean NNESTs seeking to secure non-contingent faculty positions in higher education based on their advanced degrees and teaching experience, as well as Korean NESTs competing for a limited number of short- and long-term native-speaker ELT positions at universities.

As mentioned, the two principal factors currently altering the ELT employment market are the recent policy changes in higher education. The first occurred in 2013, when the revised higher education act dictated the number of permanent tenure-track positions an institution could possess, forcing contingent Korean NNESTs to question the longevity of their jobs (Crook, 2016, Sung, 2012). The next was when the Korean government began to restructure to account for low birth rates and the reduced student enrollment in universities (Lee, 2009; McNeil, 2011). As a consequence, universities cut freshmen intake quotas due to governmental decree and cut contingent faculty positions.

Although this is a natural consequence of a free market based on supply and demand, it presents new challenges for Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs as the employment market has become more competitive. It can be assumed that white NESTs too may face employment challenges as the overall need for ELT positions in higher education has diminished for both NEST and NNEST positions within the division of teaching in Korean universities. It is not very common that a white NEST can fill a Korean NNEST position within a Korean university regarding ELT. The division of labor is fairly structured. However, in some cases for less qualified white NESTs who are unable to secure the longevity of their employment, it is assumed, and often the case, that they are able to secure employment in ELT in another country due to the demand for the white native

speaker or find employment in their home country.

The issue and concern raised here in this discussion is that Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs may in fact find themselves "at home" (i.e., Korea is their perspective long-term country of residence) with advanced degrees, but unable to secure a viable and secure income for themselves and their families based on the local factors discussed. Therefore, the authors aim to use this article's discussion to raise awareness through personal experiences of Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs who possess advanced degrees and teaching experience, obtained through collected data, to offer insight into current ELT employment challenges in Korean higher education.

DISCUSSION

The following discussion is based on the experiences encountered or witnessed by the authors and anecdotal evidence received from Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs. The paper does not attempt to frame the discussion as empirical evidence acquired through formal data collection. The article is a summary of a conference panel discussion that aimed to present the experiences of the panel members to foster an open forum discussion with the audience to raise awareness of the on-going bias for the white NEST. Through this open forum discussion the authors hoped to educate those that were unfamiliar with the issues surrounding the white NEST bias within Korean ELT and to serve as a venue for those who have experienced discrimination to voice their concerns.

Korean NNEST Higher Education Experiences

Pederson (2012) talked about the myth of the native speaker in teaching English as second language (TESL) and English as foreign language (TEFL). Accordingly, he continued to raise the question of native speakerism, which symbolized the ownership of English. No matter how many non-native-speaking English teachers take steps to gain pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge of English-speaking countries and cultures, they are unable to become a "good" English teacher in the eyes of parents and school administrators. Such systematic domination in ELT has undermined Korean NNESTs' ability to teach English in English. Korean NNESTs in higher education know that they are highly qualified, or in some cases over qualified for the positions offered to them, to teach English to Korean students. They also often have experiences of being marginalized from teaching English, despite being qualified, to international students and non-native-speaking students when residing in inner-circle English-speaking countries (e.g., the U.S.) as graduate students. If the qualifications to be competitive for a position were based on advanced degrees and a specified number of successful teaching experiences, many Korean NNESTs would be competitive for advertised positions.

However, the ability to be qualified for a position is in part dictated by native speakerism and the white NEST's ownership of English. Therefore, possessing the required advanced degrees and teaching experience does not grant Korean NNESTs ownership of English, which signifies that they are effectively not a

qualified person to claim the right to represent the native speaker and a standard model of English. "The ownership of English constantly resides in the hands of the native speaker" (Pederson, 2012, p. 3).

Although this discussion focuses on ELT higher education, issues within ELT in Korean public schools are relevant. First, there is continuously lingering apprehension among public school teachers who are teaching English in English. These public school teachers are smothered, and therefore, controlled by native speakerism and a standard model of desirable English. For that reason, they frequently doubt their ability to teach their students in English. In part, they are self-marginalized Korean public school NNESTs as they too have a strong belief in the myth of native speakerism and what an ideal model of Standard English is. They insist that they need to master "Standard English," yet there are so many forms of "Standard English" (Kachru, 1992). Since the 1980s, research on World Englishes has in part aimed to legitimize these varieties, which are usually labeled based on a geographical location (e.g., "Singapore English") and are described in terms of their pronunciation, their grammar, and their vocabulary. This research has contributed to an increased awareness of the legitimacy of English varieties of non-inner-circle varieties (Kachru, 1985). "World Englishes" (Kilickaya, 2009) is becoming a more commonly discussed notion in many parts of the world and regional ELT contexts, but much more research and advocacy is needed (Perianco Marti, 2014). As such, the struggle in Korea is still in its initial stages of policy changes and changes in social perceptions based on the discussion in the literature review. Without the mastery of an ideal Standard English, public school teachers not only believe that they will not have the self-efficacy to effectively teach their students but also perpetuate the myth of the native speaker model. In doing so, their conduct and the larger social context teaches Korean public school students the notion of the inferior role of Korean NNESTs compared to white NESTs. These students then are those who enter Korean universities, bringing with them these myths, and thereby, indirectly further perpetuate the same myths and the marginalization of their Korean NNESTs in higher education because students perceive Korean NNESTs as not having *ownership* of English.

As a NNEST teacher educator both in pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher education, one author has instructed Korean NNESTs that they must have a strong hold on their sense of self-confidence in their pedagogical training and on their ability to effectively teach their students. The problem noted, however, is that as new teachers and often young, they did not yet have the experiences and knowledge that the more experienced NNEST author had. As a result, the newly trained and experienced public teachers still held as fact the myth of native speakerism and an ideal model of Standard English. Unfortunately, their focus was not on how they could work as Korean NNESTs to dissolve the myth of the native speaker among parents and school administrators but on how they could better strive to be a native-like English speaker. At the same time, they would dedicate less concern to the content of teaching English or the lesson design of their classes and more to their English pronunciation and usage in class.

If Korean NNESTs are going to be evaluated first and foremost on their native speakerism and if Korean NNESTs are going to perpetuate the myth of the native speaker, then, in this regard, Korean NNESTs will not be qualified to educate Korean students in higher education or public schools. Korean NNESTs within the

current paradigm do not and will not possess legitimate ownership of English. However, if NNESTs and NESTs work to alter the current influence of the white native-speaker model in Korea, they will come to possess ownership of English within Korean society. In many other diverse English language and ELT contexts, perceptions of NNESTs' varieties of English are beginning to change, even if slowly (Park & Wee, 2009), granting them the ownership of English that they in fact already have. Learning a language and being a speaker of a language transforms individuals, allowing them to find a space and an identity (Norton, 1995) within that language. If something is part of a individuals' identity, they *own* it. It is part of them. If it is intrinsically part of them, it cannot be taken away.

In one sense, the ownership of English becomes a "regime of truth" (Foucault, 1984), which constructs subject positions that affect individuals' non-nativeness in ELT and the way Korean NNESTs think in the discursive practice of the colonized mind within Western norms of teaching English to non-native English-speaking students. In particular, in Korea this translates itself into ELT being centered on a functional approach, rather than the communicative approach. Within such a context, the pedagogical knowledge and sociocultural content knowledge that Korean NNESTs have is undervalued, despite the fact of being a speaker of English is a part of their identity.

Yet despite this, nativeness in ELT is connected to the notion of being an effective EFL educator (J. Kim, 2008, as cited in Pederson, 2012). It is true that the native-speaker–non-native-speaker dichotomy (NS–NNS) has a strong presence in Korean English education (Pederson, 2012). This social phenomenon influences the employability of NNESTs. In general, the norms for qualification with the ELT market are not first seeking academic and professional qualifications, but the often unmentioned ownership of English. As long as the present NN–NNS dichotomy exists, Korean NNESTs will have little competitive employability within the Korean market.

However, the legacy of colonization and the NS–NNS dichotomy can offer NNESTs cultural tools to mediate critical consciousness, challenging the Western logic of positivism and reductionism in EFL. It empowers us through deconstructing the myth of nativeness, the ownership of English, qualification with respect to the logic of standards of English, and reconstructing the power of resistance for the ingrained view of mainstream English education policies. These empowered NNESTs can demystify the preference of so-called native speakers of English. They also place themselves in contestation of the dominant discursive practice and hegemonic discourse in ELT.

Korean NEST Higher Education Experiences

Korean NESTs are often perceived as being of a lower caliber than white NESTs and, therefore, are less competitive in securing employment opportunities that call for a NEST. The criteria of being a NEST as an employment standard is discriminatory in itself, but it is a further level of discrimination, when one is an ELT-trained NEST, for whatever perceived value the individual may possess, but is perceived as less desirable because they are not Caucasian. This raises issues of perceptions of race as being a factor that negates any formal education training

and experience an individual may have. In some cases, Korean NESTs may have pursued a formal teaching degree to make themselves more competitive in a market biased for the white NEST, trained or untrained. Yet after right-minded and respectable efforts to professionalize themselves, the degree may not provide the employment leverage expected.

When employment is secured, Korean NESTs frequently are paid less than the market rate for NESTs. One reason for this is, in part, based on the fact that both employers and students perceive Korean NESTs as non-Westerners regardless of their birthplace, or cultural and educational background based in inner-circle English-speaking countries. As a result, Korean NESTs often report that students lack a genuine desire to learn English with them. Korean students perceive Korean NESTS as not genuinely being a *true* foreigner and seem to want to learn English from them in a Koreanized environment where the Korean language and culture are incorporated into classroom instruction. This form of instruction is understandably psychologically comforting for Korean students as they may lack a desire to step out of their cultural comfort zone when learning English. However, many Korean NESTs are monolingual English speakers or many have only an elementary level of Korean proficiency and are, therefore, unable to incorporate Korean into instruction. Even if a Korean NEST is a heritage speaker of Korean, the sociocultural use of the language would be distinct and the Western classroom culture they possess would be different from what Korean students would expect within a classroom conducted in Korean.

Korean NESTs often sense that they end up having Korean students in their classroom who are taking the English courses as a requirement and are not truly engaged in acquiring the language. A common perception is that when Korean students display a sincere desire to learn English and the culture, they will seek out courses taught by a white NEST and would never "settle" for classes with a non-white NEST (Sung, 2012; Qiang & Wolf, 2007a, 2007b). This perception, regardless of it being a reality or not, impacts Korean NESTs self-image and self-confidence as they believe students do not see them as a legitimate teacher. This, in turn, impacts student–teacher interaction and, therefore, student learning. A supportive relationship between teacher and students that is built on trust and respect enhances the learning process. By having such a relationship with students, teachers offer students the chance to be motivated and feel engaged in the learning process.

However, like with Korean NNESTs, the legacy of the NS–NNS dichotomy can offer Korean NESTs opportunities to mediate critical consciousness challenging the notion of the white native speaker. Korean NESTs too can contribute to deconstructing the myth of nativeness and the ownership of English through their resistance to and engagement with common perceptions held about them as NESTs each day in class as a model of the native speaker and through critical discussion of NS–NNS perceptions with students. Part of teaching is not only transmission of knowledge but also to critically engage students with unsettling moments that provoke them to reflect and question their worldview and their view of themselves within the world (Mezirow, 2000). These empowered Korean NESTs and Korean English language learners can simultaneously break down the dominant discursive practice and hegemonic discourse in ELT locally that can then translate to changes nationally within Korea.

CONCLUSIONS

Even though individuals may be aware of and sympathetic to the experiences of Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs, they may feel that the notion of the white NEST as the preferred ELT teacher is so ingrained in Korean society that there is little one person can do. However, micro-level action informs macro-level policy over time and can inform national preferences and policy in the future.

There are many opportunities for ELT professionals, Korean students, Korean parents, and Korean educators and administrators to vote with their feet in small ways to positively impact Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs that will assist in the effort to reduce the hegemony of the white NEST. For example, ELT professionals, in and outside of Korea, can become involved in NNEST advocacy through ELT associations. Korean students can be encouraged by their NNESTs and NESTs through their daily stance and actions to see them as teachers as individuals based on their unique qualities for teaching, rather than through a lens based on NEST–NNEST assumptions. Korean parents can be encouraged to assess teachers based on their individual professional qualifications and experience, and to select schools and classes for their children based on this through the actions of teachers and administrators that promote the qualities of Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs. Korean educators and administrators can strive to take risks and hire Korean NNESTs and Korean NESTs based on professional qualifications and experience, and advertise to potential students and parents the benefits of doing so.

It is through small micro-level actions at the local level that inform mid-level policy at individual institutes and universities that can result, over time, in adjusting macro-level governmental policy and, therefore, social perception. Despite the perception of the myth of the native speaker model being firmly ingrained in the Korean sociocultural psyche and that there is little that can be done, this article has highlighted that it is, in fact, continuing small actions that are needed by Korean ELT stakeholders to begin to support the initial efforts that have already begun to raise awareness to break down the influence of the white NEST model. The authors encourage individuals to seek opportunities in their own way to raise awareness and deconstruct native speakerism in their daily actions and, as relevant, in their academic work.

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Writing Across Borders: Panel Findings on Collaborative Writing

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With over seventy years of combined experience, this panel offers innovative ideas that incorporate collaborative learning and technology into the teaching of ELT composition courses. The first section offers first-hand evidence that showcases the value of collaboration in the writing process. The next section explains the use of Google's G Suite for Education and Zotero in junior high and pre-sessional college classes in Japan. The concluding section reviews an online collaborative writing project between two universities in Okinawa, Japan. Though limitations are noted in each section, we believe that the ideas presented in this article not only improve the students' skills in written and social communication but also enhance their employability in an increasingly digital world.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the world, the teaching of English as a second/foreign language remains grounded in methods where students sit through hours of explicit instruction. Our contexts, Japan and South Korea, are no exception (e.g., see Choi, 2008; Hadley, 2002; Harumi, 2011; Walker, 2017a). Rather than presenting students with opportunities to express themselves, it is not uncommon for teachers to opt for tepid course books, which oftentimes are replete with obscure grammar and vocabulary items. In theory, such methods and content are intended to help students develop communicative skills. In practice, however, students often learn in solitude, devoting more time to memorization strategies as opposed to interacting with others and applying these skills (purportedly) learned in class.

With over seventy years of combined experience, the ideas presented in this article serve as an alternative. This article suggests helpful ways to incorporate collaborative learning and technology into the teaching of English composition courses. Following this introduction, the first section offers evidence that showcases the inherent value of student-to-student collaboration. The next section explains the use of Google's G Suite for Education and Zotero in junior high and

pre-sessional college classes in Japan. The concluding section reviews an online collaborative writing project between two universities in Okinawa. Taken together, we are united in our belief that the ideas presented in this article not only improve the students' skills in written and social communication but also enhance their employability following graduation.

WALKER: THE CASE FOR COLLABORATION

The context of this report takes place in a beginner-level written composition course at a mid-sized university in Seoul. Designed for students majoring in the university's Department of English Language and Literature, the course aims to introduce students to ways in which different types of sentences form different types of paragraphs. Over the 16-week semester, students composed four 200-word paragraphs: (a) an imperative paragraph (i.e., giving instructions on how to cook a meal with a grammatical focus on countable and non-countable nouns), (b) a descriptive paragraph (i.e., describing one of Korea's many subway stations using adjectives that describe the human senses, such as sight, smell, touch, and hearing), (c) a narrative paragraph (i.e., telling the story of an emotionally significant moment with a grammatical focus on complex sentences and climatic writing), and (d) an opinion paragraph (i.e., student's choice with a focus on structure, cohesion, and logic).

The course syllabus did not include a midterm exam, which allowed for a minimum of five classes for each written assignment. In the first two classes, students analyzed, critiqued, and in some cases, ridiculed sample paragraphs from Folse et al. (2014), the course textbook. Through this collaboration, the teacher spent two classes reviewing compositional structure (e.g., word count limitations, formatting, and cohesion) and key grammar items were identified (e.g., countable and non-countable nouns, adjectives, complex sentences, punctuation). Next, students were briefed on the written task topic and grading rubric. The remaining three classes were devoted to peer-review, in which students proof-read, edited, and offered comments on each other's writing.

Similar to the collaborative teaching methods introduced in Walker (2017b), the class began by arranging students into pairs. At the beginning of each class, students drew a card. Next, each student had to find the other student with the matching card. If a student drew a Red-9, for instance, s/he would have to locate the person who drew the Black-9. Once found, these two students would sit beside each other and be partners for the class. This process of arranging partners randomly was done repeatedly at the beginning of each class over the course of the semester. The intention behind this method was to provide students with opportunities to collaborate and interact with fellow students. In doing so, it was hoped that students could be presented with a rich diversity of insights and perspectives.

I was pleasantly surprised to see the level of student engagement after just a few classes. Though many of the students had not been previously introduced to each other, the majority of the students could be seen looking up vocabulary/grammar items on their smartphones, asking thought-provoking questions, writing comments, and brainstorming ideas. In the twelfth week of the

course, the students were asked to complete an anonymous course evaluation using Google Forms, which included thirteen Likert-scale items that were taken from the university's course evaluation and two open-ended questions: (a) What do you like most about the course? and (b) What are your suggestions for improvement? This data was collected from two separate course sections (N = 23), one in 2016 and the other in 2017, and coded to identify relevant themes.

Constrained by space, I wish to discuss the theme that was easiest to identify in the results of the data. Of 23 responses submitted, 12 students directly commented on the value of collaboration. Here are a few of the responses:

> The most enjoyable part of the class is that we advise each other about [the writing] task. (Student 7, 2016 Fall Section, 15/11/16 14:12)

> Interacting with classmates. Fantastic! Helping each other rather than competitive study. (Student 17, 2017 Fall Section, 08/11/17 15:24)

> I found that people were really active on what they are assigned to do, especially when they were evaluating peer to peer. [This] made me participate in the class with more enthusiasm. (Student 18, 2017 Fall Section, 09/11/17 18:44)

> Peer review. It was interesting to find out how other people write. And I could also learn from the others. (Student 20, 2017 Fall Section, 11/11/17 20:50)

> To evaluate my partner's paragraph. I can learn new expressions, and get appropriate feedback. (Student 21, 2017 Fall Section, 12/11/17 17:26)

From these excerpts, we can see the inherent value in having students collaborate in class. Student 7 and 17 commented on how collaboration in class fostered a positive learning environment. Student 18 remarked on how collaboration in class was a means of being held accountable to others. Students 20 and 21 suggest that collaboration plays a key role in the learning process. Taken together these findings are particularly relevant to contexts like Korea and Japan where researchers (e.g., Choi, 2008; Hadley, 2002; Harumi, 2011; Walker, 2017a) have observed the tendency for teachers to inundate students with hours of lecture and memorization in preparation for standardized exams.

Though these findings are encouraging, it is worth noting much of the collaboration took place in the student's L1, Korean. For teachers who are limited in their ability to communicate in their student's L1 (such as myself), this might be unsettling. However, the students intense focus and body language observed during the collaboration processes in class leads me to believe that much of the students' oral discourse are what scholars (e.g., Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García & Wei, 2014) call *translanguaging*: "the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential" (García, 2009, p. 140). I am of the camp that believes this sort of discourse serves a valuable purpose in the language classroom. A more pressing area of interest is to evaluate the quality and accuracy of their comments during the peer review process. One way in which this can be done is through collaboration online. And to that end, my fellow panel members have some thought-provoking ideas to share.

PATERSON: DIGITAL COLLABORATION IN JUNIOR HIGH AND PRE-SESSIONAL COLLEGE CLASSES

This section examines the approaches taken and results gleaned from an action research collaborative writing project with two different groups of students. The first was a pre-sessional course for Japanese and other Asian students at a Japan branch campus of a U.S. university: Lakeland University Japan (LUJ). The second was a pair of classes from an International Baccalaureate IB Middle Years Program at Tokyo Gakugei University International Secondary School (TGUISS), where the students included Japanese returnees and mixed heritage children. In both cases, students were taught how to use Google Docs and Google's G Suite for Education. Freely available and easy to access, G Suite for Education comes with multiple applications that allow users to comment, revise, and edit documents online.

In addition, students were taught how to use Zotero, a reference management tool that allows users to collect, organize, cite, and share research sources. Although there are many online referencing tools available, an increasing number of researchers and teachers have endorsed Zotero (see Clements & Guertin, 2016; Duong, 2010; Lisbon, 2014; Winslow, Skripsky, & Kelly, 2016). In addition to its user-friendly interface, Zotero works with a range of word processors and will run on Apple, Linux, Chromebooks, and Windows computers. Zotero has a notetaking and note sharing function for items and collections, which can all be synced via the cloud for usage on multiple devices and by multiple users. For teachers who work with students with varied linguistic backgrounds, Zotero comes with multi-lingual support documentation (Zotero Documentation, n.d.). This, along with the other benefits mentioned above, led me to choose Zotero over the other available referencing applications.

Studies have shown Japan to be one of the most risk-averse societies (Aspinall, 2010; Peltokorpi, Allen, & Froese, 2015), which has had an effect on the speed of change in adopting technology. Regarding use of information communication technologies (ICT), Japan has scored poorly amongst OECD nations (OECD, 2016), and was situated in the lower extreme of ICT usage when compared with schools internationally according to the 2015 PISA Report (OECD, 2015). Therefore, there is an overarching need to examine the impact of low ICT usage in the educational sector in general and the state school system in particular. Based on these findings, it was not surprising to see that all my students had little or no previous exposure to any kind of writing applications before taking my class, with the exception of basic skills in Microsoft Word.

Some critical research has also been done on how younger students use applications (Gardner & Davis, 2014). This is seen as an important aspect of non-native English speakers' use of digital communications (Meurant, 2010). However, Igari (2014) has commented on Japan lagging behind in its ICT usage in general, a comment that is borne out by other sources when in-school ICT usage is examined (OECD, 2015). Additionally, the importance of digital literacy and ICT usage in the modern classroom has attracted attention elsewhere (Jones & Hafner, 2012; Knobel & Lankshear, 2007; Kress, 2003; Lankshear & Knobel, 2008), although this has not lead to any widespread ICT implementation in Japan

(OECD, 2016). My classes aimed to address this lack of digital literacy and promote ICT usage by facilitating collaboration in the students' written assignments.

Students were given a Google Document template for academic writing, containing five sections: an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Students were given a deadline for preparing a draft for each section and then engaged in peer review where they edited, proofread, and commented on each other's work. These groups were set up thematically so that students writing on similar topics could share resources and ideas via Zotero and their Google Drive accounts. Theoretically, this draws upon Lave and Wenger's (1991) widely cited communities of practice, which has evolved into online communities of practice (see Lewis & Allan, 2004).

Reactions to this writing process (and to the introduction of Zotero and G Suite for Education) in an end-of-course questionnaire at LUJ were overwhelmingly positive with many students asking why no one had ever shown them this way of writing before. At the end of my TGUISS courses, students were asked to write a reflective blog post on what they had learned. These questionnaire responses and blog posts not only showcase development in their writing but also highlight the benefits of collaborative learning. The word limits of this short entry preclude a deeper examination of this. In general, however, I would whole-heartedly recommend the ideas mentioned in this section to other teachers looking to introduce their students to the benefits of online collaborative writing.

MACLEAN AND FEWELL: A COLLABORATIVE WRITING PROJECT BETWEEN TWO UNIVERSITIES

This section describes a collaborative writing project involving students from two public universities in Okinawa, Japan. After learning how to use the G Suite for Education (GSE; see Google for Education, 2014) and other information communication technologies (ICT), students completed an online writing collaborative project. Since the tourism industry is a primary source of employment in this prefecture, we asked our students to write a travel guide describing one of Okinawa's tourist attractions/destinations. After writing the travel guide, students were asked to give a Google Slides presentation. Students intensively used the GSE to complete this assignment, including Google Drive, Docs, Sheets, and Slides. After completing the projects, students from both universities were asked to complete a follow-up questionnaire.

Aim, Participants, and Procedure

This study aimed to introduce students to ICT, promote collaborative learning, and help students improve their writing. The participants for this project involved EFL students from compulsory entry-level university English courses taught at two public universities in Okinawa. Altogether, the average age of the students was 18.6 years old; there were 39 (39%) males and 42 females (61%). The procedure is described in five steps.

Step 1: Students were arranged into groups of four. First, they were randomly divided into groups of two within their class, and then they were paired with two students from the other university. Their contact information was entered onto a Google Sheet. Next, students were required to send a greeting email to their partners at the other university.

Step 2: Students communicated with each other and chose a topic relevant to tourism in Okinawa. Topics were chosen either geographically (e.g., Miyako-jima Beach) or thematically (e.g. Okinawan cuisine such as *champuru*, a stir fry with local ingredients). Once they decided on a topic, they entered the information into the Google Sheet mentioned in Step 1.

Step 3: Students' names were color coded on the Google Sheet, and an additional column was added with a hyperlink to a shared Google Document. They were told to write a 200-250-word paragraph about some aspect of their chosen topic. They were encouraged to proofread and comment on their partners' writing.

Step 4: Once the writing was complete, another column was added to the Google Sheet with a hyperlink to a common Google Slides presentation. In total, each group's presentation had an introduction slide, a conclusion slide, and eight slides (i.e., two from each student). During this time, we looked carefully at both the quality and quantity of the students' online collaboration.

Step 5: Students at each university presented their group's presentation, including the information from their partners at the other university.

Findings

In comparison to individual writing assignments, we observed that this collaborative writing method revealed noticeable improvements in the students' content, organization, grammar, and mechanics. As teachers, we were impressed with the students' level of interest and were entertained by some of the topics, which included expressions from the local dialect, Okinawan TV personalities, and differences between Okinawa and the mainland. As an exploratory project, however, there is room for improvement. A small minority of the students did not complete their assignments. We suspect this could be attributed to the social dynamics of the group. For some groups, cultural differences in group behavior (e.g., see Peak, 1991), behavioral norms, personality types, and perhaps limited English proficiency are factors that may have led to limited online correspondence as shown in Figure 1.

Although most of the groups were able to complete their projects, the overwhelming majority of the students communicated less than 4-5 times. At this stage, we are unclear on the nature and length of the conversations that took place over the phone or in person. In general, we suspect that there is a positive relationship between the grade they received on their presentation and the number of times they collaborated. The students who received high scores on their presentations seemed to know more about their fellow group members and looked quite comfortable during their presentations.
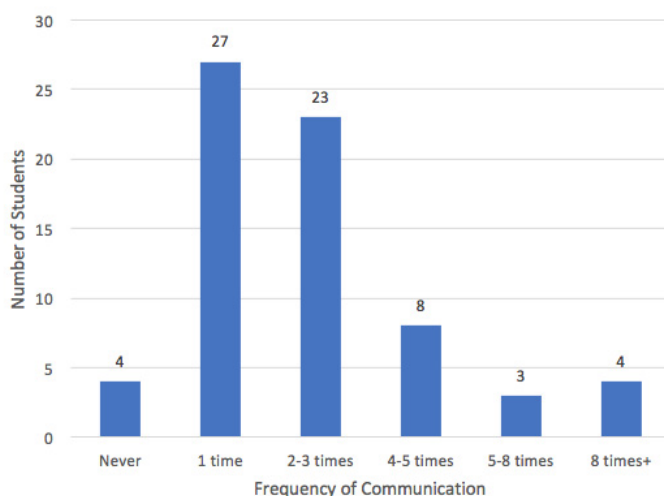
FIGURE 1. Frequency of Communication Between Writing Partners.

A questionnaire was administered to participants at the end of the project from which we were able to derive several useful insights (see Table 1). According to a Likert scale, where 1 indicated strong disagreement and 5 indicated strong agreement, students responded to a series of statements about their experiences during the project. Students liked working in groups (Item 1, M = 4.46) as opposed to working individually (Item 2, M = 2.70). They indicated mild agreement that the project was difficult (Item 3, M = 3.20), although not excessively so.

TABLE 1. Student Responses About the Writing Project

Statement	Descriptive Statistics		
	Count	Mean	SD
1. I liked working in groups	69	4.46	0.81
2. I prefer working individually	69	2.70	1.05
3. This project was difficult	69	3.20	0.95
4. This project helped me to learn English	69	4.04	0.67
5. Skills learned for this project will help me in the future	69	4.36	0.64
6. I want to do this again	69	3.68	0.80

Note. SD = Standard deviation

Regarding educational benefits derived from the project, students agreed that it helped them to learn English (Item 4, M = 4.04), and they indicated a strong sense that the skills they learned from this project will be helpful in their futures (Item 5, M = 4.36). There was some support for the idea of repeating a similar project in the future (Item 6, M = 3.68); however, this was not as strong as we had hoped. Nevertheless, the standard deviation for this item indicated that there was very little strong disagreement with this proposition.

Summary

Analysis of the data revealed that this study made significant strides in not only raising awareness of ICT and collaborative learning but also in helping students improve their writing. Results from the questionnaire coupled with our observations suggest that this collaborative writing project was a success. Considering the limited amount of time available for this project (approximately six classes), we believe these findings are especially encouraging. We are motivated to continue this project and plan to address the limitations mentioned above by providing more explicit instruction on how to write emails, proofread, and leave comments online. On a broader level, we hope that the content and pedagogic methods used in this class will help students develop practical and social skills that will help them find employment following graduation.

CONCLUSIONS

To begin this article, we mentioned that the teaching of English as a second/foreign language remains grounded in methods where students sit through hours of explicit instruction, often in preparation for standardized exams. We find that such methods do not adequately allow students to develop skills in written communication. To address this inefficiency, the innovative ideas presented in this article draw together the benefits of collaboration and technology in teaching composition courses. Drawing from student comments received on course evaluations, the first section identified the inherent value of collaboration. The following section offered insightful suggestions on how students can collaborate using Google's G Suite for Education and Zotero, an online reference management application. The last section reported on the success of a collaborative writing project between two universities in Okinawa. Although more research is needed in understanding the nature and extent to which students collaborate through other means (e.g., in person, in the cloud, and over the phone) as well as ways in which teachers can evaluate student participation, we remain united in our belief that the ideas presented in this article not only help students develop skills in written and social communication but also that they enhance their employability following graduation.

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Conference Overview

Presentations of

The 25th Korea TESOL International Conference − PAC 2017

Why Are We Here? Analog Learning in the Digital Era

October 21–22, 2017, Seoul, Korea

The 2017 Korea TESOL International Conference Committee gratefully recognizes the following individuals for presenting research papers, conducting workshop sessions, and leading discussions at the 25th Korea TESOL International Conference – PAC 2017.

Invited Sessions

Andy Curtis (Plenary)	Confessions of an Online Instructor: Returning to the Classroom
Andy Curtis	Using Film in Class to Connect Languages and Cultures
Andy Curtis	Tea with the Speaker
Nicky Hockly (Plenary)	Is the Future Tense?
Nicky Hockly	Going Mobile
Nicky Hockly	Tea with the Speaker
Marti Anderson	Why Are We Here? Critical Thinking, Teaching, and the Digital Era
Marti Anderson	Developing Critical Thinking Skills in Teachers and Students
Kalyan Chattopadhyay	Analogue Teacher Training for the Digital Teacher: What the Teachers Say and Do
Mark Dressman	Informal Language Acquisition and Classroom Teaching: Complementary, Not Competitive, Approaches
Mark Dressman (with Ju Seong Lee)	New Technologies (and New Uses for Old Technologies) of English Education
Kathleen Kampa	No-Tech, Low-Tech, Active Teaching
Kathleen Kampa	Creating a Classroom of Success Through Music and Movement
Kathleen Kampa	Tea with the Speaker
Chan Kyoo Min	A Future Paradigm of English Education in Korea
Ted O'Neill	How We Value, Choose, and Use Technology in Education

Ted O'Neill	Importing Content and Language Integrated Learning to Japan
Glenda Rose	Analog or Digital? Making an Informed Decision
Glenda Rose	Why Even Online Students Still Need Human Teachers
Glenda Rose	Tea with the Speaker
Helen Slatyer	Advances in Listening Research and the Implications for the Classroom
Bodo Winter	The Sweet Stink of Language: The Sensory Structure of the English Lexicon
Bodo Winter	A Manifesto for a Reproducible Open Linguistics

Panel Discussions

Peadar Callaghan	Looking Back, Moving Forward: KOTESOL at 25
Robert J. Dickey	
Carl Dusthimer	
Lindsay Herron	
Myung-Jai Kang	
Oryang Kwon	
Joo-kyung Park	
Tory Thorkelson	
Andy Curtis	The Future of Face-to-Face Conferences in the Digital Era
Nicky Hockly	
Sean O'Connor	
Ted O'Neill	
Glenda Rose	
So Yeon Kim	Experience and Employment Opportunities in the Korean ELT Market
Hyun-Myoung Lee	
Kara Mac Donald	
Daniel Bailey	The Rigors of Research: Success in Graduate School and Beyond
Jamin E. Bassette	
Joanne McCuaig	
Eric Reynolds	
Phillip Schrank	

Norman Fewell	Writing Through the Ages / Writing Across Borders
George Robert MacLean	
Rab Paterson	
Colin Walker	

Assessment / Testing

Andrew Atkins	Students Speak Out About Language Education in Asia
Gunther Breaux	The World Has Changed: Stop Grading Speaking with Grammar Mistakes
Kevin Browne	How Test Raters' Accent Familiarities Are Affecting TOEFL Pronunciation Scores
Michael Free	Assessment Dialogue: Let's Talk about Grading Attendance and Participation
Keith Mannix	CEFR: The Greatest Language Teaching Tool You Probably Aren't Using
Paul Anthony Marshall	Teacher Autonomy and Assessment in Japanese University EFL Programs
Lutfi Mauludin	Dynamic Assessment to Improve Students' Skill in Writing Genre Text
Elizabeth May	Assessment Dialogue: Let's Talk about Grading Attendance and Participation
Victoria Muehleisen	Students Speak Out about Language Education in Asia
Keunyoung Pak	Students Speak Out about Language Education in Asia

Classroom Management

Christopher Haswell	International Teaching Assistants: At the Intersection of Policy and Experience
Douglas Margolis	Increasing Instructional Effectiveness Through Mindset and Goal Orientation Training
Cheryl Woelk	4 Key Questions for Successful Classroom Management
Jocelyn Wright	Critical Incidents, Redesign, and Restoration of Teacher Agency
Changyou Zhang	Critical Incidents, Redesign, and Restoration of Teacher Agency

Content-Based Instruction

Calum Adamson	Student Expectations from Active-Learning Events
Mark Rebuck	What Makes You Japanese (or Korean)? Activities Reflecting on Identity
Lisa Theisen	Scaffolding L1 Novels for the L2 Classroom

Developing Learner Creativity

Langgeng Budianto	Using Project-Based Learning to Develop ESP Students' Writing Skill
Carl Dusthimer	Creativity: It's Not Magic. It's Habits
Scott Henderson	Using Internet Memes to Teach English
Hyunju Kim	Vocabulary Instruction Through Typotionary
Christopher Miller	Strategic Considerations for Maximizing Metaphors in the Classroom
Nita Sari Narulita Dewi	Role of Autonomy on Student's Creativity in Writing Short Story
Jessamine Price	Creativity Without Tears: Process Writing to Overcome Student Resistance
Robin Reid	Writing for Theatre and Its Effects on Language Output
Fera Sulastri	Role of Autonomy on Student's Creativity in Writing Short Story
Suparmi Suparmi	Using Project-Based Learning to Develop ESP Students' Writing Skill

ELT and Cross-cultural / Intercultural Communication

F. Alicia Aukema	The Impact of Cultural Lenses Within the EFL Classroom
Krista Brusky	Motivation, Music, and Culture in the Korean Elementary EFL Classroom
Stephenie Busbus	Motivation and Demotivation of EFL Learners in an Inclusive Setting
Kara Mac Donald	English-Medium Instruction Policy in Korean Universities: Challenges and Progress
Anisatul Maghfiroh	Intercultural Competence and CLT in Teaching Exposition Text
David Ostman	Intercultural Competence: Development Through Empathic Literature
David Rear	Asian Students and Critical Thinking: Examining the Evidence
Neil Talbert	Emergent Culture in a Language Exchange Community

English for Specific or Academic Purposes

Nick Clements	Approaches to Teaching Film for EAP: Film, Text, and Intertextuality

Maria Lisak	A Pedagogy of Care and New Chances
Seonmin Park	Writing Activities for EAP Learners
Edward Sarich	Raising Communicative English Proficiency Through Participation in Collaborative Workshops
Nicholas Shaw	Approaches to Teaching Film for EAP: Film, Text, and Intertextuality

Grammar

| Carl Eldridge | English Grammar: Clear, Simple and Logical |
| Kent Lee | A "the" or the "a"? L2 Learner Problems and Patterns |

Identity (Learner or Teacher)

Adam Agostinelli	The Second Language Identity of EFL Students in Foreign Contexts
Jovan Cavor	L2-Mediated Identities: Korean Study Abroad English Learners in New Zealand
Stewart Gray	Motivation and Identity: Current Perspectives
Monica Harendita	Examining Pre-service Teachers' Identity Through Metaphors on Digital Media
Sean Mahoney	Japan's Primary School English: "Successful Classes" for Non-native Speaking Assistants

Learning Preferences / Styles

Paneeta Nitayaphorn	Technology Integration in Language Classrooms: Hit or Miss?
H. Douglas Sewell	Helping Korean Students Adapt to Unfamiliar Learning Approaches and Expectations
Josh Tanaka	How to Leverage the Internet to Boost Your Career
Simon Thollar	Does Being "Globally-Minded" Facilitate English Learning in University Students?

Listening

Morteza Bagheri	Classroom Practices Characterize Listening in Private English Institutes in Iran
Naheen Madarbakus	Stop Press! Using BNE in Academic Listening
Kerry Pusey	Repurposing Jigsaw Activities for the Listening Classroom

Materials and Course Design

Andrew Bailey	Teaching Pronunciation: Beyond Listen and Repeat
Krista Brusky	Dynamic Applications of Music in the Elementary EFL Classroom
Peadar Callaghan	Designing Better Classroom Activities Through a Gamified Approach
Matthew Coomber	Utilizing Learner Interactions to Strengthen Vertical Integration Within a Curriculum
Wayne Finley	Teatime! Immersing Students in Realistic Speaking Environments
Michael Free	Using Thinking Routines with Visual Prompts
Roger Fusselman	Time Management and Organization Skills for English Teachers
Andrew Gallacher	Varying Approaches Within an Active Learning Environment
Andrew Griffiths	Ten Ways to Produce Amazing Classroom Board Work
Peter Harrold	Dabbling in Dogme: Teaching an English Conversation Class Textbook Free
John Jackson	Using Cultural Familiar Texts Across Levels to Increase Language Learning
Justin Morales	How to Create and Use a Wiki for Your English Class
Skyler Schiavone	Arts and Discourse in the Language Classroom
Marshall Shank	Brainy Class: Better Language Learning Through Brain Engaging Activities
Robert Sheridan	Using Cultural Familiar Texts Across Levels to Increase Language Learning
Richmond Stroupe	Fostering Learners' 21st Century Skills Through Language Instruction Every Day
Patrick Travers	A Flipped Classroom Curriculum for University English Programs
Steve Urick	Using Data from Surveys to Redesign an Academic Writing Course
Julian Warmington	Empathy, Creativity, and Critical Thinking: Skills for Generation Climate Challenge

Other Issues

Peadar Callaghan	From Korea to Saudi
David Johnson	Demotivators of High- and Low-Proficiency EFL Students

Mitzi Kaufman	KOTESOL International Conference Orientation Session
Jia Wei Lim	Increasing Reflective Critical Thinking Skills
Eli Miller	Enhancing Interaction with Very Young Learners Through Storytelling
Heidi Nam	KOTESOL International Conference Orientation Session
Yuuki Ogawa	Demotivators of High- and Low-Proficiency EFL Students
Quy Pham	Teacher! We Hate Playing Games.
H. Douglas Sewell	Moving On: Perspectives on Transitioning Beyond Korea
Tory Thorkelson	KOTESOL International Conference Orientation Session

Pragmatics

Bryan Aguiar	Conquering Conversation with Notebooks and Socratic Debate
John Campbell-Larsen	You Went Where? Teaching Strategic Skills and Repair
Wei-teh Lee	An Analysis of Relationships between Taiwanese Students' Awareness and Strategies

Professional Development

Danielle Bergez	Overcoming Stereotypes in Online ESL/EFL Teacher Education
Mayumi Kashiwa	Teacher Cognition of Language Learning Environments Beyond the Classroom
Justin McKibben	Making Your First Professional Presentation (@KOTESOL): Start to Finish
Eric Reynolds	Making Your First Professional Presentation (@KOTESOL): Start to Finish
Matt Wilson	Overcoming Stereotypes in Online ESL/EFL Teacher Education

Reading / Literacy

Amy Ahn	Getting the Most Out of Your Reading Resources
Sylwia Ejmont	Teaching Media Literacy in the EAP Context
Jennifer Groat	Phonics in Elementary Public School: More Than Just ABC
Holly Harper	Applying Critical Multicultural Methods in a "Homogeneous" Learning Community

Mary Hillis	Seeing the Story in a Different Way
Seonmin Huh	Critical Reading Tips: Insights from *I am Malala*
Sunette Labuschagne	Make Uninteresting Textbook Sentences More Fun to Learn
Sunette Labuschagne	Want Them to Read? Teach Them Phonics!
Maggie Lau	Teaching Media Literacy in the EAP Context
Connie Park	Getting the Most Out of Your Reading Resources
Maria Ping	Audio-Assisted Versus Text-Only Extensive Reading Materials: Potentials and Students' Preferences
Ni Kadek Heny Sayukti	Students' Perceptions on Criteria for Bilingual Children's Storybooks
Bob Schoenfeld	Reading Fluency: Three Practical Activities
Jason Stayanchi	Seeing the Story in a Different Way
Kay Sung	Getting the Most Out of Your Reading Resources
Syamdianita Syamdianita	Audio-Assisted Versus Text-Only Extensive Reading Materials: Potentials and Students' Preferences

Reflective Teaching Practice

Mariana Acosta Guimaraes	Blended Learning: A Case Study in Buenos Aires, Argentina
Swi-Ee Cheah	Teaching in the Digital Era: Conversion or Convergence
Keenan Fagan	Dialogue for Progressive Knowledge Building in Practicum Post-lesson Reflections
Jessica Ives	Exploring Teacher Beliefs and Classroom Practices Through Reflective Practice
Paula Trejo	Blended Learning: A Case Study in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Second Language Acquisition

Daniel Corks	Popular Language Learning Beliefs vs. SLA Research
Hyunju Kim	Syntactic Complexity in College-Level EFL Writing
Andrew Lasher	Syntactic Complexity in College-Level EFL Writing
Amanda Maitland	Spaced Learning: A Time to Remember.
Kaya Munakata	Key to Becoming Successfully Bilingual: Japanese-Iranian Children's Case
Shinji Munakata	Key to Becoming Successfully Bilingual: Japanese-Iranian Children's Case

Kaori Takeuchi	The Process of Self-Regulated Learning in SLA
Chutatip Yumitani	Human Intelligence vs. Artificial Intelligence: A Case of SLA
Yukihiro Yumitani	Human Intelligence vs. Artificial Intelligence: A Case of SLA

Sociolinguistics / Language Policy / World Englishes

Hyera Byean	Cultural Production of *Yeongpoja* in a Korean Middle School
Greg Goodmacher	Culture, Communication, and Inter-Asian Understanding
Aaron Hahn	Representations of Teachers' Beliefs, Attitudes, and Ideologies in Lesson Plans
Aaron Hahn	An Accurate Representation of a Globally Modeled English Language
Christopher Haswell	An Accurate Representation of a Globally Modeled English Language
Dan Mortali	America's Soft Power and English Enrollment Trends in Japan
Alaric Naude	Ghost in the Shell: Discussing the Future of Language Teaching
Binh Nguyen	Integrating World Englishes into EFL Pedagogy in Higher Education Institutions
Thi Thanh Phuong Nguyen	Integrating World Englishes into EFL Pedagogy in Higher Education Institutions
Van Khanh Nguyen	Integrating World Englishes into EFL Pedagogy in Higher Education Institutions
Jack Ryan	America's Soft Power and English Enrollment Trends in Japan
Craig Smith	Culture, Communication, and Inter-Asian Understanding
Clay Williams	Second Language Phonology: Are Constraints Psychological or Biological?

Speaking / Conversation / Pronunciation

John Campbell-Larsen	Small Talk Is Big Talk: Teaching Phatic Communication
Daniel Craig	Videoconferenced General English Course: Design Decisions and Outcomes
Marcel Daniels	Embracing Non-native Accent Models Through Authentic Mixed Media Samples

Technology-Enhanced Instruction

Rob Dickey	Is Teachers' Technology Over-Rated?
Gilbert Dizon	Exploring the Use of Intelligent Personal Assistants with EFL Learners
Norman Fewell	Collaborative L2 Writing and Communication: An Intercollegiate Group-Based Project
Jamey Heit	Raising the Low Stakes: Using Technology to Increase Writing Practice
Todd Jobbitt	Raising the Low Stakes: Using Technology to Increase Writing Practice
Sarinya Khattiya	The Impact of Multimodal Learning Environments on English Language Learning
Matyana Khim	Revitalizing ELT Face-to-Face Classrooms: Becoming Digital Teachers
Marie Kjeldgaard	Digital Literacy for Modern Students
Bruce Lander	Australian-Japanese Multimodal e-Books for Language and Cultural Exchange
Anisatul Maghfiroh	Digital Projects: Implementing Multimodal Teaching in the Language Classroom
Vanneath Meav	Revitalizing ELT Face-to-Face Classrooms: Becoming Digital Teachers
Tetsuaki Miyoshi	Australian-Japanese Multimodal e-Books for Language and Cultural Exchange
Leonie Overbeek	How Digital Feedback Makes a Difference in Writing Class
Rab Paterson	T.E.A.C.H.Technology Education Academia Combined Here
Bilal Qureshi	Let's Speak Digitally: A Pathway into the Future
Bilal Qureshi	How Digital Feedback Makes a Difference in Writing Class
Santiana Santiana	Challenges and Practice of Using Toondoo in English Young Learners Classroom
Michael Tom	Utilizing Video-Based Asynchronous Computer-Mediated Communication for EAP Speaking Practice

Vocabulary

Elizabeth Arias	Academic Vocabulary Protocol for Long-Term Retention
Robert Fuchs	False Friends in Advanced Learner English: Implications for L2 Pedagogy
Cassandra Leoni	Switching Roles: Changing Learners into Leaders
Maria Lisak	Dialoguing on Transformative Literacies: Global Digital Citizenship and Cosmopolitanism

Amanda Maitland	The Power in the Chunk! or The Company Words Keep
Ramon Mislang	Switching Roles: Changing Learners into Leaders
Deborah Moon	Digital Flashcard Study Methods: Teacher-Led Versus Independent Study
Victor Reeser	Digital Flashcard Study Methods: Teacher-Led Versus Independent Study
James Rush	Dialoguing on Transformative Literacies: Global Digital Citizenship and Cosmopolitanism

Writing

Yutaka Fujieda	Examining Emotionality of Writing in English: Using TAE Method
Roger Fusselman	The How and Why of Teaching Storytelling Structure
Todd Jobbitt	Introducing Peer Review Circles
Noriko Kurihara	Does Peer Reviewing Benefit Writing Skills Development?
Shaun Manning	Introducing Peer Review Circles
Shaun Manning	Successfully Integrating Automated Writing Feedback into the EFL Writing Class
Tran-Thanh Vu	Preparing Students for Writing: The Combined Approach

"101" Presentations

J. R. Abernethy	What Does It Mean to Teach Speaking?
Bryan Betz	A Michelin Guide to Giving Feedback on Speaking
Michael Gentner	Using Prior Knowledge in the Design of Task-Based Lessons
Leonie Overbeek	The Twins' Story: Developing Relevant Reading Material
Alexis Pusina	Classroom Management and Communicating Effectively with Disengaged Students
Victor Reeser	How to Correct Mistakes Correctly
Jack Ryan	Effectively Utilizing Authentic Materials in the EFL Classroom
Aaron Snowberger	Google Classroom 101
Sarah Warfield	Formative Assessment Practices for Large EFL Classes

Poster Presentations

Atsushi Asai	Word Difficulty Properties Arise from Lexical Data and Votes
Atsushi Asai	Can Amount of Learning Time Influence Learners' Autonomous Learning?
Hannah Bradbury	Music and Lyrics: Inspiring Teaching Through Song
Setyo Prasiyanto Cahyono	Using Comic Strips to Promote Speaking for Low-Level Learners
Billunta Carter	Using Psychology to Build Academic English
Kip Cates	An Introduction to the Asian Youth Forum (AYF)
Peter Edwards	Professional Development in the Developing World
Joe Garner	Student-Teacher Conferences: An Aid to Critical Syllabus Design?
Reginald Gentry	Speaking Fluency Development in Japanese University Students
Boutkhil Guemide	Integrating Tablets in EFL: Improving Students' Learning in Underserved Areas
Michael Heinz	Cloze Testing to Improve Preposition Usage
David Johnson	Improving Classroom Management with Flipped Instruction
Seung-an Jung	Shall We Dance with English?
Noriko Kurihara	An Introduction to the Asian Youth Forum (AYF)
Mayuko Matsuoka	Word Difficulty Properties Arise from Lexical Data and Votes
Mayuko Matsuoka	Can Amount of Learning Time Influence Learners' Autonomous Learning?
Setyo Prasiyono Nugroho	Using Comic Strips to Promote Speaking for Low-Level Learners
Erin Okamoto	Virtues of the "Analog" Experience in Reflective Practice
Ryan Pain	Improving Classroom Management with Flipped Instruction
Daniel Paller	Language-in-Education Policy in Japan: Language Teacher Cognition and Ministry-Approved Textbooks
Thuy Pham	Facilitation, a Peer-Teaching Activity Killing Two Birds with a Stone
Ksan Rubadaeau	Avoiding Stereotypical Images and Representations in ELT Materials
Ayu Ida Savitri	Using Comic Strips to Promote Speaking for Low-Level Learners

Peter Wanner	An Introduction to the Asian Youth Forum (AYF)
Kevin Watson	Growth-Based Internal Action Frameworks: Balancing Technology with Effective Pedagogy

Promotional Sessions

Ian Bosiak	Comics to the Rescue: Promoting Literacy While Motivating Students
Ian Bosiak	Creating Dynamic Lessons and Promoting Literacy with Graded Readers
Evan Frendo	Evolving Needs in University English for Specific Purposes
Julie Hulme	21st Century Skills in the EFL Classroom
Jessie Im	Integrating Digital Feedback Tools to Support Excellence in English Writing
Stephanie Lee	TED Talks in English Language Teaching: Powerful Ideas and Powerful Communication
Casey Malarcher	World History Readers
Roxanne Miller	Roxifyonline.com: An Independent Learning Linked Automated Essay Feedback System
George A. Miller	Roxifyonline.com: An Independent Learning Linked Automated Essay Feedback System
Helen Slatyer	Study and Research Pathways for Applied Linguistics & Translating and Interpreting
Hyunwoo Sun	Can You Really Learn a Language Online?
Bodo Winter	The University of Birmingham: MA TESOL / MA Applied Linguistics

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