KOTESOL Proceedings 2019

Advancing ELT: Blending Disciplines, Approaches, and Technologies

Proceedings of the
27th Korea TESOL International Conference
Seoul, Korea, October 12—13, 2019

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

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Foreword

Advancing ELT: Blending Disciplines, Approaches, and Technologies was the theme of the 27th Annual Korea TESOL International Conference, held at Sookmyung Women's University in central Seoul. During the two-day conference, October 12–13, a total of 200 presentations were given, including 20 poster sessions and seven panel discussions. Approximately 800 attendees from 23 countries participated in the event. Notable plenary sessions were delivered by Dr. Rod Ellis and Dr. Andrew D. Cohen, and an additional nine featured sessions addressed the conference's theme.

The conference theme encapsulates the increasing recognition of the widely multifaceted nature of ELT. Applied linguistics is a diverse field in its own right, but no longer can some of the challenges faced by teachers in local contexts be met by scholarship that limits itself to the field of applied linguistics. More and more, we are learning that the best ways to engage students in English language learning are informed also by fields outside of the traditional domains of applied linguistics, for example, culture, identity, education, and communication. We are also entering a post-post-methods era in English language teaching that is moving away from any single "best method" for a given ELT situation and away from viewing Western-centric top-down theories and approaches as providing the best guidance to teaching EFL in a global context.

The papers contributed by our invited speakers capture this multifaceted nature of ELT. Rod Ellis speaks on developing tests of L2 learners' pragmatic knowledge. Andrew Cohen talks about fine-tuning word meanings through online and mobile app technologies. Thomas Farrell discusses becoming expert TESOL teachers by reaching for "Who I am is how I teach!" Kara Mac Donald gives examples of how to draw on skillsets outside of ELT to inform instructional practice, and Stephen Ryan takes a person-centered approach to language teaching. The additional 25 papers provided by conference presenters comprise 13 research reports, two action research reports, four workshop reports, and six reports on teaching techniques and classroom activities.

It is with great pleasure that we offer the conference papers appearing in this volume of *KOTESOL Proceedings 2019*. We are grateful to all our contributors who have written summaries of their presentations to be compiled in this volume. The variety in topics herein is certain to include reports of interest to ELT practitioners, researchers, and administrators. We hope that you enjoy reading these papers, and moreover, that you find much that resonates with you in your ELT context.

David Shaffer & Jake Kimball
Editors

KOTESOL Proceedings 2019

Advancing ELT: Blending Disciplines, Approaches, and Technologies

Proceedings of the 27th Korea TESOL International Conference

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Invited Speaker Papers

Developing Tests of L2 Learners' Pragmatic Knowledge

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Developing measures of implicit and explicit second language (L2) knowledge is important because of the need to understand the effect that instruction has on knowledge of an L2. To date, research has focused on the assessment of implicit and explicit grammatical knowledge. In this paper, I first review the key theoretical perspectives relating to the implicit–explicit distinction and then describe a battery of novel tests designed to distinguish implicit and explicit pragmatic knowledge. These tests differ in terms of the extent to which they require controlled or more automatic processing of language and awareness of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic norms. They also differ in terms of whether they involve comprehension or production, and whether they focus on isolated utterances or continuous text.

Theoretical Perspectives

Interest in the relevance of the implicit–explicit distinction for L2 learning began almost from the inception of SLA as an identifiable field of enquiry in the 1970s. It has continued apace since and now constitutes an identifiable area of enquiry in SLA. Increasingly SLA researchers have focused on how to measure implicit and explicit knowledge as without valid measurements it is not possible to investigate what and how learners learn an L2.

In a series of articles, N. Ellis (1994, 1996, 2002, 2005) presents his account of how L2 learning takes place and the roles of implicit and explicit knowledge. Below is our summary of the main points of his position:

1. Humans are capable of both implicit and explicit learning.
2. Working memory functions differently in these two types of learning: Implicit learning involves the unconscious identification of connections between linguistic forms (i.e., pattern detection), and explicit learning involves conscious "noticing," leading to the storage of declarative rules.
3. Implicit, associative learning is primary, and the main route to a high level of proficiency in a language. Conscious attention to linguistic forms in the input helps to implant linguistic forms in memory, but subsequently non-conscious statistical learning processes take over. The knowledge obtained through implicit learning is available for rapid, online use.
4. Explicit learning is secondary. It arises in two ways: through taught pedagogical rules and through conscious analysis of implicit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is available for output, but it requires conscious

attention and thus is not readily accessible for online use (i.e., it requires controlled processing). However, practice in the application of declarative rules can enhance accessibility.

5. Explicit knowledge is limited in another way: “Only simple and salient features are governable by explicit online control” (N. Ellis, 1994, pp. 16).
6. Implicit and explicit memories are interconnected. In particular, declarative rules can have top-down influences on perception, making features in the input salient and thereby helping to induce noticing, and so, fine-tune the implicit knowledge network.

Much of N. Ellis’ research is directed at explaining the processes involved in implicit learning. He identifies the crucial rule of frequency in determining what learners attend to in the input, the importance of “chunking,” the “counting” that arises from the unconscious attention to forms in the input, and the gradual discovery of more abstract patterns that are rule-like but still distinct from explicitly learned rules. For N. Ellis, the implicit system involved in implicit processing is functionally and anatomically separate from the system involved in conscious, attended processing. However, “conscious and unconscious processes are dynamically involved together in every cognitive task and in every learning episode” (R. Ellis, 2005, p. 340). Thus, while separate, the two systems constantly interface.

My own approach is somewhat different. I am more interested in the practical business of developing a set of tests that provide relatively separate measures of grammatical knowledge, which I argue are needed to investigate whether formal instruction has an effect on implicit as well as explicit knowledge. To this end, I identified a set of characteristics that distinguish implicit and explicit knowledge and thus serve as a basis for developing the tests. Table 1, from R. Ellis (2005), summarizes the characteristics I identified. Subsequently, R. Ellis (2018) acknowledged that some of these characteristics are more discriminating than others: in particular awareness, accessibility, and self-report. I define implicit knowledge as knowledge that the learner has no subjective awareness of, can access in spontaneous language use, and is unable to verbalize. Conversely, I see explicit knowledge as knowledge that the learner has conscious awareness of, requires controlled processing, and has a metalinguistic representation that can be verbalized.

TABLE 1. Key Characteristics of Implicit and Explicit Knowledge (based on R. Ellis, 2005)

Characteristics	Implicit Knowledge	Explicit Knowledge
Awareness	Intuitive awareness of linguistic norms	Conscious awareness of linguistic norms
Type of knowledge	Procedural knowledge	Declarative knowledge
Systematicity	Variable but systematic knowledge	Anomalous and inconsistent knowledge
Accessibility	Automatic processing	Controlled processing
Use of L2 knowledge	Accesses during fluent performance	Accessed during planning difficulty
Self-report	Non-verbalizable	Verbalizable

I and my co-researchers (R. Ellis et al., 2009) developed a set of tests designed to measure implicit and explicit knowledge of grammar. Three tests – an oral elicited imitation test, a narrative-retelling task, and a speeded grammaticality judgement test – all required relatively automatic processing and so potentially measured implicit knowledge. Two other tests – an untimed grammaticality judgment test and a metalinguistic knowledge test – measured explicit knowledge as declarative knowledge and articulated knowledge, respectively. R. Ellis (2005) reported a factor-analytic study that provided evidence that these tests measured separate constructs and argued that these constructs corresponded to implicit and explicit knowledge. Subsequent studies (e.g., Bowles, 2011; Gutiérrez, 2013; Spada et al., 2015; Zhang, 2015) reported very similar factor-analytic results.

It is relatively easy to manipulate accessibility in the design of such tests. The underlying assumption of my approach is that because accessibility is closely associated with awareness, it has construct validity as the primary distinguishing characteristic of implicit and explicit knowledge. The problem here, however, is that, to some extent at least, explicit knowledge can be automatized through practice. When this happens, however, awareness of rules is still present. In other words, to some degree at least, automatic access can occur with explicit knowledge and so does not distinguish the two types of knowledge. This is the position that DeKeyser has taken in challenging my claim that tests such the Oral Elicited Imitation Test function as tests of implicit knowledge.

DeKeyser (2003) identified three defining characteristics of implicit–explicit learning – consciousness, intentionality, and automaticity – and concluded that the key characteristic was consciousness. In other words, implicit learning is essentially learning without awareness. He noted that time pressure does not guarantee that implicit knowledge is being accessed and suggested that learners are able to communicate quite effectively using explicit knowledge provided this is available for automatic processing. The implication of DeKeyser's position is that a true measure of implicit knowledge must be one that excludes awareness, and he proposed alternative tests that aimed to measure whether learners were able to demonstrate knowledge of grammatical structures without awareness.

All this theorizing has focused on grammar. We need to ask also whether it is applicable to pragmatic knowledge of language, that is, knowledge of those "aspects of language systems that are dependent on the speaker, the listener, and the context of an utterance" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p. 1).

Implicit and Explicit Pragmatic Knowledge

To apply the implicit–explicit distinction to pragmatics requires a different conceptualization from grammar. It requires a focus on principles' rather than 'rules' and understanding the difference between implicit and explicit pragmalinguistic knowledge.

Rules versus Principles

Grammar involves *rules* (or at least, rule-like regularities); pragmatics involves *principles* (e.g., Grice's, 1975, cooperative principle and its associated maxims; Brown & Levinson's, 1987, politeness principles). These principles concern how context determines the meaning of an utterance. To develop tests of implicit and pragmatic knowledge, we need to investigate learners' knowledge of pragmatic principles. One such principle concerns how we process irony. Sometimes, there can be a mismatch between what the context leads us to expect someone to say and what is actually said as when a speaker says "On time again, I see" if his friend turns up for a meeting half an hour late.

What are the psycholinguistic processes involved in interpreting such an utterance? Giora (1997) distinguished three types of processing: (a) direct processing, when the ironic meaning is available without first processing the literal meaning, (b) parallel processing, when the literal and ironic meaning are processed together, and (c) sequential processing, when the literal meaning is processed first, rejected, and the ironic meaning then inferred. Direct and parallel processing occur automatically and without consciousness, and thus, are implicit. Sequential processing, however, is explicit because it involves consciousness and is non-automatic, as the listener has to first process and reject the literal meaning. Thus, whether hearers process an ironic comment implicitly or explicitly will be evident in the speed at which they arrive at the ironic meaning.

Implicit and Explicit Pragmalinguistic Knowledge

Again, there is a fundamental difference between the grammatical and pragmalinguistic features of a language. It is one thing to investigate how learners respond to the ungrammaticality in a sentence like "My friend always *visit* his mother at the weekend" where ungrammaticality occurs in a single grammatical feature and is determined by the internal context of the sentence. It is entirely different to investigate how learners respond to an utterance such as "I would be very grateful if you would help me with my essay." To determine whether such an utterance is appropriate, learners need to take account of the external context of the utterance and to attend to several linguistic features in an utterance.

Native speakers know what level of politeness is needed in a particular situation, and usually they know implicitly which linguistic strategies are required to achieve the appropriate level of politeness in a speech act. There may be times, however, when they are uncertain and so attend consciously to their choice of linguistic strategies in order to ensure they do not offend. Language learners, like native speakers, may draw on their implicit knowledge of pragmalinguistic strategies but they are likely to be experience uncertainty to a much higher degree than do native speakers. As a result, they may try to apply L1 pragmalinguistic strategies consciously or alternatively draw on their explicit L2 knowledge of pragmatic norms.

Aspects of Pragmatic Knowledge

The starting point in the development of a battery of tests of pragmatic knowledge is to decide what aspects of pragmatics to assess. Taguchi and Roever (2017) identify four key aspects: speech acts, implicature, routines, and extended discourse.

Speech Acts

The vast majority of work in second language pragmatics has focused on speech acts. Taguchi and Roever note, "The speech act is fundamental to research in interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics" (p. 10). However, researchers have tended to focus on a narrow set of speech acts – in particular, requests, apologies and refusals. The test most commonly used is the discourse completion test (DCT), where learners are given a situation that requires the performance of a specific speech act and asked to indicate what they would say. There is also a receptive type of DCT, where learners choose the most situationally appropriate response from a number of response options. DCTs are limited in that they only demonstrate how learners respond when making offline decisions, which may not correspond to what they would do in online, real-world interaction. In fact, a DCT cannot show whether learners are accessing their implicit or explicit knowledge. Metapragmatic judgment tests that ask learners to say whether an utterance is appropriate or not are analogous to grammaticality judgement tests and, like them, are likely to tap into explicit pragmatic knowledge.

Implicature

Irony is a good example of implicature. The listener has to infer the meaning of an utterance such as “On time again, I see” by referring to the context in which it was produced. Taguchi (2011) reported a study that showed that learners’ ability to comprehend implicature develops hand in hand with proficiency.

Given the difficulty of creating contexts to elicit production of utterances expressing meaning indirectly, tests of implicature are invariably receptive of the multiple choice items kind. In some cases (see Taguchi, 2013), response times are also collected to provide evidence of how automatic learners’ responses were.

Routines

Routines are conventional expressions such as “Nice to meet you” when being introduced to a new person. They are understood and produced as wholes. Research by Bardovi-Harlig (2012) indicates that with exposure to the target language, learners pick up common routines quickly but that the ability to produce them appropriately develops more slowly. Routines can be picked up through exposure, but they may also be taught and consciously learned. Thus, they may be stored implicitly or explicitly.

Extended Discourse

A feature of the tests used to measure the previous three aspects is that they typically focus on the ability to understand or produce individual utterances rather than continuous discourse. The competence to participate in extended discourse is, however, a crucial dimension of pragmatic competence. To assess this, it is necessary to investigate how learners engage in interaction by examining, for example, whether they display appropriate turn organization and whether they respond actively to previous turns. Participating in extended discourse involves interactional competence, which is essentially implicit in nature. The main assessment instrument used to investigate learners’ ability to participate in extended discourse is role-plays.

The Battery of Tests

I will now to describe the tests measuring implicit and explicit pragmatic knowledge that I and my co-researcher (Carsten Roever) have developed. They cover three of the aspects described in the previous section: speech acts, implicature, and extended discourse. For each test, I will give my reasoning for the kind of knowledge or processing (implicit or explicit) that I expect the test will tap.

Oral Elicited Imitation Test (OEIT)

In this test, learners first read a description of a situation, which provides the context for what someone says. They hear what someone says and answer a yes/no comprehension question. They then try to imitate the utterance they heard as completely as possible. The aim is to prevent rote memorization of an utterance by requiring learners to process it for meaning first. The processing demands are not excessive as the length of the utterance stimuli is controlled (they are all between 11 and 13 words) and contain only high-frequency vocabulary. Each utterance in the test contains a hedging device (e.g., *actually*, *just*, *really*), which is the target feature. All the sentences are appropriate for their context. Here is an example of an item in the test:

Situation: Lin has left her room very untidy. Her father decides to speak to her about this. He says: "*Your room is kind of messy, so can you do something about it?*"

Question: Is Lin's father sure he wants Lin to tidy her room?
YES / NO / NOT SURE

[Target hedge: *kind of*].

The OEIT is scored by identifying whether learners include the target hedge (or a hedge with equivalent meaning) when they imitated an utterance. No account is taken of omission of other words or of the inclusion of ungrammatical elements.

The test focuses on a specific kind of pragmalinguistic feature (hedges), which serve as upgraders or downgraders in common speech acts (e.g., requests, apologies, complaints, responses to compliments). In this test learners are focused on meaning, under time pressure, and do not know that the purpose of the test is to assess their ability to use hedges. While learners may well try to monitor their production, they are more likely to focus attention on the linguistic forms that convey the semantic meaning of the utterance than on the single hedge that conveys pragmatic meaning. Those learners who are not sensitive to the role of hedges as politeness markers and are prone to the use of a simplification strategy are likely to omit them, while learners who are sensitive to hedges and are less prone to simplification are more likely to include them. It is possible that learners will become aware of the need to reproduce the hedges, but this is unlikely, as the hedges are not essential for conveying the propositional meaning of the utterances and learners are not told of the need to be polite. In short, there are grounds for claiming that this test will afford a measure of learners' implicit pragmalinguistic knowledge.

Interactive Role-Play Tasks

There are two interactive role-play tasks requiring learners to interact with a tester. All the role-plays involve a situation where the learner needs to make a request. Learners first read a description of the situation and can ask questions if they are not clear. The tester opens the conversation in one of the roles (e.g., the boss in the example below) and then waits for the learner to start speaking in his/her role. When the learner explains the problem (e.g., not being able to come to work) the tester objects, obligating the learner to seek a solution to the problem. The conversation is audio-recorded. Two raters score the role-play, assigning points for whether the learner has successfully performed the actions required (e.g., apologizing for not being able to come to work, explaining why, and suggesting a solution), the extent to which these acts are pragmalinguistically appropriate, and the extent to which the tester had to scaffold the learner's performance.

> **Situation:** You are a student working part-time at a convenience store. You are scheduled to work tomorrow afternoon. However, you forgot that you have a meeting with your thesis supervisor tomorrow afternoon, so you need to tell your boss that you can't come in. You and your boss have worked together for a few months and get along well. You go to your boss's office. Your boss is sitting at the desk, and will speak first.

Interactive role-plays afford opportunities for relatively naturalistic language use in that "they elicit moment-by-moment, co-constructed interactions" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p. 89). To maximize this the role-plays involve situations that university students (the intended test-takers) are likely to be familiar with and have some experience of. Role-plays do not exactly mirror conversations in real life, as learners have no actual stake in achieving a satisfactory outcome. Nevertheless, there is evidence that the interactions in role-plays can closely resemble those that occur in natural situations (Al-Ghatani & Roever, 2012).

The interactive role-play tasks were included in the battery of tests to provide a measure of learners' implicit pragmatic knowledge. This claim rests on the facts that the learners had no opportunity to plan and that production occurs online in extended discourse, minimizing the opportunity for monitoring. I acknowledge, however, that the criterion I am relying on is accessibility and that it is not possible to rule out awareness. The very fact that learners know that it is a test may result in them becoming conscious of the need to display appropriate language.

Monologic Role-Plays

In addition to the interactive role-plays, there are two monologic role-plays. These involve situations where learners have to leave a phone message, as in the example below. Learners first read the situation and then immediately perform the role-play. As with the interactive role-plays, learners have to apologize, give a reason for their inability to perform an action, and offer some form of redress. They differ from the interactive role-plays in one crucial respect: Learners do not receive any scaffolding and thus have to rely entirely on themselves. Scoring again focuses on whether learners have performed the actions required by a role-play and whether they have done so in pragmalinguistically appropriate ways.

> **Situation:** You have an appointment with Professor Jim Kane in 15 minutes to discuss your thesis topic. You have taken several classes with him and know him well. However, you were busy working on assignments at home and completely forgot about your appointment. It takes you about 45 minutes to get to the university from your place, so you need to cancel your appointment. You call Prof. Kane's office, but he does not answer.
>
> Leave a voice message.

The Monologic Role-Play Tasks are analogous to the Oral Narrative Task in R. Ellis (2005), which was also monologic and intended as a test of implicit knowledge. The tasks also call for online production and therefore the need for automatic language use. They are more taxing than the interactive role-plays because learners have to produce an extended turn without interactive assistance and so are less likely to try to monitor their production.

Irony Test

This is a test of the learners' ability to understand irony. There are 20 binary-choice items in the Irony Test. Ten of the items involve irony (5 negative irony and 5 positive). Another ten items involve literal statements (5 negative and 5 positive). For each item participants first read information about a situation and then hear what someone says. They are asked a question about what the person meant to say. They then indicate whether the comment is a positive or negative one by circling a smiley or sad face. Finally, they state how certain they are about their answer. Below is an example of a negative irony item. The test is computerized making it possible to record the response time for each item. The test will be scored by awarding one point for each correct response. In addition to a total score, separate scores will be calculated for positive irony, negative irony, and literal positive and literal negative items. In addition, the average response time for the five types of items will be calculated.

> **Situation:** Maggie is in a restaurant with her friend. She has ordered a pasta dish. When the meal comes, it is a rice dish. She says to her friend: "*Hey, this is just what I wanted.*"
>
> **Question:** How did Maggie feel about her meal? 😊 😒
>
> How certain were you? Very certain Quite certain Not certain

I have argued that implicature draws on pragmatic *principles* rather than *rules* and, therefore, what counts is not the type of knowledge but the kind of processing involved. First, the test will show to what extent the learners are successful in processing irony. It will also be possible to compare learners' scores for the ironic and literal items, and their scores for the negative and positive ironic items. Positive irony is expected to be especially problematic. The learners' response times will provide evidence of whether learners process the negative items directly or sequentially. If response times are slower for the ironic than for the literal items, this would indicate sequential processing; if they are the same, it would constitute evidence of direct processing. In other words, I will be able to examine the extent to which the learners are able to process the ironic comments implicitly or rely on more explicit processing.

Metapragmatic Knowledge Test

The battery of tests in R. Ellis (2005) included a Metalinguistic Knowledge Test where learners were asked to select the metalinguistic explanation that best described a grammatical error in a sentence from a set of choices. The Metapragmatic Knowledge Test is an analogous test. It consists of 2 training items and 15 testing items, each of which involves a specific speech act (e.g., a request or apology). Learners first read a brief description of a situation and then study an utterance. They must first decide whether the utterance is appropriate or inappropriate. Out of the 15 items, 10 are inappropriate either because the utterance is not sufficiently polite or because it is too polite. If learners decide an utterance is inappropriate, they must then answer a multiple-choice question, choosing from four choices which explanation best says why it is inappropriate. They must also indicate how certain they are of their response. The test is computerized so that the multiple-choice question only appears if the learner has indicated the utterance is inappropriate. If the learner considers it appropriate, they go straight to the certainty question. Below is an example of an item containing an over-polite utterance in a complaint situation.

> **Situation:** Yoshi is staying in a hotel. He booked a non-smoking room, but when he gets to his room, he finds it smells badly of cigarette smoke. He goes down to speak to someone at the hotel reception desk.
>
> Receptionist: Can I help you?
> Yoshi: I know how busy you are, but I was wondering if at all possible could you consider changing me to a non-smoking one.
>
> **Question:** Is what Yoshi said appropriate? YES / NO
>
> If you think it is not appropriate, explain why.
> A. He should not have complained about his room.
> B. He should have been more polite when requesting a room change.
> C. He should have been more direct in requesting a room change.
> D. He should have threatened to leave the hotel.
>
> How certain of your response are you?
> Very certain Quite certain Not certain

This test is intended to tap a specific type of explicit knowledge: the ability to understand explanations of why an utterance is pragmatically unsatisfactory. However, the test also allows us to obtain a measure of abstract explicit pragmatic knowledge by scoring whether learners correctly judged each utterance as appropriate or inappropriate. In an untimed judgment test, language users are able to draw on their non-automatic explicit knowledge.

The grounds for claiming that the test measures explicit knowledge are threefold: First, the test requires learners to treat language as an object rather than as a communicative tool; second, learners are required to make conscious decisions; and third, these decisions are always deliberate and therefore non-automatic. The test tells us what learners know *about* appropriate speech act behavior. It is likely that because most learners will not have received explicit instruction about pragmatics, their explicit knowledge will be more uncertain than it is certain.

Evaluating Social Context Variables Test

Most other tests, like the Metapragmatic Knowledge Test, require students to judge whether an utterance is appropriate for its context. This involves them taking account of the three sociolinguistic variables (i.e., power, status, and imposition) that govern the choice of pragmalinguistic features in the performance of speech acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The Evaluating Social Context Variables Test directly assesses learners' ability to determine how these variables function. Learners read a bare bones description of the context that specifies the nature of the speech act and are then shown what Person A says to Person B. In every item, what is said is intended to be appropriate. They have to decide on the relationship between the speakers by answering a multiple-choice question. In order to do this, learners have to evaluate the pragmalinguistic features in terms of whether they show that speakers are in symmetrical or asymmetrical power relationship (+/–), whether they are well-known to each other (+/–) and whether the imposition involved is light or heavy (+/–). In the example below, Person A makes a request and uses a complex request strategy ("I was just wondering ....") to display politeness. Such a strategy is unlikely if the speaker is talking to a spouse (– status / + familiarity). It is also unlikely if addressed to a neighbor who has just moved into the house next door (+ imposition / – familiarity). It is, however, much more likely, for a work colleague (– power / + familiarity).[1] The utterances in the 12 items cover a number of speech acts (e.g., requests, apologies, suggestions, complaints, disagreement, greetings) embodying varying combinations of power, status, and imposition. The test is scored by counting the number of correct answers.

> **Situation:** Person A is asking to borrow person B's car.
>
> Person A says: "I was just wondering if it was possible to borrow your car tomorrow for a short time."
>
> What is the relationship between Person A and Person B?
> A. They are married.
> B. They are work colleagues.
> C. Person B has just moved in to the house next door to Person A.

This test assesses learners' ability to interpret utterances in terms of what they show about the social relationships of the participants in a conversation. It is untimed, and it encourages conscious reflection. Fairly clearly, then, it provides information about learners non-automated explicit knowledge of the pragmalinguistic features that signal the social relationship between a speaker and hearer.

SUMMARY

Researchers of second language pragmatics have drawn heavily on sociolinguistic theories but paid little attention to psycholinguistic accounts of language use – an exception being Takahashi (2011), who recognized the need to investigate not just what learners know but whether they could process what they know automatically. In this article, I have reviewed different psycholinguistic accounts of implicit and explicit knowledge of grammar and advanced some suggestions for how this distinction applies to pragmatics. I noted that, unlike grammar, where it is possible to investigate specific features in terms of whether they are correct or incorrect, pragmatics involves the use of a cluster of features in any one utterance to achieve appropriateness. I also noted that pragmatics differs from grammar in another crucial respect; namely, it draws on principles that govern the relationship of language to context rather than on rules that govern the formal correctness of language irrespective of situational context. Thus, whereas awareness is the crucial aspect distinguishing implicit and explicit grammatical knowledge, the key criterion for distinguishing the implicit–explicit distinction in second language pragmatics is accessibility (i.e., whether or not learners are able to process pragmatic meaning automatically).

I have described a number of tests that vary in the demands they place on learners' access to their pragmatic knowledge. The tests assess different aspects of pragmatics: speech acts, implicature, and extended discourse. They vary in scope – some tests involve extended discourse, others discrete utterances. Some require production, while others assess comprehension. Each test has a primary focus on either meaning or on pragmalinguistic forms. Crucially, the tests vary in whether they require the online or offline use of language. I anticipate that tests that require online production and have a primary focus on meaning will result in automatic language use of the kind associated with either implicit processing or automated explicit processing (i.e., the Oral Elicited Imitation Test, the Interactive Role-Play Task, and the Monologic Role-Play Tasks). One of these tests (the Interactive Role-Play Task) involves extended discourse, which makes is less likely that learners will be able to monitor their production and thus more likely that they will rely on more implicit processing. Conversely, the other two tests (the Monologic Role-Play and the Oral Elicited Imitation Task) involve less extended discourse or isolated utterances and offer greater opportunity for monitoring, and thus, may encourage explicit processing albeit of the more automated kind. The Metapragmatic Knowledge Test and the Evaluating Social Variables Test both involve isolated utterances, a primary focus on form, and offline comprehension and clearly advantage non-automatic explicit processing. The Irony Test has more mixed features. It consists of isolated utterances and allows for offline processing but, as a test of implicature, the primary focus is on meaning, and because response times are recorded, it may be possible to establish whether learners identify the irony directly or indirectly and, thereby, the kind of processing involved.

Table 2 summarizes the design features of the six tests and indicates the type of knowledge each test is designed to elicit. Given the absence of previous research investigating second language pragmatics from a psycholinguistic perspective, I recognize that I am entering a dark space. The tests I am proposing are obviously programmatic. The next step will be to administer the tests to a sample of L2 learners and examine to what extent the tests provide a similar factor solution to that found in R. Ellis (2005) for grammar when scores are entered into a factor analysis.

TABLE 2. Key Design Features of Six Pragmatic Tests

Test	Scope	Modality	Focus	Accessibility	Knowledge Assessed
1. Elicited Oral Imitation Test	Isolated utterances	Production	Meaning	Online	Implicit
2. Interactive Role-Play Task	Extended discourse	Production	Meaning	Online	Implicit/Automated explicit
3. Monologic Role-Play Task	Extended discourse	Production	Meaning	Online	Implicit/Automated explicit
4. Irony Test	Isolated utterances	Reception	Meaning	Offline/ Response-timed	Implicit/Explicit
5. Metapragmatic Knowledge Test	Isolated utterances	Reception	Form	Offline	Explicit
6. Evaluating Social Variables Test	Isolated utterances	Reception	Form	Offline	Explicit

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FOOTNOTE

[1] I acknowledge that the Evaluating Social Context Variables Test is deterministic in nature and that, in the real world, people can and do say all sorts of things depending very much on context and that the "all else being equal" approach to pragmatics is very problematic because language use is not generic in the real world. However, the approach adopted in this test is likely to be very similar to the approach adopted in pragmatics instruction. Obtaining native-speaker responses to the test will go somehow to ensure its validity.

Fine-Tuning Word Meanings Through Online and Mobile App Technologies: A Close-up Look at Successful and Unsuccessful Strategy Use

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The purpose of this study was to investigate a hyperpolyglot's strategies for fine-tuning his understanding of Chinese vocabulary through mobile apps, online programs, and interactions with a tutor. Video-recorded verbal reporting revealed that the subject used strategies for (a) managing vocabulary resources – planning, organizing, and monitoring/evaluating their use, and for (b) processing the information in the resources – finding word equivalents in Chinese for English words, fine-tuning the word meanings, and then verifying them. He predominantly used strategies either in sequence or in pairs, sometimes separately, and only occasionally in clusters. While he was successful at fine-tuning 57% of the vocabulary items through accessing selected resources, his fine-tuning efforts still were unsuccessful 43% of the time. The effectiveness of fine-tuning depended on the subject's ability to find the information he needed, to orchestrate the various aspects of word knowledge, and to monitor and evaluate his performance.

Introduction

The advent of mobile apps and internet programs has provided access to a myriad of dictionary resources. But is the literature on language learner strategies (LLS) keeping pace with the technological advances in the field? This plenary talk presented a case study of a hyperpolyglot's efforts at fine-tuning (F-T) his understanding of word meanings in Chinese as a means of investigating this issue. The findings of this study are seen to have implications for strategy instruction provided to EFL learners in South Korea.

Review of the Literature

Looking up words in a dictionary is not so easy in that it takes numerous strategies to do so effectively (Neubach & Cohen, 1988; Quigley, 2018). Altogether, strategies for dealing with target-language (TL) vocabulary are complex in nature (Wang, 2018; Cohen & Wang, 2018a, 2018b). Mobile apps and online dictionaries for vocabulary lookup and translation are abundant, as underscored by a recent survey (Mavrommatidou et al., 2019). But however potentially informative such resources may be, it would appear that learners could benefit from suggestions as to what strategies they would be advised to use in order to operationalize them most effectively for their needs.

While there is a literature on the learning of Chinese vocabulary through mobile apps and online programs (Qian et al., 2018), such literature would best be characterized as general in nature, lacking in detail for learners in search of specific strategies. In the spirit of providing detailed strategy information, a case study was conducted on LLS for the fine-tuning of word meanings (Cohen & Wang, 2019). While it was conducted with a focus on Chinese – the TL for the given learner, the findings and implications are intended to be relevant to EFL teachers looking for ways to support their learners' strategic efforts in comprehending vocabulary. This study constituted the major focus of my plenary talk for the 2019 Korea TESOL International Conference.

Research Questions

RQ1. What strategies does a hyperpolyglot use when engaging with mobile apps, online programs, or a tutor in an effort at F-T his understanding of Chinese vocabulary?

RQ2. To what extent are these strategies used separately, in sequence, in pairs, or in clusters?

RQ3. What is the relative effectiveness of strategies for F-T word meanings through the use of vocabulary resources?

Research Design

Subject

The subject was me – a hyperpolyglot, studying Chinese as my thirteenth language, with high proficiency in Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Hebrew, some ability in Arabic and Japanese, and considerable attrition in Italian, German, Quechua, Aymara, and Latin. I would consider myself an expert in LLS and intercultural pragmatics. I am able to interact professionally in five languages – my native-language English, Spanish, Hebrew, French, and Portuguese. I was 74 years old at the time of the study, having begun my study of Chinese at the age of 67, studying in a foreign-language (FL) context, which meant minimal contact with the language. I restricted my use of Chinese to writing a blog in *pinyin* and discussing it a bit orally with my tutor. My motivation for continuing to study the language: writing weekly blog entries on topics of interest. Because of my limited contact with the TL, I do not have an intuitive sense of what new words might mean. My use of *pinyin* (i.e., the romanization system for standardized Chinese) meant that I had no clues to meaning from word analysis strategies, despite Chinese being composed largely of two-morpheme words. The co-investigator and my Chinese tutor in this study was Isobel Wang, a research fellow at the University of Graz (Austria) and a specialist in vocabulary strategies.

Instrumentation

The Blog Topics

I wrote an ongoing blog on politics, health, home fix-it projects, and what sparked joy in my life. The topics for the study were

1. Revelations about Trump's longtime lawyer
2. A handyman for our daughter's home
3. Baking bread with teff flour, given my special diet
4. Earthquake-proofing a neighbor's condo
5. LED light therapy for treating my neuropathy.

I sought vocabulary best describing the issues (however technical) rather than simplifications.

Dictionary Resources

I only accessed bilingual dictionaries – not monolingual nor bilingualized ones. I used the online MDBG Chinese–English Dictionary on my desktop computer; the Google Translate app on my mobile phone, which provided translations in need of verification; the Pleco phone app, which helped in analysis of morphemes and in finding other similar words; and the Line Dictionary phone app, which provided me English–Chinese definitions in *pinyin*, with collocations and sample sentences. Additional resources that I accessed included the Chinese–English Collins Dictionary (which provided collocations and parts of speech); the Google search engine, which I used occasionally to check if two words in *pinyin* had similar meanings; and a personalized dictionary referred to as BYKI (*Before You Know It*), for which I made my own entries in *pinyin* by grammatical category: nouns, verbs, adjectives, function words, and measure words. Finally, I also relied considerably on my native Chinese-speaking tutor, when I was not sure if my F-T was accurate, even after consulting various dictionary resources.

Video-recording

I video-recorded all of my vocabulary F-T sessions, using the camera mode in Windows 10. I stored the video-recorded sessions on my Google Drive. I then sent the link to my co-investigator/tutor for analysis.

Data Collection Procedures

Step 1: I wrote five blog entries and video-recorded verbal report (VR) + written summary of F-T strategies, indicating difficulties.
Step 2: Upon receiving the blog and video-recorded VR, the tutor identified instances where I was unclear with regard to my intended meaning.
Step 3: She flagged Chinese concepts that I needed to F-T.
Step 4: I then provided additional VR as to the strategies used to arrive at understanding of the Chinese words that she had flagged.
Step 5: She watched my videos and determined the successfulness of my strategy use.
Step 6: She and I had a Skype session, going over each blog topic, during which she provided further explanations about words, as well as tips

on how to use the various resources.

Step 7: I reviewed my blogs, identifying the words in need of further F-T, and asked her for further distinctions.

Step 8: Based on her feedback, I recorded the distinctions in my personal dictionary, BYKI.

Data Analysis Procedures

The tutor analyzed the VR during my blog writing, and my subsequent VR while attempting to fine-tune the meanings of flagged word pairs. The analysis process was largely inductive, involving identification of strategies that I had reported using. The criteria used to determine the extent to which my F-T strategies provided me were (a) a correct understanding of the meaning for the word or phrase in the given context and (b) a sense as to acceptable collocations, appropriate use of register, and the formality of the word or phrase.

Results

Research Question 1. Strategies That the Hyperpolyglot Used for Engaging with Mobile Apps, Online Programs, or a Tutor

It is to be noted that since the complete set of findings is provided in the published study (Cohen & Wang, 2019), the following is simply meant to be illustrative of some of the findings by category.

Strategies for Managing Resources

(a) Planning vocabulary resources

(From Topic 2, Handyman) "My strategy for starting with BYKI is if I start with Google Translate or another dictionary, I tend not to check out what I've already entered into BYKI. In BYKI, those are words that have been used in other blogs and at least have been checked with a tandem partner."

(b) Organizing the resources

When the dictionary app provided user-friendly definitions, sample sentences, and collocations, it helped me in F-T my understanding of the words.

(c) Monitoring and evaluating the use of resources

- Using one resource (Topic 3, Baking bread): (Looking up "liquid" in MDBG) "It means more than just *shuǐ* 'water' (scanning all the English meanings provided for the MDBG entries and determining which word covered my desired meaning). This is gonna be a problem. It's too abstract. So here is a good case where I can go to other resources. I can start with Google Translate."
- Then using Google Translate to find the Chinese equivalent for "Put in liquid ingredients."
- Continuing to evaluate the effectiveness of Google Translate after this search by comparing that result with those from other resources.

Strategies for Processing the Information in the Resource

(a) Finding word equivalents in Chinese

Using BYKI

- Recalling the context and whether the Chinese word fit it.
- Making use of the semantic information (e.g., connotative meanings) and examples (e.g., collocations) to identify the best Chinese equivalent.

Using MDBG

- Scanning all the English definitions provided by the MDBG entries.
- Arriving at a possible or probable Chinese equivalent from their English definitions.

Using Google Translate

- Drawing on prior knowledge of Chinese to pick and choose material from the phrases or sentences provided by Google Translate.
- Double-checking the spelling and the tone markings (1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th tone).

(b) F-T the word meaning

- Activating vocabulary knowledge, especially regarding multiple meanings for words.
- Arriving at a possible or probable word meaning by reading definitions provided in various entries.
- Using the semantic information and sample examples in BYKI to arrive at possible connotative meanings for the word.
- Drawing an analogy between the chosen word (e.g., *jiànmiàn*, “meeting up”) and known related words (e.g., *yíngjiē*, “meeting and greeting,” and *jùhuì*, “getting together with people”).
- Figuring out the constraints on the use of the word in collocations and formality level to get a feel for the semantic coverage of the word (e.g., *shàngshēng*, “rise in price or number” vs. *fā*, “rise in bread or dough”).

(c) Verifying the word meaning

- Use of collocations and contextual clues from sample sentences.
  (Looking up “decrease” in BYKI): “*Jiǎnshǎo*, like ‘decrease expenses.’ Ah, ‘decrease symptom’ it’s *jiǎnqīng*. That’s a better case ... Let’s try it out and see what happens with *jiǎnqīng*. (Looking up jiǎnqīng in the Line Dictionary): *Jiǎnqīng* ‘to reduce.’ (Looking at the sample sentences): Yes, *jiǎnqīng téngtòng* ‘lighten your pain.’ I’m sure that’s it. I do mean ‘to lighten’ and ‘to ease.’”
- Emailing the tutor re semantic distinctions.
  Me: “*Zuòyè/rènwu/huó/zhònghuó* – I assume the first is a specific kind of task – doing schoolwork. I understand the next is more formal and refers to a mission. I would like to clarity in the last two. BYKI indicated that the last means ‘hard task.’”
  Tutor: “*Zuòyè* – yes, it refers to a specific kind of task. E.g., *zuòyè* ‘homework/schoolwork,’ *shuǐxià zuòyè* ‘underwater operation,’ *gāokōng zuòyè* ‘aerial work’ ...”

Research Question 2. The Extent of Strategy Use Separately, in Sequence, in Pairs, or in Clusters

I mostly used sequences of strategies (49%), then paired strategies (29%), next strategies used separately (17%), and least used were strategies in clusters (5%).

Research Question 3. The Relative Effectiveness of F-T Word Meaning Strategies Used with Vocabulary Resources

I chose to F-T 56 vocabulary items: 40 individual words, 15 vocabulary pairs, and one group of three words. I was successful at F-T 57% of the vocabulary items: 22 individual words, and 10 vocabulary pairs. I was unsuccessful with 43% of the items – in trying to get at the context-specific meaning of 18 individual words, 5 vocabulary pairs, and a group of three words.

Challenges in the Search for Information

- Identifying the correct headword when 2+ headwords had the same denotation – difficulty determining semantic differences.
- Identifying the correct headword when other headwords had the same *pinyin* form.
- Finding the desired meaning in an entry offering multiple definitions.
- Understanding the information when presented just in Chinese characters, not in *pinyin*.
- Finding an alternative strategy when the sought-after Chinese word was not offered as one of the entries in the dictionary being accessed.

Ability to Monitor and Evaluate Performance

In 64% of the total cases, I expressed awareness as to the effectiveness of my strategies for F-T vocabulary. In 84% of the successful cases, I knew that I had achieved successful F-T of vocabulary. In 63% of the unsuccessful cases, I was unaware that I was unsuccessful at F-T the vocabulary items.

The Nature of the Dictionary Entries

The Chinese–English dictionaries provided minimal explanations for word meanings. They only provided occasional collocations through sample sentences. In addition, it was difficult to find information about grammar, and there was rarely anything on register or culture. Consequently, I sometimes felt compelled to check with my tutor.

Discussion

Summary of the Findings

In the case of this one hyperpolyglot subject, it was found that the fine-tuning of Chinese vocabulary meaning involved strategic awareness, personal effort, and time. I used designated dictionary resources to F-T words or phrases. I deployed a complex set of strategies in a flexible, individualized, and dynamic way. Half of my strategies were in sequences, another third in pairs, a few in clusters, and the remainder were used separately. As a highly skilled language learner, while I was successful at F-T 57% of the vocabulary items, I was nonetheless unsuccessful with 43%.

Interpretation

Even skilled strategy users may inadequately mobilize technology in F-T efforts. The actual impact of phone app and online dictionary/translation programs on learners' F-T of word meanings may fall short of expectations. Despite mobile apps and internet programs, the F-T of word meanings is a challenge, especially with unfamiliar TLs. In this study, strategic F-T was seen to depend largely on the ability to find the needed input, orchestrate aspects of word knowledge, and monitor and evaluate performance.

Consistent with my cognitive style preference of being *concrete-sequential*, I preferred using strategies in sequence. My limited use of strategy clusters may have been in order to avoid fatigue – that is, trying to be parsimonious and not prolong strategic activities.

My lack of success had various possible explanations, among which were lack of practice at checking the Chinese characters associated with the given *pinyin* and not searching far enough down the set of entries so as to find the sought-after meaning. When two or more headwords had close semantic overlap, I usually did not perform analysis of individual morphemes + their context of use.

Finally, there was the issue of the nature of the dictionary entries themselves. Success at looking up a word in a digital resource was seen to depend on adequate scanning of all the senses of the word in a dictionary entry and adequate analysis of the word, related words, definitions, and examples.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

It would be helpful to complement this case study with research on a group of, say, 20 polyglots, representing a range of ages, focusing on their strategies for fine-tuning vocabulary. Half could be learning through *pinyin* and the other half through Chinese characters, thus allowing for access to monolingual or bilingualized dictionaries in Chinese. It would also be beneficial to include learners in both an L2 and an FL context so as to investigate ways in which exposure to vocabulary in use from the local context contributes to the F-T process.

In addition, it would be interesting to replicate this vocabulary study focusing on speaking, listening, or reading. Furthermore, researchers may wish to explore ways to raise learners' awareness about effective F-T strategy combinations for them. In an effort to follow up on the relationship between learning style preferences and strategy use, subjects could be asked about their reasons for preferring a particular combination of F-T strategies.

Finally, it would be helpful to continue to conduct detailed analysis such as in this study in order to get beyond fuzzy strategy categories that are usually rather uninformative with regard to specific strategy use in a given skill area and for the given tasks.

Pedagogical Implications for EFL Teaching

EFL teachers could consider assisting learners more in accessing dictionary resources – in, for example, extracting grammatical information regarding the use of verbs, prepositions, and other parts of speech; demonstrating how to cut and paste information from a dictionary entry in one app to an entry in another app; and finding "usage examples" even if the screen says "no search results."

In addition, EFL teachers could provide strategy instruction for learners (see Chamot & Harris, 2019) – especially regarding how they select F-T strategies most appropriate for them, combine strategies effectively, and sustain motivation over time in the face of frustration in dealing with language tasks.

Finally, learners could benefit from teacher tips on accessing bilingual, bilingualized, and monolingual dictionaries and translation programs. Even accomplished language learners can benefit from strategy instruction on accessing vocabulary resources through mobile apps and internet programs.

Conclusions

The study was intended to show how unhelpful it can be to tell students to strategize by using a dictionary, when in reality using a dictionary is a skill involving the accessing of various possible dictionary resources and the engaging of numerous strategies in order to do this effectively. Given the number of dictionary resources now available in apps and in online programs, it behooves learners to have an enhanced sense of just how to strategize most effectively given their particular vocabulary needs.

The approach to research taken by this in-depth, qualitative investigation demonstrated how informative it can be to use VR as a complement to the more typical questionnaire-based, quantitative analysis of reported vocabulary strategy use (Wang, 2018). It illustrated how an LLS study could provide more detailed descriptions of strategy use by learners as they go about accomplishing vocabulary comprehension tasks. It is now easier than ever to collect video-recorded data from subjects engaged in VR and to share these data with others. The ultimate purpose is to improve feedback to learners so as to enhance their TL learning.

The Author

Andrew D. Cohen was professor of ESL at UCLA (1972–1975), Language Education at the Hebrew University (1975–1991), and Second Language Studies at the University of Minnesota in 1991–2013. He co-edited *Language Learning Strategies* with Ernesto Macaro (Oxford University Press, 2007), co-authored *Teaching and Learning Pragmatics* with Noriko Ishihara (Routledge, 2014), and authored *Strategies in Learning and Using a Second Language* (Routledge, 2011) and *Learning Pragmatics from Native and Nonnative Language Teachers* (Multilingual Matters, 2018). He has also published many book chapters and journal articles. For the last ten years, he has been studying his thirteenth language, Mandarin.

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Expert TESOL Teachers: Reaching for "Who I Am Is How I Teach!"

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INTRODUCTION

I was honored to be invited to speak at the 2019 Korea TESOL International conference in Seoul, Korea, and my topic was a reflection on what an expert TESOL teacher entails. I will not go over in detail what I talked about at the conference as Kimberley Roberts (2019) wrote a nice review in her article in *The English Connection*: "A Newbie's Experience: Review of the 2019 KOTESOL International Conference." Kimberley said in summary that my talk gave her

> a lot to consider when I think about my own definitions of what exactly a "good" or "expert" teacher might be, as it became evident that pinpointing exactly what a "good" teacher is isn't an easy task. He [Farrell] concluded that while the exact meaning of "expert" might be elusive, reflective practice is critical to developing expertise. (p. 25)

It is this latter point, that reflective practice is critical to developing teaching expertise, that I base my paper on: a reflection of my own journey as a teacher from a recent book that I contributed to that was edited by Alan Maley (2019): *Developing Expertise Through Experience*. This wonderful (and free) book collects together teachers' narratives and reveals the value of reflecting on experiences for teacher development and training.

Focusing on the role of experience in teacher training and lifelong development, it is an exploration and extension of Prabhu's (1987) concept of "the teacher's sense of plausibility." Prabhu suggests that whatever forms of training and professional development teachers are exposed to, they will make sense of them in their own way, drawing on their own values, beliefs and experiences and on their evolving sense of what will be appropriate for them in their specific context. Twenty practitioners worldwide were invited to reflect on their own career trajectories in the light of Prabhu's idea. Their responses offer fascinating insights into the way places, publications, ideas, and key people have influenced the professional and personal development of the contributors. Thus, I summarize in this volume the various themes that emerged from my own reflections (Farrell, 2019a) as well as provide a discussion of some meditation techniques (Farrell, 2019b) that teachers can consider as they reflect on their understanding of what a "good" teacher is or what an "expert" teacher is. I would encourage readers to read both books and reflect on what other wonderful language teacher educators from around the world have reflected about their journey in our profession.

My Reflections on My Journey

Probably the most significant theme emerging from my own reflecting on my teaching journey over the past 38 years as an ESL teacher starting in Korea and then as a language teacher educator, also while in Korea and then in Singapore and Canada, is this simple statement: "Who I am is how I teach!" The general purpose of engaging in reflection for all teachers is to get some kind of awareness of who we are as teachers, what we do, and why we do it. Becoming more aware of who we are as teachers means exploring our own inner worlds through contemplation so that we can become more mindful of what we do. Mindfulness is the opposite of mindlessness – and unfortunately, our world gives us too many examples of the latter rather than the former. Recently I have developed a framework for reflecting on practice in second language teacher education (SLTE) that can help language teachers and teacher educators to become more mindful of who they are and how they teach (Farrell, 2015, 2018).

As Freeman (2016, p. 208) maintains in his recent book, reflection offers a way into the "less accessible aspects of teachers' work," and my framework offers such an accessible way into all aspects of a language teacher's work. This framework differs from many other approaches, as it offers a holistic approach to reflection that focuses not only on the intellectual, cognitive, and meta-cognitive aspects of practice that many other approaches are limited to, but also on the spiritual, moral, emotional, and non-cognitive aspects of reflection that acknowledge the inner life of teachers. Teacher educators can encourage pre-service (and in-service) teachers to use the framework as a lens through which to view their professional (and even personal) worlds, and what has shaped their professional lives as they become more aware of their philosophy, principles, theories, and practices, and how these impact issues inside and beyond practice. Pre-service (and in-service) teachers need to be encouraged to think about themselves and their teaching in ways that include activating their feelings and emotions, or the affective side of reflection, so that they can develop their inner resources to meet future challenges in the profession. I believe that implementing a holistic approach to teacher reflection produces more integrated second language teachers with self-awareness and understanding, and with the ability to interpret, shape, and reshape their practice.

As a result of these reflections, I now make a brief statement of my beliefs/values about language and about learning languages: Learning a language has little to do with learning grammar, vocabulary, or phonology, but everything to do with learning about other human beings' ways of life. The pace of how we learn a language will match the pace of how much we want to know about others.

Meditating on Teaching

Here are four meditative techniques: insight meditation, mantra, visualization, and movement meditation for the mindful teacher (Farrell, 2015, 2019b). Insight meditation (or *vipassanā*, which means to "see" things as they really are) allows us to focus on what happens in each moment as it happens. We can accomplish this by just focusing on our breathing: When we breathe in and out, we just concentrate on this act and nothing else. Then as we focus on our breathing, we can gain insight into the "self" as we watch various thoughts and emotions come and go because we do not react to any of them. Eventually, these thoughts and emotions get weaker and finally disappear. In this way, we are practicing insight meditation.

Mantra means "word," and the meditative activity is to use a word repeatedly (out loud or internally) while either sitting or in motion as we continue with our normal daily activities. Singing out loud could also be a form of mantra meditation, as the act of singing can lead to an inner calmness and also be a way of relaxing the mind (and even the body) before teaching a class. Sing your favorite song out loud ten minutes before entering your next class. After you sing the song, note any physical or mental changes before and after singing. You could even get your students to sing out loud as well and see if their disposition towards learning has changed.

Visualization is a meditative technique by which you visualize a place (new or old) or a task and remain in a general state of openness while using this place as a type of sanctuary where you feel safe because this sanctuary is unique to you. As you see yourself inside this sanctuary, you become calm and just sit there and totally relax. Because this sanctuary is unique to you, it reflects who you are as a person, as you "see" yourself relax and then begin to notice your personal visualizations. We gain knowledge of the self as a result of meditating on our visualizations because these too are unique to the person who is meditating. You can try this before class and see if your attitudes (to your teaching, your students, and learning) change. You could also get your students to try it through English as it can all contribute to learning.

Movement meditation includes any body movement as meditation. The most popular types of movement meditation include yoga and its many different forms, as well as tai-chi, but even a simple routine such as walking or jogging can be considered movement meditation. My own preference for movement meditation is my practice of the discipline of taekwondo, a Korean martial art. I studied this wonderful art when I was in Korea for 18 years and, for me, the calming nature of the pre-practice stretching routine along with the practice of kicking and other body movement and postures allows for enhanced awareness of self through attention to mind, body, and spirit while in action. Apart from the physical benefits of feeling "high" after intense movement (the effect of increased endorphins in the brain), I also have noticed that any negative pre-practice thoughts and energy have been fully transformed into positive thoughts and energy as I go through the movements. Teachers can do simple stretching exercises or whatever body movements that relax body and mind before they enter a class, or they can take a walk/jog during their lunch hour and experience meditation through movement. Try some movement activities before you enter your next class, and note any physical and mental changes before and after your movements. You can also have your students move during class to get them focused. This is especially useful for teachers of young learners.

Conclusion

I noted in the beginning of this paper that Kimberley Roberts (2019) wrote a summary of my presentation on teacher expertise and how elusive this is to define (just as what "good" teaching is) but that reflective practice is critical to reaching expertise. I followed this up with the idea that reaching any level of expertise is in fact also reaching a state of "who I am is how I teach," where we know how we are by meditating on what makes us unique personally and professionally, and by reflecting on what we do. I contribute this paper to the *KOTESOL Proceedings* with the hope that other ESL teachers in Korea, the place where I really started my own teaching career, will engage in reflective practice so that they too can become the best teacher they can be. I end with Kimberley's hope for her own future reflections as maybe others can do what she intends to do:

> Having dabbled in reflective practice a couple of years back, this presentation certainly gave me a little push to pick it back up again. I even bought a new notebook to keep in my classroom for tracking my reflections, and I'm excited to get back into the practice. (p. 25)

Enjoy your teaching journeys.

The Author

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Drawing on Skillsets Outside of ELT to Inform Instructional Practice

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Introduction

KOTESOL leadership afforded me an invited speaker session opportunity, knowing of my interest on the topic of skill transfer. Areas I have focused on in recent years have been the application of diverse skillsets in ELT and on how ELT professionals can retool their skills to maintain and increase competitiveness, and develop resiliency to personal and industry change (see Mac Donald & O'Reilly, 2018).

I will begin this summary of the conference session by recounting my own journey to becoming interested in the topic. Next, I will discuss skill transfer as a concept also with respect to Korean ELT. Then, I will offer tangible ways readers can adapt and utilize the discussion for their own personal and professional development. That is to say that the conference session is practice-orientated and not a research-based session, and is intended to be more dialogic with readers.

A Developing Interest in Skill Transfer Outside of ELT

I will begin with an informal recount that starts when a colleague, Pomarici, and I began to look deliberately at pre-service and in-service teacher training through the lens of other professions in which we have worked. We also considered personal hobbies in which we have participated, as well as those of teachers and course participants with whom we have interacted as teacher trainers. The process of doing so began when we transitioned in 2014 from working in a division of about 30 instructors that delivered institute-wide pre-service and in-service teacher training at a U.S. military language training facility to providing similar training but within one specific language school at the institute, delivered solely by Pomarici and myself.

This change in institutional structure permitted closer and more tailored support to teachers for professional development that often fostered more long-term mentoring relationships. Working alongside these colleagues, providing training connected to their classroom practice and often in their classrooms, lead Pomarici and I to incorporate the use of our own past professional and present personal skills as analogies to guide faculty to address their professional development needs.

In the spring of 2014 at the TESOL Annual International Convention, I saw *Language Teaching Insights from Other Fields: Sports, Arts, Design, and More*

(Stillwell, 2013), picked it up as it seemed interesting, and glanced through it. Yet, I purchased another TESOL Press book, and made note of this one for a later purchase. At the time, Pomarici and I had just transitioned to our new teacher training context, and even though it was something that struck me as curious, the Stillwell book was not specifically relevant to what was taking place in my professional context at the time. Consequently, I put it on my list to purchase later online, rather than at the convention. It was not purchased that year. Then, Stilwell published another book on the same topic, *Language Teaching Insights from Other Fields: Psychology, Business, Brain Science, and More* (2015) and I ran across it in an email flyer from TESOL Press some time in 2016.

This was the time that I picked up the books and made a more formal connection to the practice of viewing language teaching through the lens of other fields. Therefore, Pomarici and I wrote a book review (Pomarici & Mac Donald, 2019) and an article (forthcoming 2020) based on our experiences in relation to Stillwell's first book (2013), as the subfields of focus in the book better related to and resonated with our past professional and personal experiences.

Skill Transfer, Understanding *What* We Blend, *How* We Blend, and *Why* We Blend

Skill transfer as a term and concept is broad but can be classified in distinct ways. Fields delineate the concept into cross-disciplinary, multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches to skill transfer. To begin, cross-disciplinary approaches look at one discipline through the lens of another. Next, multi-disciplinary approaches draw on specialists from diverse disciplines collaborating to assist each discipline. Inter-disciplinary approaches integrate the knowledge base from distinct disciplines to blend diverse methods into one. Although Pomarici and I are interested in all three approaches, in the case of Stillwell's (2013, 2015) books, skill transfer is understood as a cross-disciplinary approach, as the objective is to utilize the perspective of a separate field to inform ELT teaching, and therefore, so is the focus of this article.

You may have been an individual that made the decision to pursue a change in your previous field to work in ELT. You may have moved on, assuming that chapter of your professional life was left behind. However, your previous skillset, and your personal hobbies, are informative to your teaching. You could improve your effectiveness in ELT by connecting the dots between what you have done in another profession and/or what your past or current personal interests offer you as an educator. This entails explicitly making connections between what you possess from the past and present outside of ELT and how this has unknowingly informed or can currently inform you as an educator.

In "Understanding *What* We Blend, *How* We Blend, and *Why* We Blend" (Mac Donald, 2019), I discuss how each individual consciously and unconsciously uses prior and present skills for instructional practice, based on Stillwell's (2013, 2015) books. The following sections offer an example of assessing one's professional expertise for skill transfer to inform their ELT.

Re-using Your Skills from a Field Outside of ELT

To begin to identify how to assess the skill competencies you may have from a previous profession, or past or present personal hobby, I will offer an example starting with retooling ELT classroom teaching skills (Fisher et al., 2018) for other positions within the field of ELT. I offer this first, as it provides an example of the analysis process through ELT competencies with which educators are familiar.

In a conference panel session, addressing avenues to transition into new roles within her education as an ESL/EFL professional, Pascucci (Fisher et al., 2018) shared an accessible manner through which to identify professional competencies and how to these same competencies supported lateral and upward ELT career opportunity for her.

Table 1. Sample for Evaluating ELT Skill Competencies

Tasks I Do as an ESL Instructor	Competencies These Demonstrate
Lesson Planning	Devising measurable learning outcomes, curriculum mapping, developing clear communication policies
Assessment	Determining validity reliability, creating variety, providing effective delivery methods, creating rubrics (rubric training materials)
Materials Development	Analyzing effective learning activities, utilizing design skills
Student Counseling and Advising	Appropriately leveraging campus resources, implementing important customer service
Teacher-Led Professional Development	Devising needs assessments for training, utilizing ADDIE model (Ref), implementing constructive feedback models, working well on a tram (collaborative)
Incorporate Technology (LMS, G Suite, Applications)	Analyzing and implementing effective technology applications and techniques

Pascucci in Fisher, O’Reilly, Mac Donald, Pascucci, and Shida (2018).

The analysis in Table 1 reflects a classroom teacher’s self-assessment of competencies to successfully apply, interview, and transition from a classroom teacher at a university intensive English program (IEP) to an online course designer at a university.

Based on the sample skills competencies assessment within ELT, I now move to address how drawing on skillsets outside ELT can inform ELT instructional practice. I use a generic example of how one component of my previous professional experience, working in an artisanal bread bakery, has informed my past six years of acquiring an understanding of agriculture in gardening/hobby farming.

Biga, in the Italian style of bread-making, is a thick, clumpy mixture of flour, water, and yeast that is left to ferment at room temperature for a lengthy amount of time, before being combined with fresh, dry dough ingredients to make bread. The biga mixture is not fully depleted each time a portion is used, and the remaining biga is *fed* an appropriate proportion of flour and water at the appropriate hourly or daily intervals. To have good bread, you need a good biga. Then, you need a skilled understanding of how much dough to mix in a vat that is the size of a small jacuzzi to not over develop the gluten, and then, you need to know the amount of time needed for it to rest and rise in an uncontrolled warehouse environment. Next, you have to possess the skills to roll hundreds of loaves by hand without overdeveloping the gluten once again, and yes, letting them all rise before baking in an uncontrolled warehouse environment. Finally, the loaves are baked in an industrial oven with rotating shelves, larger than any pizza oven you have seen, with extreme heat being released. As each shelf rotates by, the ready loaves need to be pulled and others left as the heat distribution is not usually even. And yes, all this is just to make the early morning quota for lunch restaurant service deliveries, and then, the same thing is required for early afternoon restaurant dinner service deliveries (see Table 2).

TABLE 2. Mini-Sample for Evaluating Non-ELT Skill Competencies

Tasks I Did as an Artisanal Bread Baker	Competencies These Demonstrate for Gardening/Hobby Farming	Benefit for Gardening/Hobby Farming
Biga, starting and feeding	Understanding the value of water composition, flour type, and quality and time with no seeming output (i.e., reward).	Knowing that good soil, seed quality, and planting impact the outcome.
Hourly, daily, weekly, and ongoing attention to bread-making process simultaneously	Dough is a live being and needs to be developed and cared for as vegetables would be cared for in the refrigerator or at room temperature. The baking of bread, like cooking meat, is food science and changes the structure of the molecules of which it is composed and requires understanding.	The ongoing attention to, and assessment of, developing plants on various levels that change over time as they develop.
Manual operation of semi-heavy equipment: jacuzzi-size mixer and industrial-size oven (the size of most commercial walk-ins), and so on.	Using semi-heavy equipment to work a delicate process and the physical strength to operate and clean such equipment.	Ability to understand how manual and mechanized agriculture tools are part of the manual human process.

For humor, but in truth, a stint in an abattoir and commercial commissary receiving whole tuna for breakdown would offer much the same sample skills transfer to gardening/hobby farming and also ELT. Yet bread seemed more appropriate as an example.

APPLICATION FOR READERS

I recommend that you do as Pomarici and I have done; that is, take the time to examine what skillsets you have from previous professions and/or past or current hobbies. By doing so, you can explicitly leverage these skills in your classroom practice. I possess a culinary arts degree with 10 years of formal professional employment, among them as a hotel and restaurant pastry chef. And before that, professional experiences building my skillset that permitted that career path. My colleague, Pomarici, aside from his professional experiences outside of foreign language teaching (FLT), is presently a longstanding skilled amateur athlete, having represented the U.S. (note: he's Italian by birth and now a U.S. citizen) internationally. We are better educators for reflecting on what other fields have provided us as skillsets, and we encourage others to do so.

Table 3 is a simple, truncated sample frame that readers can use to begin their own journey of reflection of their dynamic selves.

TABLE 3. Sample Frame for Evaluating Non-ELT Skill Competencies for ELT

Task I Did as a/an [⋯].	Competencies These Demonstrate	Benefit for ELT

To readers, I recommend Stillwell's (2013, 2015) books, as they consist of individual accounts of how experiences and skillsets outside of ELT have informed teachers in ELT. Each chapter is an account from one individual and offers practical information. This article only reflects my experiences and my interpretation and use of Stillwell's publications.

CONCLUSION

I suggest a journey of reflection for readers of engaging with the topic of skill transfer. It has informed my colleague and myself. Our engagement with the topic has been provided in this summary of the 2019 invited speaker session delivered by me. The article has emphasized that reflection on skillsets from outside experiences is essential for ELT educators. I have done the same and have connected Stillwell's books to this process for readers.

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A Person-Centered Approach: What It Means and Why It Matters

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Introduction

"What is the purpose of language teaching?" It is a fundamental question that we all ask ourselves intermittently over the course of our careers. Or, at least, we should. In my own case – although I may not have asked as frequently or as probingly as I should have done – over the years, the answers I have come up with have evolved significantly. In this short piece, I intend to discuss those changing perspectives and connect them to shifting macro-approaches to language education. Through this discussion, I hope to outline a newer understanding of the role of language teaching more consistent with the experience of teachers working in contexts where language education exists primarily as a compulsory component of the formal curriculum.

Teacher-Centered Language Education

In the early years, my understanding of the function of a language teacher was very clear and very simple: Language teachers were there to teach language. And this was very much in accordance with the prevailing educational climate of the day – it was quite a long time ago! – and the ways in which I had been trained as a language teacher. Going back thirty years or so, foreign language education was very much a teacher-centered activity. As language teachers, our twin tasks were to deepen our knowledge of the language we were teaching and to broaden our repertoire of teaching techniques. The practical challenge for the language teacher was then to apply the appropriate teaching technique to the language point being taught, based on the assumption that learning would then occur. Of course, this represents something of a simplification, but it is not too far from the reality of how language teaching was discussed back then, both formally and informally. The fact that learning rarely occurred as planned was usually attributed to either of two factors. In public, teachers would pass responsibility to learners and their failings, while in private they would worry about their own shortcomings as teachers. From a research perspective, the differences in learning outcomes were generally attributed to aptitude, the cognitive capacity to learn a language.

Fortunately, very fortunately, the situation was showing signs of change by the time I started language teaching. Foreign language education was beginning a move away from teacher-centered approaches to more learner-centered ones in which language learning outcomes were no longer seen as simply a product of teachers and teaching. There is now a much greater awareness of, and interest in, the contributions language learners make to their own learning.

Learner Contributions to Language Learning

Teacher-centered approaches to language learning were based around ideas of a unidirectional transfer of mental knowledge. Language was essentially a finite set of rules and items; the task of the teacher was to pass on his/her knowledge of the language to learners, identifying what should be taught and when it should be learned. Accompanying a shift towards more individualistic societies – at least in the economically developed world – language educators began to reject this one-size-fits-all approach to teaching and consider approaches to teaching that accounted for individual variation across learners. The first coherent articulation of a learner-centered approach to language education came with the "good language learner" studies of the 1970s (Rubin, 1975). Without going into too much detail, these studies, exploring the ways in which successful language learners approached their learning and how they could serve as models for other, less successful, learners, paved the way for a version of language education that positioned learners as unique individuals with their own goals and experiences shaping learning.

In terms of theory and research, these learner contributions were operationalized through concepts such as strategies, the actions learners take to facilitate learning (Cohen, 2011; Oxford, 1990); styles, an individual's preferred ways of thinking and learning (Griffiths, 2012); and beliefs, the beliefs that learners hold about language or learning and how these beliefs direct learning behavior (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2003). However, by far the most extensively researched learner characteristic has been motivation. There has been a huge surge in interest and output in this area (Boo et al., 2015), with much of this research being premised on the idea that individual effort is at the heart of successful language learning, consistent with Corder's (1967) much-cited claim that "given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data" (p. 164). A key assumption behind much motivation research is that through understanding motivation we can improve classroom practice and learning outcomes, but in very different ways to those envisaged within a teacher-centered framework. Teacher-centered approaches to language education portrayed language teaching as a technical activity, positioning language teachers as technicians; in a learner-centered environment teachers become more human, inspirational, motivating figures in the lives of their learners.

A Person-Centered Approach

The growth in interest in language learner motivation has been a very positive development, facilitating a more inclusive and optimistic view of language education. However, another possible, more mundane, explanation for this increasing interest is the perception of a problem with the motivation of language learners. It is interesting to observe that bulk of the "surge" in motivation research has been conducted in contexts where foreign languages (mostly English) are taught as a compulsory school subject (Boo et al, 2015). From a motivational perspective, there has always been something problematic about compulsory subjects, since the notion of choice is fundamental to motivation. Nevertheless, motivation researchers have tended to investigate and discuss the motivation to learn a foreign language as a compulsory school subject using the same terms and concepts as when discussing the motivation of learners who have made an active decision to learn the language.

As a language teacher/motivation researcher, I have to confess that there have been times when I found myself lost in this chasm between motivation theory and classroom reality; one common feeling that I remember from early in my career as a researcher was the excitement of encountering new theoretical ideas being tempered by the frustration of attempting to apply those ideas in my classroom. "If only they were real language learners like in the research," I would find myself thinking about the people in my classrooms. In effect, I was blaming the learners for not fitting the theory rather than challenging the relevance of that theory to my particular teaching situation. Motivation research was treating the "language learner" as the unit of investigation; as an experienced practicing teacher I was aware that factors beyond the immediate domain of language learning were far more influential on events in my classroom.

Motivation research reveals a further fundamental question in regard to the nature of language learning as a compulsory subject. Motivation is about the initiating and sustaining of effort in pursuit of a particular goal (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). For language learners, this means effort toward the goal of improved language proficiency. When viewed through the prism of conventional, yet outdated, ideas of motivation, it is not actually that difficult for language teachers to motivate language learners. External motivation works in the short term. It works through the regulation of rewards – and sometimes punishment – by teachers, and the long-term negative consequences of this approach have been well documented in the literature (Kohn, 1993). However, goals and actions that a teacher decides are appropriate for a language learner may not be appropriate for that individual as a person. Fortunately. the latter part of the twentieth century witnessed a move away from ideas of externally imposed motivation towards theories that emphasize its internal nature, that people are motivated to do things that allow them to feel better about themselves. This shift has been particularly relevant to teachers in contexts where languages are taught as compulsory subjects as it allows us to look at motivation beyond linguistic proficiency and to prioritize learner well-being.

Increased awareness of the importance of motivation was key to ushering in learner-centered approaches to language education; increased research activity in language learner motivation has revealed a need to consider the whole person, not simply the language learner.

KEY CONCEPTS FOR A PERSON-CENTERED APPROACH

A person-centered approach challenges us to rethink some of the core concepts of both teaching and research. Early teacher-centered approaches had the advantage of clearly defined roles and clearly defined classroom interactions. Language education was based around language points and teaching techniques; learning was a unidirectional transfer of mental knowledge from teacher to student. The shift to learner-centered accounts of language education complicated the picture somewhat. Internal learner characteristics, such as motivation and strategies, became more prominent considerations and for teachers the notion of the task subsumed language points as the key organizational unit of teaching. A person-centered approach requires an expansion of the language education agenda beyond its narrow linguistic base; it requires us to develop existing concepts to consider the whole person and not just the language learner within that person.

Let us begin with motivation, the cornerstone of the learner-centered language education. The bulk of the research into language learner motivation tends to problematize a lack of motivation; it does not allow for the possibility that a lack of motivation to learn a foreign language may be appropriate for some individuals. For teachers of classes where language learning is a compulsory subject, this is not very helpful; as teachers we have a duty to all our students, not just those highly motivated to learn a foreign language. Of course, motivation is and will always be important, but it needs to be discussed in connection to other related constructs. One such construct beginning to attract serious attention is engagement (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). Engagement goes beyond motivation and is “less of a coherent theory than a promiscuously applicable construct for explaining learners’ activity in learning environments ... the hinge joint in learning a foreign language” (Oga-Baldwin et al., 2019, p. 106). Engagement offers language teachers a framework for understanding how learning activities can still be meaningful and rewarding for individuals who are not necessarily motivated as language learners.

Another concept that enables teachers to look at the whole person over the long term is interest (Fryer, 2019). Interest has long been conceptualized as a component of motivation, but when discussed on its own terms, this is a concept that allows teachers of foreign languages as a compulsory subject to reframe their teaching in a more positive way. An understanding of interest allows teachers to look beyond the immediate here and now, to regard language learning as a lifelong pursuit. Seen from this perspective, individuals may choose to engage with and disengage from language learning at various points across a lifetime; the most meaningful aim of language teaching, rather than improved linguistic proficiency, becomes the nurturing of a lifelong interest in individuals, equipping them with the means to re-engage with language learning when called for.

From a practical classroom perspective, a person-centered approach calls for a reconsideration of the notion of the learning task. The move towards task-based language teaching (Ellis, 2003) has been one of the most significant contributions to improved practice within foreign language education. Yet, there is something problematic about how we view tasks in contexts where languages are being taught as a compulsory subject. Task-based teaching is based on the idea of learning through meaningful use of the target language, but what constitutes meaningful use for learners who have little opportunity, or even desire, to use the language outside the classroom? Much of the discussion around task-based teaching relies on the view of a language learning task as some kind of rehearsal for "real-life" use outside the classroom (Long, 2015). However, for many of the world's language learners, the "real-life" use of a foreign language is the classroom. In such contexts, how do teachers design meaningful and rewarding language learning tasks?

For many young people in compulsory education, one of the biggest factors in their schooling is the maintenance and development of personal relationships. Hattie (2009) identifies the quality of relationships in the classroom, both peer-to-peer and student–teacher, as one of the major factors in successful learning. A person-centered view of language education allows teachers to explore ways in which foreign language learning can be used to improve relationships as well as language skills. At the heart of foreign language learning is communication, and it may be more meaningful for teachers to consider ways in which the target language can be oriented toward communication with classmates present in the immediate environment rather than improbable meetings with imaginary speakers of the target language at some unknown point in the future.

Summary

Foreign language learning as a compulsory subject is an unusual undertaking, especially in contexts where there is little or no contact with the target language. When measured purely in terms of linguistic gains, neither teachers nor learners are very successful. Yet, we still discuss language learning as if success in terms of improved language proficiency were the norm. In place of this discourse of failure, it is surely time to reconsider how we define successful language learning. A person-centered view of language education enables us to do this by looking beyond language and linguistics towards other disciplines. A person-centered view of language education allows us to consider the benefits language learning offers in terms of well-being, enhanced relationships, and long-term personal development; as language teachers we are not only developing language within learners, but we are also developing people through language.

The Author

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Research Session Papers

Game On: Impact of *Spaceteam ESL* on Listening Comprehension

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Videogames are increasingly being recognized (in research and otherwise) as a classroom tool for language instructors to educate students in an engaging way. This research project adds to the growing research in using videogames in the EFL classroom. *Spaceteam ESL* is one particular videogame that has the potential for benefitting language learning students in and out of the classroom. This study shows the benefit this videogame contributes to students' listening comprehension skills. This study is a quasi-experimental mixed- methods research project that examines the impact of playing *Spaceteam ESL* on Korean university students' English listening comprehension skills. Results suggest that students' listening comprehension skills are enhanced after playing this videogame throughout their semester. The results also suggest that students have a positive attitude towards certain kinds of videogames in the classroom as a means to improve their listening comprehension skill.

Introduction: Growth of Videogames

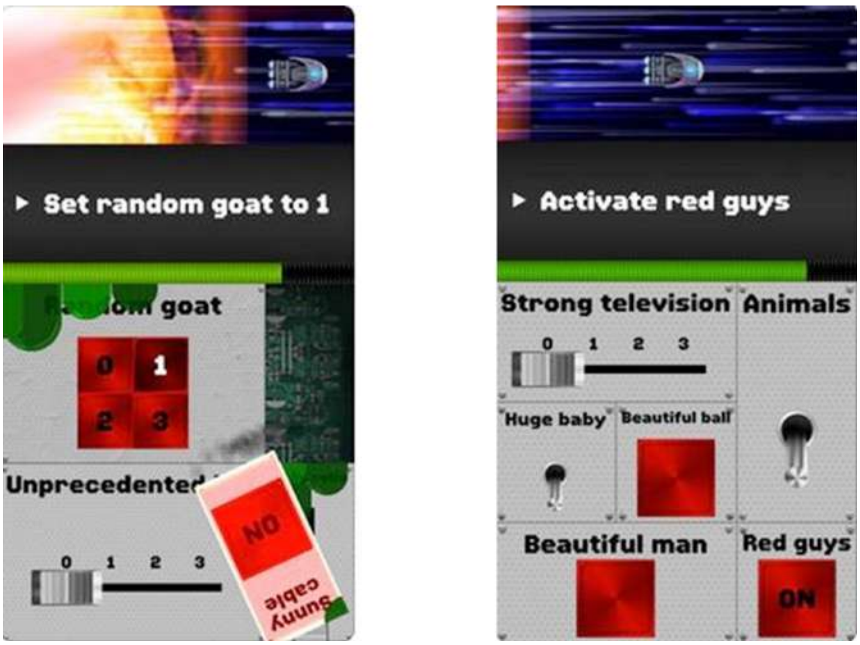
Digital technologies are increasingly playing a larger role in the lives of many people in recent days. This can be seen with the ubiquitous smartphone and tablets. Individuals are using these digital devices in many areas of their lives. Not only that, digital technology is influencing many different spheres of society including entertainment and education.

It is estimated that there are 2.2 billion active gamers in the world and 28.9 million of them are playing in South Korea – 53 percent of the population (Peterson, 2012). This makes South Korea the fourth largest videogame market globally (McDonald, 2018). Playing videogames has become such a common part of the social fabric that even a prestigious university has declared it as a major (Sorokanich, 2014). Needless to say, playing videogames among university students has become equally popular.

Introducing the Videogame

Spaceteam ESL is a videogame available for free iOS or Android download. This is how playing *Spaceteam ESL* works and helps students with their listening comprehension. In this game, two players play on separate smartphones or tablets but work cooperatively to win the game. On each players smartphone screen is displayed the game's user interface in two parts: the lower half of the screen includes an instrument panel with labeled instruments and the upper part of the screen is the horizontal command line bar. The words for the instruments are common English vocabulary (teacher-chosen or chosen by the game). The command line is where commands for the players to follow are displayed for a pre-determined period of time – usually about five seconds. (See Figure 1 for the screenshots of the game being played with example control panel names and commands in the display panel, in white).

FIGURE 1. Screenshots of *Spaceteam ESL's* User Interface



Note. Mobile phone screens show instrument panel and command line for Player 1 and Player 2.

The gameplay of this videogame makes the game silly, fun, and educational. During gameplay, players must listen carefully to their partner for commands to adjust their instruments that appear on their partner's command line. When the first player hears a command given by the second partner, the first player presses the appropriate instrument in a timely manner. At the same time, the student must tell their partner the commands on their own command line. Thus, players often need to tell their partner a command and listen for commands from their partner at the same time. This gameplay encourages students to communicate by listening and speaking clearly.

The research questions for this study were the following:

RQ1. What is the impact of playing *Spaceteam ESL* on students' listening comprehension?

RQ2. What are students' perceptions of using *Spaceteam ESL* during class time to enhance their listening comprehension skills?

Participants

The students for this study were Korean undergraduate university students studying in a mandatory "College English" course in which EFL communications skills are taught (i.e., speaking and listening). The university is located in Suwon, South Korea. The students were from a variety of majors. They ranged from 20 to 24 years of age with a mean age of 22. During the 15-week semester, each class met once per week for one 110-minute class that included a 10-minute break between the first 50 minutes of the class and the final 50 minutes of the class. Most of these 69 students had an intermediate level of English. Convenience sampling was used to create four intact classes: Students from two classes acted as the experimental group (n = 36 students), and students from two other classes were the control group (n = 33 students). The groups were considered sufficiently demographically similar (i.e., in age, gender, and language level). Any variations between these classes were found to be statistically insignificant.

Experiment

This quasi-experimental mixed-methods study used a pre-test and post-test design to respond to the research questions. To start with, a pre-test was administered to both groups. This was Part A of the Listening Comprehension section of a recent institutionalized version of the TOEFL iBt (ETS, 2018). A Cronbach's Alpha consistency test was run on the test. The resulting estimated Cronbach's Alpha for the best battery was 0.78. This value shows that this test has great constituency and is reliable enough to use for this study.

During the 15-week semester, students study and learn speaking and listening comprehension skills. The course objectives revolve around the theme of enhancing students skills in speaking and listening with the purpose of communicating. The objectives of the course emphasize the different subskills and knowledge that students need to be able to enhance their speaking and listening skills. Some of these listening skills are listening for gist, listening to short utterances. The speaking subskills include speaking about various topics such as giving locations or purchasing items at a clothing store. This course uses the coursebook *Basics in EFL 2*. Aside from the treatment time, students use this coursebook during the class period. Both the control group and experimental group used this coursebook.

The treatment for this study was for the experimental group to play the videogame entitled *Spaceteam ESL*. This videogame was played on students' smartphones – iOS or Android. Students downloaded it from the Android Play Store or Apple Store free of charge and installed it into their smartphones. One important necessity for this videogame to work is a stable wifi or Bluetooth connection between the players who are playing as one team. That is, the pair of players must create a wifi-mediated or Bluetooth-mediated "link" between one another. The videogame must recognize that they are using the same signal (whatever that may be).

After the treatment, the post-test was administered using the same test as the pre-test, and a survey was administered to the experimental group. The procedure of this treatment occurred over the entire 15-week semester in both the experimental group and the control group. During this time, for 15 minutes at the start of each class, students from the control group participated in listening activities based on the coursebook while students from the experimental group played *Spaceteam ESL*. A survey was also given to the experimental group about their perception of playing *Spaceteam ESL*.

Results

The results for this study were quite interesting and eye-opening. There was no statistically significant difference in the TOEFL pre-test scores between the experimental group and control group. In contrast to the pre-test scores, the post-test scores were significantly different. The post-test scores of the experimental group were significantly higher than the post-test scores of the control group. This answers research question 1 in the positive: Playing *Spaceteam ESL* helped students improve their listening skills. Playing this videogame during the whole semester significantly improved their listening comprehension skills. There may be several game-related reasons for this. One is that to play the game successfully, the student needs to be in a state of readiness to listen to his partner's commands. A second reason is that each student is motivated to listen to their partner's abrupt and unannounced commands so as to win the game. The third reason is that the student is motivated to instantly comprehend and react to the command of their partner.

Regarding research question 2, the completed questionnaire data from the control group and experiment group were extracted and analyzed. The questionnaire contained 20 questions to be analyzed. The purpose of administering this test was to examine the difference in students' perceptions of usefulness and relevance to helping improve listening comprehension skills between the control group and experimental group. The results of the survey showed students' felt and thought that playing the game helped them with their listening comprehension skills.

Nevertheless, the results provide insight into the role of digital technology in language learning and especially listening comprehension skills. The aim of this study was to determine the effects of using a piece of digital technology in enhancing students' listening comprehension skills – that is, by playing the videogame *Spaceteam ESL*. The study showed, through answering research question 1, that students playing this videogame during class significantly outperformed their counterparts doing traditional paper-based listening comprehension classroom activities. In addition, this study showed that students playing the videogame showed a more positive attitude and perception that playing the videogame contributed to their language learning more than the paper-based activities did. It can be concluded that a variety of classroom activities need to be included in listening comprehension classes. This research should not be taken to mean that paper-based listening comprehension activities are ineffective or viewed by students as ineffective. Instead, this research shows that such activities need to be included alongside other activities such as those that use digital technology like videogames.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is hoped that this research sheds light on the role of digital technology such as videogames in the language learning classroom. Future research could look at different ways that videogames can be integrated into the classroom or the classroom curriculum.

The Author

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Sans Forgetica: Typography's Effect on ESL/EFL Reading Comprehension

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Research has shown that when a learning task requires effort, desirable effort, it can improve the performance of the learning task. This is called *desirable difficulty*. The Sans Forgetica font was designed specifically to take advantage of this phenomenon by creating an unfamiliar, hard to read, disfluent font that forces the learner to increase the cognitive load on the learning task at hand. This study wanted to determine if the Sans Forgetica font would have an effect on reading comprehension of a group of Japanese university students learning English. Two groups were administered six reading passages that alternated between a desirable difficulty font, Sans Forgetica, and a control font, Century Schoolbook. The students were then given a short reading comprehension quiz. No significant difference was found in the mean scores of the two fonts. As expected, reading time was affected by the disfluent font.

INTRODUCTION

This paper covers an experiment that sought to examine the effects on the comprehension of reading passages when applying a concept called *desirable difficulty* with a group of Japanese university EFL students. Oppenheimer (2008) defines fluency as "the subjective experience of ease or difficulty with which we are able to process information" (p 237). Creating a *disfluent* situation means making the ability to process information more difficult. In the case of this paper, and many other educational settings studying the effect of disfluency on memory and/or comprehension, the disfluent situation will be visual impairment such as a degraded text, unfamiliar font, or in another way, simply harder to read. Overcoming such disfluent conditions, while maintaining a desirable effort, affects and facilitates beneficial encoding and retrieval processes. In other words, desirable difficulty is when "processing difficulty at either encoding or retrieval that improves long-term retention" (Rosner et al., 2015, p. 11). Yue, Castel, and Bjork (2013) write about a similar concept called the *perceptual-interference effect*, which is where "perceptual disfluency leads to improved memory performance" (p. 229). Another important aspect of desirable difficulty is the *desirable* half of the term. The learning task attempting to put this theory into practice must be considered one of a desirable nature. Bjork and Bjork (2011) sum up the difference between desirable and undesirable difficulty:

> Desirable difficulties, versus the array of undesirable difficulties, are desirable because they trigger encoding and retrieval processes that support learning,

> comprehension, and remembering. If, however, the learner does not have the background knowledge or skills to respond to them successfully, they become undesirable difficulties. (p. 58)

These concepts have been studied and applied a great deal to general education contexts (Diemand-Yauman, Oppenheimer, & Vaughan, 2011). Applying these concepts to ESL/EFL context has received much less attention.

The idea behind desirable difficulty is that by increasing the cognitive load, a learner will have more deliberate and deeper processing (Alter et al., 2007). Few studies in the ESL/EFL context have studied desirable difficulty, but some similar and related concepts have received attention in which the increase on the cognitive load are key to the learning process of L2. One such notion is *noticing*, which is the idea that "conscious attention to the form of input is necessary to subsequent second language (L2) development" (Robinson, 1995, p. 284). Another related concept is *attending*, which is simply the process where an ESL/EFL learner slows down to attend to a word (Joe, 1995). Cacali (2016) is one of the studies that did apply desirable difficulty learning to a group of Japanese learners of English. Cacali applied the theory to vocabulary learning and testing. A list of 15 TOEIC words where given to the students in class. Half were printed in an easy-to-read, 14 pt., black Calibri font and the other half were printed in a harder-to-read, 14 pt., gray Minya Nouvelle font. Contrary to similar studies, in general education settings, with learners using their native language, Cacali (2016) showed that the disfluent font had a lower mean score on all the vocabulary review quizzes.

Font Selection

Screws (2016) conducted a study on two font types to determine if there were any effects on reading comprehension. A serif and sans serif font were used for comparison (see Figure 1 for an example). Screws (2016) examined fixation time, saccade length, words per minute, re-fixations, and words between fixations. No significant difference was found, and the conclusion drawn in Screws (2016) was that the fonts chosen where still too similar.

Figure 1. Sans Serif (left) and Serif Font Examples

For this study, in order to increase the condition that this study was examining a disfluent learning situation, a truly unique and hard to read font was located, Sans Forgetica. Sans Forgetica was developed at RMIT University and is available for free download from the RMIT website (RMIT University, 2018a). The font was "specifically designed to enhance memory retention" (RMIT University, 2018b). It was designed by a multidisciplinary team of designers and behavioral scientists with the aim to obtain the optimal desirable difficulty font.

The control font chosen for this study is Century Schoolbook. This is a very common serif font. It was designed for and is used extensively in textbooks as it was designed to be an easy to read font. See Figure 2 and Figure 3 for a text example of each font.

FIGURE 2. Example Text in Sans Forgetica Font

Reaching the top of a mountain is a thrilling experience.

FIGURE 3. Example Text in Century Schoolbook Font

Reaching the top of a mountain is a thrilling experience.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1. Does the use of the San Forgetica font increase the reading comprehension and recall among Japanese EFL learners from short reading passages?

RQ2. How are the reading times effected by the use of the Sans Forgetica font versus the more familiar Century Schoolbook font?

METHOD

The participants in this study were 50 first-year students at a private Japanese university. All of the students were of Japanese nationality and were enrolled in a mandatory English class. These 50 students were divided into two groups. The estimated English proficiency level of these students was around CEFR A1 to A2 (determined by TOEIC scores and entrance exam results). A pilot reading passage was chosen and administered in order to better gauge the reading difficulty level and the students average reading speed to determine how much time to allow for the main text administrations. After the initial pilot administration was completed and analyzed, an additional six texts were selected for the study. Each reading passage was about 400 words (+/-5 words). The Flesch Reading Ease score ranged from 80.5 to 86.5 and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level ranged from 3.7 to 4.6. The goal was for the reading to be as easy as realistically possible for this word length and age group. For each of the six administrations, half the texts would be printed using the control font, Century Schoolbook. The other half of the texts were printed using the disfluent font, San

Forgetica. Care was taken to match line spacing, font size, and word spacing so that only the fonts themselves were different. The students who received the control and disfluent fonts were switched in each administration. After the students finished reading, they recorded their reading times for each administration by looking at a stopwatch displayed on an overhead screen. After the texts were collected, a 10-question multiple-choice comprehension quiz was administered and checked.

RESULTS

For each reading administration an independent *t*-test was run to determine if any differences in quiz scores in the Sans Forgetica font and Century Schoolbook font (control) reached significance. The statistics program used for this test is a free web-based system hosted at langtest.jp. None of the six administrations returned statistically significant results when examining the difference in quiz scores (see Table 1). These results suggest several possibilities, the Sans Forgetica font did not cause a desirable difficulty effect, a desirable difficulty effect did not improve reading comprehension in this group of EFL students, or the testing conditions were inadequate to perceive any desirable difficulty effects. Next, the reading times where then examined for each administration (see Table 2). Three administrations (2, 4, and 5) did not return significant results in the different average reading times. There was a significant difference in reading times in administrations 1, 3, and 6. For administration 1 there was a significant difference in the average reading time (in seconds) for the control font (M = 225, SD = 10.43) and Sans Forgetica font (M = 328, SD = 7.69); $t(45)$ = -7.77, p < 0.001. For administration 3 there was a significant difference in the average reading time (in seconds) for the control font (M = 225, SD = 10.43) and Sans Forgetica font (M = 328, SD = 7.69); $t(45)$ = -7.77, p < 0.001. For administration 6 there was a significant difference in the average reading time (in seconds) for the control font (M = 225, SD = 10.43) and Sans Forgetica font (M = 328, SD = 7.69); $t(45)$ = -7.77, p < 0.001.

TABLE 1. Reading Comprehension Quiz Results

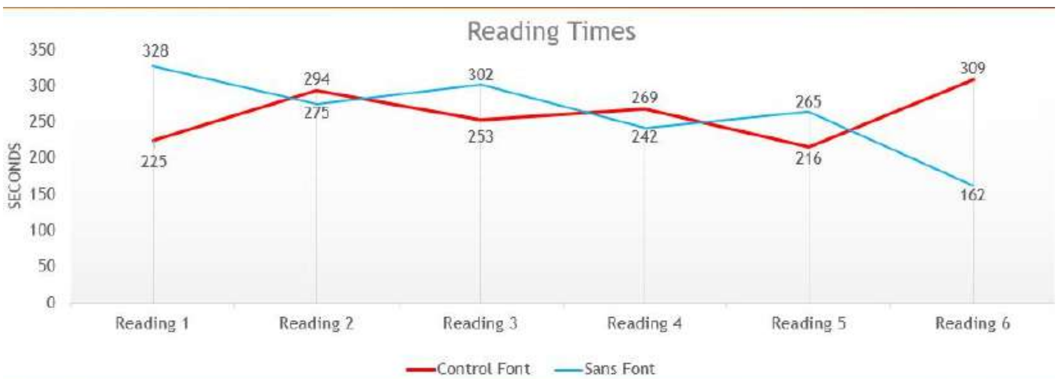
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Control font mean	6.52 (*n*-25)	6.84 (*n*-19)	7 (*n*-26)	7.95 (*n*-21)	6.08 (*n*-26)	7.52 (*n*-21)
San Forgetica mean	6.5 (*n*-22)	6.73 (*n*-26)	6.45 (*n*-22)	8.79 (*n*-28)	5.19 (*n*-21)	7.54 (*n*-26)
Control *SD* / standard error mean	1.58 / .32	1.77 / .41	1.36 / .27	1.16 / .25	1.98 / .39	1.5 / .33
Sans *SD* / standard error mean	1.88 / .42	1.76 / .34	1.82 / .39	1.75 / .33	1.63 / .36	1.92 / .38
t value	.04	.21	1.19	-1.89	1.65	-.03
df	43	43	46	47	45	45
Sig value	p < 0.969	p < 0.835	p < 0.241	p < 0.065	p < 0.106	p < 0.977
Effect size	d = .01	d = .06	d = .34	d = -0.55	d = .48	d = -.01

Table 2. Reading Time Results

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Control font mean in seconds	225 (*n*-25)	294 (*n*-19)	253 (*n*-26)	269 (*n*-21)	216 (*n*-26)	309 (*n*-21)
Sans font mean in seconds	328 (*n*-22)	275 (*n*-26)	302 (*n*-22)	242 (*n*-28)	265 (*n*-21)	162 (*n*-26)
Control *SD* / standard error mean	52 / 10.43	46 / 10.31	34 / 6.72	63 / 13.73	41 / 8	53 / 11.5
Sans *SD* / standard error mean	36 / 7.69	48 / 9.4	60 / 12.69	44 / 8.25	49 / 10.59	57 / 11.1
t value	-7.77	1.32	-3.6	1.78	-3.74	9.12
df	45	44	46	47	45	45
Sig value	$p < 0.001$	$p < 0.193$	$p < 0.001$	$p < 0.081$	$p < 0.106$	$p < 0.001$
Effect size	$d = 2.27$	$d = .39$	$d = 1.04$	$d = 0.51$	$d = 1.1$	$d = 2.68$

When the reading times are visualized in a graph (see Figure 4), two points of interest emerge. More data points would surely make this clearer, but looking at the graph (and subsequent data), it appears that the control font reading times are stable, while the Sans Forgetica font shows a general trend of decreased reading times, possibly indicating the students acclimating to the unfamiliar font. Another point of interest that should not be dismissed is in the reading times for administration 6. The quiz scores for this administration were almost identical and have no significant difference (M = 7.52 and M = 7.54), but the reading averages appear to be outliers. It is unclear why this occurred. It might be from misreported data or possibly some external circumstance of the testing conditions that day. The data input in the analysis was double-checked, so that has been ruled out as a possibility.

Figure 4. Reading Times Graph



Discussion

The most obvious concern raised in this study is not only did the use of San Forgetica not have any statistical effect on the scores of the comprehension test, it did have a statistically detrimental effect on reading speed in two of the six administrations, with one possibly being an outlier, and the other three returning no statistical significance. A result similar to this was observed in Soleimani and Mohammadi (2012). In their study, they examined a serif and sans serif font, 10 pt. vs 12 pt. fonts, and set (single space) vs double spacing. None of these factors had any significant effect on recall or comprehension. Font selection and space had no significant effect on reading speed. When comparing the 10 pt. to the 12 pt. font, the difference in reading speed was found to be significant, the 12 pt. condition was faster. As Screws (2016) pointed out, a simple serif and sans serif font are too similar and familiar to have an effect on reading. But a 10 pt. font is harder to read. Their conclusion was that the “speed of reading ... is more sensitive to typographical factors than comprehension and recall” (Soleimani & Mohammadi, 2012, p. 214). In what appears yet another reason not to apply something like Sans Forgetica to reading texts for ESL/EFL is that the impact on reading speed is much greater in L2 readers compared to L1, with L2 proficiency not having an effect on this phenomenon. Gauvin and Hulstijn (2010) examined the reading speeds of L1 and L2 readers using a control font and a degraded (harder to read) font. They found that when reading in a degraded font, the reading speeds in L2 readers was effected more than that in L1 readers. However, they found that the degraded font’s effect on L2 reading speed was not affected by L2 proficiency.

If San Forgetica does prove, in further studies to be a valuable tool in applying desirable difficulty, a major concern is acclamation to the font. Eventually it will become as familiar as any other commonly seen font. In this study, it has already been observed that the average reading speed appears to improve as the exposure to the Sans Forgetica font increased. Each group read three passages in Sans Forgetica, and with each passage their average times decreased. That is roughly 1200 total words in the Sans Forgetica font that each group was exposed to. Following this study, it seems safe to assume two things in regard to using a font like Sans Forgetica in order to apply the desired difficulty learning technique: (a) It is probably best to use this font for single vocabulary words (or short phrases) instead of lengthy reading of any kind, unless (b) some sort of dynamic, ever-changing font could be utilized in order to maintain the unfamiliar and disfluent condition of the font. An idea similar to this has already been developed for children. Lau and Chu (2015) discuss what they call a kinetic font. The aim of their research was to develop an interactive and animated typography to enhance the learning in children aged 2 to 7 years old. Their proposed font is not only animated, having movement, but changes in size, and color to make it exciting and interesting for children. These same types of manipulations could assumingly be reversed: Instead of making a word more appealing, they could be made more unfamiliar, disfluent, and degraded, changing dynamically and periodically to slow down the acclimation to the disfluent and degraded presentation of the chosen material.

In Cacali (2016), a theory was put forth that cannot be dismissed in this study either. When using a disfluent English font, be it Sans Forgetica or some other degraded or disfluent text condition, there may be a contextual reason that is causing inference. That is, “every English grapheme is already outside of the Japanese writing system” (Cacali, 2016, p. 69), which was the contextual setting for both this study and Cacali (2016). The number of writing systems that are completely different from a Latin-based grapheme (like English) is quite numerous. World Standards (2019) estimates that only 2.6 billion people (about 36% of the world's population) use a Latin-derived writing system. It is possible that even a familiar English font like Century Schoolbook, is still a disfluent font for students who are far more familiar with the Japanese kanji and kana writing system (or other non-Latin-based systems). This could mean that this study was simply comparing two disfluent fonts, albeit of varying degree. This should be taken into account in further studies when trying to determine at what point in an ESL/EFL learner's development something like Sans Forgetica would be introduced. To a 10-year Japanese school child, Sans Forgetica would be as unfamiliar as practically any Latin-based font. As stated in the results section, the outcome of the analysis suggests several possibilities, the Sans Forgetica font did not cause a desirable difficulty effect (possibly because it was an undesirable difficulty), a desirable difficulty effect did not improve reading comprehension in this group of EFL students (for example, due to the situation described in the previous paragraph), or the testing conditions were inadequate to perceive any desirable difficulty effects. Regarding inadequate testing, this could be because we used short reading passages instead of single words or short phrases. However, it is suspected that the time between the administration of the reading passages and the comprehension quizzes was also too short. Many scholars examining desirable difficulty define it as a condition at the encoding or retrieval stages that improves long-term retention (Rosner et al., 2015).

In strict psychological terms, generally there are three types of memory that are accepted nomenclature: *short-term*, *working*, and *long-term* memory. Short-term memory is technically only seconds long used for single words or a short string of numbers like a telephone number (Miller, 1955). It can be argued that this experiment still tested the long-term retention of the students, as opposed to the short-term, since long-term memory can be measured anywhere from minutes to decades, the results of this test may have been different if we had expanded the time between the reading text administrations and the comprehension quiz anywhere from 15 minutes to even one or two weeks.

Sans Forgetica and the application of desirable difficulty in the ESL/EFL context deserves more research. For further studies in this area it is recommended that reading passages be abandoned for single words or possibly short phrases. We also suggest not only extending the time between task and recall events, but examining various time spans to determine if there is a point that desirable difficulty possibly begins, is most pronounced, and degrades.

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Complex Emotions and Sense of Writing in English: A Case Study of Three Japanese EFL Writers

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This study examined second language (L2) writers' felt sense of writing and explained the interpretation of each writer's felt sense of writing. This study utilized case studies together with inductive thematic and qualitative analyses. Three Japanese undergraduate participants' worksheets based on Gendlin's Focusing and Gendlin and Henricks's Thinking at the Edge (TAE), and individual interviews were included for analysis. The results were categorized with a coding system and divided into thematic categories to reveal emergent themes. The findings indicated that participants could develop their writing fluency in L2 and understand the characteristics of writing in a different language. Although they had difficulty in expressing themselves in English, they found that writing in L2 helped them gain logical writing ability and a feeling of accomplishment through English writing practice.

INTRODUCTION

Emotions in second language (L2) writing have been studied to address the effects of negative feelings on language development. A line of research on emotional studies of L2 writing has examined L2 writers' feelings towards writing in English and how L2 writers manage their emotions during their writing (Chen, 2004) from the viewpoints of second language acquisition. These studies focused primarily on the writers' psychological anxiety towards L2 writing and investigated how affective factors influenced writer performance and skill development (Fartoukh et al., 2012; Gabryś-Barker & Bielska, 2013; Han & Hiver, 2018).

Previous investigations regarding emotions in L2 writing have highlighted the importance of exploring the writer's inner feelings and sought alternative approaches to teaching writing. Whereas such inquiries examined the learners' emotions critically, less attention has been paid to emotions that are difficult to express in words, which is called felt sense. Such unverbalized feelings conceived by the writer are necessary to portray the writer's complicated inner feelings and sense beyond separating emotions into merely positive or negative stances (Fujieda, 2019; Gkonou et al., 2017).

This current study addresses this issue by elucidating the felt sense of writing in English perceived by three Japanese undergraduate students as an ongoing research project supported by Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research. Drawing from the framework for Focusing (Gendlin, 1978) and Thinking at the Edge (TAE; Gendlin & Hendricks, 2004), this study explores the following research questions:

RQ1. What felt sense of writing in L2 do writers have?
RQ2. How can the felt sense of each writer be interpreted?

EMOTIONS OF L2 ENGLISH WRITING

Emotional studies in L2 writing have been prominent in examining learners' anxiety as a negative psychological aspect (Gabrys-Barker & Bielska, 2013; MacIntyre et al., 2016). Most studies have focused mainly on the development and performance of writing skills with measurement scales, such as the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz et al., 1998), the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (Chen, 2004), and the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Test (Daly & Miller, 1975). These quantitative inquires have convincingly and objectively demonstrated the degree of language attainment and acquisition. However, such investigations have offered little in-depth analysis of the writer's emotional feelings. As several factors are intertwined in a complex manner in human emotions, emotions of L2 writing need to be interpreted to understand the inner feelings of the writer holistically. In particular, emotions that are difficult to express in words are essential for exploring the writer's insider view because emotions and feelings are sometimes genuine and profound, but tangled and implicit at the same time (Dewaele, 2010). Human emotions involve unverbalized feelings and sense called "bodily felt sense" (Gendlin & Hendricks, 2004). To elicit the felt sense of the writer, which is hard to articulate, a TAE approach can be an innovative alternative to examine writers' emotions.

FOCUSING AND THINKING AT THE EDGE

Eugene Gendlin (1978) proposed a psychotherapy approach to grasp one's unverbalized feelings gradually and interpret them. Gendlin (1978, 2004) and Rome (2014) argued that one cannot necessarily articulate his or her feelings precisely because one perceives inexpressible sense, but one's body knows. Gendlin termed this condition as "felt sense" and identified the Focusing approach as a structured process to understand the meaning of felt sense and identified the Focusing approach as a structured process to understand the meaning of felt sense. Focusing includes six steps (clearing a space, felt sense, handling, resonating, asking, and receiving) to stimulate one's felt sense even if the felt sense is ambiguous and abstract.

Gendlin and Hendricks (2004) proposed a structured, concept-formation method called Thinking at the Edge (TAE). The purpose of this TAE approach is to help one verbalize their implicit and vague sense with explicit words step by step. As Gendlin and Hendricks argued, humans have abstract and intuitive felt sense, which is hard to articulate. The TAE methods were created as a process-based method to understand implicit experience, knowledge, and intelligence of the body by creating meaning. The TAE method follows three major stages, each of which requires four or five phases. In this method, a total of 14 steps encourages one to verbalize and theorize the felt sense by responding to several structured procedures.

METHODS

This study examines the emotions of writing of three Japanese undergraduate students by exploring aspects of their emotions towards writing in English; this examination was conducted by eliciting their felt sense using the TAE approach. In this research, a qualitative case study was employed to demonstrate the relevance of experiences and practices of English writing with a holistic description that relied on analyzing the data sources (TAE worksheets and an individual interview; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Yin, 2018).

Participants

In this study, three Japanese undergraduate students agreed to participate voluntarily, after they were assembled using a convenience sampling method. The research participants, Ami, Chika, and Nozomi (pseudonyms), were all female students majoring in English at a private four-year university in Japan. Their English proficiency was intermediate; their basic score on the TOEIC test was approximately 500. During the research period (October 2017 to February 2018), Nozomi was a sophomore, and Ami and Chika were fourth-year students. Their backgrounds in practicing English writing were quite similar. In their high school years, they focused mainly on accurate sentence-making practice by translating Japanese into English for their university entrance exams. After entering university, they had experience in using patterns to create certain sentence structures (e.g., comparison, cause-effect, and argumentative) in a paragraph. Ami and Chika learned an academic style of writing in English because they took a specialized elective course, Advanced Writing, during the research period.

Data Collection and Analysis

To obtain the data of the participants, I requested that they join a workshop of TAE-based reflection activities individually. In the workshop, I guided them on how to illustrate their felt sense of writing in English based on the worksheets (Tokumaru, 2008). As mentioned, the TAE approach includes three major steps, each of which provides several reflective activities. Since this present study was a pilot study, I highlighted five worksheets to understand the participants' general felt sense towards writing in English. The first part, capturing a broad meaning of feelings and sense, emphasized a single sentence about writing in English (Worksheet 1). The second part aimed to abstract their felt sense with pattern extraction and intersect form by their daily experiences (Worksheets 2 and 3). The final section organized and theorized their felt sense logically (Worksheets 4 and 5). After completing the workshop, I conducted an unstructured interview individually in Japanese based on their worksheets that lasted approximately 60 minutes. Then, the interviews were transcribed into English with their permission.

Data analysis of this research involved three phases. First, all worksheets were read, reread, and translated into English carefully. Then, member checking with the participants was done to confirm the translated meanings of TAE worksheets and interviews. The first step was meant to produce the categories based on the topical entries considered pertinent to English writing. Afterwards, all data sources were saved in NVivo 11 Pro, a qualitative research application, to recheck the rich data sources following the recursive process in qualitative approaches (Boystzis, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). In the second phase, new categories were established, comparing the documents and interview transcripts of the participants with the existing codes, as necessary. Finally, I assessed the credibility of the coding systems and categories by revisiting the coding schemes used in the databank in NVivo to lend credence to the research findings.

RESULTS

The findings regarding the felt sense of the three participants towards writing in English revealed three major issues: developing their language skills, gaining logical ability, and proving their accomplishment of writing in L2. This section addresses each issue with excerpts from the participants.

Developing Their Language Skills

The first point was related to the participants' ability to develop their English writing through several practices. Table 1 summarizes the general felt sense towards writing in English.

TABLE 1. General Felt Sense of the Participants

Participants	Felt Sense	One Sentence
Ami	focus, difficult, word/grammar, continuous, memory, repeat	I don't have to be afraid of making mistakes.
Chika	importance, achievement, grammar, learning	Writing in English is important.
Nozomi	hard, bothersome, word/grammar, structure, translation	I have to specify the meaning of English sentences.

As all participants used relatively negative words, they did not demonstrate an interest in English writing. For example, "I'm often reluctant to write, so it takes time to start to write" (Nozomi's Worksheet 1), and "When I finished writing, I always felt satisfied, but I don't want to review my writing. ... My English writing made me feel annoyed" (Nozomi's interview). Nozomi, especially, showed reluctance to write through the TAE reflective activities. However, the participants were able to learn various characteristics and differences between Japanese and English writing. Their worksheets revealed the following: "Through writing, I can develop my English grammar skills" (Ami's Worksheet 1); "Writing helped me memorize (gramma[r], words, characteristics of English writing) and learn a lot" (Chika's Worksheet 3); and "I know that writing is frustrated, but I can think a lot from different points [of writing]" (Nozomi's Worksheet 3). Even though the general felt sense did not adopt a positive stance towards English writing, the "one sentence" section revealed the writers' mind: what they should do to write in English.

Gaining Logical Ability

The second point, gaining logical ability, stemmed from the participants' practice of classroom writing. The participants mainly reflected on their writing practices in their classes by intersecting their felt sense of writing and their daily life. Ami indicated that she had difficulty in expressing herself in English clearly, but engaging in English writing contributed to understanding the logical structure of English writing. She stated, "When I write in English logically again and again, my writing ability will be acquired" (Ami's Worksheet 4).

Chika noted that the practice of English writing in class was effective for developing her language skills. She said, "I practiced writing in English a lot at university. Writing has helped me learn English further" (Chika's Worksheet 4). By understanding various features of English writing, she learned organized and reader-based writing. Chika also answered, "Writing is the best way to learn and develop English. ... I write a lot to make my body know the importance of writing" (Chika's interview).

Providing a Sense of Accomplishment by Writing in L2

The last theme presented the participants' sense of accomplishment of writing in L2 drawn from their theorizing of felt sense. As the general felt sense towards English writing demonstrated, the participants found it difficult to hold a positive image. However, ultimately, the three participants theorized their felt sense of writing in English as an achievement of writing in a different language. For instance, the excerpts from their worksheets included the following: "Writing needs more knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. ... I don't like to write in English, but I always feel happy when my writing word was over" (Ami's Worksheet 5); "Making efforts on writing leads to a success of developing English" (Chika's Worksheet 5); and "When I write in English, I feel like a foreigner. ... I learned a lot and sometimes felt that my language skills were developed through writing" (Nozomi's Worksheet 5).

Discussion

The current study examined three Japanese undergraduate students' felt sense towards writing in English. The TAE-based reflective activities described some common characteristics in writing in L2.

One result was that participants were inclined to present their learning and performance negatively at first. This was not surprising; however, their reflective activities based on the TAE approach presented a clear meaning of the writers' felt sense towards writing in L2. As Gendlin and Hendricks (2004) proposed, TAE helps people to interpret their feelings toward writing and articulate their theory (outcomes of the felt sense).

The contribution of this present study to the field of L2 writing is to provide empirical support for Gendlin's (1978) and Gendlin and Hendricks's (2004) theoretical argument for the TAE method; the TAE approaches serve as a tool to elicit unverbalized human feelings (i.e., felt sense). This study reveals that TAE methods can be employed to explore the writer's inner feelings and felt sense, by expressing their feelings and sense using several procedures. With the advancement in TAE-based research on emotional studies (Gendlin, 2004; Tokumaru, 2011), this study stresses the significance of examining emotional studies with TAE as an alternative approach and helps researchers provoke writers' into revealing their complex web of inner feelings and sense.

CONCLUSIONS

The current study explored the value of articulating the felt sense of three Japanese undergraduate learners towards writing in English. This study provides some empirical support for theoretical assumptions for the TAE approach: (a) using Focusing and TAE methods helps writers to better understand their inner feelings and (b) data on TAE activities are useful for teachers and researchers to verbalize and analyze feelings that are hard to express in words.

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Contextualized Versus Decontextualized Vocabulary Learning as a Pre-reading Task

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Adding context to a vocabulary learning task should increase retention by inducing more evaluation and thus deeper processing of the target words. This study points out issues with previous studies that failed to find a significant positive effect for contextualization and investigates the effectiveness of a contextualized vocabulary learning task designed to circumvent these issues.

INTRODUCTION

What makes a task effective for vocabulary learning? Laufer and Hustijn's (2001) Involvement Load Hypothesis (ILH) has garnered growing support (Hustijn & Laufer, 2001; Kim, 2008; Rott, 2012) and holds that the effectiveness of a vocabulary learning task may be predicted based on its level of *task-induced involvement* which comprises the need to learn the target words, the extent to which learners must search for the word meanings, and the amount of evaluation involved in studying those words. Based on the ILH, we would expect that the effectiveness of a simple paired-associate learning (PAL) task, in which target words are presented paired with their meanings, should be increased by adding context to the word-associate presentations. Adding context to PAL should promote greater evaluation or the comparing/combining of the target words with other words. According to the ILH, this greater evaluation should lead to higher retention due to the increased probability of noticing relevant information related to the word (Schmidt, 1990) and more varied and robust associations made between that information and the word form through the resultant depth of processing (Lockhart & Tulving, 1975). However, studies comparing contextualized to decontextualized PAL have so far shown that decontextualized PAL is as effective or more effective than contextualized PAL (Dempster, 1987; Griffin, 1992; Laufer & Shmueli, 1997; Mondria, 2003; Seibert, 1930; Webb, 2007). This apparent discrepancy between theory and practice deserves investigation.

The first issue to note is that none of the previously mentioned studies supporting the ILH involved decontextualized PAL, as these studies were primarily interested in focus on form (FonF) tasks that, though drawing some focus to certain vocabulary, aimed at comprehension and production of meaningful sentences or texts rather than the memorization of those vocabulary (see Rott's, 2012, rationale for this emphasis on FonF). Decontextualized PAL on the other hand is, by nature, a focus on *forms* (FonFs) task because the only information available to focus on are the target word forms and their paired associates.

Second, whereas all the studies mentioned above comparing decontextualized to contextualized PAL involved conditions with isolated sentences as the context, only Laufer and Shmueli (1997) included additional full-text conditions conveying meaning at the discourse level (with glosses providing paired associates for target words). However, in contrast to their decontextualized PAL group (their "list" group), the participants in these conditions were directed to study the texts in order to complete comprehension exercises rather than to learn the target words. Thus, the full-text groups did a FonF task, whereas the list group necessarily did a FonFs task. As the attention of the full-text groups was not explicitly directed toward learning the target words, they unsurprisingly retained fewer vocabulary than the list group. Had the full-text groups' perceived need to learn the target words been equal to that of the list group, the result might have been different: Full passages tend to be more meaningful than isolated sentences, and learners are more likely to attend to, and thereby acquire, language when it conveys meaningful or relevant information (Krashen, 1985). Alternatively, explicit direction to learn the glossed words in the text might have resulted in participants ignoring the context altogether, which brings us to the third issue of attention.

Learners have limited attentional resources and, for example, have difficulty simultaneously processing the form and meaning of L2 words (VanPatten, 1990). Adding context to PAL therefore risks forcing learners to divide their attention between that context and the word-associate pairs, potentially diluting rather than reinforcing learning. This is especially so for learners of lower L2 proficiency as suggested by Griffin (1992), who found that adding context to PAL was effective only for higher proficiency learners presumably due to their greater automaticity in L2 processing allowing them to free up more attention for both the words and their context.

A possible way to avoid the dividing of attention while also offering more meaningful full-text context is to have learners do PAL situated within a passage as a pre-reading activity for that passage. The pre-reading task would ask learners to study word-associate pairs as preparation for reading a passage containing those words in a subsequent task. The word-associate pairs would then be presented via a computer program one by one within the context of the passage to be read, but again, no explicit focus would be given to that context until the follow-up task. Although learners would likely pay minimal attention to the context during PAL, they would at least be familiarized with where the target words are situated in the passage. During the subsequent reading of the passage, this familiarity would give them preemptive awareness of approaching target words, allowing the more effective allocation of attention to the context preceding that word as well as to the word itself. This raised attention to target words and their context during the reading stage should in turn lead to greater target word evaluation and thus, according to the ILH, better retention. It may also lead to better general comprehension of the context surrounding target words and consequently of the passage as a whole. The present study therefore seeks to investigate this type of contextualized PAL pre-reading task, specifically addressing the following questions:

RQ1. Does paired-associate learning of L2 vocabulary contextualized within a passage increase recall and quality of written usage of those vocabulary compared to decontextualized paired-associate learning when done prior to reading that passage for comprehension?

RQ2. Does this type of contextualized PAL increase comprehension of the passage compared to decontextualized PAL.

METHOD

Design

To investigate the research questions, this study employed an experimental design in which participants were randomized into either a contextualized or decontextualized PAL condition. The experiment consisted of two in-class sessions, a week apart, in which participants completed tasks via an online application accessed through their personal laptop computers. The sessions and tasks within each are listed below in the order participants completed them.

Session 1 (approximately 70 minutes)
1. Vocabulary pre-test
2. Vocabulary study
3. Reading a passage containing the studied vocabulary
4. Survey on the participant's opinion of the passage
5. Multiple-choice reading comprehension test on the passage
6. Summarization of the passage
7. Vocabulary post-test for immediate recall

(One week passed with no further study of the vocabulary or passage)

Session 2 (approximately 30 minutes)
1. Summarization of the passage read the previous week (from memory)
2. Vocabulary post-test for delayed recall

All tasks were identical for both conditions except for the vocabulary study task (Session 1, Task 2). For this task, participants in the contextualized condition were shown the target vocabulary item or its L1 translation (depending on which phase of the task they were on) highlighted within the context of the passage that they would be asked to read in Task 3 of Session 1. Meanwhile, participants in the decontextualized condition, were shown only the target vocabulary or their L1 translations, without any surrounding context. Besides this difference, the vocabulary study task was the same for both conditions and was divided into four phases of study for each vocabulary item. First the application showed participants each target English word and provided two choices for its L1 translation, one correct and the other incorrect. If participants chose the correct L1 translation, the application moved on to the next word; if not, they were shown the same item again until they chose correctly. Phases 2 and 3 were similar to Phase 1, except the L1 translation of each item was shown and participants had to choose the correct English equivalent, from three choices in Phase 2 and six choices in Phase 3. In Phase 4, participants were shown the L1 translation of the target word and had to type the spelling of the word correctly to move on to the next item. If participants made three mistakes in the attempt to type the correct letter while spelling a word, the application would show them the correct letter to type. The vocabulary study task took participants in both conditions approximately 15 minutes to complete. Note that none of the tasks had time limits: Participants completed them at their own pace, but all were able to finish the tasks for each session within the time allotted.

Participants

Students in two second-year general English courses, one lower-intermediate and the other upper-intermediate, at a public university in Japan participated in this study. Of the original 70 students enrolled in the classes, 49 completed both the first and second session of the experiment and so were included in the final analysis.

In the attempt to control for differences in L2 motivation and proficiency, participants were assigned to either the contextualized or decontextualized condition via within-class random-stratified sampling based on their grades from the previous quarter of the class. Table 1 below displays the condition assignments and class membership of the participants.

TABLE 1. Participants per Class and Condition Assignment

Class	Condition	
	Decontextualized	Contextualized
Upper-Intermediate	13	10
Lower-Intermediate	12	14
(Combined)	25	24

Whereas participants were informed prior to the experiment that the general aim of the research was to better understand how people learn vocabulary in a foreign language, they were not made aware of their assignment to either of the conditions or that any difference in conditions existed.

Materials

The reading task (and contextualized PAL) employed a different non-fiction passage for each class, taken from textbook units that they had yet to study, with low-frequency words selected as target vocabulary items. Table 2 summarizes the passage and vocabulary information for each class.

TABLE 2. Passages and Target Vocabulary

Class	Passage Word Count	Vocabulary Studied	Vocabulary Used
Upper-Intermediate	541	25	8
Lower-Intermediate	416	20	6

Instruments

The variables of interest for this study included receptive and productive reading comprehension, immediate and delayed gain in vocabulary recall, as well as immediate and delayed ability to use the vocabulary (usage).

Receptive and productive reading comprehension were both measured during the first session of the experiment. To measure receptive comprehension, the online application presented participants with ten multiple-choice questions about the passage they had just read. Receptive comprehension scores could thus range from 0 to 10. Upon finishing this section, participants answered a short essay question, which asked them to summarize the passage using some of the words they had studied in their answer. Three native raters rated the quality of the responses on a scale of 0 (poorly summarized) to 5 (well summarized). The sum of these three ratings became participants' productive comprehension score, ranging from 0 to 15.

To measure vocabulary recall gain, the application first gave participants a vocabulary pre-test. The application tested participants on each word by showing them the Japanese translation of the word and asking them to type the spelling of its English equivalent. At the end of Session 1, participants completed a vocabulary post-test in the same format as the pre-test, only with the items differently ordered. After one week passed, participants returned for the second session of the experiment and took the delayed post-test, which once again included the same items in a different order. Immediate vocabulary recall gain was calculated by subtracting a participant's pre-test score from their immediate post-test score, while delayed recall gain was calculated by subtracting the pre-test score from the delayed post-test score. Each test score was obtained by taking the mean of a participant's scores on each vocabulary item. The scoring system for items is described below.

To maximize the sensitivity of the vocabulary tests, participants were given points on a letter-by-letter basis as they attempted to spell a word, with points for initial letters more heavily weighted than final letters. Participants received three chances to type each letter of the word. They received full points if they typed the correct letter on the first try, two thirds of the points after one mistake, and one third after two mistakes. After three mistakes, the application would simply show participants the correct letter allowing them to type it (for no points) and move on to the next letter. The number of points possible for each letter was determined by the position of the letter and total number of letters in the word. The final letter of a word was always 3 points (1 point multiplied by 3 chances), while the second to last was double the first, making it 6 points (2 points multiplied by 3 chances), and so on.

The logic behind this weighting system is that the more letters a participant already knows of a word, the easier it is for them to figure out the rest of that word through only partial knowledge of that vocabulary. Therefore, the test-taker is awarded more points for correctly spelling the beginning of the word and fewer points as they move toward the back of that word. This partial scoring system provided a way – imperfect though it is – to measure partial knowledge of vocabulary items, thereby lending a greater sensitivity to the tests. The final score for each item was calculated by taking the number of points a participant earned on that item and dividing it by the number of points possible for that item and then multiplying by 100, obtaining a score ranging from 0 to 100. The score on the test was then calculated as the mean of the scores for each item.

Finally, the ability to use target vocabulary in writing (usage) was measured with the same short essay item employed to measure productive comprehension in the first session and once again in the second session with a modified version of the same item. The item asked participants to use some of the words they had studied in their summary of the passage. These six or eight words (depending on the class) were listed in the item and were chosen by the researcher and the teacher both for their usefulness in summarizing the main points of the passage and for the relative difficulty involved in using them correctly within a sentence. Three native raters rated participants' use of each of the words on a scale of 0 (not used or used incorrectly) to 3 (used appropriately). The mean of the usage score for each word was then taken for each of the three raters and summed to create a score ranging from 0 to 9. For the analysis, immediate usage was subtracted from delayed usage to obtain the loss in participants' ability to use the target vocabulary or "usage loss," which is described further in the next section.

Analysis

To address the secondary research question of whether contextualization had a positive effect on reading comprehension, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed with contextualization as the independent variable and receptive and productive comprehension as the dependent variables. For the primary research question of whether contextualization positively affects vocabulary recall and usage, another MANOVA with contextualization as the independent variable was performed, this time with immediate and delayed gain in recall along with usage loss as the dependent variables. Since there was no baseline measurement taken for usage, a *t*-test was conducted on the immediate measurement of usage to investigate for an initial difference in usage scores between the two conditions. The result showed no significant difference between the conditions, $t(47) = -.961$, $p = .341$. Assuming that participants would gradually lose their ability to use the vocabulary as time passed, the immediate usage scores were subtracted from the delayed scores to obtain "usage loss" scores. The MANOVA addressing the primary research question and subsequent univariate tests were conducted with the expectation that a significant difference in recall gain would emerge in favor of the contextualized condition while the decontextualized condition would experience a significantly greater loss in usage ability over time.

Results and Discussion

This section discusses the results of the analyses, first with regard to reading comprehension and then with regard to recall and usage.

FIGURE 1. Comparison of Mean Receptive and Productive Reading Comprehension for the Two Conditions

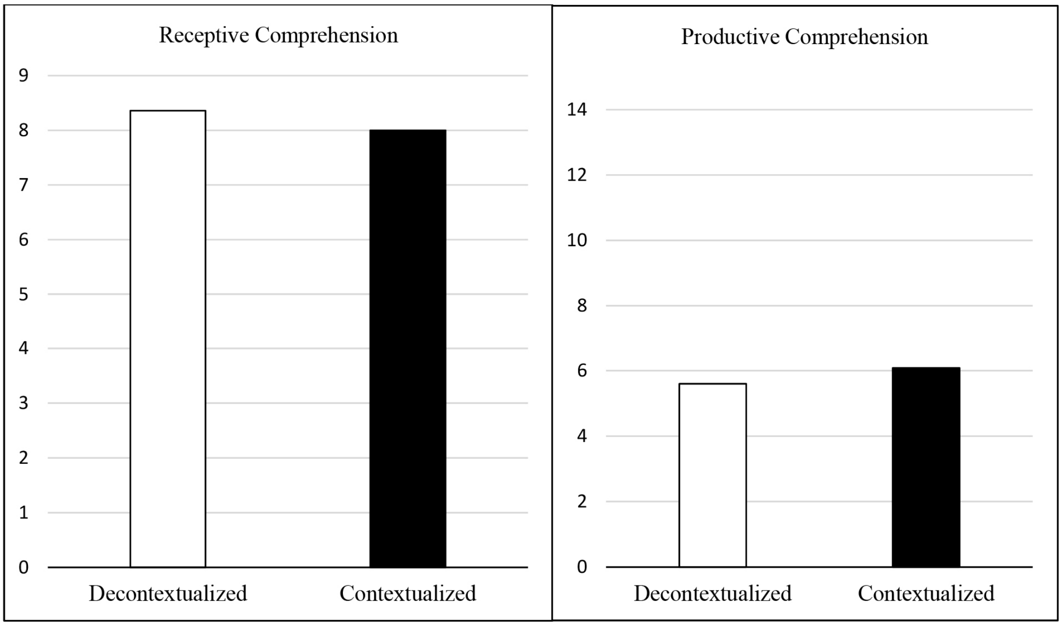


Figure 1 displays the mean receptive and productive reading comprehension scores for the decontextualized and contextualized conditions. A MANOVA showed no overall significant difference (Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, Roy's Largest Root) below $p < .05$ between groups on these measures of reading comprehension, ($F(2, 46) = 1.10$, $p = .340$). This finding suggests that any additional evaluation of the local contexts of target words due to their prior contextualization during PAL was not enough to produce a measurable difference in comprehension.

FIGURE 2. Mean Vocabulary Recall Pre-test and Post-test Scores for the Two Conditions

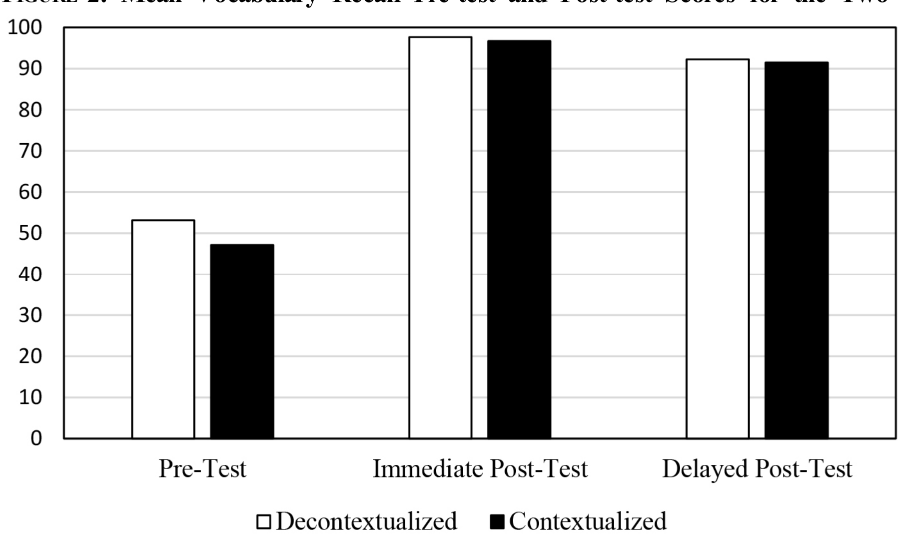


FIGURE 3. Mean Recall Gain from Pre-test to Immediate Post-test (Immediate Recall Gain) and Pre-test to Delayed Post-test One Week Later (Delayed Recall Gain)

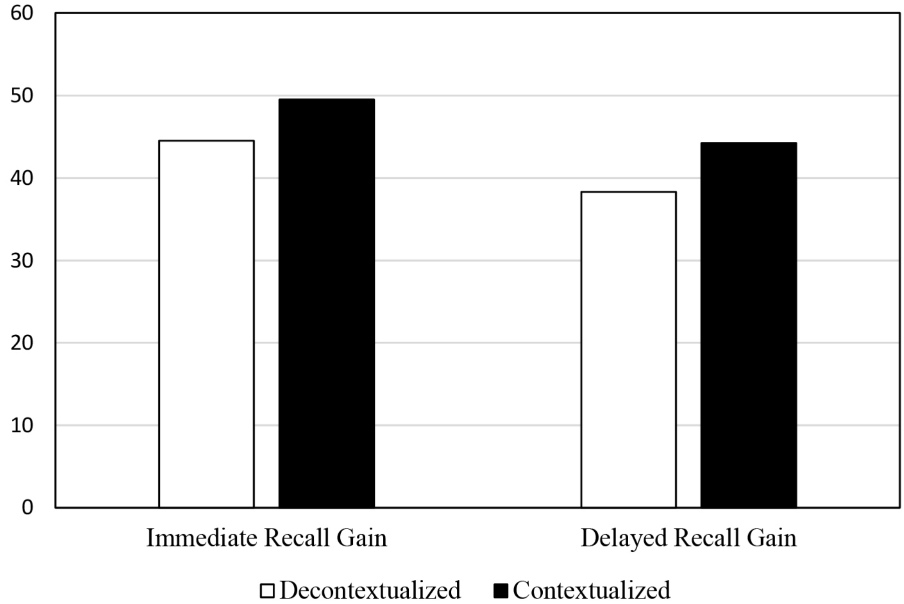
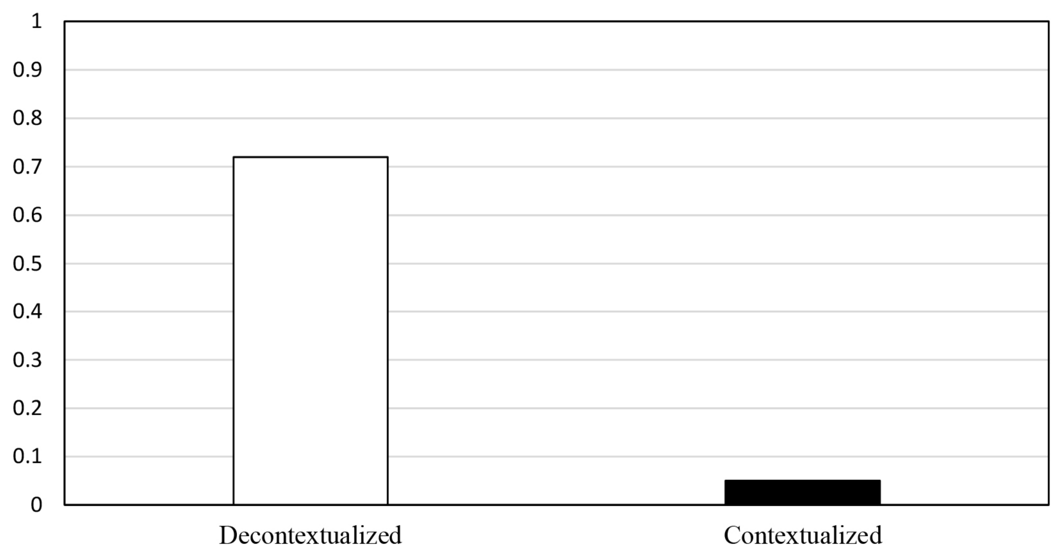


Figure 2 displays the mean scores for the two conditions on the vocabulary recall pre-test and two post-tests. Although there appears to be little difference between the scores for the two conditions, Figure 3 shows that the group in the contextualized condition achieved both higher immediate and delayed recall gains. In addition, Figure 4 shows a higher loss for the group in the decontextualized condition in the ability to use target vocabulary in their writing after one week compared to the group in the contextualized condition.

FIGURE 4. Mean Loss in Vocabulary Usage Ability from Immediate Post-test to Delayed Post-test One Week Later



A MANOVA involving the immediate and delayed recall gain along with usage loss revealed a significant difference between the two groups in favor of the contextualized PAL condition, (Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, Roy's Largest Root) $F(3, 45) = 3.14$, $p < .05$, with further univariate tests providing the results shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Univariate Tests for Recall Gain and Usage Loss

	Decont.		Cont.		Mean Difference	$F(1, 47)$	p
	M	SD	M	SD	(Cont. - Decont.)		
Immediate Recall Gain	44.53	9.40	49.52	6.90	4.99	4.46	.040*
Delayed Recall Gain	38.33	10.05	44.25	7.78	5.92	5.28	.026*
Usage Loss	0.72	1.32	0.05	1.07	-0.67	3.77	.058*

Note. *Significant at $p < .05$.

As shown in Table 3, there was a significant difference in favor of the contextualized PAL condition for both immediate and delayed recall gain, while the difference in usage loss was marginally significant, again favoring the contextualized condition.

Overall, these results suggest that contextualized PAL had a positive effect on both immediate and delayed recall gain as well as possibly the retention of usage ability. Two points should be noted though. First, despite the attempt at random stratification during condition assignment, participants in the decontextualized condition attained significantly higher vocabulary pre-test scores than those in the contextualized condition, $t(47) = 2.5$, $p = .016$. Despite this difference being ostensibly due to chance, that probability (.016) is actually lower than the probability of the differences in recall gain and usage loss between conditions being due to chance. Although this does not automatically disqualify the findings in favor of contextualization, it does indicate that further research is necessary to confirm them. Second, it is important to note that the differences in recall gain found in favor of contextualization, though significant, were small in practical terms. To illustrate, the 5.92 percent difference in delayed recall gain found using this study's scoring system is about the same as the difference in correctness according to the system between these two misspellings of the word *people*: *peeple* (87 percent) versus *pepole* (81 percent). If the correctness of these misspellings were judged in the usual binary correct–incorrect (1–0) manner, both would of course be marked 0. In fact, reanalyzing the delayed recall gain data using this traditional method obtains a non-significant difference between conditions of .92 words correct in favor of the contextualized condition, $t(47) = 1.03$, $p = .307$. Thus, the advantage of contextualization could only be observed using a highly sensitive measurement system. Previous studies' comparative lack of sensitivity in measuring vocabulary gain might therefore partially explain their failure to find a significant difference in favor of contextualization.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on Laufer and Hulstijn's (2001) Involvement Load Hypothesis (ILH), contextualizing the paired-associate learning (PAL) of vocabulary should lead to increased retention of target words by inducing greater evaluation of those words. Possible reasons why previous studies have failed to find an advantage for contextualization include the dividing of attention between the contexts and the associate pairs as well as a lack of meaningfulness of the contexts used. This study proposed a contextualized PAL task designed to circumvent these confounding factors. First, in order to avoid the dividing of attention, it explicitly focused learners on the PAL aspect of learning with the full-text context serving mainly to indicate where each target word was located in that context. Second, the context was meaningful at the discourse level and was the same passage that learners encountered in the reading-for-comprehension task immediately upon completing the PAL task. It was in this follow-up reading task that the benefits of contextualization were hypothesized to emerge by enabling learners to better predict and prepare for encounters with the target words, thereby freeing up attention to devote to further evaluating those words and increasing retention. The results support this hypothesis showing a significant difference in L2 vocabulary recall gain in favor of the contextualized condition. This difference, though slight, indicates a hitherto undetected advantage for contextualization predicted by the ILH.

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Meaning-Focused vs. Form-Focused Activities in Elementary School English Lessons

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The purpose of this study is to discern any characteristics that may contribute to how much elementary school students enjoy English lessons. The study compares two sixth-grade English classes in a qualitative manner: One of them was found to be highly enjoyable and the other was less enjoyable. A comparison shows that the highly enjoyable class focused on meaning-focused rather than form-focused activities, whereas the less-enjoyed class concentrated on form-focused rather than meaning-focused activities. The meaning-focused activities matched the beginning learners' tendencies to attend to meaning rather than form. It is argued that as far as beginning language learners are concerned, language activities should be designed in such a way that students focus on meaning rather than on form because they tend to have difficulties in focusing on both meaning and form at the same time due to their limited processing capacities.

INTRODUCTION

Japanese elementary school fifth- and sixth-graders have been learning English under the name of "foreign language activities" since 2011. English is usually team-taught by homeroom teachers (HRTs) and assistant language teachers (ALTs), who are native or near-native English speakers. The major reasons for the team-teaching (TT) system is that over 90% of Japanese elementary school HRTs do not have any English teaching license (Mahoney & Inoi, 2014); that they do not have confidence in teaching English, or in their own English; and that they need help from ALTs when teaching English. Some HRTs try to lead TT English lessons as the main teachers, while others try not to get involved, leaving ALTs mainly in charge: Such HRTs play very marginal roles in the classrooms.

Japanese elementary school students have only one or two English lessons a week. Some students enjoy TT English lessons a great deal and display high motivation to learn English, whereas others do not show any favorable attitude toward such lessons or even toward English itself. What brings about such different attitudes in students? The purpose of the present study is to discern any characteristics that may contribute to how much children enjoy English lessons.

Students' affective factors, including their lesson enjoyment levels, may be linked to a number of other factors, such as teacher characteristics (e.g., language proficiency levels, English teaching skills, personality traits), activities and teaching materials used in English lessons, peer groups, student anxiety levels in the classroom, student personality traits, parental attitudes toward English education, and the classroom atmosphere, to name but a few (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Lightbown & Spada, 2013). This study focuses mainly on speech activities, especially on the ways in which such activities are implemented in elementary school English lessons.

The study first reviews three studies on second (foreign) language learning and teaching that address certain principles of language lessons in terms of form and meaning. It then describes how the data was collected for this study and compares two sixth-grade classes in a qualitative manner: One of them was found to be highly enjoyable and the other was less enjoyable, despite the fact that both of the classes included speech activities during the lessons. Finally, it explores students' different lesson enjoyment levels in terms of form and meaning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ortega (2007) argues for the following three principles, based on the cognitive-interactionist SLA (second language acquisition) perspective, when designing meaningful practice in foreign language lessons. Principle 1 is "L2 practice should be interactive"; Principle 2 is "L2 practice should be meaningful"; Principle 3 is "there should be a focus on task-essential forms" (pp. 182–186). Ortega's second principle is particularly relevant to this study. She proposes that L2 practice should be meaningful in two senses. In the first, practice should focus on both meaning and form. L2 practice should be designed in such a way that form–meaning connections will be salient for the learner. In the second sense, L2 practice should involve learners' cognitive engagement or personal involvement with a task. Ortega adds, however, that it is difficult to assess the learner's cognitive involvement empirically through a task. Her principles, including the second one, are designed for language learners in general, not specifically for beginning language learners (including elementary school children). Ortega's second principle will be explored in this discussion of Japanese elementary school English lessons.

Ellis (2008a) proposes ten principles of instructed second language acquisition, which are designed to be general in nature and therefore relevant to English teaching in a variety of situations, including foreign language teaching situations. His second principle says that "instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning" (p. 1). This is because "when we learn a language naturalistically, we do so by focusing primarily on what we want to say (i.e., meaning) rather than on how we say it (i.e., form)" (p. 1). He also adds that "engaging in activities focused on creating meaning is intrinsically motivating for learners" (p. 2). His third principle, however, says that "instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form" (p. 2), because there is widespread acceptance that second (foreign) language acquisition requires learners to attend to form (Ellis, 2008a). Ellis (2008b) also adds that instruction should attend to form because "learners fail to achieve high levels of competence in communicative classrooms," (p. 827). Like Ortega (2007), Ellis argues that language learners need to attend not only to meaning but also to form in instructed second (foreign) language acquisition, and his principles also apply to language learners in general.

Curtain and Dahlberg (2010) take a view slightly different from those of Ortega (2007) and Ellis (2008a) when teaching young learners. They emphasize the significance of meaning rather than form, remarking that "one of the most important principles of cognitive psychology for the early language teacher is that information is best learned and retained if it is made meaningful to students" (p. 8). The differing views are probably due to the difference in language learners: Curtain & Dahlberg (2010) focus on young language learners in particular, while Ortega (2007) and Ellis (2008a) cover a wide range of language learners, including young language learners.

The present study analyzes language activities of two different elementary English lessons, particularly how speech activities are implemented, with a focus on form and meaning. The term "form" in the present study means not only linguistic form, such as a word, a phrase, or a sentence, but also non-linguistic form, such as how students deliver speech in speech activities; that is, how students say what they want to say, corresponding exactly to the term in Ellis (2008a). In other words, it includes speech delivery features such as voice volume, eye contact, gestures, and smiles.

METHOD

The author visited a total of 39 classes in the fifth and sixth grades in 14 public elementary schools in Japan, between November 2013 and February 2019, to observe English lessons and conduct questionnaire surveys. Each class of 45 minutes was visited only once and video-recorded for later analysis. A five-item questionnaire was designed and conducted to reveal Japanese fifth- and sixth-graders' different attitudes toward English lessons (see Appendix). Two of the questionnaire items were particularly relevant to this study: Q1, which was multiple-choice, and Q5, which was open-ended. Q1 asked students whether they enjoyed English lessons or not. They were asked to respond on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 4 ("Yes, very much") to 1 ("Not at all"). Q5 asked students to write about the activity/activities they enjoyed and did not enjoy during the English lesson, and also asked for reasons. Mean class scores were used to measure students' levels of enjoyment of English lessons. The present study focuses on two sixth-grade classes, E6–1 and K6–1, as shown in Table 1. These two classes were chosen for a comparison for the following reasons: (a) Both classes consisted of 6th graders and English teachers who were not the children's main, homeroom teachers; (b) both classes included speech activities on the same topic ("What do you want to be?"); and (c) the E6–1 enjoyment rate of English lessons (3.64) in particular was found to be significantly higher than that of K6–1 (3.00), $U = 155.00$, $p < .01$, two-tailed. In other words, students in these two classes experienced a wide gap in enjoyment levels despite having had the same topic covered.

TABLE 1. E6-1 and K6-1 Enjoyment Rates of English Lessons

School & Grade - Class	Enjoyment Rate	*N*	Main Teacher	Year
E6 - 1	3.64	28	ALT	2014
K6 - 1	3.00	20	JTE	2019

Note. The letters "E" and "K" represent school names. "ALT" stands for the "assistant language teacher," and "JTE" for "Japanese teacher of English."

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Questionnaire results showed that 20 (71.4%) out the 28 students in E6–1, the more enjoyable class, made an explicit reference to the speech activity as particularly fun, while none in K6–1, the less-enjoyed class, did so. Students in E6–1 reported that they enjoyed telling their friends about their future dreams and hearing about friends' dreams in English. In K6–1, students reported that they enjoyed playing a card game, without making any mention of the speech activity despite the fact that it had occurred.

A close comparison was made between the lesson activities of the two classes in order to identify any differences that might have brought about the different lesson enjoyment rates and student comments. In the highly evaluated E6–1, students first practiced job names such as *cabin attendant*, *farmer*, *singer*, and *dentist*, and the sentence pattern "I want to be a ___" through repetition and chanting. The practice lasted for only about five minutes. Then, the lesson proceeded to a listening activity. The ALT read three speech examples aloud from the textbook very slowly, sometimes explaining new words in simple English. The speech examples included such information as the speakers' names, their favorite sports, animals, and school subjects, and what they wanted to be in the future. This was one of the examples:

> Hello. My name is Suzuki Sakura. I want to be a vet. I like cats. I have a white cat. I want a dog. I want a hamster, too. I want to be a vet. Thank you.

Students took notes while listening to the speech examples. Then, the ALT wrote four English sentences as a speech model (i.e., "Hello. I like ___. I want to be a ___. Thank you.") and instructed students to prepare brief speeches based on the model. The students were allowed to use Japanese in writing their speeches. Both the ALT and the HRT walked around the classroom to help students write their speeches. They prepared the speeches in about ten minutes. The students first practiced their speeches in groups of five and then did more practice with several more students individually. Near the end of the class, six boy students, all volunteers, delivered speeches individually in front of the whole class, and each of them received plenty of applause from the classmates.

In the less-enjoyed K6–1, the students first practiced reading aloud alphabet letters and words with consonant letter combinations such as *knob*, *knees*, and *knuckles*. Then, they practiced the following dialogue through repetition:

> (A) Where do you want to go?
> (B) I want to go to Italy. I want to eat pizza. I want to see the tower.

After that, they practiced the dialogue in pairs. They spent about 20 minutes practicing the alphabet letters, words, and the dialogue. Then, the lesson proceeded to the speech activities, in which the ALT first demonstrated three types of speech delivery in front of the whole class. In one type, he spoke in a barely audible voice; in another type, he read his paper without looking at students at all; and in the third type, he delivered his speech in an appropriate voice volume with eye contact and a smile. Then, students were asked to evaluate each speech delivery type. After their discussion of the ALT's speech delivery types, they were instructed by the JTE to practice, in groups of five, the speeches that they had already prepared in the previous lesson. They were also given speech assessment worksheets and were asked to assess group members' speeches in terms of delivery features such as eye contact, voice volume, and smiles. Lastly, they played a card game.

The overall lesson feature of E6–1 was that it was more meaning-focused than that of K6–1. In E6–1 the form-focused activities (i.e. the practice of job names and the sentence pattern through repetition and chanting) took place at the beginning of the lesson, lasting only about five minutes, while the rest (i.e., the listening activity, the speech preparation, the speech practice in groups, the volunteers' speech presentation) were all more or less meaning-focused activities. In K6–1, on the other hand, almost all the activities except the card game toward the end of the lesson were found to be form-focused.

The speech activities of E6–1, including the listening activity, seem to have been more meaning-focused than those of K6–1. In the listening activity of E6–1, students took note of the speakers' names while listening to the speech examples in the textbook read aloud by the ALT, while also noting what the speakers liked, and what they wanted to be in the future. When taking notes, they mainly focused on content words such as nouns and verbs rather than function words such as articles and infinitives with "to." When it was time to listen to classmates' speeches, students focused on the contents of speeches, and on what their classmates wanted to be in the future. As a result, the E6–1 students probably reported in questionnaires that they enjoyed telling and hearing about each other's future dreams in English. In other words, they were personally involved in the speech activities, which accords with Ortega's (2007) second principle that "L2 practice should be meaningful" (p. 183).

On the other hand, the K6–1 students focused on speech delivery rather than speech content. They first listened to and discussed the three types of speech delivery demonstrated by the ALT and then evaluated group members' speeches in terms of speech delivery features such as eye contact, voice volume, and smiles. They were so preoccupied with filling out the speech delivery assessment worksheets in listening to group members' speeches that they seemed to hardly pay attention to what their classmates wanted to be in the future. In other words, they focused on speech delivery (i.e., form) rather than speech content, or meaning. Probably they did not learn much about their classmates' future dreams; that is, they were not personally involved in listening to their friends' speeches. The meaning-focused speech activities in E6–1 may have brought about the students' higher enjoyment rate than the non-meaning focused speech activities of K6–1.

One of the characteristics of beginning language learners such as elementary school children is that they are likely to focus on meaning rather than form. Based on the cognitive perspective in second language acquisition, Lightbown and Spada (2013) explain that "leaners at the earliest stages will tend to use most of their attention resources to understand the main words in a message… [because]…there is a limit to how much information a learner can pay attention to" (p. 108). Brown and Larson-Hall (2012, p. 64) also support this characteristic, remarking that in second (foreign) language learning, beginners in general usually focus on the content words rather than the function words and grammatical endings because their processing ability is limited. This characteristic of beginning language learners corresponds precisely to the principle of teaching young language learners mentioned by Curtain and Dahlberg (2010). It is thus safe to say that because of their limited processing capacities, beginning language learners such as elementary school children are likely to focus on meaning rather than on form. Though both form and meaning should be focused on in second language teaching and learning, as suggested by Ortega (2007) and Ellis (2008a, b), beginning language learners tend to have difficulties in attending to both form and meaning at the same time due to their limited processing ability. This may go far in explaining the students' different lesson enjoyment rates and their different comments on the questionnaires between the two classes even though speech activities were included in both lessons. In other words, the speech activities of E6–1 matched the beginning learners' propensity to attend to meaning rather than form, whereas those of K6–1 did not.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper compared the two classes' language activities, particularly speech activities, in terms of meaning and form. The overall lesson feature of E6–1, the highly enjoyable class, was more meaning-focused than that of K6–1, the less-enjoyed class. This feature was particularly found in the speech activities of E6–1 rather than K6–1. The E6-1 students focused on what their classmates wanted to be in the future (i.e., meaning), while the K6–1 students focused on speech delivery such as eye contact, voice volume, and smiles (i.e., form). The meaning-focused activities matched the beginning learners' tendencies to attend to meaning rather than form.

As far as elementary school students are concerned, language activities should be designed in such a way that allows students to focus mainly on meaning rather than form since they tend to have difficulties in attending to both at the same time because of limited processing capacities. In teaching English to beginning language learners, priority should be given to meaning-focused rather than form-focused activities. Of course, this does not mean that all form-focused activity should be excluded from elementary school English lessons: Students should also be engaged in some form-focused activity since both meaning and form are important in second (foreign) language learning, as suggested in Ellis (2008a).

This study has two limitations. First, only two classes were compared, with one focusing mainly on meaning and the other on speech delivery, or form. A larger number of classes focusing on meaning and form, respectively, should be examined along with students' enjoyment levels. Second, students' enjoyment is surely related to various factors such as teacher factors, peer groups, student anxiety levels in the classroom, student personality traits, parental attitudes toward English education, and the classroom atmosphere, as mentioned earlier. Focusing mainly on speech activities in terms of meaning and form may be a bit too narrow in scope to fully explain the different students' enjoyment levels of English lessons. However, the present study gives an insight into the designing of such lessons: Teachers should design them so that students will become engaged mainly in meaning-focused rather than form-focused activities.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

(The following is a translation of the Japanese questionnaire for elementary school students.)

Q1. Do you enjoy English lessons at school?
4) Yes, very much 3) Yes 2) Not really 1) Not at all

Q2. Do you usually take active participation in English lessons?
4) Yes, very much 3) Yes 2) Not really 1) Not at all

Q3. Would you like to study English more?
4) Yes, very much 3) Yes 2) Not really 1) Not at all

Q4. How much do you like each of the following activities?
4) Yes, very much 3) Yes 2) Not really 1) Not at all

a) Singing songs in English
b) Playing games
c) Practicing English pronunciation
d) Doing conversation with friends in English
e) Talking with the ALT
f) Learning about foreign countries
g) Learning about differences between L1 (Japanese) and English
h) Reading English letters and words.

Q5. Please write about the activity/activities you enjoyed and did not enjoy in today's English lesson and include reasons.

Use of AWE and Peer Feedback for Improving Academic Writing

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This research explores how EFL learners engage with corrective feedback when an automated writing evaluation (AWE) tool is used in combination with peer feedback. The aim is to investigate whether there are any short-term effects on students' writing, that is, revisions due to student engagement with technology-assisted peer feedback. The study was carried out at a Japanese university during the 2019 school year, and 21 students participated. From a pedagogical perspective, the study contributes to research in studies related to feedback and assessment in writing as it helps instructors make informed decisions on how to successfully integrate AWE into writing courses for low-proficiency students.

Introduction: Student Engagement and EFL Writing

Effective learner engagement is indispensable for learning, for it can prevent demotivation and facilitate efficient learning. Student engagement is an inclusive term, which, in the EFL writing context, broadly means "the extent students are invested or committed to their learning, embracing a complex of factors which can be seen in students' responses to texts and their attitudes to writing and responding" (Zhang & Hyland, 2018, p. 90). There are three aspects to this concept. Behavioral engagement refers to participation in activities or involvement in tasks, and affective engagement includes affective reactions to teachers, classes, or academic duties, whether positive or negative, such as interest, boredom, happiness, or anxiety. Cognitive engagement is, for one thing, related to psychological investment in learning and for another, strategic learning and self-regulation. The former includes a preference for challenge, manipulation of failure, or willingness to make an effort to accomplish difficult tasks, whereas the latter involves students' strategies to plan, monitor, and evaluate their cognition to master and accomplish tasks (Fredricks et al., 2004).

In EFL writing, the relationship between corrective feedback and students' engagement has acquired academic attention. For instance, it was found that learners' engagement and uptake of feedback tend to differ based on their beliefs about language and goals of learning, that is, it depends on affective factors (Han & Hyland, 2015; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010). In regards to the relationship between types of feedback and engagement, Zhang and Hyland (2018) reported that when comparing a highly engaged and a moderately engaged learner, the difference of degree of their engagement and learning development was more apparent in automated writing evaluation (AWE) than in teacher feedback due to its autonomy. Overall, it is suggested that engagement is an important factor for both the uptake of feedback and the development of writing skills. However, fewer studies have explored student engagement in the combination of AWE and peer revision, which is the focus of the present research.

As the positive effects brought by both peer feedback and AWE (ETS Criterion®) could greatly depend on the extent and quality of students' participation, perceptions, and learning strategies they apply, the current study asks the following research questions:

RQ1. What are the short-term effects of an AWE tool used in combination with peer feedback on student's revisions?
RQ2. How is engagement with AWE and peer feedback reflected on revision uptake?

Literature Review

Peer Feedback in the Japanese Educational Context

Different terminology, such as *peer response* (Hyland & Hyland, 2006) or *peer revision* (Hu, 2005), is used to denote *peer feedback*. Regardless of the differences, this learning strategy can be defined as an activity in which pairs or groups of learners are involved in reading and checking other learners' writing and interact with each other by giving, receiving, and using oral or written feedback for the revision process. Peer feedback effectiveness is broadly acknowledged. For example, it can offer students opportunities to raise the awareness of readers (Chang 2016; Hyland & Hyland, 2006), and reading others' composition enables students to learn new vocabulary, logical organization, or novel ideas (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). In the Japanese educational context, peer feedback gained a high reputation in its utility for various writing skills, such as awareness of readers (Baierschmidt, 2012; Fujii et al., 2016; Kohro, 1995; Wakabayashi, 2013; Yoshikawa, 2016), language learning (Fujii et al., 2016; Yakame, 2005), learning from reading peers' draft in order to acquire information (Wakabayashi, 2016) or improvements in composition (Yoshikawa, 2016).

Some limitations of peer feedback have been highlighted. For example, feedback in L2 tends to mainly focus on form rather than content (Chang, 2016). When compared to other types of feedback, even if peer feedback is more favorably accepted than computer-based feedback in its utility and higher quality (Chang, 2016), students still prefer teachers' comments to peers' feedback because of the peers' perceived deficiency of linguistic and communicative abilities (Baierschmidt, 2012).

Moreover, peer feedback has some defects from the viewpoint of student engagement. Kohro's (1995) study indicated that only learners who were more highly motivated and skilled were able to benefit more from peer review activity. In addition, Allen and Katayama's study (2016) revealed the connection between proficiency, confidence, and engagement: students of higher proficiency level gave more comments to peers, and lower confidence led to both less feedback and less revision. Additionally, confidence also affected the type of feedback in that students who perceived themselves as having lower competence gave more suggestions related to the content, whereas those perceived having higher proficiency paid attention to form and register-related issues. To optimize the effectiveness of peer feedback, it is essential to clarify the state of students' involvement regarding their participation, motivation, confidence, and proficiency in order to detect and minimize the setbacks that can inhibit students' full engagement.

AWE in Japanese EFL Context

Automated writing evaluation (AWE) is "an attempt to model human essay scoring, with its assignment of scores or grades based upon a rubric" (Deane, 2013, p. 298). Among many AWE tools, ETS Criterion® is one of the most widely acceptable systems in the Japanese EFL context. The focus of previous research was on the use of ETS Criterion® as an assessment of L2 writing (Koizumi et al., 2016), comparison with teacher feedback (Heffernan & Otoshi, 2015; Long, 2013; Otoshi, 2012), or the efficacy for learners to improve writing skills (Ohta 2007; Otoshi, 2012). In terms of students' perception, it is reported that learners overall showed a positive perception of the program, as they appreciated its instantaneity and availability (Ohta, 2007; Tsuda, 2014).

Despite its prevalence and usefulness, research has indicated some disadvantages of ETS Criterion®. Unlike teachers' feedback, comments from ETS Criterion® chiefly focused on surface-level mechanics, which resulted in minimal progress in usage and structure (Long, 2013). It led to limited improvement and only in relation to text length and syntax complexity (Koizumi et al., 2016). Students still expected and preferred teacher feedback for different aspects of writing, such as word usage, content, and rhetorical aspects (Heffernan & Otoshi, 2013; Otoshi, 2012). Finally, learners whose TOEFL scores were 500 or above improved writing quality after using it, whereas those scoring 485 or lower made no gains (Ohta, 2007). By answering our research questions, we suggest how some of these shortcomings can be addressed, and how to effectively use this tool among students whose TOEFL scores are 485 or lower.

Study Design and Participants

The study was conducted during an EFL academic writing course at a public university in Japan for the duration of 16 weeks (two quarters) in 2019. First-year students were placed in groups based on their TOEFL ITP score (low-level proficiency; the average scores were 402 for Group 1 and 408 for Group 2). Classes met once a week, and each lesson lasted for 90 minutes. The goal of the course was to teach paragraph structure, coherence, and content development.

Twenty-one students gave consent to participate in the study: 13 in one group and eight in the other. As our pre-study survey showed, most students studied English between five and ten years. Only three students had some idea what peer feedback meant, and no student had used ETS Criterion® before. Only four learners thought this writing tool could help with generating more content or ideas. In general, students found writing in English to be important for their current studies (all students agreed on this) and future jobs. However, 67%

reported that they were not good at writing in English.

As others (Diab, 2011; Hyland & Hyland, 2006;) suggested that training is crucial for successful implementation of AWE in writing classes, the first quarter was used to teach students how to use and interpret the AWE feedback. The main activity, where students first used ETS Criterion® to write one paragraph at home, then comment on their peers' writing in class was conducted on three occasions in the second quarter. The same type of activity was repeated during Weeks 2, 5, and 7. All the topics were chosen from the ETS Criterion® topics' menu.

ETS Criterion® was used in this study because it is web-based, easily accessible, and can facilitate written feedback provided by instructors and peers. The main mechanism behind this tool is e-rater®, which is a scoring engine that generates both diagnostic feedback and holistic scoring (ETS, n.d.). For details about how ETS Criterion® assesses writing and its drawbacks, check Vojak et al. (2011) and contributions to Shermis and Burstein (2013).

Data were collected as follows: All the writing samples and students' comments were downloaded from ETS Criterion® and saved as Excel files. This data was coded in different categories by one author. The second set of data about students' attitudes and perceptions was collected by administering a survey at the end of the second quarter. The survey included Likert-type questions, and closed and open-ended questions. To analyze all the data, we used descriptive statistics. To calculate the percentages, we used Excel. Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% in some or all of the tables, as they are rounded off to the nearest percent. To get insight into the raw data, contact the authors.

RESULTS

To answer the first research question, we analyzed the ETS Criterion scores® before and after the class activity, and these scores were used as proxies for writing improvement. The number of submissions (one-paragraph writing samples) is added as a note at the bottom of some tables (e.g., n = 20). When there is a difference between "before" and "after" number of writing samples, this is because we were not able to collect the data for a number of reasons (e.g., a student participated in both activities, but data was not available via ETS Criterion® during the data collection time).

Table 1 shows the scores before and after the class activity as percentages and changes in score categories for both groups of learners combined per writing assignment.

Both groups improved their writing, as measured by the differences in score percentages before and after the class activity and from score category to score category. For example, in Writing 1 after the revision, students' writing was scored mostly as 2, which means that students who previously received the score 1 improved their writing. At the same time, some students who got the score 2 further improved and received the score 3. The biggest change happened during Writing 2. As shown in Table 1, there were no writing samples that received the score 1 after revision, while the percentages for score categories 2, 4, and 5 increased. However, even though the number of writing samples with the score 3 decreased, it does not necessarily mean that student's writing did not improve.

One explanation can be that some students did not improve, but others got higher scores. Due to space limitations, we do not present the breakdown of the score results per group but have to note that there are some differences.

TABLE 1. ETS Criterion® Scores Before/After

Score	Writing 1		Writing 2		Writing 3	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Advisory					24%	10%
1	62%	10%	10%			
2	33%	75%	5%	10%	24%	5%
3	5%	15%	57%	38%	38%	43%
4			24%	43%	14%	43%
5			5%	10%		
6						

Note. n = 21; Writing 1, After n = 20.

By looking into our second research interest (RQ2), how engagement with AWE and peer feedback was reflected on revision uptake, we wanted to see if and how students' interactions with two types of feedback could unlock the benefits of feedback. We first looked at the changes in the number of errors flagged by ETS Criterion®.

TABLE 2. Number of Flagged Errors by ETS Criterion® Scores Before/After

Error Type	Writing 1		Writing 2		Writing 3	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Grammar Errors	21	11	12	13	9	6
Usage Errors	34	17	35	21	22	8
Mechanics Errors	26	11	25	11	34	23
Style Errors	483	436	561	564	6	0
Organization and Development	334	338	176	315	346	436

Table 2 shows a reduction in the number of errors flagged by the AWE system between "before" and "after" writing samples across four categories during Writing 1 and Writing 3: grammar errors, usage errors, mechanic errors, and style errors. However, the situation was different during Writing 2. The decrease in the number of errors was evident across two categories only (usage errors and mechanics errors), and there were no significant changes in grammar and style errors.

It is interesting to note that when it comes to the category organization and development (see Table 2), the number of flagged messages increased in all the writing tasks. One of the explanations for this can be found in how ETS Criterion® assesses writing. Namely, as students' writing improves, or at least as some aspects of their writing improve (e.g., the use of discourse markers), the number of flagged parts of the essay increases. That is, there are more color-coded parts of the text accompanied by a message (e.g., "Your essay appears to introduce three main ideas").

As this was a combined feedback activity, where both AWE and peer feedback could affect revisions, we counted the types of comments given by students via ETS Criterion® after the first submission. Table 3 shows the total number of comments given per writing assignment per group, as well as the percentage of different types of comments given by students in two groups on three occasions. As expected, most comments given by both groups were related to grammar, word usage, and mechanics. This can be sort of a "spill-over effect." As students were exposed to AWE feedback on several occasions before we started to collect the data, and trained in understanding the metalinguistic explanations provided by ETS Criterion®, students might have internalized the AWE's way of giving feedback, which mostly focuses on surface-level mistakes. However, Group 2, in one of their tasks (Writing 2), did focus almost equally on the content, negotiating meaning and coherence. As seen in Table 4, 50% of peer comments were related to global aspects of writing.

TABLE 3. Amount and Type of Peer Feedback per Group

Feedback Type	Writing 1		Writing 2		Writing 3	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
Content/Meaning	11%	29%	13%	10%	13%	15%
Organization/Development	10%	21%	19%	28%	24%	12%
Grammar	33%	18%	18%	18%	22%	15%
Word Usage	21%	14%	18%	8%	8%	3%
Mechanics	21%	11%	16%	20%	8%	21%
Style	12%	4%	7%	3%	6%	6%
Praise	1%	4%		3%	13%	21%
Other			9%	13%	7%	9%
Total (*n*)	73	28	90	40	72	34

Note. n = total number of comments per group.

As engagement is a construct that includes the cognitive component, one of the authors coded all the students' comments to check whether students only provided feedback or if they also included some explanation along with their comments (see Table 4).

TABLE 4. Peer Feedback: Explanations/Cognitive Engagement

Feedback Explanation	Writing 1		Writing 2		Writing 3	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
Explanation Provided	26%	39%	31%	35%	29%	24%
No Explanation	74%	61%	69%	65%	71%	76%
Total (*n*)	73	28	90	40	72	34

Note. n = total number of comments per group.

Unsurprisingly, both groups of peer commenters, in most cases, did not explain their comments or give any reasons why changes to the paragraph should be made. For example, during the third activity (Writing 3), 71% of comments in

Group 1, and 76% in Group 2 were not explained, whereas only 29% and 24% were explained in Group 1 and Group 2, respectively.

Behavioral engagement is measured as a number of comments and time spent on the task. On average, students in Group 1 gave more comments than students in Group 2 (see Table 5). Out of 21 students who completed their writing tasks, the majority (48%, or 10 respondents) spent about 45 minutes on the task. One student (5%) spent about 15 minutes, while four students spent 30 minutes (19%) on average. There were six students (29%) who spent up to one hour by writing and/or revising their paragraphs.

Table 5. Average Number of Comments per Student

	Writing 1		Writing 2		Writing 3	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
	5.6	3.5	6.9	5	5.3	4.2
Total (*n*)	73	28	90	40	72	34

Note. *n* = total number of comments per group.

To learn about students' attitudes, we administered a survey during the last week of the course. The majority of students (11, or 52%) said that receiving feedback was the most useful part of this activity. This was followed by the act of giving feedback (9, 43%), while one (4%) student found no utility in this type of activity.

Students' attitudes were mostly positive, as seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Students' Attitudes about Combined AWE and Peer Feedback Activity

Likert-Type Question Items	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Median (IQR)
Q1 By evaluating my peers writing on ETS Criterion®, I learned a lot about writing in English.	0%	6%	6%	71%	16%	4 (0)
Q2 Reading and evaluating peers' paragraphs helped me to improve my own composition/writing.	0%	6%	3%	71%	19%	4 (1)
Q3 I became more confident in writing because of combined peer and ETS Criterion® feedback activity.	0%	10%	26%	55%	10%	4 (1)
Q4 I think that ETS Criterion® feedback in combination with peer feedback should be introduced in all writing classes.	0%	6%	52%	32%	10%	3 (1)
Q5 I prefer this kind of activity to teacher's feedback.	10%	26%	61%	0%	3%	3 (1)
Q6 I would participate in this kind of writing/evaluating activity again.	3%	10%	29%	48%	10%	4 (1)
Q7 I can use peer feedback and ETS Criterion® feedback to analyze my writing problems.	0%	6%	19%	68%	6%	4 (1)

An overwhelming majority of respondents answered "agree" and "strongly agree" to Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q7. We used these as indicators of positive attitudes towards this type of activity.

Discussion

Interpretation of the findings of the current study, from the point of view of the engagement concept and research on technology-assisted feedback, suggests that this combined feedback activity can enable EFL learners to improve their writing, even if only moderately. To answer the first research question about the short-term effects of the combined activity on student revision, we looked at the changes in AWE scores before and after the activity. Findings suggest some improvements in scores (see Table 2) and decline in several types of surface-level errors (e.g., grammar or style; see Table 3). The latter is in line with other studies (e.g., Chang, 2016; Long, 2013; Yoshikawa, 2016), which also saw some improvements in these surface-level aspects of writing. What differs is that the current study shows that students improved in some rhetorical aspects of writing, too, as indicated by the changes in numbers of "organization and development" comments flagged by ETS Criterion® (see Table 3).

As for engagement, it is difficult to quantify it due to the way we conducted the study and presented the data. However, the data indicate that the type of engagement exhibited by learners in this study did lead to some improvement in revision; thus, it shows that student engagement with the task is an important aspect in learning writing when using revision activities. As for the time spent on the task (behavioral engagement), most students spent about 45 minutes on writing or revising. Groups differed in the number of comments (behavioral engagement; see Table 5). As for affective engagement, students' attitudes were mixed. Although they did perceive the activity positively and thought that it increased their confidence in writing, as well as helping them to analyze their writing problems, they still preferred teacher feedback and were undecided as to whether this type of feedback should be introduced in all writing classes. When it comes to their preference for teacher input on their writing, this is similar to previous studies (e.g., Baierschmidt, 2012; Heffernan & Otoshi, 2015; Otoshi, 2012).

Finally, if we look at the type of comments, students mostly commented on grammar, word usage, and mechanics of writing. However, as seen in Table 2, they did somewhat engage in commenting on organizational and rhetorical aspects while the number of those comments varied greatly. These learners, in most cases, did not provide explanations on why they suggested a change or how it should be made (see Table 5). If students provided some type of metalinguistic or some other explanation, it would mean that they had to apply more cognitive strategies to solve the task at hand. It can be speculated that more cognitive engagement, including different strategies, could result in more revision uptake, and better scores, that is, better writing.

Conclusions

To conclude, somewhat different to some studies (such as Allen & Katayama, 2016; Kohro, 1995) which found that, in most cases, only highly skilled, motivated, and proficient students benefit from AWE feedback, the current study shows that AWE combined with peer feedback can unlock feedback's potential for revision among low-proficiency students. In addition, engagement, even if moderate, is an important factor to consider. Thus, several recommendations can be made. To enable the technology-assisted peer feedback to have a positive effect on writing, instructors have to ensure sufficient training and explanation of metalinguistic language provided by AWE. Learners should be specifically instructed on how to give feedback on global aspects of writing. Learners at lower levels of proficiency should be encouraged to use their native language to provide comments as to ease the cognitive burden of the activity.

There are several limitations to this study. First, the number of participants is small, and they were mostly low level in terms of proficiency. Therefore, the findings are not generalizable to other proficiency groups and potentially are valid for one cultural group only (i.e., Japanese learners). Second, further study should look at the differences between the students within groups and analyze actual revisions they make (e.g., by using Ferris's, 2006, taxonomy).

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A Literature Review on Queer Frameworks for Education and Literacy

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Three articles are outlined regarding queer literacy and connected to teaching English in South Korean classrooms. Critical memoirs of a gay educator show reflective conversations tracing the discursiveness of learning, which helped him to navigate his personal and professional paths within the education system. Discussion from a previous workshop in South Korea on LGBTQ+ topics is shared as a collective critical memoir. An article on the theory and application of queer literacy frameworks will be outlined and shown how they can inform curriculum choices. Additionally, an article on the affective alignment of emotional labor and its impact on inclusion are connected to the experiences of English teachers in Korean classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

South Korea's education system focuses on test scores and status accumulation (Ripley, 2013). Top-down policies from the Ministry of Education as well as the social pressure of parents and families fails to respect the diversity that learners bring to the classroom. Often professional conversations for teachers are funneled into straightjacketed personal conversations around heteronormativity (Dinkins & Englert, 2015) In talking about LGBTQ+ issues in conservative South Korea, discussion often stigmatizes or marginalizes those opening spaces for diversity (Bong, 2008), shutting down opportunities for inclusivity practices in teaching and for learning. This paper reviews three papers from the U.S. and one workshop in South Korea on queer literacy and connects them to teaching English in South Korean classrooms, hoping to initiate professional and respectful conversations.

Burns and Johnson's (2019), "Reconciling the Personal and the Professional: Coming Out from the Classroom Closet" in *Educators Queering Academia: Critical Memoirs*, shows reflective teaching practice as a critical memoir. In the fast-paced arena of Korean education, in both private and public sectors, the changes to the English language teaching industry create both a pedagogically challenging environment to work in as well as a culturally complicated space whether within schools or for teachers' private lives. Critical memoir is a rigorous method to help articulate the emergent complexity and add to the collective narrative on teacher well-being, especially for teachers coping with mainstream resistance to LBGTQ+ rights.

KOTESOL has been intentionally creating space for teachers to talk about LGBTQ+ issues in education since the spring of 2018. The Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter welcomed a thread of social justice workshops on LGBTQ+, and

KOTESOL members have continued to make space for ongoing dialog regarding LGBTQ+ topics, impacting all stakeholders in a learning community. In November of 2018, in a workshop titled "Students Discuss Queer Topics: How Educators Can Foster Communication," discussion was categorized by the author and attendees as a potential critical autobiography, a subgenre of memoir (Di Summa-Knoop, 2017), of participants' teaching experiences.

This literature review also looks to how queer literacy frameworks can help the administration safeguard schools for diversity in gender and sexuality as well as support the methodological practices of teachers for inclusivity. Miller's (2015) "A Queer Literacy Framework Promoting (A)Gender and (A)Sexuality Self-Determination and Justice" in *English Journal* outlined this framework for participants to see how they can influence curriculum choices by the values they bring to their workplace to address teacher development practices in South Korea.

Lastly, an article by Neary et al. (2016) in *Gender and Education*, "A Queer Politics of Emotion: Reimagining Sexualities and Schooling," opens a discourse on the care aspects of teaching inclusively. The authors define and study the affective alignment of emotional labor and its impact on inclusion. Affect, or awareness of emotion as a set of observable manifestations that may be physical, social, or personal of a subjectively experienced emotion, is an important practice to voice and study the complicated experiences of English teachers in Korean classrooms. This resource shares a method to study the embodied meaning of the complexity in shared spaces especially for teachers juggling the sociocultural diversity of gender and sexuality of those in their classrooms as well as those in control of classrooms.

THE REVIEW

Reconciling the Personal and the Professional (Burns & Johnson, 2019)

While about educators and systems in the United States, Burns and Johnson's (2019) article "Reconciling the Personal and the Professional: Coming Out from the Classroom Closet" is especially helpful for teachers of social justice education. The critical memoir, a historical analysis of one's biography sourcing personal knowledge and experiences, is an excellent tool for reflective teaching practices around inclusivity issues. In this book chapter, a gay educator and a teacher trainer as an ally examine two critical incidents and how social justice pedagogy is in dynamic play around LGBTQ+ issues.

These authors are theorizing the narratives of the educator while they are examining the educator's explicit use of critical pedagogy around LGBTQ+ issues. The first experience was deemed unacceptable by the school's administration, yet the second experience narrates a supportive environment for critical pedagogy in which the educator felt less motivated to use social justice teaching practices for LGBTQ+ issues. These two stories are concluded with hesitancy and caution about the educators next steps.

This critical memoir is an important article that shows the discursiveness of one's teaching practice. As a new teacher, the author sought to bring in his social justice perspective. However, life and teaching experiences since that initial reckoning made the educator to see the complicatedness of his role as he navigated his personal and professional paths. This article is important because it talks back to the “happy-ending” stories of prescribed pedagogy, where the humanity of the teacher’s learning is to be discrete and generalizable to others. Instead, this article gives example to the rich life and learning that teachers go through as they seek to be themselves and promote social justice inclusivity in different environments of systemic support.

Students Discuss Queer Topics (Lisak, 2018)

In a 2018 workshop entitled “Students Discuss Queer Topics: How Educators Can Foster Communication,” this author facilitated participant conversation on her students’ group discussions, both planned and emergent, on LGBTQ+ issues. In the workshop, attending educators were invited to look at students’ responses to group discussions in class about LGBTQ+ issues and share their thinking. This activity elicited stories of disquiet of the visiting (foreign) teacher in disharmony with the administration. A participant mentioned that they have had a student “come out” to them privately. Many educators agreed that, most often, students were teased or bullied by other students using derogatory, stereotypical language. This space to discuss such issues was highly appreciated by attendees, as they did not feel supported to talk about such issues with co-teachers at their schools. In closing the discussion, attendees wondered aloud about how these KOTESOL workshops could lead to critical autobiographies of our work in our classrooms as an important constructivist approach to documenting the reality of our classrooms and using our experiences to theorize how to foster communication translingually on issues of humanity such as sex and gender.

A Queer Literacy Framework (Miller, 2019)

In Miller (2019), “A Queer Literacy Framework Promoting (A)Gender and (A)Sexuality Self-Determination and Justice,” Table 1 of non-negotiables for a queer literacy framework is a helpful graphic organizer for teachers of English in South Korea. It reminds that we are historically ensconced. We have inherited sexuality norms that pathologize and delegitimize difference. Miller reminds that this is something that we should not compromise on; we need to move away from this type of policing as binary views of gender and sexuality are potentially damaging. Miller emphasizes that gender and sexuality should be articulated as separate concepts. Children are humans and thus have agency, the table states assertively. Despite children having rights to their own (a)gender and (a)sexuality meaning-making, gender and sexuality norms take away children’s agency as they are labeled instead of emergently negotiated. The table concludes by emphasizing that everyone is entitled to the same basic human rights and that we should all be able to live a livable life.

The article continues by documenting curriculum choices and to listen to those that are queering literacy. Presuming students are straight is a principle that should be challenged. Other frames teachers need to bring to lesson plans are that gender is intersectional and concepts like masculinity and femininity are performed in a context. Identity as well as gender and sexuality are fluid and flexible. Creating spaces for learners to self-define and critique gender norms in the content of the curriculum should be a regular critical literacy practice.

A Queer Politics of Emotion (Neary et al., 2016)

Affect Theory is helpful to share and understand the embodied intersection of teachers and learners in the Korean English language classroom. In "A Queer Politics of Emotion: Reimaging Sexualities and Schooling," Neary et al. (2016) align affect to emotional labor, looking at its impact on inclusion to widen questions about sexuality and schooling. Performance of expected relationships, like those of the overarching legacy of the Confucian education system, have distinct patternings of interaction expectations that often are "surface acting" and not authentic emotions experienced by teachers. This is in contrast to the emotional labor of "deep acting," in which reflection and the feelings evoked are more important than the outcomes of the work.

The article discusses the emotional economies that are invested in by schools and families. Queer phenomenology of affect helps to understand how emotions are created and followed, sometimes conformed to by school participants, other times transgressed as the emotional impact of inclusion is manifested.

What is key in this conceptualization and method is that the often invisible work, the emotional labor of teaching, is interrupted. Questioning the supposed ease of negotiating the work of daily teaching responsibilities, especially when heteronormativity is unquestioned, is an important disruption. Interrupting these stories of heteronormativity is a type of resistance with an emotional affect that manifests itself physiologically, socially, and internally. Prescribed lessons and curricula, even if inclusive in intention, still work within larger systems where adherence to exclusionary norms may be uncritically embedded in a simple solution, showing that inclusivity is considered but not reflexively practiced.

Conclusions

Working in a country and culture different than the one you are born in creates discomfort, and efforts are made to acclimate and accommodate to fit in. When teaching English in South Korea, a "foreigner's" body and feelings consistently face an implicit, heteronormative push to follow the collective good of the South Korea story. Talk of equity in gender and sexuality in education is not that of happiness as an outcome but of a performed status quo. Cultural dissonance brings into harsh relief the labor required to negotiate meaning. Korean classrooms implicitly gravitate towards traditional gender roles of communication. Perforations or resistance to heteronormative assumptions are often ignored or misread as an uncooperative visiting teacher.

These three articles and workshop documentation on queer literacy have been connected to teaching English in South Korean classrooms. Burns and Johnson's (2019) critical memoir of a gay educator was given as an example of reflective teaching practice where teachers document their ever-changing experiences of developing professionally while also being fully human. The Daejeon-Chungcheong Symposium's workshop on analyzing participant discussion on LGBTQ+ and gender offered a face-to-face collaboration, documenting work experiences as potential critical autobiography of local teaching experiences. Miller's (2015) Queer Literacy Framework combines the theoretical with application of queer literacy frameworks and how they can inform curriculum choices as well as teacher development programs in South Korea. Connecting to how teaching is a caring profession, Neary et al. (2016) articulate how affective alignment of emotional labor and its impact on inclusion are a regular experience for English teachers in Korean classrooms. Working to humanize the well-being of teachers and learners by queering language teaching practices requires a paradigm shift from dichotomous gender and sexuality discourse to the dynamic negotiation that language teachers are already very versed in from teaching that words do not have mathematical equivalents but are situationally negotiated.

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Multicultural Households: Student Identity Negotiation and Implications for the Classroom

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This study examines how students of multilingual and multicultural households negotiate their identity in various social contexts in Korean society. Due to the growing racial and ethnic diversity accelerated by a rapid industrialization and globalization, raising awareness of and addressing the needs and expectations of students of multilingual and multicultural households is necessary across various Korean educational settings. This ethnographic case study includes eight middle and high school students attending a non-government foreign language school in Korea. A questionnaire was administered. It was comprised of six sections: soliciting biographic information, personal linguistic information, language use in and outside the home, exposure to a heritage in the target country, and personal self-identity descriptions. The findings suggest that heritage languages play a key role in participants' identity negotiation, regardless of language proficiency, and social and personal use. The findings also indicate participants place a great value on multilingualism and multiculturalism as a cultural negotiator in a globalized society. The research concludes that educators should assist students of multilingual and multicultural households in gaining a better understanding of the complexities and dynamics of identity negotiation and its realities. Additionally, the paper provides suggestions on how to embed effective instructional activities, promoting interaction with all of the students' multifaceted identities, which develops empowered individuals and global citizens (Deardorff, 2019; Nieto, 2010).

Introduction

In many contexts, multilingualism in the home of English language learners (ELLs) is common or on the increase, such phenomenon is also common in Korea (Song, 2012) and has been studied extensively across numerous domains (Ortega et al., 2016). With Korea's rapid economic growth, many Koreans return after having lived with their children overseas. Additionally, an increased number of foreign professionals, migrant workers, and foreign brides have moved to reside in Korea. As a result, the increasing number of Korean and foreign national households are influenced by not one or two, but sometimes by three languages and cultures. This has implications across the Korean society, but of interest here is what this means for educators of students of multicultural households in foreign/international schools in Korea, as well as educators of Korean monocultural ELLs in conventional public and private schools.

In this light, the study examined students' negotiation of identity from multilingual and multicultural households to understand how such students negotiate their Korean and other linguistic cultural identities. The objective is to raise consciousness among teachers and to inform classroom instructional practice to support students residing in ever more diverse contexts (Deardorff, 2019).

Literature Around the Topic

Multilingualism

Recently, the field of multilingual studies and their communities have come to include individuals who operate at varying levels of proficiency in more than two languages. Individuals do not need to have near-native proficiency in all languages (Valdes, 2019). Language ability is viewed on a functional continuum across all language skills.

The understanding of multilingualism has evolved over time (Valdes, 2019), but the notions of multilingualism and multiculturalism are often studied within the framework of bilingualism (Mercer & Williams, 2014). Although there is an overlap, multilingualism and multiculturalism pose a more dynamic situation. Therefore, it is valuable to examine the language practices and enactment of cultural practices on students' negotiation of identity from multilingual households to support them in the classroom. Such an examination is also valuable for teachers of students of entirely monolingual and monocultural classrooms, as society outside the educational setting is increasingly more diverse. Therefore, educators, novice and experienced, can benefit from new resources, a review of known resources, and/or a renewed dialogue to better meet all students' needs.

Increasing Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Korea

After Korea's rapid industrialization, a decreasing working-age population due to a trend in declining birthrates (Miller, 2010) and a highly educated population not readily filling low-skill jobs (Park, 2017), foreign immigrant labor increasingly filled positions in many sectors of the economy. In addition, the increase in foreign brides over the decades among predominantly rural men, in part because of the gender imbalance, has impacted the changing social demographic. Moreover, Korea's participation in increasing cooperative partnerships in global economies has also influenced the changing demographic, as foreign professionals work and reside for extended periods in Korea (Kim, 2013).

These social factors have resulted in an ongoing increase in racial and ethnic diversity in Korea. In 1995, Korea had the lowest foreign residents, permanent and temporary, of all OECD countries, equaling 0.24% of the country's whole population (Lim, 2017). In 2010, 0.5% of all births were from parents of mixed race/heritage (e.g., 20,000 out of 470,000; Strother, 2012). In 2016, the foreign resident population constituted 3.6%, approximately 1.9 million residents (Lim, 2017). The government projection is that by 2030 the foreign resident population will be over 6%, exceeding 3 million residents (Lim, 2017).

Korea has made recent and deliberate efforts to address the ever-increasing sociocultural demographic (Strother, 2012). For example, the country has broadened the standardized curriculum and many social educational agendas to increase understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures and the growing multicultural Korean society (Song, 2012).

Founding Work on Language and Identity

Mercer and Williams (2014) draw on Bakhtin's (1981) work, which highlights that language does not exist without its use within social communities. They also draw on Bourdieu's (1991) work on language and power and how individuals may leverage language use as a form of social capital, while at the same time, society may position them pejoratively for particular language use. These factors influence the embodiment of who individuals understand themselves to be and how they approach the negotiation of who they are (i.e., identity) in their communities. Ochs (1993) views identity as a means to describe a range of social personae including social status, interpersonal relationships, and family and community roles, while Norton (2000) emphasizes the complexity of identity, understanding it as multifaceted and in a constant flux over time and space. This is significant as the linguistic, social, and cultural practices individuals engage with are not static but change based on with whom they interact.

Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Curriculum

Cultural awareness is important for students to have, but learning about and having an understanding of different linguistic, cultural, and ethnic communities is not sufficient. Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) moves beyond viewing others solely through the lens of one's own culture, which ultimately constitutes ethnocentrism. ICC encompasses the ability to view differences through a broader lens, incorporating views of others, and to participate appropriately with distinct individuals and within diverse cultural contexts. Doing so demonstrates *interculturality* (Byram, 1997) and the possession of a critical awareness of how to negotiate incompatible belief sets, perspectives, and behaviors effectively. When this is achieved, communication and interaction occurs in an established shared space between individuals of different linguistic, social, and cultural backgrounds.

Teachers should not only foster cultural awareness but also present opportunities for students to reflect on their own identities and cultural practices, along with those of others, to explore and cultivate ICC in and out of the classroom. Language and culture rarely are separate but are intrinsically connected, and therefore, language reflects an individual's reality and one connection – a connection to society (Kramch, 2006). These intangible factors surrounding language learning and language use are essential for speakers/learners of language to address explicitly to be able to have cultural intelligence in support of ICC (Livermore, 2011).

The Study: Ethnographic Inquiry

Methods

A small ethnographic case study explored the negotiation of identity of students' of multicultural households. The participants were eight middle and high school-aged students from multicultural (i.e., trilingual and tricultural) households, attending a non-government foreign international school in the city of Dongducheon, located in the northern part of Gyeonggi Province near Seoul. A questionnaire, in English (see Appendix A), was administered by their Korean-English bilingual English teacher. Table 1 is a summary of the questionnaire's topic areas.

TABLE 1. Summary of Topic Areas of Questionnaire

Section	Topic Area	Subtopic Areas
Section 1	Biographical information	Gender, Age, Languages used at home, L1/L2/L3. Strongest proficiency / Weakest proficiency
Section 2	Personal Linguistic Information	Age learning L1/L2/L3, Schooling in L1/L2/L3, Residence in country of L1/L2/L3, Study in school of L1/L2/L3 as FL, Travel to country of L1/L2/L3, Generation in US, Rating of fluency in L1/L2/L3
Section 3	Language Use in the Home	Mother & Father L1, Siblings L1 and use of language(s), Use of Ls with whom and for what purposes/content
Section 4	Language Use Outside the Home	Where used, which, and for what purposes/content, and with whom
Section 5	Exposure to LOTE in TL Country	Where used, which, and for what purposes/content, and with whom
Section 6	Self-Identity and You	Language most affiliated with, Culture most affiliated with, Role of being multilingual, Awareness of negotiation of self

The questionnaire was also translated into Korean (Korean translation not provided in the Appendix). Participants selected their language preference when completing the questionnaire. The teacher served not only as the administrator but also as the moderator in case of any doubt regarding the information requested in a question. Participants described their multi-language proficiencies, language practices, cultural exposure, and ethnic community integration, and depicted the dynamics of their personal identity.

The data was recorded for the closed one-item response answers and coded for the open constructed response answers. Then, the findings were examined for emerging patterns framed through the described identity research and immigration-assimilation studies, and current sociocultural characteristics of the study context.

Findings

An overview of the participants' personal and linguistic information collected in Sections 1–3 of the questionnaire is provided in Table 2. The full details of responses are not provided, due to the nature of the responses. The data collected from Sections 4–6 of the questionnaire were all open response answers and the principle patterns of the data are described below framed by two categories: (a) language, culture, and cognition, and identity and (b) multilingualism and identity.

TABLE 2. Overview of Participants Biographical Information

P	Gender	Age	L1	L2	L3	#1L in Home	#2L in Home	#3L in Home	L1 Mother	L1 Father
1	F	15	English (Birth)	Korean (3 yrs.)	Tagalog (3 yrs.)	Tagalog	Korean	English	Tagalog	Tagalog
2	M	12	Korean (Birth)	Urdu (5 yrs.)	English (7 yrs.)	Korean	English	Urdu	Korean	Urdu
3	M	13	Punjabi (Birth)	English (5 yrs.)	Hindi (7 yrs.)	English	Hindi	Punjabi	Punjabi	Punjabi
4	M	14	Korean (Birth)	English (11 yrs.)	Bengali (12yrs.)	Korean	English	Bengali	Bengali	Bengali
5	F	18	Korean (Birth)	English (2 yrs.)	Urdu (Birth)	Korean	English	Urdu	Korean	Urdu
6	F	19	Urdu (Birth)	Korean (5 yrs.)	English (7 yrs.)	Korean	Urdu	English	Korean	Urdu
7	F	15	English (Birth)	Russian (Birth)	Korean (5 yrs.)	English	Russian	Korean	Spanish	Russian
8	F	18	Japanese (Birth)	Korean (11 yrs.)	English (11yrs.)	Japanese	Korean	English	Japanese	Korean

Note. P = Participant number. #1L = Language most used, #2L = Language used second-most, etc.

Language and Culture & Identity

The participants' multilingualism and multiculturalism played a significant role in their identity negotiation and a lack of proficiency or absence of use of productive skills in a language did not result in a reduced connection to the language as part of their identity. The amount of participation in the local heritage language community and/or foreign target language community was not indicative of the participants' connection to that community and its impact on identity. However, home language use was important to connecting participants to the language(s) and the identities associated with the language or languages. In some cases, language use of the participant was different with each parent, but in other cases, language use with each parent was the same language. The use of English was most common among participants at school and among friends, but Korean was widely used. This finding could be a result of participants participating in the study in the context of their English classroom.

The influence of ethnic backgrounds and the corresponding culture had a high influence on participants' identity. Participation in the heritage language community through religious, social, and educational activities was critical to identity embodiment of the heritages cultures. They expressed that their identities operated on a continuum and that language affirmed association with the ethnic community and the enactment of that heritage language and/or community on their identity. Again, their connection to a community was not dependent on the level of proficiency in the language. They did not indicate that their Korean identity as a preferred one, even though they participated in the Korean society as the dominant realm on a daily basis. They understood their identity as meshed and dynamic, not as three separate identities existing in isolation. Their maintenance of the heritage languages and identities, along with their Korean ones, were enacted while crossing through diverse communities.

Multilingualism and Identity

Participants viewed multilingualism as a natural result of their parents, birth, residence, or family contexts, and not something they deliberately sought to possess or maintain. For them, by default, they are multilingual, but were proud of the diversity they possess (language, culture, and ethnicity). However, some did express a sense of prejudice regarding certain aspects of their diverse backgrounds in society as a whole. For example, being positioned as foreign when part of their dynamic identities encompass being Korean. Yet since the use of each language and the enactment of the associated identities most commonly operate in distinct realms, a sense of negative positioning was not common as they were most often among an in-group when using a particular language.

Participants also saw a value in being multilingual and multicultural, as they understood these factors as permitting them to meet others on their "turf" and to serve as a language or cultural negotiator. With Korea's push for being a contender in the global market and various policies for social members to be global citizens (Noh, 2018), such comments appeared in line with the socialization and education of students. However, it was striking when compared with parallel studies conducted among students from multicultural household in central California, USA (Mac Donald & Park, 2019), where participants presented similar responses to the study conducted in Korea but with no mention of understanding their multilingualism and multiculturalism as a benefit for others or society. This could possibly also be a result of the socialization and education of students in California, or the USA, and the view of other languages within the hegemony of English (Ortiz, 2011).

Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

The multifaceted and dynamic nature of the continuum on which the participants negotiate their identities is evidence of how an individual may often view themselves through the lens of a blended identity, rather than operating within several different identities. It shows how they move along a continuum, and adjust and draw on certain languages and cultural aspects as needed to meet the other in his/her space or to establish a shared third space for interaction. Therefore, there is an immense value in not only teachers understanding the complexities of students' identities but also to assist all students to better understand and competently communicate across cultures.

Focus on multicultural and intercultural dimensions present in the classroom is important, as students, like those in this study, possess multifaceted realities, and these complex and dynamic realities influence the negotiation of who they are in and out of the classroom. Developing a space in the classroom where learners can come to explicitly explore themselves as well as those around them builds maturity, tolerance, understanding, and empathy. Thus, providing learning activities that include such dimensions will help learners understand how social identities (values, beliefs, worldviews, expectations) are partly formed through personal interaction, perceptions of others, and others' perception of them. Awareness of differences and the ability to successfully adapt influence successful communication and interaction (Byram et al., 2002; Deardorff, 2019).

Individuals seek to make sense of the world by operating on generalizations (Welsh, 2011), as a starting place based on our social and educational training. Yet, generalizations only tell a portion of the story (Ngozi Adichie, 2009). They are never a complete representation of a reality. Educators can also be enriched and learn from activities with and the stories of their students to strive that will enhance their ability to interact with all of the students' multifaceted identities (Deardorff, 2019; Nieto, 2010). One's cultural orientation is complex, deeply ingrained and multifaceted (Deardorff, 2019). How one interprets or lives is a culture and enactment of an identity (Nieto, 2010), and educators' own understanding and negotiation of their identity will also be developed through offering such activities in the classroom.

Applications for Instructional Practice

Navigating the Intercultural Classroom (Lindholm & Mednick Myles, 2019) offers both theoretical perspectives on culture, personal identity, language, cultural identity, culturally embedded behaviors, and intercultural communicative competence (ICC), as well as focusing on specific educational settings like international English programs (IEP), English for academic purposes (EAP), and vocational-focused programs. Complementing these discussions in each chapter are practice-based suggestions and sample activities that can be used in the classroom or adapted as needed. An overview of some selected classroom activities are discussed here to offer examples of how students' multifaceted identity can be explored while fostering ICC.

Sample Activities for the Classroom

Who Am I?

Where is one from? Where is home, even if it is a hybrid one or flowing and dynamic? How does one express the process of transitioning from one culture to another, or negotiating multiple cultures simultaneously? Storytelling is a valuable tool in permitting students to express their complex personal stories that are ever-changing biographies. Storytelling can be difficult, but it can also be liberating and opens a space for students to address the drama/trauma of experiences they have not been able to speak about.

What Is a Name?

A name expresses a variety of *messages* that are intrinsically culturally and linguistically connected to one's identity. Consequently, it lends itself as a space for students to tell a personal narrative of the *significance* of their name. In doing so, one shares an inner facet of their identity based on already shared public information about one self, but it also offers significant information that would not be shared otherwise.

Exploring Cultural Stereotypes

Stereotypes are only part of the story. Providing an opportunity for students to discuss what they perceive of another based on societal messages, with a member of that group present to describe why one dresses differently, eats differently, etc. affords even lower-level proficiency students to begin to engage in a dialogue of culture as artifacts, customs, and/or beliefs (Baider, 2013). Presenting the *iceberg* as a culture metaphor can be useful, segmenting as needed or presenting the whole iceberg, to engage in unpacking stereotypes.

Investigating Cultural Symbols, Values, and Beliefs

Artifacts of cultural beliefs are everywhere. Examining them in the classroom offers dynamic expression and learning for others. Regardless of the level of proficiency or age, as we all have social experiences that may be limited or extensive, the examination of a cultural artifact from a student's heritage country, country of asylum or migration status, and/or final country of asylum or residence is still extremely meaningful.

Conclusions

The accounts of the participants show the dynamic ways they understand the value of the languages they know, participate in distinct communities, and negotiate their identities. Their visual ethnic appearance may have some, little, or no impact on how they would most identify. Yet, even more important is that the multilingual and multicultural realities they enact within Korean society are highly dynamic. Offering activities in the classroom needs to do more than present an understanding of cultural differences; it should also present opportunities for students to reflect on their own identities and cultural practices, along with those of others, to develop ICC.

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APPENDIX

Ethnographic Questionnaire

*Space for open-response answers has been deleted for article publication purposes.

Multilingual & Multicultural Household, Child Identity Study

Student/Child Questionnaire **Date**____________

Biographical Information

Part 1

PARTICIPANT #___________ Sex: M F (Circle one)

AGE: _________ Number of years living in the United States ___________

What are the three languages used in the home? ________, ________, _______

What do you consider to be your 1st language (L1)? ________________

What do you consider to be your next strongest/largely used language (L2)? __________________

What do consider to be your least strong/least used language (L3)? __________________

What language do you most closely identify with respect you your personal identity?

____________. Why? ____

____.

What is your Father's/Caretaker #1's L1: _____________________________

What is your Mother's/Caretaker #2's L1: ____________________________

What heritage culture/s do you consider part of your household, even if you do not speak that language?
____

Personal Linguistic Information

Part 2

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. At what age did you begin learning your L1?
(for example: from birth or age 5) ☐

   Which language is this?_________

2. At what age did you begin learning your L2 ?
(for example: from birth or age 5) ☐

   Which language is this?_________

3. At what age did you begin learning your L3 ?
(for example: from birth or age 5) ☐

   Which language is this?_________

4. Did you start school in the United States? Circle one: **YES** **NO**

5. Have you studied in your L2-speaking country? Circle one: **YES** **NO**
   If you answer ***YES***....
   What country? __________________ From age _________ to age ________

6. Have you studied in your L3-speaking country? Circle one: YES NO
   If you answer ***YES***....
   What country? __________________ From age _________ to age ________

7. Have you studied in a bilingual education, immersion, or dual language program?
   Circle one: **YES** **NO**
   If you answered ***YES***.... Which grades? __________________

8. Do/have you study/studied any of your home languages in school?
   Circle one: **YES** **NO**
   If you answer ***YES***, which one and for how many academic years.
   Language/s: ___________ Years:_________

   If YES, briefly what is/was your main reason for studying this/these language/s?
   ____

9. What generation are you in the United States (1st, 2nd, 3rd)? ___________

10. Do you travel to your family's/parent's/caregiver's home country? **YES** **NO**
If ***YES***, which country/countries: ___________________
How often: ___________________ For how long? ___________________

11. Mark an X for the language(s) <u>you used most</u> in the following periods of your life:
(**LOTE** = Additional Language Other Than English)

AGE	ENGLISH	LOTE 1	LOTE 2	BOTH LOTE 1 & LOTE 2	LOTE 1, LOTE 2 & ENGLISH
0 - 5 yrs. old					
6 - 12 yrs. old					
13 - 18 yrs. old					
18+ yrs. old					

12. Rate your proficiency in English, your L1 and your L2 (speaking, reading, writing, listening) according to the following scale (write the number next to each skill):

6 = NATIVE FLUENCY
5 = NEAR (ALMOST) NATIVE FLUENCY
4 = ADVANCED FLUENCY
3 = INTERMEDIATE FLUENCY
2 = BASIC FLUENCY
1 = BEGINNING FLUENCY

ENGLISH		YOUR LOTE 1		YOUR LOTE 2	
Speaking		Speaking		Speaking	
Reading		Reading		Reading	
Writing		Writing		Writing	
Listening		Listening		Listening	

13. Read the following statements about and write an X to indicate YES or NO.

a. Knowing <u>English</u> is an important part of who I am. **YES** **NO**
b. Knowing my LOTE 1 (__________) is an important part of who I am. **YES** **NO**
c. Knowing my LOTE 2 (__________) is an important part of who I am. **YES** **NO**

14. Which language most influences your personal identity? _______________

15. Which language most influences your social/public identity? ___________

Language Use In the Home

Part 3

16. Which language/s do use with which household members and for which purposes (i.e., topics)?

Father/Caretaker #1:

Mother/Caretaker #2:

Sibling(s): List all siblings (brothers and sisters) and their ages.

Language Use Outside the Home

Part 4

17. What has been your exposure to your LOTE 1 and LOTE 2 outside the household (e.g., church, temple, community center, family friends, etc.)?

Exposure to LOTE 1 and/or LOTE 2 in Target Language Country

Part 5

18. What has been your exposure to your LOTE 1 and LOTE 2 in the target language country (e.g., language program, religious program, camp, church, temple, community center, family friends, etc.)? Was the target language country a heritage language country? How did these experiences influence your connection to the language, the culture, the country? How did it influence your personal identity?

Self-Identity & You

Part 6

19. Please share anything about how you view your language use and its influence on your identity inside and outside the home and on your personal identity?

20. Describe any difficulties negotiating the identities you have described. Or negotiating the use of language(s) and in which context, if so?

21. Has knowing more than one language made school more difficult at any point in time?

22. Has identifying with more than one language and culture as part of your identity made your negotiation-of-self more/less difficult at any point in time?

23. Do you perceive that your identity shifts depending on the language you are speaking and/or the context in which you use that language?

24. Do you perceive a difference in the way you think in English, your LOTE 1, and your LOTE 2? If so, in what way?

25. What language most strongly influences your identity overall?

26. What language most strongly influences you identity inside the home?

27. What language most strongly influences you identity outside the home?

Towards English for Summer Olympics Purposes: A Corpus-Based Vocabulary Analysis

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In July, 2020, Japan will host the Summer Olympic Games, which has created both a need and a desire for learning English vocabulary related to the events, sports, and news associated with the games – arising from the fact that English serves as the games' lingua franca. Consequently, much of the communication amongst the international community participating, following, and covering the events will occur in English. Thus far, no study has examined the statistically significant corpus-based vocabulary of keyness, essential for navigating through written Summer Olympics discourse. Employing a mixed methodology consisting of rigorous testing to identify technical Summer Olympics vocabulary, findings indicate loanwords, together with English lexicon, as unique terms that are part of the Summer Olympic discourse community. Hence, this study offers lexical insight for learners and practitioners of Summer Olympics English.

INTRODUCTION

In July 2020, Japan will host the Summer Olympic Games (SOG), which has created both a need and a desire for learning English vocabulary related to the events, sports, and news associated with the games. This requisite arises because English serves as the games' lingua franca, similar to other international events (Jenkins, 2006; Meierkord, 2002; Riccobono, 2018). Therefore, much discourse of the international community that will participate, follow, and cover the SOG events (i.e., athletes, journalists, spectators) will be in English. Hitherto, no corpus-based lexical research has examined single-unit words of statistical keyness, essential for navigating through written Summer Olympics discourse. Hence, this study aims to fill this gap for both learners and practitioners of Summer Olympics English (SOE).

This paper illustrates how a need for learning SOG vocabulary is first established by conducting ethnographic interviews with university professors in Japan to explore interest in SOE, content beneficial to learners, and SOE problematic areas. Subsequently, a Summer Olympics English Corpus (SOEC) is constructed and used to identify technical Summer Olympics vocabulary in conjunction with a semantic rater scale.

No known research has examined the field-specific corpus-based vocabulary used in SOE readings, and a more effective, comprehensive SOE pedagogy is needed for sports English and General English (GE) because SOG is a topic discussed globally amongst a wide variety of individuals, including non-native English speakers (NNESs) and English language learners (ELLs).

Accordingly, this corpus-based lexical study develops a new branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP): English for Summer Olympics Purposes (ESOP). The results may benefit learners and practitioners of SOE (e.g., English for sport pedagogy, Content and Language Integrated Learning, teams, international NNES journalists). Increasing sports vocabulary could further communication and lead to effective action in relation to particular sport involvement (Stolz & Pill, 2016). Thus, after the ethnographic phase of this research, the author compiles the SOEC construct (see Table1), which leads to the extraction of statistical keywords (KWs) and, ultimately, to a technical SOE wordlist (see Appendix A).

Table 1. Composition of the Summer Olympics English Corpus (SOEC)

Registers	Athletic Events	Word Tokens	Files	Word Types
Wikipedia articles, online newspaper articles, magazine articles (for each Tokyo 2020 SOG event).	40	563,811	220	26,270

Theoretical Background

Concerning the lead-up to the Tokyo 2020 SOG and an absence of a triangulated SOE word list, this research provides a long-needed starting point for establishing a pedagogical model and praxis that promote learner mastery of practical SOE-related vocabulary. A wordlist can appropriately address fundamental needs and act as a beginning stage from which learners could better communicate in field-specific discourse (e.g., Coxhead, 2013; Lewis, 1993, 1997, 2000; Nation, 1993; Riccobono, 2019; Tangpijaikul, 2014), such as SOE. However, learning to communicate in a specific field of English relies on vocabulary size to a great extent (Chung & Nation, 2003; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) and necessitates a more rigorous and strategic approach to drive linguistic comprehension and functional proficiency. Deficiencies in learning English vocabulary are not only related to learners lacking knowledge of words and phrases interconnected with their specific field of study or occupation, (Martinez et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2008; Ward, 2009) but also to their lack of semantic and syntactical comprehension, leading to insufficiencies in L2 discursive reasoning, analysis, and application. This study aims to resolve this quandary through a mixed methodological approach inclusive of raters that judge which corpus-driven SOE terms relate more to SOE.

Consequently, given the role of English as an international SOG language, NNESs working or following the games in an English-only or English-as-a-lingua-franca environment currently do not have access to reliable empirical research data for learning technical or field-specific SOG-related vocabulary of statistical keyness. Instead, SOE learners presently rely on SOE glossaries, consisting of intuited vocabulary and geared principally toward a homogenous group of readers whose unique language groups are ill-defined or entirely unaddressed (Riccobono, 2018). This study falls in line with other research building specialized corpora to identify technical vocabulary (TV) for sports English (Riccobono, 2018).

Aim

To fill this gap in corpus-based ESP vocabulary studies, this research aims to develop a list of field-specific single-word units (SWUs) to enhance the lexical SOE proficiency of those interested in learning this specific discourse. The approach this study employs incidentally produces some words from West's (1953) General Service List (GSL) and Coxhead's (1998, 2000) Academic Word List (AWL), both of which are widely used in ELL vocabulary pedagogy, especially at tertiary levels (Nation, 2012). Additionally, since TV includes GSL and AWL words, a researcher ought not to remove them from technical word lists (Chung & Nation, 2003; Coxhead & Hirsh, 2007; Sutarsyah et al., 1994; Xue & Nation, 1984) despite other corpus-based technical word list studies eliminating them (Tangpijaikul, 2014). Therefore, considering the core significance of these words, this study introduces a technical lexicon vocabulary list, presented as a resource to benefit SOE learners and practitioners, regardless of prior knowledge of frequently used GSL and AWL words.

Furthermore, this research provides field-specific SWUs for those who are already involved or are considering participating in an English-speaking SOG-discourse environment and for SOE learners and teachers, enhancing their professional SOE proficiency. Thus, this paper reveals approaches to constructing the Technical Summer Olympics English Wordlist (TSOEWL). The following research questions (RQs) guide this paper:

RQ1. What SOE-related registers and topics indicate ELL limitations and needs in gaining SOE vocabulary competencies?
RQ2. What SWUs belong on a TSOEWL?

Methodology

To conduct a needs analysis (NA) for a technical written SOE lexicon utilized by learners and practitioners and to understand the necessary SOE make-up, this research follows Hong and Jhang (2010), Long (2005), and Riccobono (2018) by conducting ethnographic interviews (N = 5: n = 2 university English language practitioners, n = 4 native Japanese speakers, n = 1 native American English speaker), which illustrated the need for an SOE corpus and essential lexicon. University professors interested in the 2020 SOG were chosen as interview participants from a university in Aichi Prefecture, Japan, drawing on Hong and Jhang's (2005) question format used for a maritime English construct and Riccobono's (2018) research on technical spoken baseball English lexicon.

The participants revealed problematic SOE areas and parts of SOG-related interest. Subsequently, an SOEC analysis was executed in comparison to a reference corpus, the Corpus of Contemporary American English's written texts, producing a keyword (KW) list. Then, utilizing a mixed methodological approach, this research employed N = 5 raters to intuit corpus-based technical types for the SOE wordlist using a 4-point semantic rater scale from the aforementioned KWs (Chung & Nation, 2003; Riccobono, 2018; Tangpijaikul, 2014). As informed by

Chung and Nation (2003) and Tangpijaikul (2014), each rater was trained to employ the semantic rater scale. The raters did not include any of the aforementioned ethnographic interview participants. The N = 5 raters consisted of n = 4 university students majoring in English and n = 1 university English practitioner from an Aichi Prefecture university in Japan. Each rater received training recommended by Chung and Nation (2003) for using a 4-point semantic rater scale, which was first used by them to identify technical words for applied linguistics and anatomy. The scale was modified by Tangpijaikul (2014) in a study of technical business words and in Riccobono's (2018) investigation of technical baseball vocabulary.

Ethnographic Interviews

To justify the need for the SOEC and to identify the necessary genres and registers for compiling it, a triangulated approach involving ethnographic uniform interview questions was used, with N = 5 aforementioned university practitioners interested in SOE (Hong & Jhang, 2010; Riccobono, 2018). Furthermore, qualitative-focused coding (Saldana, 2009) was used with the assistance of word clouds (Deakin et al, 2012; Harvey & Baumann, 2012) and a concordance analyzer, AntConc (Anthony, 2016a), to identify recurring interview themes (Charmaz, 2006; Saldana, 2009). As the above-described techniques demonstrate, the SOEC compilation was informed by the advice of ethnographic participants (EP) together with empirical methodologies, including statistical, quantitative, and qualitative analyses. EP intuition accounted for the initial SOEC data compilation phases. Accordingly, issues surrounding copyright infringement related to compiling corpora were also recognized and suggestions were adhered to (Park & Kim, 2011; Riccobono, 2018).

Corpus Compilation

SOEC exemplifies an ethnographically predisposed, indexed corpus of balance and representativeness (Biber & Conrad, 2009; Hong & Jhang, 2010; Riccobono, 2018). It involves written English discourse from all 40 events scheduled for the 2020 SOG. Data for each event include a general Wikipedia article explaining the sport and its history, famous records and athletes, as well as online newspaper and magazine articles.

Identifying Technical SOE Words

To illustrate the mixed-methodology approach for identifying technical vocabulary (TV) with statistical keyness values, an NA was first conducted via aforementioned ethnographic interviews, a field-specific corpus (SOEC) was created, and KWs were then extracted through a corpus comparison that employed a log-likelihood (4-term) exam, utilizing Anthony's (2016a) AntConc 3.5.0. A fundamental characteristic of compiling and analyzing corpora is using machine- or computer-readable formats (Baker, 2006; Bednarek, 2015; Hong & Jhang, 2010). This study employed AntConc 3.5.0 (2016a) to extract SWUs and analyze SOEC concordance. Next, reference corpus comparisons were conducted through log-likelihood exams to identify the vocabulary of keyness or the key vocabulary (Culpeper, 2009; Grabowski, 2015; Riccobono, 2018; Tangpijaikul, 2014). Furthermore, the critical KW threshold selected for this study was a Bonferroni $p < 0.05$, used to qualify KW for SOEC, representing a robust measure for identifying KWs of statistical significance (Weisstein, 2005).

To employ AntConc, a discussion on the weight of keyness value needs attention. Merits of various quantitative measurement types for extracting lexis from a given corpus exist specifically in terms of quantitative measurement based on frequency and/or keyness. The question arises whether frequency counts are truly effective in identifying and evaluating significant words in corpus linguistics or whether assessments of the keyness value of words and phrases are more reliable. The KW search feature, available in concordancer applications discussed in more depth below (e.g., AntConc), compares the frequency wordlist of a reference corpus with that of the specialized corpus: the SOEC or the Baseball English Corpus (Riccobono, 2018). A word is considered to be a key or of keyness value only when its frequency rank in the target corpus under study, in this case the SOEC, is high in comparison to its rank in the reference corpus (i.e., the Corpus of Contemporary American English: COCA).

Studies have shown that the reference corpus comparison approach acts as a suitable beginning point for numerous corpus-based vocabulary analyses (Evison, 2010; Riccobono, 2018; Tangpijaikul, 2014). COCA is also representative of North American English, which comprises much of the SOEC; therefore, the comparison is on an equal dialectal footing. Moreover, since the SOEC represents written texts, similar COCA written newspaper and magazine texts were chosen for comparison (Biber & Conrad, 2009; Hong & Jhang, 2010; Riccobono, 2018). It should also be noted that this study executed a log-likelihood (4-term) keyness measure in AntConc for KW ranking because it represents a robust test for identifying unique KWs in a given corpus (Anthony, 2016a).

Lemmatization

Words of the same base but with different inflectional affixes (e.g., *run*, *runs*, *runner*, *runners*) were subjected to lemmatization as one lexical item and considered to be members of the same word family at Level 2 in Bauer and Nation's (1993) classification of word families: "Regularly inflected words are part of the same family. The inflectional categories are plural, third person singular present tense, past tense, past participle, *-ing*, comparative, superlative, possessive" (p. 270). Thus, lemmatization served to economize lexis while uniformly creating consistency across the TSOEWL in this study. KWs were lemmatized for this purpose only in line with Chung and Nation (2003) and Tangpijaikul (2014).

Lexical Profiling

Prior to the rater scale approach initiation, a breakdown of GSL, AWL, and off-list words across the SOEC was generated (see Figure 3) using Anthony's (2016b) AntWordProfiler 1.4.1m. Some AWL and GSL words cut across technical word lists, but in this study, the author, also a sports English stakeholder as reported in Riccobono (2018), made that determination in line with Nation (2012; personal communication, January 3, 2017). AntWordProfiler can also aid SOE learners and practitioners to determine less-familiar to familiar words, and it corroborated the notion that technical words cut across GSL and AWL, despite research by Tangpijaikul (2014), suggesting ELLs already have knowledge of GSL and AWL words, and therefore unnecessary as TV. However, others suggest these types may serve as beneficial for developing SOE vocabulary (Nation, personal communication, January 16, 2017; Riccobono, 2018; Tangpijaikul, 2014). During this stage, some GSL and AWL types, proper names, and abbreviations or acronyms were excluded. Nation (personal communication, January 3, 2017) concurred with Tangpijaikul (2014) that it was worth excluding names and places from the KW list; however, retaining some abbreviations conforms with Chung and Nation (2003) because *BICS* appeared as a word in their study in applied linguistics TV. Referring to Chung and Nation's (2003) and Tangpijaikul's (2014) recommendations, the present study also retained abbreviations as TV rating candidates. Additionally, as Tangpijaikul (2014) suggested, abbreviations consisting of proper names were filtered out.

The 4-Point Semantic Rating Scale

The final step in forming the technical wordlist entailed rating the KWs that remained on a semantic scale, ranging from words whose meanings were related to the SOE field to those without a particular semantic relationship with the SOG events whatsoever. The use of a 4-point rating scale (see Appendix A) to determine the SOG lexicon semantic ratings requires extensive knowledge of the subject area (Chung & Nation, 2003, 2004). The raters received training based on Chung and Nation's (2003) studies on TV in anatomy and applied linguistics, on Tangpijaikul's (2014) business TV research, as well as on Riccobono's (2018) baseball TV study. Conclusively, Figure 1 illustrates the process of identifying the technical SOE lexicon.

Figure 1. Steps in Extracting Technical SOEC Words

1. SOEC frequency list formed	2. Reference corpus comparison	3. Keyword list formed and lemmatized	4. Word profiling removal	5. Application of rating scale
			KWs belonging to GSL are rated and removed.	Lexicon that remains is rated on the semantic rating scale.
			KWs belonging to AWL are rated and removed.	
			Proper names and abbreviations are rated and filtered.	

Note. Adapted from Riccobono (2018) and Tangpijaikul (2014).

Inter-rater Reliability

At each step of the rater scale, the agreement among inter-raters was evaluated for bias (Chung & Nation, 2003; Riccobono, 2018; Tangpijaikul, 2014). As cited in Chung and Nation's (2003) study on identifying TV, a raw accuracy score of 0.7 constitutes a desirable inter-rater reliability threshold for rating items in four groups or levels on the semantic scale. In the present study, to include a word on the final SOE wordlist, a reliability rating of 0.8 for any combination of steps 3 and 4 (among the inter-raters) was required, greater than the 0.7 minimum needed to establish rating accuracy (Chung & Nation, 2003). Items from steps 1 and 2 were not retained (Tangpijaikul, 2014). Henceforth, this study refers to SWUs that remained on the KW list as items belonging to the TSOEWL. Additionally, the establishment of TSOEWL suggested validity by the high level of inter-rater reliability agreement (0.8 to 100.0) achieved in this study. To assess the inter-rater reliability, intraclass correlations could be used (see Riccobono, 2018).

Results and Discussion

Qualitative Results and Discussion

When answering the first RQ, interviews with N = 5 EP indicated interest in increasing lexicon proficiency from varying SOE-related events and topics (e.g., *track & field*, *cycling*, *volunteering*, *logistics*, etc.). Of the interviewees, n = 3 reported SOE useful for reading newspapers; n = 4 saw it is as beneficial in communicating with foreigners. All N = 5 viewed SOE as useful for future practicums. Therefore, participants saw potential value for SOEC-driven pedagogy, with n = 4 noting that an SOE corpus has essential merit because English serves as the primary world language used in and around Olympic events.

EP also suggested various written mediums for SOEC data collection (e.g., BBC, Facebook, online newspapers, and magazines). As mentioned, word clouds (see Figure 2) assisted in coding interview data and narrowing down what types of texts to include in SOEC: written and spoken SOE. Moreover, EP suggested that writing and reading represent areas that they, as NNESs, cogitated as challenging and suggested including that identifying written SOE lexicon (via SOEC analysis) may serve SOE learners and practitioners. Despite suggestions for both spoken and written texts in SOEC, this resulted in encompassing only written data for SOEC, mainly due to feasibly, despite participants also indicating a need for improving their oral communication proficiency. Moreover, n = 3 reported speaking and n = 4 indicated listening as areas of SOE difficulty. Nevertheless, written lexicon identified as technical in TSOEWL has conceivable prospects for also improving speaking and listening (Milton, 2009). Thus, the researcher may include spoken SOE texts for future research and make it publicly available. Therefore, upon completion of ethnographic interviews, the opinions expressed by EP substantiated a need for the SOEC, with the focus on including written texts in the corpus from all scheduled 2020 SOG events.

FIGURE 2. Word Clouds

Quantitative Results and Discussion

The log-likelihood (4-term) exam produced 1,000 total KW types. However, only 170 KWs, resulting in 100+ keyness value, were examined (using a semantic rating scale) for technicalness in this study due to feasibility. Thus, N = 5 examined 170 KWs on the semantic rating scale (see Appendix A). The analysis resulted in 49 words rated as either 3 or 4 on the semantic rating scale with at least .80 inter-rater reliability. Accordingly, these 49 words form the TSOEWL (see Appendix B).

As evident, the majority of TSOEWL does not contain North American English words. Several points warrant consideration when rationalizing this finding. First, the reference corpus, COCA, contains North American English texts, whereas the corpus this study compared it to, SOEC, includes texts on SOE events with non-English lexicon; this perhaps accounts for the bulk of TSOEWL of non-North American English types as the aforementioned corpus comparison approach used in this study, identifies word frequency distinctions between the reference corpus, COCA, and target corpus, SOEC. Next, most of the list contains non-English types (e.g., *taekwondo*, *kata*, *choong*, *épée*). Noticeably, the SOG represents an international event and, therefore, this finding of loanwords (also used in English vernacular) complements this, showing that the TSOEWL also includes international or loanword types. This finding aligns with international sports inclusive of technical loanwords (e.g., baseball in South Korea and Japan integrating baseball English terminology, for example, *coach*, *balance*, *changeup*, *bunt*; Riccobono, 2018).

Using a 100-keyness threshold effect size, 2% of the words on the TSOEWL were found in GSL (e.g., *metre*; see Figure 3). Therefore, TSOEWL represents mostly words not often found in general (i.e., GSL) or academic (i.e., AWL) discourse; these types are considered off-list. Examining keyness value types below

100, on the other hand, resulted in potentially more (41.8%) SOE-type candidates (see Figure 4) cutting across GSL and AWL (e.g., *sport*, *jump*, *equipment*, *goal*). This indicates additional lexical pedagogy opportunities to utilize TSOEWL for lower proficiency learners by augmenting the next version of the wordlist with lower keyness values types (e.g., *competition*, *sport*, *medalist*) identified as technical. Moreover, *metre*, a British English type, represents the only list word (GSL) in TSOEWL. This lends reason to considering a future reference corpus that also includes British English. Incidentally, *metre* is not used as frequently in American English in comparison to British English. Perhaps this resulted in the KW *metre*. Therefore, augmenting the reference corpus may have eliminated *metre* as a word of high keyness value (i.e., above 100).

FIGURE 3. Profile of TSOEWL: 100 Keyness Value Threshold Types

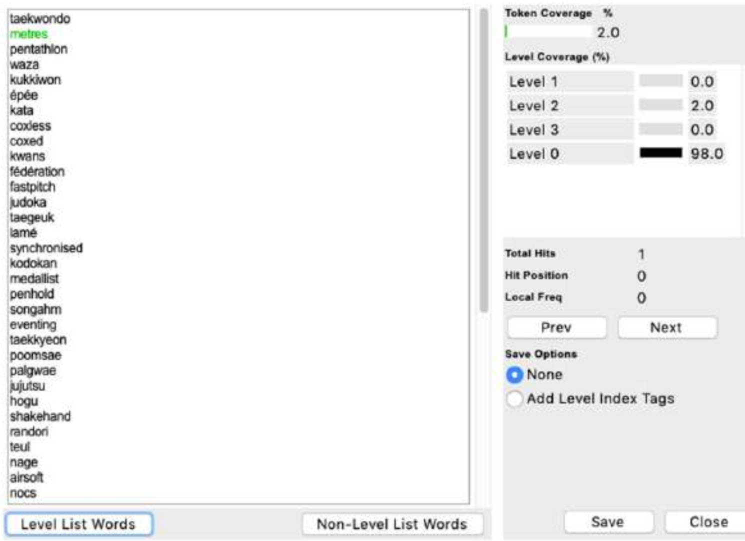
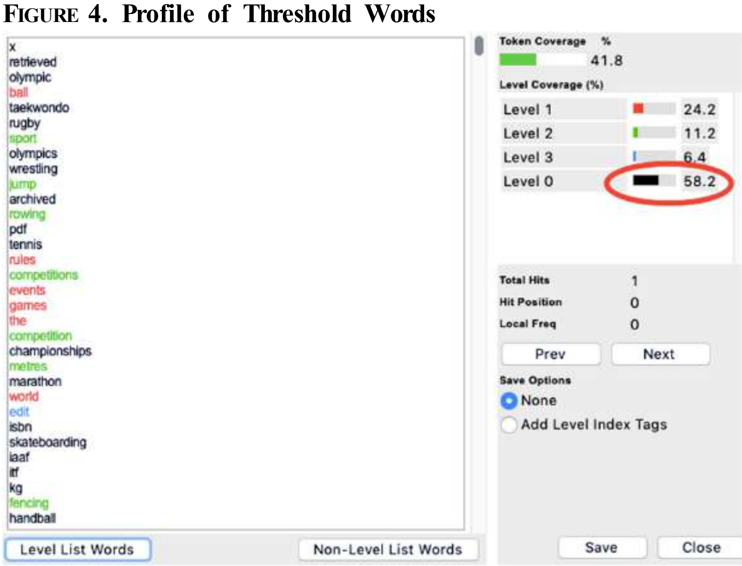


FIGURE 4. Profile of Threshold Words



Note. Below 100 keyness value candidates (red, green, blue) for next version of TSOEWL.

CONCLUSIONS

Through a robust, triangulated mixed-methodology approach, this study provides SOE learners and practitioners with a wordlist of unique vocabulary in comparison to GE with potential for increasing vocabulary size and pedagogy related to SOG. The SOG represents an international event and, therefore, the findings in this study indicatively complement this, reporting that technical SOE types include international or loanword types of low frequency in GE. Perhaps this increases opportunities for ELLs to gain knowledge of unique, niche lexicon in a highly topical discourse community, also suggesting an increase in proficiency. This study has further potential aimed at follow-up inquiry, rating the SOEC KWs and phrases (of lesser keyness value) for an expanded TSOEWL. The wordlist from this study affords SOE practitioners to construct lexical SOE assessments aimed at improving ELL knowledge of such vocabulary. Research here lends itself toward further lexical SOE investigations by identifying technical words with lower keyness values (see Figures 3 and 4) and increasing the TSOEWL (Riccobono, 2018; Tangpijaikul, 2014). Future prospects also include expanding SOEC, adding spoken texts, which may increase its representativeness and balance for future additions to TSOEWL. Additionally, in moving toward growing SOG lexical pedagogy, the SOEC offers future research paths for identifying technical SOE *n*-grams (e.g., Riccobono, 2018), thereby further developing sports English lexical pedagogy in several academic settings: CLIL, ESP, or general ELL instruction.

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APPENDIX A

Four-Point Semantic Rating Scale

Level 1: Function words that have no particular relationship to Summer Olympics. Words: (e.g., *a*, *an*, *the*, *is*, *among*, *really*, *very*, *cannot*, *article*)
Level 2: Words marginally related to SOE whose meanings may not be concerned directly with, but can be interpreted as being related to, Summer Olympics and its activities. Words: (e.g., *world*, *superior*, *body*)
Level 3: Words closely related to Summer Olympics and its activities that can still be used in other fields. Such words are also used in general language. Words: (e.g., *metre*, *jump*, *sport*, *event*)
Level 4: Words specific to Summer Olympics not likely to be known in general language. These words have clear restrictions of usage, depending on the subject field. Words: (e.g., *Olympics*, *marathon*, *medalist*, *Olympiad*)

APPENDIX B

Technical Summer Olympics English Wordlist (TSOEWL)

taekwondo	*taegeuk*	*shakehand*	*pentathletes*
metre	*lamé*	*randori*	*reefing*
pentathlon	*synchronised*	*teul*	*armstand*
waza	*kodokan*	*nage*	*kansetsu*
kukkiwon	*medalist*	*airsoft*	*choong*
épée	*penhold*	*judogi*	*ippon*
kata	*songahm*	*bigak*	*subak*
coxless	*eventing*	*jūdō*	*biathle*
coxed	*taekkyeon*	*katame*	*corkspin*
kwans	*poomsae*	*dojang*	*kōdōka*
fédération	*palgwae*	*goalkeeping*	
fastpitch	*jujutsu*	*kukki*	
judoka	*hogu*	*penalise*	

Using a Radio Drama as Input in English Writing Courses

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This paper aims to report the usefulness of a radio drama in writing classes at the university level. A lot of previous research has identified the merits of using audio-visual materials for developing students' listening abilities. However, there have been very few papers reporting on the usefulness of radio dramas used in foreign language classrooms, especially on their use as input to stimulate writing practice. A radio-style drama of 11 episodes was used for English writing courses. Every week 167 students listened to an episode and worked on open-type comprehension questions as an assignment test. Also, they wrote a 500-word summary of the whole story at the end of the course. A questionnaire was conducted to evaluate the course. Many students found it useful to use the radio drama to practice writing as well as listening, regardless of their English proficiency levels. Radio dramas have a powerful potential as useful materials.

INTRODUCTION (RESEARCH BACKGROUND)

Theoretical Background 1

There are three major aspects to be considered for language learning or teaching: input, output, and interaction (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. Language Acquisition Activities

INPUT ⇄ INTERACTION ⇄ OUTPUT

Concerning the importance of "input," Krashen (1985) put forth the "input hypothesis" and stated that comprehensible input is necessary at the level of "*i*+1." In addition, it is important for learners to be aware of particular features of the target language in the input information. As for the importance of "output" practice, Swain (1985, 1995) claimed that output practice is necessary for language acquisition, using "comprehensible output." She explained that output practice is useful from the following four aspects: (a) enhancement of fluency, (b) the noticing function, (c) the hypothesis formulation and testing function, and (d) the metalinguistic function. A lot of researchers have admitted and claimed the necessity of output practice, but effective methods and materials for actual classroom use need to be delineated (Oka et al., 2010; Someya, 2010). In addition, concerning the importance of "interaction," other researchers have also emphasized the importance of authentic dialogue (Bialystok, 1983; Tarone, 1981), which has brought about the development of "communication strategies" research. However, the ultimate goal of language teaching should be to help learners produce ideas and feelings effectively and persuasively.

Theoretical Background 2

Audio-visual materials are often used in foreign/second language classrooms. It is generally agreed that these materials can motivate students to learn more positively. Kadoyama (2004, 2005, 2006) overviewed a lot of research using movies for foreign/second language classrooms and made the following two informative and insightful comments: (a) movies' motivating functions have been supported in almost all studies, and (b) not many scientific research papers have reported about exact improvements of learners' listening abilities.

However, as for using a radio drama consisting of several episodes, there have been very few papers on its usefulness. A radio drama is defined as an audio story, not an audio-visual story like a movie. To examine the usefulness of radio dramas as input, the author of this paper used one for university English writing courses and got very positive feedback from the students (Tatsukawa, 2015, 2016). He confirmed that using a radio drama can be useful for improving students' listening abilities and as input information for productive activities, namely writing activities.

THE STUDY

Research Questions

To confirm the usefulness of radio dramas as input in writing courses, another survey was conducted, building on previous papers (Tatsukawa 2015, 2016). The following two research questions are examined in the present study:

RQ1. Do the students in this study have positive attitudes towards the radio drama for improving English writing abilities?
RQ2. Is the perceived usefulness of the radio drama affected by students' English proficiencies?

Participants and the Radio Drama Used

Table 1 shows seven groups (A–G) of students with their majors and English proficiencies. *Acapulco Vacation* was originally written by J. Harmer and D. Maybin in *Coast to Coast 3* and the amended version by Tatsukawa et al. (2009), consisting of eleven episodes, was used as the coursebook.

TABLE 1. Students' Majors and English Proficiencies

Group	Major	TOEIC				SD
		n	Ave.	Max.	Min.	
A	Human S. (H)	28	593.3	785	505	58.6
B	Engineering (H)	23	623.3	825	575	54.6
C	Education (L)	26	373.3	385	360	8.5
D	Science (H)	32	566.6	750	510	55.9
E	Medical (H)	17	570.0	660	540	32.0
F	Medical (L)	15	384.7	460	300	47.6
G	Human S. (L)	26	366.4	395	335	18.3
Total		167	501.6	825	300	115.5

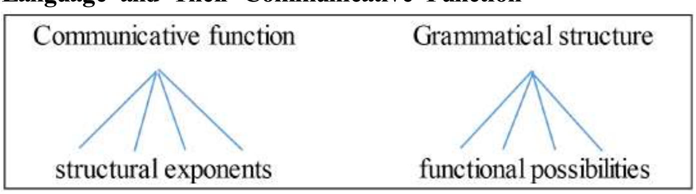
The following is the research method of the present paper:

Time: Fall semesters in 2013, 2014, 2017, and 2018.
Course: Communication IIA 9 (compulsory writing course).
Survey: A questionnaire was conducted in the last lesson of each of these courses to evaluate the course.

Emphasizing "Intelligibility" in Writing

In order to motivate and encourage the students to write, the author emphasized in class that intelligibility is the most important in communication. There is not only one way to realize any communicative function. There are several different ways to convey particular messages or ideas (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. Form and Function: The Relationship Between the Grammatical Forms of a Language and Their Communicative Function



(McDonough & Shaw, 2003, p. 23)

Below are some examples that can be shown in class so that students can understand the importance of intelligibility. The teacher always accepted such sentences as the following, as they have the same information values in terms of intelligibility:

Example 1
Episode 3: Mr. Freeman

Q4. According to Mr. Freeman, how do they deal with chemical waste?
He says that it is burned at a very high temperature.
He says that they burn it at a very high temperature.
He says that they destroy chemical waste properly.
He answers that his company gets rid of it legally.

Example 2

Episode 5: Be Careful

Q4. What does Mitch think of their idea of going to Houston?
- He does not think that it is a good idea.
- He thinks that they are stupid.
- He thinks that it might put Jessica and Amy in great danger.

The students in the classes were always encouraged to use the words and sentence structures that they had the most confidence in utilizing. Some particular information that people want to express can be realized in a variety of ways: using different sentence subjects, verbs, adjectives; either active or passive voices; and affirmative or negative sentences. By teaching this, the goal of the instructor was to help students understand that writing is both an enjoyable and a creative activity.

Survey (Questionnaire)

A survey was conducted involving the 167 students at the end of their course and contained the following statements that the students were to respond to using a five-point Likert scale:

About the radio drama (*Acapulco Vacation*)

(Q1) I liked the radio drama (*Acapulco Vacation*).
(Q2) The level of the radio drama was appropriate.
(Q3) The radio drama was useful for improving my listening ability.
(Q4) The weekly assignment test was useful for improving my writing ability.
(Q5) The summary writing assignment was useful for improving my writing ability.

About the course in general

(Q6) I am now more motivated to write in English than before taking this course.
(Q7) I have learned some techniques for writing in English by taking this course.
(Q8) I think that a radio drama is useful as English course materials.

Responses to choose from (Choices):

1 = *Strongly disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Agree*, 4 = *Strongly agree*

Free Comment

(Q9) Please feel free to write any comment on the materials used.

Results and Discussion

Survey Results (RQ1)

Do the students in this study have positive attitudes towards the radio drama for improving English writing abilities?

The results of the survey of 167 students for the questions Q1–Q8 above are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Results of Questionnaire on Radio Drama and Course

Choices	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
2	4	13	11	13	10	29	24	3
3	72	87	88	79	92	95	100	59
4	90	67	67	74	65	43	42	104
Average	3.50	3.32	3.32	3.35	3.33	3.08	3.10	3.59

About the Materials (*Acapulco Vacation*)

Almost all the students (97.0%), which was 162 out of 167 students, liked the radio drama (see Q1). Also, they stated that it was useful for improving not only their listening abilities (Q3: 92.8%) but also their writing abilities (Q4: 91.6%; Q5: 94.0%).

In addition, 92.2% of the students felt that the level of the materials, namely the radio drama, was appropriate regardless of their proficiencies (see Q2). This may have something to do with the learning conditions in that they could listen to each episode as many times as they wanted before each class.

About the Course

By using the radio drama as input, 82.6% of the students answered that they became motivated to write (Q6), and 85.0% answered that they had learned some techniques for writing in English by taking this course (Q7). As many as 97.6% thought that a radio drama was useful as English course materials (Q8); in particular, 104 out of 167 students, equivalent to 62.3%, strongly agreed with the statement. In other words, about two-thirds of the students found that the radio drama was very useful as English course materials.

Survey Results (RQ2)

Is the perceived usefulness of the radio drama affected by the students' English proficiencies?

Correlations Between Students' Proficiencies and Survey Responses

No strong correlations were found between students' English proficiencies and survey responses (see Table 3). All the correlation figures were smaller than 0.2, and the largest figure was -0.18 between TOEIC® scores and answers for Q4, which was a negative one. Thus, it is clear that students having higher TOEIC® scores did not correlate with positive survey responses.

TABLE 3. Correlations Between Students' Proficiencies and Question Items (Spearman's rank correlation)

	TOEIC	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
TOEIC	1								
Q1	-0.13	1							
Q2	-0.08	0.55**	1						
Q3	-0.04	0.41**	0.38**	1					
Q4	-0.18*	0.34**	0.29**	0.34**	1				
Q5	0.01	0.31**	0.28**	0.26**	0.58**	1			
Q6	-0.06	0.45**	0.36**	0.46**	0.59**	0.49**	1		
Q7	0.07	0.34**	0.31**	0.39**	0.49**	0.46**	0.57**	1	
Q8	-0.12	0.57**	0.41**	0.36**	0.39**	0.31**	0.41**	0.41**	1

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$.

The 167 participant students were divided into two groups (100 students and 67 students) according to their TOEIC® scores. Table 4 shows average scores for each group: the higher-proficiency group and the lower-proficiency group.

TABLE 4. English Proficiency of the Higher- and Lower-Proficiency Groups

Group	TOEIC				SD
	n	Ave.	Max.	Min.	
Higher	100	587.7	825	505	59.6
Lower	67	373.1	460	300	26.1

There was no overlapping of scores between the two groups; the lowest score of the higher group was 505, while the highest score of the lower group was 460. Tables 5 and 6 show the results of responses by the higher group and the lower group, respectively.

TABLE 5. Results of Responses by the Higher Group (n = 100)

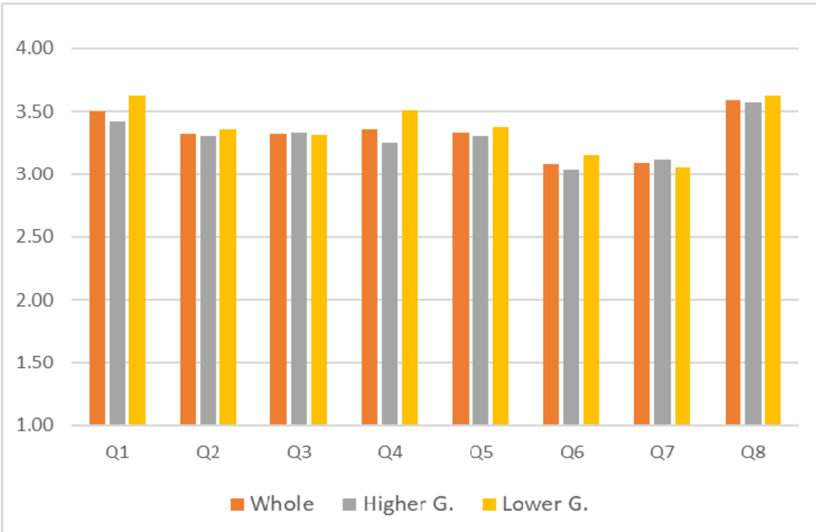
Choices	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
2	3	7	6	11	9	20	13	2
3	49	56	52	50	52	56	62	36
4	47	37	41	38	39	24	25	61
Average	3.42	3.30	3.33	3.25	3.30	3.04	3.12	3.57

TABLE 6. Results of Responses by the Lower Group (n = 67)

Choices	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
2	1	6	5	2	1	9	11	1
3	23	31	36	29	40	39	38	23
4	43	30	26	36	26	19	17	43
Average	3.63	3.36	3.31	3.51	3.37	3.15	3.06	3.63

The lower-proficiency group gave a slightly more positive evaluation of the use of the radio drama (see Figure 3). Statistically, there was no significant difference except for Q1 and Q4, which showed more positive evaluation by the lower group (Q1: $F(1,166) = 5.24$, $p = .02$; Q4: $F(1,166) = 6.50$, $p = .01$).

FIGURE 3. Results of Students' Responses for Whole Group, Higher-Proficiency Group, and Lower-Proficiency Group



Participants' Comments

Qualitative feedback was also obtained through students' comments. Overall, these were positive comments about the use of the radio drama as input for writing English. One hundred fifty-one (151) out of 167 students (90.4%) made some comments. Some popular words seen in the comments were "enjoyable," "(exciting) drama development," "interesting," and "easy to study." Some example comments, translated by the author, are shown below (numbers in brackets are TOEIC® test scores of the individual responding participants):

(1) "Enjoyable," "enjoyably"
Fifty-six (56) students, which was 37.1% of the participants, commented such as the following:

- The story was very interesting, and I enjoyed the course material. (545)
- I am not good at English, but I had a good time working on the course task. (380)

(2) "Story," "episode," "drama"
Fifty-four (54) students, 35.8% of the students, used one of above words:

- I was excited about the development of the story. (375)
- I looked forward to listening to the following episode every week. (365)
- Since it was a radio drama, I didn't feel like I was studying a school subject. (580)

(3) "Interesting" (the content of the story)
Fifty-one (51) students, 33.8% of the students, felt the story content was interesting:
- I found the story really interesting. (595)
- I have never felt it enjoyable to read or listen to English, but the story was very interesting. (440)

(4) "Easy to study"
Forty-five (45) students, 29.8%, thought that the drama-type material consisting of 11 episodes was easy to study:
- The story development was very interesting, and it helped me to prepare for the next lesson. (620)
- It was a drama, so I wanted to know what would happen next. It created my positive attitudes to continue to study. (440)
- It was a new experience to do the worksheet after listening to each episode. This helped me improve my writing abilities. (560)

There were other types of comments that were unique to the radio-drama type of audio materials:

(5) Authenticity of radio drama
Twenty-four (24) students, 15.9%, mentioned the material's authenticity:
- The story was interesting, but I had difficulty understanding the information because of surrounding sounds (e.g., wind noises). (360)
- We often have essay-type materials in English classes, but it was kind of refreshing to learn a lot of oral messages and it was fun. (735)
- I learned a lot of authentic oral English, which was not provided at high school. I have found that native speakers use simple expressions, and we do not have to use difficult words or sentence patterns. I think I can express myself more in English. (570)

(6) Content of the drama
A couple of students referred to the content of the radio drama:
- The issue of illegal dumping of chemical waste was very interesting for science major students. (345, 550)
- I just want to know how the relationships of Jessica and Mitch will develop after that. (340)

In addition, here are other kinds of important comments to consider when using the radio-drama type of materials:
- I enjoyed the drama. However, when I could not listen to the attached CD with my computer, it was difficult to do preparatory work. It was very helpful that we could access the university web-service (Bb9) after a couple of weeks. (360)
- The story was very interesting and exciting. I had a good time studying English with this coursebook. However, I got the impression that the weekly tests measured our memorization rather than comprehension. (570)
- The difficulty of drama content varied from one episode to another. There

were some episodes which had difficult words for me to catch although I listened to the recording so many times. However, the overall English level was appropriate for me. (550)

- When two men or women talk, it was often difficult to tell which one of them talks to the other. (565)

Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

From the survey results and discussion above, it can be said that (a) students had positive attitudes towards the radio drama for improving English writing abilities as well as listening abilities and (b) the usefulness of the radio drama was not affected by students' English proficiencies. Therefore, it may be concluded that using a radio drama can be a novel way of creating positive attitudes and motivation for writing.

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Using Peer Review Through Blackboard to Improve Presentation Skills in Vietnam

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In presentation classes, practicing in front of the mirror or videotaping oneself are quite common but can be subjective since these techniques lack comments from others. In Presentation Skills classes at International University in Vietnam, teachers struggle to provide comments to everyone. Also, the audience often ignore their peers. Hence, we propose a method in which students upload videos of their presentations onto Blackboard. Students have to comment on and score their classmates' videos. This paper examines the effectiveness of blending online peer reviews and face-to-face instructions in enhancing students' body language. The 113 students in this study are divided into an experimental group and a control group, and were pre-tested and post-tested. The findings show a higher mean score in body language for the experimental group.

INTRODUCTION

With the increasing use of the internet in education, the flipped classroom has been a trendy application for many language skills courses. However, the implementation for presentation courses can prove more problematic due to the innate nature of face-to-face interaction and a strong focus on oral production rather than written. Furthermore, presentation classes require the presence of an audience that is expected to give feedback both during and after the presentation. Adding the time limitations and the large class sizes, it can be a formidable task for the teachers in these presentation classes to give tailor-made comments for each of the students. In an attempt to alleviate this problem, we propose sharing the burden with other members of the audience, that is, making use of peer review, which has proved its effectiveness in teaching and learning, but mostly in writing. This gives rise to a question: Will it also work for presentation classes, where the audience plays a significant role? To answer this question, and also to keep us in accord with the trend of blending technology into teaching and learning, we conducted a study with the help of video recorders and an online platform named Blackboard, to find out whether peer review can assist teachers in improving students' performance in presentation skills at International University, Vietnam National University – Ho Chi Minh City.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Using video feedback in presentation classes is not a new technique and has widely been adopted in many countries. Previous research in Vietnam has also confirmed the helpfulness of video-recorded feedback on Vietnamese students' communication competence in public speaking classes (Do & Dang, 2014). The results showed affirmative reactions from students towards video-recorded feedback. However, the feedback in that study is in the form of self-reflection and self-evaluation. Though having its own worth, it is not as objective and multifaceted as feedback from students' peers, or in other words, as peer review.

The Oxford Dictionary (2009) defines a *peer* as someone of the same age or someone who has similar competences. According to *Peer Review* (n.d.), a well-known education website, *peer review* refers to "the many ways in which students can share their creative work with peers for constructive feedback and then use this feedback to revise and improve their work." The logical basis of peer feedback can be explained by Vygotsky's theory. Vygotsky (1978) states that a person's mind develops through their interactions with the world around them. According to him, learning is a cognitive activity that relies on a social context rather than an individual activity. Therefore, it is essential for students to incorporate peer interaction into their studies if they want to have a better performance, as peer review enables students to develop knowledge and understanding through the actions of social sharing (Liu et al., 2001). For that reason, peer review has been applied to improve students' performance in many fields including critical thinking, cognitive development, clinical skills, and academic gains (Stone et al., 2013).

The main benefits of peer review are that students can gain an in-depth understanding of their subject areas, and that they can obtain a clear view of what steps to take to enhance their study (Orsmond et al., 2013). In addition, they can learn to develop and give constructive feedback on their classmates' work, and they can also collect valuable feedback for their own work and respond to that feedback in a professional way (The Teaching Center, n.d.). Once students have learned to be more critical of their peers' writing, their own writing grades also show a corresponding improvement (Yalch et al., 2019). Thanks to its tremendous advantages, peer review has been strongly recommended by an increasing body of researchers (Hinkel, 2004; Lundstorm & Baker, 2009; Min, 2008; Pol et al., 2008; Storch, 2004).

There are times when peer review might not work, but it is more because of learners' attitudes rather than because of the drawbacks of this method. To be more specific, it is quite easy to find vague comments from students such as "I liked your paper" or "Good job," which add no value to their peers' work. Such responses can be attributed to a fear of hurting a peer's feelings. By giving a general positive response, such students hope to avoid discomfort and potential conflicts with their peers and to generate a falsely-created supportive environment as well (Nilson, 2003).

Peer review in presentation classes is quickly gaining popularity worldwide. According to Sellnow and Trienen (2004), peer review is now quite prevalent in presentation classes. Reynolds (2009) also asserts that this kind of feedback is similar to what students might give and receive in their future work. Furthermore, it is of much value, as it offers a greater volume of comments than teachers' remarks (Topping, 2009).

However, Vietnamese students, who are accustomed to rote learning (Biggs, 2003), seem unfamiliar with this strategy. This is a severe limitation in presentation classes, where audience feedback is expected, and where students are more concerned with the perception and acceptance of their peers than with that of their teachers (Shaw, 2002). In these classes, teachers are traditionally the only ones to offer comments, a task that can prove to be both "daunting" and "demanding" (Kaur, 2005). More seriously, the teacher being the sole source of comments may result in unintentionally judgmental or poorly thought through feedback. This may adversely affect students' potential in future experiences (Quilligan, 2007).

Aim of Study and Research Questions

Within the limited range of this paper, the authors aim to discover whether peer review through Blackboard can improve students' body language in presentation classes at International University (IU), Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, by comparing the results of the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental and the controlled group. The study focuses on answering the following three questions:

RQ1. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test for the experimental group?
RQ2. Is there a significant difference between the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group?
RQ3. Can peer review improve students' body language in presentation classes at IU?

Method

Participants

One hundred and thirteen (113) Speaking AE2 (Presentation Skills) students were divided into one experimental group (n = 60) and one control group (n = 53). These students all had and English competency of IELTS 5.5 or above.

Instrument

Blackboard is an online learning platform that enables lecturers and students to connect with a variety of functions. At International University, Vietnam National University, HCMC, all teachers and students are automatically logged in to the course at the beginning of the semester. With the fast development of the internet and handy apps on smart devices, Blackboard develops its own mobile apps in two versions: one for instructors and one for students. The apps are available to be downloaded for both Mac and Android users.

Pre-test

Students in both groups were required to video-record themselves giving a one-minute self-introduction at week 2, which also served as a pre-test. A trained judge marked all the students for their use of body language according to the following criteria: eye contact: 2.5 points, posture: 2.5 points, hand gestures: 2.5 points, facial expressions: 2.5 points, for a total of 10 points (rubrics were provided).

Students in the control group only received comments on the spot from the teacher. Meanwhile, students in the experimental group were asked to post their videos on Blackboard and give written remarks on their classmates' body language. Specifically, they were asked to comment on their classmates' eye contact, posture, hand gestures, and facial expressions.

In-class Procedure

For both groups, the teachers used the same teaching slides and materials, and provided equal instructions and comments. Some key differences in the activities are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Comparing Control Group and Experimental Group Activities

Activity	Control Group	Experimental Group
One-minute self-introduction (video recorded: week 2)	✓	✓
Peer review on classmates' body language	X	✓
In-class assignment (video recorded: week 8)	X	✓
Peer review and peer scoring (based on provided rubrics)	X	✓

Post-test

The Speaking AE2 midterm test at IU was chosen as the post-test. In this test, students were evaluated by trained examiners on seven different criteria, such as voice techniques, use of language, organization, and body language. However, only the body language score was taken to compare with the pre-test. The criteria and rubrics for marking the body language were the same as those of the pre-test.

Written Feedback

At the end of the course, written feedback was taken from students in the experimental group to gather their detailed opinions on the use of peer review for the course. The authors created a survey using Google Forms. The link to the survey was then posted on Blackboard. Some bonus points are given to encourage more elaborately written feedback from students. Questions used in the survey are shown in the Appendix.

Results and Findings

When comparing the body language scores of the pre-test and post-test for each group, the results in Figure 1 were obtained.

Figure 1. Experimental Group Pre-test and Post-test Comparison

Sample	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
pre exp	60	5.2000	1.2185	0.1573
post expe	60	7.4500	1.5341	0.1980

Estimation for Paired Difference

Mean	StDev	SE Mean	95% CI for μ_d
-2.2500	1.5363	0.1983	(-2.6469, -1.8531)

μ_d: mean of (pre exp - post expe)

Test

Null hypothesis	H_0: $\mu_d = 0$
Alternative hypothesis	H_1: $\mu_d \neq 0$

T-Value	P-Value
-11.34	<0.0001

From our first research question, we make the claim that there must be a significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test for the experimental group. As shown in Figure 1, the mean score on the pre-test is 5.2. Compared to the mean of the post-test, 7.45, we can see that there is a clear difference. To test this claim for accuracy at the 95% level of confidence, we make a null hypothesis (H_o) that there is no difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test for the experimental group. The result shows that the *p*-value (0.0001) is smaller than alpha (0.05). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words, there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test.

From our second research question, we also make a claim that there must be a significant difference between the post-test of the experimental group and that of the control group. To be more specific, our alternative hypothesis is that the post-test of the experimental group's mean score is higher than that of the control group at the 95% level of confidence. To test this claim, we make a null hypothesis (H_o) that there is no difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test for the experimental group. The result shows that the *p*-value (0.9973) is greater than alpha (0.05; see Figure 2). Therefore, the null hypothesis is correct: There is no significant difference between the post-test mean score of the control group and that of the experimental group.

The results reveal two things: (a) Students in the experimental group made a significant improvement from the pre-test to the post-test, and (b) there is no difference in the results of the post-tests for the two groups. This leads to the answer of our third research question: Peer review does not play a role in improving student performance within the range of our study.

FIGURE 2. Experimental Group and Control Group Post-test Comparison

Method

μ_1: mean of post-test experimental group
μ_2: mean of post-test control group
Difference: $\mu_1 - \mu_2$

Equal variances are not assumed for this analysis.

Sample	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
post-test experimental group	60	7.4500	1.5341	0.1980
post-test control group	53	8.1698	1.1559	0.1588

Estimation for Difference

Difference	95% Lower Bound for Difference
-0.7198	-1.1409

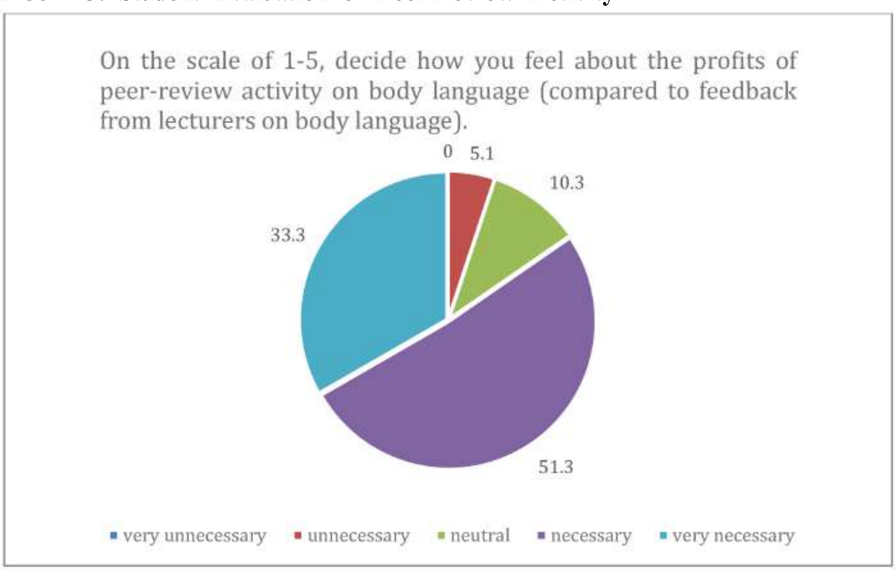
Test

Null hypothesis H_0: $\mu_1 - \mu_2 = 0$
Alternative hypothesis H_1: $\mu_1 - \mu_2 > 0$

T-Value	DF	P-Value
-2.84	108	0.9973

For the survey carried out at the end of the course, the response rate was acceptable with 65% of the students in the experimental group participating in it. For the third question, which asks for their judgment on the effectiveness of the peer-review activity using Blackboard, 84.6% of the students believe that it is necessary to have their friends watch their video clips and provide personal feedback. The results can be seen in graphic form in Figure 3 (very unnecessary = 0, unnecessary = 5.1, neutral = 10.3, necessary = 51.3, very necessary = 33.3).

FIGURE 3. Student Evaluation of Peer-Review Activity



Implications and Conclusions

Although the results did not yield the expected outcome, the authors are still highly motivated by the positive feedback from students in the experimental group on this peer-review strategy. The majority of the students understand the benefits of peer review and enjoy reading their classmates' comments. They also find it easier to accept criticism and more beneficial to have another perspective from a different age range of audience than that of their teacher. Some claim that they have more chances to practice English and improve their judgement skills. Most importantly, they find that the peer reviews provide them with sufficient time for detailed evaluation, which would be impossible in class, as time there is quite limited.

The mystery, then, is why their results are not significantly better than those of the control group, given all the confirmed benefits of peer review. When asked about this, these students admit that they are still not in the habit of logging in to Blackboard. Sometimes, they feel that coming up with the right way to review their classmates is a tiresome task, as they are not used to taking on the role of critic. Half of the students find it hard to trust the consistency and fairness of their classmates' marking and commented that they think their classmates are trying to "sugar-coat" their opinions or are too reluctant or simply too lazy to give sincere feedback. It is also worth noting that some students blame technical problems on the ineffectiveness of this activity. Low-quality video clips discourage them from carefully watching their classmates' performances. Thus, inaccurate comments may be collected.

The findings prove that there is still a gap between Vietnamese students' understanding and their willingness to change their studying habits. Though the results did not meet the expectation of the study, the results still encourage the authors to search for better ways to use peer-review activities to lessen the possibility of unfairness in the classroom. The study suggests a strong need to transform Vietnamese students' perceptions of their roles in the classroom. Students should have more opportunities to assume the role of critic rather than passively accept comments from their teachers only. Last but not least, the study indicates a direction for further research on improving Vietnamese learners' active roles in the classroom.

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Appendix

Survey Form

Question 1: On the scale of 1–5, decide how you feel about giving comments for friends on body language (via Blackboard).

1	2	3	4	5
very unnecessary	unnecessary	neutral	necessary	very necessary

Question 2: On the scale of 1–5, decide how you feel about reading friend's comments on your body language (via Blackboard).

1	2	3	4	5
very unnecessary	unnecessary	neutral	necessary	very necessary

Question 3: On the of scale 1–5, decide how you feel about the profits of peer-review activity on body language (compared to feedback from lecturers on body language).

1	2	3	4	5
very unnecessary	unnecessary	neutral	necessary	very necessary

Question 4: Write 3 reasons why you enjoy peer-review activity.
Question 5: Write 3 reasons why you do not enjoy peer-review activity.

What Study Resources Are University Students Really Interested In?

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University students need a rich learning environment outside of the classroom to develop as autonomous learners, and universities are increasingly making concerted efforts to enhance their English learning environments. However, students are not always receptive to such efforts, and deeper understanding of students' needs is crucial to providing them with appropriate support. To do so, a survey on student attitudes towards English resources was conducted at a university in Tokyo. Although students responded somewhat negatively towards the university's English resources, they did not express strongly positive interest in environmental improvements such as English study rooms, nor towards recreational resources. Feeling dissatisfied with the current learning environment did not correlate with interest in specific resources, and the presence of such resources alone may not be enticing. Interventions to improve the English study environment also requires helping students understand how and why they should want to use novel resources.

INTRODUCTION

Although most formal English study at universities happens within classrooms, where English language education is primarily conducted, this is usually insufficient for a variety of reasons. The most obvious include the time and situational constraints of the classroom; more importantly, however, to develop as autonomous learners who are capable and interested in furthering their learning, students also need support outside of the classroom through a resource-rich English study environment (Benson & Voller, 1997). Universities are increasingly sensitive to this need, and many have put much work and money into enriching their learning environments. On the low-end range, this includes improving traditional resources like libraries, to mid-range projects such as English cafés and high-end, costly projects such as developing self-access lounges and language labs.

In Japan, where the research presented here has been conducted and which will be the focus of the current article, interesting efforts include Jissen Women's University in Tokyo, which has focused on international exchange on campus, and holds casual English lunch meetings, a university-led English chat club, and all-campus English week, during which English is used as the university language (Jissen Women's Educational Institute, 2019); and Rikkyo University (2019), which opened its Global Lounge on both of its campuses in 2014, where students can participate in academic workshops, activities with international students, and intercultural events throughout the year. Given that many universities have semi-outsourced these efforts through connections with major players in the *eikaiwa* "English conversation" industry – such as Nagoya Gakuin University (2019), which offers on-campus, non-credit conversational classes through Berlitz – these endeavors are also inevitably connected to the commercialization of English learning.

For many universities, these resources are a source of pride, and a distinct focus has been on making English something accessible, familiar, and fun for students. This focus on the pleasurable aspects of English learning has been supported by some research; Beglar et al. (2012) have shown that self-selected, pleasurable activities are more effective than those that are not, suggesting that offering resources on campus such as graded readers appropriate for extensive (pleasure) reading would be a wise choice. However, students are not always receptive to these efforts. Reporting on the development of a self-access study lounge at one Japanese university that offered reading materials, electronic materials, and a place for socialization, Hill (2012) found that general lack of motivation amongst students to independently continue their English study meant that, when no longer required to do so, they stopped going to the lounge. At least partially by necessity, the development of these resources is generally university-led, meaning that student input is limited and that these spaces and offerings do not necessarily reflect the resources that students really desire. Better understanding of how students view such resources may be necessary to their proper utilization. This study seeks to contribute to that understanding by reporting on the results of a survey of university students' interest in potential English learning resources.

METHOD

The current study is part of a larger collaborative project formed between the author and colleagues to investigate how collaborative and supportive relationships can be better fostered between teachers of English as a second language, and how the learning environment can also be improved for students. The majority of the project has been conducted at a private, mid-tier university in Tokyo, Japan, which will here be called XU. Thus far, the project has been multifaceted, and has been comprised of student and teacher surveys, teacher interviews, resource analyses, and the creation of learning materials, amongst other efforts. The scope of the current paper will be limited to the results of a survey on student attitudes towards English study resources.

When the current study was conducted, XU had a variety of resources available for English learning on campus, including a yearly short-term English camp, international student events, and extra non-credit earning TOEIC classes. As such, it cannot be said that there is a pure lack of resources available at XU, but there are several issues that make the existence of these resources less transparent. Institutionally, the different faculties and research and support centers at XU are highly independent of each other, and information is not necessarily shared in a regular, traceable fashion. This means that it is also not easy to share information with students, as it is not always clear to teachers and administrators themselves what other faculties and departments are offering.

Creating better interfaculty connections and clarifying what resources are available is thus fundamentally connected to improving the learning environment at the institution itself.

With these points in mind, the current survey was concerned with assessing how students perceived the resources already at XU and what resources they were interested in more generally in order to tailor future efforts to students' needs on the ground. The survey was conducted in January 2019 of almost all students in three liberal arts faculties – the faculty of business, the faculty of letters, and the faculty of psychology – after students completed their required English courses: The first year for students in the faculties of business and letters, and the second year for students in the faculty of psychology. The survey itself was in Japanese and consisted of 8 background questions, 28 five-point Likert-scale questions on English language education and study resources, and 4 open-ended follow-up questions. The focus here will be on the results from 13 questions on resources at XU (see Appendix A). A total of 901 valid responses were garnered (faculty of business: 249; faculty of letters: 420; faculty of psychology: 232), with somewhat more responses from female than male students (487 vs. 414) – largely reflective of the combined student body of the three faculties – and an average respondent age of 19.18 (SD = 0.79). Most participants had little to no experience abroad (n = 515, 57.22%).

Results

Overall, students at the university reported a relatively low level of interest in English: "I like English" averaged 3.03, and "I am interested in studying English" scored somewhat higher at 3.50; unsurprisingly, there was a significant correlation between these two results (r = .73; see Tables 1 and 2). Consequently, it can be said that although students are generally neutral in terms of their interest in English and English study, those who are interested in studying English also tend to like English itself.

Students were neutral or somewhat negative towards the resources that were currently available at the university, slightly more so for study spaces (M = 2.71) than for study materials (M = 2.99) and the study abroad system (M = 3.06). Critically, the fact that students evaluated the study abroad system at XU slightly more positively is likely related more to the fact that few students study abroad through XU each year, meaning they are not familiar enough with the programs offered to assess them accurately. To some degree, the slightly lower responses for the other two questions could also be explained similarly: Since the current resources are not centralized, there is a high possibility that students do not know what is available, making it difficult to evaluate them.

Table 1. Average Rates of Interest in English and English Resources

Statement	*M*	*SD*	*N*
I am interested in studying English.	3.50	1.16	901
I like English.	3.03	1.22	900
I would like to use an English studying room if there were one.	2.98	1.15	901
I would like to use an English learning corner that I could get books from easily if there were one.	3.02	1.16	902
There are enough English study materials at XU.	2.99	0.94	898
There are enough English study spaces at XU.	2.71	0.99	899
The study abroad system at XU is sufficient.	3.06	0.84	897
I want to read Japanese comics in English.	3.13	1.31	898
I want to read foreign comics in English.	3.09	1.26	897
I want to read foreign magazines in English.	3.14	1.23	897
I want to read foreign novels in English.	3.05	1.26	897
I want to play foreign games in English.	3.33	1.26	898
I want to use computer software for studying English.	3.03	1.16	898

The results for students' reported interest in potential English study resources were similar, ranging from an average of 3.03 ("I want to use computer software for studying English") to 3.33 ("I want to play foreign games in English"). As overall neutral responses, students do not seem certain whether these are resources worth being interested in. As interest in particular study resources may be connected to a more general interest in English, the correlation between interest in studying English and liking English was calculated for each resource (see Table 2). Interest in studying English and having access to English study resources were only weakly correlated, with the exception of interest in an English study room (r = .55) and interest in an English learning corner (r = .54), which were also the broadest of the different resources included in the survey; the correlation between all the resources and liking English were also generally weaker. The results suggest that students interested in studying English do want dedicated English study spaces but may be uncertain what they want in such spaces. They also suggest that being interested in studying English does not necessarily mean one is interested in English language cultural materials, and vice versa: Students who are interested in cultural resources may be interested in them for reasons beyond their using English (e.g., they like comics or video games in general).

TABLE 2. Correlation Between Interest in Studying English, Desire to Use Different Resources, and Satisfaction with Current Environment

Statement	I am interested in studying English.	I like English.	There are enough English study materials at XU.	There are enough English study spaces at XU.
I am interested in studying English.	–	.73**	.03	.07*
I like English.	.73**	–	.07*	.06
I would like to use an English studying room if there were one.	.55**	.48**	-.02	.00
I would like to use an English learning corner that I could get books from easily if there were one.	.54**	.47**	.04	.06
There are enough English study materials at XU.	.03	.04	–	.62**
There are enough English study spaces at XU.	.07*	.06	.62**	–
The study abroad system at XU is sufficient.	.04	.04	.56**	.59**
I want to read Japanese comics in English.	.27**	.22**	.07	.11**
I want to read foreign comics in English.	.28**	.26**	.11**	.16**
I want to read foreign magazines in English.	.37**	.34**	.05	.08*
I want to read foreign novels in English.	.31**	.29**	.03	.05
I want to play foreign games in English.	.23**	.19**	.11**	.12**
I want to use computer software for studying English.	.32**	.29**	.04	.05

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

It is also possible that some students who responded negatively to the current state of English study resources at XU were dissatisfied because there were specific resources they were interested in, that perhaps the university did not currently have. However, there were no significant positive or negative correlations between feeling that XU had enough English study resources and interest in specific resources. As opposed to interest in English language study, interest in an English study room and an English learning corner were not exceptions (r = -.02, r = -.04). Clearly, being dissatisfied with the current learning environment is not associated with a perceived lack of specific resources; one possibility is that students do not feel that these resources are particularly important. However, it is also likely that students are not able to verbalize the reasons for their dissatisfaction: As with the study abroad system, it is difficult to assess something that one does not have any experience with, and if students have not experienced using the resources included in the survey, they may not feel that they are a necessary part of a rich learning environment.

What, then, did students report wanting? The open-ended question asking what resources students wished for received 301 responses, not including 71 that stated that there were no additional resources that interested them. The responses were tagged for what resources they noted (see Table 3); many students requested relatively orthodox materials frequently used within English language classroom study, such as TOEIC materials (12) and traditional study resources like textbooks (36). However, many students also noted resources that were similar to those asked previously: 21 noted that they wanted books other than textbooks such as English language children's books or translated books, even though reading novels in English averaged 3.05. An additional, 31 students wrote that they wanted specific hardware or software, and 18 wanted CDs and DVDs, even as interest in English language computer resources averaged 3.03.

TABLE 3. Specific Resources Given by Students

Resources	*N*	% of all students
English study room	49	5.44%
English study resources (dictionaries, textbooks, worksheets, etc.)	36	4.00%
Learning software/hardware	23	2.55%
Foreign teachers/students	23	2.55%
English books	21	2.33%
CDs/DVDs	18	2.00%
Do not know	15	1.66%
TOEIC/TOEFL resources	12	1.33%
Improved classes	11	1.22%
Listening resources	11	1.22%
English comics	9	1.00%
English movies/movie room	9	1.00%
English magazines/newspapers	5	0.55%
Other*	21	2.33%

**Other* includes any resources selected by less than five students.

Looking at how students wrote these responses, it is important to note that they often used linguistic hedges or were vague on the specific contents of what they desired, as in Example 1, which featured the hedge *ironna*, "various," and Example 2, which noted interest in using CDs, but not what kind of CDs or in what way they wanted to use the CDs. These short answers were typical responses, both in their brevity – they were both the complete responses given – and in their non-specificity. This seems consistent with the results for the prior questions discussed above: Students may know that they want something but are not certain of what that something should be. As a result, when asked to write what resources they think would be good to have, they find it difficult to verbalize these feelings. Indeed, 15 students specifically wrote that they did not know what would be helpful. Students may have been vague and mentioned orthodox resources because they have not been trained to think about how to utilize different resources for study.

EXAMPLE 1. *Ironna hon* – "various books"

EXAMPLE 2. *Yori ooku CD o tsukau* – "use more CDs"

Discussion

In sum, students did not generally respond strongly positively to any of the potential resources for English study raised within the survey. Some of this seems to be related to the fact that students were not able to verbalize their dissatisfaction or what resources they felt would improve their learning experiences. The fact that students did not report having a strong, prior established interest in the potential English language resources given here suggests that increasing resources alone may be insufficient as students may not choose to actively pursue them. Given the cost and effort involved in large-scale projects aimed at improving universities' English language study on-campus environments such as self-access learning centers, failure to appropriately deal with these issues entails great risk. Interventions to improve the English study environment will likely require not only making sure that students know what resources exist at the institution – that is, strengthen student access support – but also helping students understand how and why they should use these resources; that is, we must obtain students' understanding. In addition, any interventions should be aligned with students' prior interests in order to encourage students to independently use whatever resources are made available. With these points in mind, XU has begun to make several efforts towards improving the current situation.

In terms of supporting student access, each faculty's English curriculum and other requirements are generally announced at student orientation directly after matriculation, but there are few organized opportunities for students to hear about what is available to them later on as they move through university. This is problematic as it means that there is little support for students as their interests develop and deepen over time: Students themselves seem to be cognizant of this, as in Example 3, from a response to the open-ended question on what resources they would like to see at the university. In addition, resources at the university are generally non-centralized and spread out among the faculties, university libraries, and international centers. This makes it difficult for both students and faculty members to ascertain what resources are available. In order to rectify this, the project team is now in the process of surveying the disparate resources at XU in order to create a booklet outlining them for students and teachers. By offering this in a student-accessible form, we hope to provide both students and teachers alike an at-hand resource to consult the English resources on campus. In addition, we are also planning on holding cross-affiliation faculty development sessions to familiarize teachers with these resources, so that they are better equipped to help students utilize what the university offers.

EXAMPLE 3. *Ima, nani ga aru no ka somosomo wakaranai* – "I don't know what there is now in the first place"

In order to make students truly autonomous learners, they must also receive support in discerning what resources would be appropriate for them, and make plans to use them. In order to facilitate students' understanding of why such resources are useful, of course, the most important point is to actually start using them. Currently, students do not appear to be proactive in using resources already available; as noted above, they often do not know how, where, or why they should use them, and these resources outside of the classroom are also underutilized by teachers. This is not surprising: Because students are uncertain what is available to them, it is not likely that they will use them. However, this puts into relief the need to create structured opportunities for students to actually use these resources and understand for themselves why they are helpful. As part of the project, we are currently coming up with lists of ways teachers can help students become familiar with the different types of resources available, which we will share with teachers at the faculty development sessions being planned.

Such efforts can and should be integrated and involve the different organizations on campus involved with English study, such as the international center and the library. One way to do so is to include using these resources as tasks for students to complete, such as having students go to the library and chose an English reader. As Hill (2012) found, this may not always lead to students using them independently, but if the initial goal is to familiarize students with the resources available, then this would clearly be a good start. Likewise, using the resources themselves within the classroom – such as having students look at the real materials offered by the university about study abroad to choose a dream place they want to go to, and then write or talk about it – would also be useful to help students learn about what is on campus. Introducing students to alternative study materials, such as online games or comics, might also give students the confidence to try them on their own. This may be further improved by working together with other facilities on campus. For example, although the library currently offers general tutorials about how to use their resources, there is no equivalent tutorial about how to study English independently. Offering such tutorials would at least raise students' consciousness. As part of the project, we are also working on developing suggestions to campus facilities concerned with English study and resources.

Finally, better effort to align the resources made available to students with their actual interests is necessary. Although the survey reported on in the current paper asked about students' interest in various potential resources, it did not ask whether students were interested in those resources in general (e.g., whether they wanted to read novels or comics even in Japanese). As a result, there is currently no baseline data indicating students' interest in these resources, making it difficult to distinguish whether they are not interested in the resources asked about because of a lack of interest in English study in general, or if it is because they were not interested in such resources to begin with (but might be interested if a different resource was offered). For example, are students really not interested in comics, or just not interested if they are in English? In order to overcome this gap in our understanding, additional surveys are being planned now to assess how students more generally integrate the things they already are interested in into their English study so as to create more organic channels to English resources.

An additional problem not noted above, but which is perhaps more difficult – and ultimately primal to the issue of increasing students' interests in using alternative English study resources – is how to find balance between students' beliefs of what appropriate "formal English study" should be while catering to their diverse interests. Although it is often assumed that learning using pleasurable resources – such as comics and movies, that is to say, the types of resources asked about in the current survey – would be more desirable by students, this is not necessarily the case. Students, especially in East Asian countries such as Japan, themselves often have a conservative view of how learning is conducted and often believe that learning involves teachers transferring knowledge to students (Brown, 2009). As Noels et al. (2000) note, ensuring students continue on with autonomous learning requires not only convincing them that studying languages is fun but that it is personally meaningful to them. This is a task for which a grand, one-size-fits-all solution is surely inappropriate. Nonetheless, helping students find meaning beyond extrinsic motivators like getting a job and needing good TOEIC scores will likely be critical to effectively supporting students and leading them to a wider variety of pleasurable potential resources for English study.

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APPENDIX A

Questions/Statements on English Learning Resources at XU

Question/Statement	Question Type
I am interested in studying English.	Likert scale
I like English.	Likert scale
I would like to use an English studying room if there were one.	Likert scale
I would like to use an English learning corner that I could get books from easily if there were one.	Likert scale
There are enough English study materials at XU.	Likert scale
There are enough English study spaces at XU.	Likert scale
The study abroad system at XU is sufficient.	Likert scale
I want to read Japanese comics in English.	Likert scale
I want to read foreign comics in English.	Likert scale
I want to read foreign magazines in English.	Likert scale
I want to read foreign novels in English.	Likert scale
I want to play foreign games in English.	Likert scale
I want to use computer software for studying English.	Likert scale
What kind of materials or spaces would you like to have at XU?	Open-ended
What kinds of actions do you think would help improve English studying satisfaction at XU?	Open-ended

Font Choice and Second Language Vocabulary Retention

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The font "Sans Forgetica" was developed in 2018 at RMIT University with a design to reduce legibility under the assumption that the increased complexity in reading tasks will increase recall of written information. In order to test the effectiveness of the Sans Forgetica font in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom environments at increasing EFL vocabulary retention, this study conducted a semester-long study in three university EFL classes (N = 56). This research examines the results of two study groups, experimental and control, in order to ascertain how effective Sans Forgetica is at eliciting higher vocabulary retention rates in university-level EFL classrooms. The results of this research suggest that Sans Forgetica may be an effective instructional tool to increase vocabulary retention rates in second language classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

This research analyzes the effectiveness of the font Sans Forgetica developed at RMIT in 2018 at eliciting higher levels of second language vocabulary retention relative to a control group in three EFL courses at a private university in Japan. For many educational institutions providing instruction in the field of foreign language study, bolstering students' vocabulary proficiency in the target language is an indispensable part of the overall curriculum. For EFL instruction specifically, vocabulary study is essential for common student goals upon course enrollment such as passing English proficiency testing (e.g., TOEIC, TOEFL, or Eiken), acquiring general speaking proficiency in specific professions (e.g., medical English or business English), and acquiring general reading proficiency. To put it another way, no matter the EFL course, vocabulary acquisition can easily be thought of as an indispensable component to general curriculum design. The question then must be asked: What is the most effective method of increasing vocabulary retention in order to improve test scores and, perhaps most importantly, to ensure that these target-language vocabulary can be recalled when they are needed in situations outside the classroom? To address this question, this research delves into memory research, how the act of forgetting is essential for long-term retention of to-be-learned material, and how EFL educators may utilize this information to increase the retention rates of second language vocabulary. More specifically, this research will look at how the font Sans Forgetica may optimize long-term memory retention and how it may be utilized as an instructional tool in the EFL classroom for second language (L2) vocabulary study.

The research team that designed the font Sans Forgetica boldly claims, as the name meaning "without forgetting" would suggest, information written in their font is more easily recalled relative to other fonts (RMIT University, 2018). The mechanism upon which their claims rest is known as "desirable difficulty," a well-researched concept that will be described in further detail later in this paper. Even if the claims made by the RMIT researchers are to be taken at face value, the questions may be raised: (a) Who specifically can reap the benefits of this memory-enhancing font? (b) Is the memory-inducing effect more pronounced with certain information as opposed to others (e.g., specific terminology versus overall comprehension)? (c) Is the effect transferable to readers who are non-native speakers of the language in which the information has been written? (d) Is the font as effective when utilized by readers whose native language does not utilize the Latin alphabet (e.g., Japanese, Korean, or Chinese)? There is a long list of potential avenues into researching just how effectively the Sans Forgetica font produces the benefits that the RMIT researchers claim it does. Furthermore, the limited number of studies conducted to verify the effectiveness of the Sans Forgetica font makes it difficult to make any broad generalizations or specific recommendations for in-class applications (for specific research testing the validity of Sans Forgetica, see Eskenazi & Nix, 2020). For this specific research, however, the following research questions guided how the study was conducted:

RQ1. Are there benefits for non-native speakers of English when utilizing Sans Forgetica for L2 vocabulary acquisition?
RQ2. Are there benefits for L2 vocabulary retention by simply switching the font for the to-be-learned vocabulary to Sans Forgetica while still maintaining an otherwise identical curriculum?

ON THE SUBJECT OF FORGETTING

In order to investigate effective methods of increasing retention rates of L2 vocabulary introduced in the foreign language classroom, it is necessary to first delve into what has come to be understood about what can be done to increase retention rates of to-be-learned material. Evidence from decades of research on memory processing points to the critical role that the act of forgetting to-be-learned material plays in storing said material in long-term memory (Bahrick et al, 1993; Bjork, 1975; Cepeda et al., 2006; Karpicke, 2009; Kornell & Bjork, 2008; Shaw et al., 1995; Smith et al., 1978; Thalheimer, 2006). Another way of thinking about how the act of forgetting to-be-learned material assists in long-term retention is that slowing down the learning process may increase the likelihood of forgetting to-be-learned material but also increase the number of times that subjects must consciously return to this material, thus strengthening and diversifying the semantic connections to the to-be-learned material in the long-term memory. Indeed, as anyone who has crammed for an exam the night before may attest to, information memorized over short intervals quickly fades away, whereas a slow and steady approach requires more time to memorize the same amount of material but will ultimately remain in long-term memory for longer stretches of time. There are a number of well-researched mechanisms that can be used to slow down the learning process and increase the likelihood that subjects will forget to-be-learned material, which in turn forces subjects to relearn (and subsequently remember) said material.

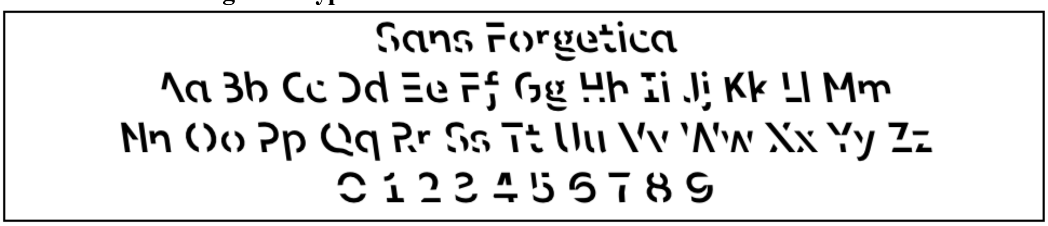
Perhaps the most researched mechanism to slow down the learning process and increase long-term retention of to-be-learned material is the spacing effect (Janiszewski et al., 2003). The spacing effect essentially calls for longer intervals between study sessions before testing, thus slowing down the learning process. The results of the above-mentioned meta-analysis again point to the idea that giving more time for to-be-learned material to be forgotten and then reviewing the same material increases long-term retention. Another mechanism that may be employed to slow down the learning process is the process of interleaving (Brunmair & Richter, 2019). As opposed to blocked practice, whereby different categories of to-be-learned/practiced material are practiced/memorized sequentially over a given interval of time, the process of interleaving would take the same categories of to-be-learned/practiced material and jump from category to category with relatively shorter practice/memorization sessions over the same given time interval as the blocked practice. By stopping a practice/memorization session of one category of to-be-learned/practiced material, moving on to a different category, then returning to the first category later, the subject using the interleaved practice mechanism is essentially creating the opportunity for the to-be-learned/practiced material to be forgotten then relearned. Interleaved practice has also been shown to be particularly effective in sports, whereby, in one study, baseball players practicing a certain swing have shown greater mastery with interleaved practice as opposed to blocked practice (Hall et al., 1994). The mechanisms introduced above, the spacing effect and interleaving, both support the claim made by researchers that slowing down the learning process to create more opportunities to forget to-be-learned material then returning to that material for review is more effective at eliciting long-term retention.

The claim that "forgetting is essential for remembering" may at first seem counterintuitive. What has been continually shown through multiple studies, however, is that allowing more time to forget to-be-learned material by slowing down the learning process is beneficial for long-term retention. These results from decades of memory research should be informing the practices of educators in any discipline that requires memorization of any kind. The concept of slowing down the learning process would seem to be of particular importance to educators in the field of foreign languages whose students are required to memorize a large amount of new information from new vocabulary to unfamiliar grammar rules over the many years required to achieve general proficiency. With that being said, however, the concept of taking more time to acquire to-be-learned material may not be so easy to implement in educational environments operating under already tight time constraints of academic calendars decided not by the instructors but by the institution of employment. It is these educational constraints that make the claims of Sans Forgetica all the more appealing: By simply changing the font to Sans Forgetica, which was designed under the psychological principle of desirable difficulty to slow down the learning process, the long-term retention of to-be-learned material may be increased.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF SANS FORGETICA

Sans Forgetica is a visibly disjointed and angularly askew typeface, a design feature aiming to decrease legibility and increase the difficulty of reading tasks (see Figure 1). The general idea behind how the font is supposed to elicit higher retention rates of to-be-learned information written in Sans Forgetica is that, as opposed to other highly legible fonts that are able to be scanned by the reader, the missing portions of each letter in Sans Forgetica will force readers to process the information more slowly, which in turn encourages additional cognitive processing of the material (Telford, 2018). The reduced legibility of Sans Forgetica, however, does not mean that the font is altogether illegible. The font rather seeks to strike a balance between highly legible information requiring very little cognitive processing and highly illegible information with a high cognitive load. This balance of “difficult, but not too difficult” is nicely summed up in the psychological principle of desirable difficulties.

FIGURE 1. Sans Forgetica Typeface



As has been touched on earlier, the psychological principle of desirable difficulty is a concept that proposes the existence of an optimal difficulty threshold of to-be-learned material for cognitive processing (Bjork & Bjork, 2011). The concept of desirable difficulties is supported by findings that suggest that, indeed, there is a correlation between the level of difficulty of the to-be-learned material and how well said material is memorized in post-study testing. Returning to the suggested correlation between forgetting/reviewing and long-term memory, it would seem the logical conclusion to assume is that the more difficult (relative to the ability of the learner) the to-be-learned material, the slower the information must be cognitively processed for memorization; thus, there should be a correlation between the difficulty of to-be-learned material and optimal processing for long-term memory retrieval. This same principle has been shown to have positive effects in second language learning environments with students effectively showing increased long-term retention of Spanish vocabulary (E. J. Marsh, 2014). Adjusting the difficulty level of the to-be-learned material may be accomplished in any number of ways, the most obvious of which would be direct manipulation of the content of the to-be-learned material itself. However, the font Sans Forgetica has attempted to achieve this increase in difficulty by modifying the legibility of the to-be-learned material. The following sections will detail how effective Sans Forgetica is at achieving desirable difficulty for optimal cognitive processing of L2 vocabulary.

METHOD

This study was conducted in three university-level EFL courses over the fall semester (15 weeks of class from September 2017 to January 2018): Medical English (ME), First-Year English Reading and Writing (RW I/II), and Second-Year English Reading and Writing (RW III/IV). There were 56 students who voluntarily participated in this study, and the results of the series of nine tests taken throughout the semester had no impact on their final score for the courses in which they were respectively enrolled. The average level of English proficiency for the students participating in this study can be described as "novice high" as detailed by the ACTFL foreign language proficiency guidelines (Breiner-Sanders et al., 2000).

Throughout the study, each student took weekly tests for a period of nine weeks. A week prior to the commencement of each week of testing, the 56 students were randomly assigned to either the control group or treatment group and issued vocabulary study guides. The control group received a vocabulary study guide of 50 words taken from Browne, Culligan, and Phillip's New General Service List (NGSL) printed in the font Times New Roman (Browne et al., 2013). The treatment group received the same 50-word NGSL vocabulary study guide printed in the font Sans Forgetica. The 50-word NGSL study guides themselves consisted of target-language vocabulary, definitions written in English, and Japanese translations of the vocabulary. The Japanese translations of the target vocabulary on the treatment-group study guides were not printed in the Sans Forgetica font due to the fact that the font does not support any form of Japanese character input; the Japanese translations of the target vocabulary were printed in MS Mincho for both the control group and treatment group. One week after the issuing of each study guide, both the control group and the treatment group were tested on a random selection of 20 words from the NGSL vocabulary study guide. The tests themselves consisted of four separate categories of questions: five written questions with definition cues, five matching questions with definition cues, five multiple-choice questions with definition cues, and five true/false questions with definition cues. The scores for the nine vocabulary tests for each group were averaged to provide the basis for a quantitative analysis of the effectiveness of the treatment group to receive higher average scores relative to the control group.

DISCUSSION

Data Interpretation

As can be seen in Table 1, the treatment group consistently outperformed the control group in all three participating courses. Although the difference in total average test scores between the two groups is a modest 4.66%, the *t*-test *p*-value of 0.049 is just low enough to accommodate an alpha of 0.05 and reject the null hypothesis. This means that we can conclude with some statistical confidence that Sans Forgetica had a measurable effect on raising the test scores of the participants in the framework of this study. Furthermore, due to the fact that the 56 study participants were randomly assigned to either the control group or the treatment group on a weekly basis, we may also assume that the consistently higher test scores in the treatment group were not the result of the students simply adjusting to the decreased legibility of the Sans Forgetica font through time. After concluding that the font Sans Forgetica has had some measurable effect on increasing vocabulary test scores in an EFL environment, the question that must be asked now is "where do we go from here?"

Table 1. Test Results for Control and Treatment Groups

Group	Control Group Total Test Averages	Treatment Group Total Test Averages
ME	81.29%	88.47%
RW I/II	81.3%	86.74%
RW III/IV	89.88%	91.25%
Total Averages	84.16%	88.82%
Paired, Two-Tailed *t*-Test	$p = 0.049$	

Considerations

The results presented in this research that demonstrate a positive effect of the font Sans Forgetica on the retention of L2 vocabulary in university EFL courses constitute the first step in the larger process of generalizing the effectiveness of Sans Forgetica. With that in mind, there are a number of considerations that must be made when interpreting the results of this research, in particular as it pertains to directing future research regarding the effectiveness of Sans Forgetica in EFL contexts. First and foremost is the absence of long-term retention data at this time. In order to accurately test the claims made by the RMIT research team that the font Sans Forgetica successfully utilizes the principle of desirable difficulties to increase long-term retention of information presented in said font, the methodology of this research needs to be continued in a longitudinal study to confirm that Sans Forgetica is successfully eliciting higher average scores in a series of tests after the cessation of studying relative to a control group. Furthermore, the methodology of this research allowed the students participating in the study to take each weekly NGSL vocabulary study guide home. Therefore, how the vocabulary was studied was left entirely up to the student participants. The lack of control over how the studying of the vocabulary lists was implemented may lead to variations in test score averages, the possibility of which needs to be investigated to confirm the results achieved in this research. Finally, the methodology of this research utilized four categories of questions for testing. Before confirming the results of this research, an effort must be made to recreate the results of this research utilizing varied testing methods that also demonstrate the effectiveness of Sans Forgetica to increase L2 vocabulary retention relative to other fonts.

Future Research

The results of this research have demonstrated that the use of Sans Forgetica successfully produced statistically significant different test score averages in a series of nine weekly vocabulary tests between the control group, who received NGSL vocabulary study guides printed in Times New Roman, and the treatment group, who received the same study guides printed in Sans Forgetica. Returning to the research questions, the results of this research suggest that Sans Forgetica is an effective method for non-native speakers of English to increase retention rates of L2 vocabulary; the results of this research also suggest that simply changing the font of a curriculum-specific L2 vocabulary acquisition task may yield better retention rates relative to tasks that do not make use of design features incorporating desirable difficulties. The initial results of this research are promising, however, there remain several avenues of research to be explored at how the font Sans Forgetica may be effectively utilized in EFL contexts. Future areas of research may include the following: How does Sans Forgetica affect L2 reading comprehension tasks? How does it affect retention of L2 grammar concepts? Is it effective at eliciting higher retention rates for other areas of EFL study?

Furthermore, curriculum-specific lines of inquiry such as the most effective method of integrating mechanisms that slow down the learning process and promote instances of forgetting and reactivating to-be-learned material need to be thoroughly investigated. Of particular interest would be the possibility of compounding the effects of memory-boosting mechanisms such as the spacing effect and interleaving with design features such as Sans Forgetica. Perhaps the most important result of this research, which hopefully future research will corroborate, is that even when teaching within the strict conditions of a pre-established curriculum with pre-determined educational goals to be achieved within a pre-determined amount of time, how this to-be-learned material is taught and presented to the students can directly influence how well this material can be recalled outside of the classroom. Controlling for the difficulty of this to-be-learned material with fonts like Sans Forgetica and other mechanisms such as the spacing effect and interleaving can be effective tools to accomplish what we as educators are tasked to accomplish: the acquisition (and retention) of knowledge.

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Action Research Reports

Developing Critical Thinking Skills in the English Language Classroom

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It has been argued that both information literacy and critical thinking are two important skills to possess in the twenty-first century. While most students are literate in the sense of being engaged through their technologies (SNS, e-learning, mobile technologies), critical thinking tends to be overlooked in formal class time. Critical thinking aims to promote people's ability to criticize, question, evaluate, and reflect. While traditional classroom techniques have used such approaches as debate to meet this end, the author discusses and presents a critical thinking exercise in the form of a problem-solving task. Students form groups, consider the problem, formulate an answer, and present it, justifying their responses. The delivery and effectiveness of the exercise is discussed.

What Is Critical Thinking?

Numerous researchers have claimed that both information literacy and critical thinking (CT) are two important skills to possess in the twenty-first century (Bailey, 2016; Fahy, 2005). While most students are literate in the sense of being engaged through their technologies (SNS, e-learning, mobile technologies), critical thinking tends to be overlooked in formal class time. This might be due to the difficulty that researchers and academics alike experience in trying to define exactly what it is (Buskist & Irons, 2008; Fasko, 2005; Halpern, 2003).

Definitions tend to vary, but there is a consensus that elements of CT become conspicuously apparent in behaviors and skills exhibited in situations requiring problem-solving. That is, CT aims to promote people's ability to criticize, question, evaluate and reflect. In fact, it can be argued that in such an information era, where people readily access and believe information drawn from the internet, there is a stronger need than ever to be able to sift through the mire of information readily at hand. Bensley (1998) defines this skill as "reflective thinking involving the evaluation of evidence relevant to a claim so that a sound conclusion can be drawn from the evidence." Rezaei, et al. (2011, p. 771) listed numerous features including the following abilities:

- Identifying problems and focus on relevant topics and issues
- Avoiding emotive reactions to opposing arguments
- Distinguishing between valid and invalid inferences
- Suspending judgments and decisions in the absence of sufficient evidence
- Accurately justifying and articulating reasons for holding a viewpoint

It could be argued that in the modern era, where "fake news" has become a ubiquitous phenomenon, the importance of being able to think critically is of paramount importance.

Can Critical Thinking Be Taught?

Yuretich (2004) argues that the teaching of CT is possible and involves the teaching of higher-order reasoning skills. These skills include the ability to process, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate given information. Furthermore, Yuretich (2004) showed that providing students with a critical thinking opportunity and allowing time to think, reflect, analyze, and discuss a problem in a context conducive to critical thinking, is the best way to engender critical thinking education. This is best achieved through active learning, by creating groups for discussion and encouraging participants to think laterally and justify their opinions. This, in turn, promotes higher-level thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation), as identified in Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956).

Leach (2011) argues that constructivism – a philosophy of education that is characterized by students' ownership of the learning process – is the best way to acquire critical thinking skills. Constructivist learning theory holds that knowledge is constructed from learners' perceptions, experience, and mental representations (Taghinezhad et al., 2018). Constructivist teachers provide discussion and challenges, and act as promoters to encourage learners to question knowledge. The process encourages students to think, engendering CT through participation, discussion, and problem-solving.

If CT can indeed be taught, as Yuretich (2004), Leach (2011), and others argue, how can it be applied in the language classroom, and to what end?

How Is Critical Thinking Beneficial for Students?

By thinking critically and seeing things from different perspectives, students become more open-minded and empathetic, better communicators, and more inclined to collaborate with their peers (Tatsumi, 2018). It can be argued that critical thinking helps students develop their creative side by allowing them to explore more possibilities. It also makes them better decision-makers and helps them save time in making such decisions. Rezaei et al. (2011) identify over 30 such positive skills and features that critical thinkers exhibit, and Ennis (1987) also lists at least 12 similar skills.

Put more simply, critical thinking encourages students to ask such questions as "Why?" or "How do you know that?" This is epitomized in the American KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) charter school system, where students, if asked, can readily answer what they have learned and why they have learned it. This is further borne out by (Bourdillon & Storey, 2002), who argue that students need to be aware of what they are learning and why they are learning critical thinking. Mayfield (2001) also emphasizes the importance of this awareness in students' critical thinking development, stressing that teachers should help students understand the critical thinking processes that they are engaged in to maximize CT skill attainment.

Is Critical Thinking Appropriate for the Language Classroom?

Critical thinking aims to promote people's ability to criticize, question, evaluate, and reflect, amongst other skills. By asking pertinent questions related to relevant or challenging topics, the teacher can help students hone such necessary skills. Involving students in discussions that show that various issues have multiple viewpoints is valuable and has traditionally been achieved through using debate. Rezaei et al. (2011, p. 775) argue that debates are versatile and can "inspire students' enthusiasm to critically contemplate upon [*sic*] topics from different perspectives." While such orthodox approaches are beneficial, students are largely only given two perspectives on which to view a topic: either agreeing or opposing.

Debate is largely a binary process, with speakers, team members and the audience tending to identify with one of the two opposing arguments. This has been a valuable way to encourage thinking and expression for the more articulate members of a group, and has proved to be effective in making students justify beliefs or argue a case. However, it constitutes only a small part of the curriculum, requires a reasonable command of the language being used, and is far from inclusive from the perspective of a whole class. It may help engender CT, but it does not seem to be the best approach.

Three other approaches suggested by Rezaei et al. (2011) have included media analysis (focusing on such topical issues as gender, equality, discrimination, censorship, or marginalization), self- and/or peer-assessment assignments (encouraging evaluation of self and others) and a general category labelled "problem-solving tasks and activities." Media analysis of topical issues may be divisive and requires the ability to articulate personal opinions. Similarly, self- and/or peer-assessment assignments may require other skills (diplomacy, honesty, awareness) and may be difficult in classes where students are not especially friendly towards one another. It is this last category, "problem-solving tasks and activities," that seems to offer the most potential for helping students develop CT skills in a language classroom.

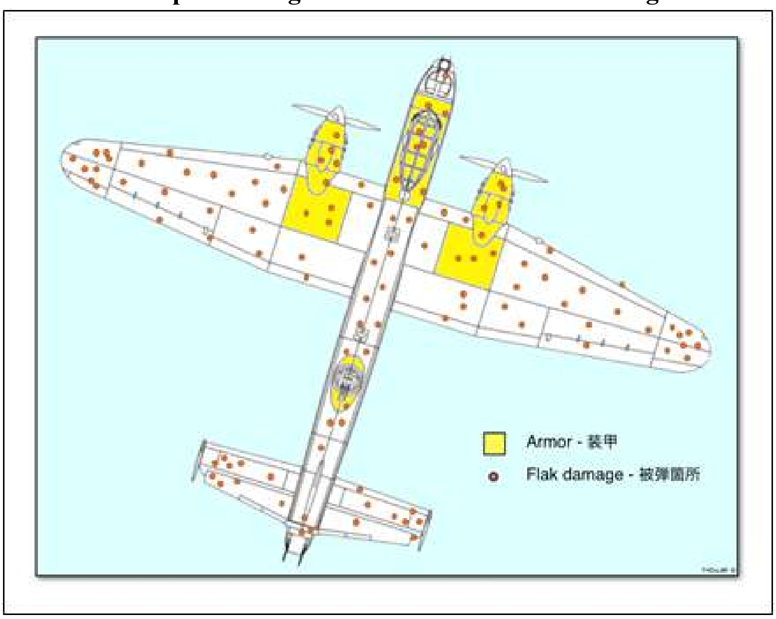
To encourage CT in a language classroom, the author discusses and presents a critical thinking exercise in the form of a problem-solving task based on a survivorship bias exercise. Students form groups, discuss the problem, consider viable solutions, formulate an answer, and present it, justifying their response. Results from using the exercise in class are considered along with student opinions and responses.

A Critical Thinking Exercise

A critical thinking exercise was developed by the author, based on a real-world survivorship bias problem. Survivorship bias refers to and describes an error in perception by looking only at subjects who have reached a certain (successful) point without considering those who have not. A good example might be "Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, and Mark Zuckerberg dropped out of college and became millionaires, so will I." Assuming that a university degree is not needed to be successful is an example of survivorship bias. While there are a number of people who have succeeded without going to university, almost 95% of North America's top businessman are university graduates (Prater, 2018).

The exercise is based on a real-life dilemma faced by the United States Air Force some 75 years ago during the Second World War. As part of the war effort, the United States Armed Forces created the Statistical Research Group, also known as the Department of War Math. It was largely an extension of Columbia University, and one of the members was a statistician named Abraham Wald (Samaniego & Samaniego, 1984). He was approached by the air force because they were concerned that many planes were being lost and that returning bombers were riddled with bullet holes. To help reduce the attrition rate and protect the crews, it was decided to add more armor to strengthen the planes. The dilemma was where the armor should be put. This problem was given to Wald and his group. They created a visual representation of the total damage incurred, expressing each of the bullet or flak holes in a composite image, as can be seen in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1. Composite Diagram of Bullet and Flak Damage to WW2 Bomber



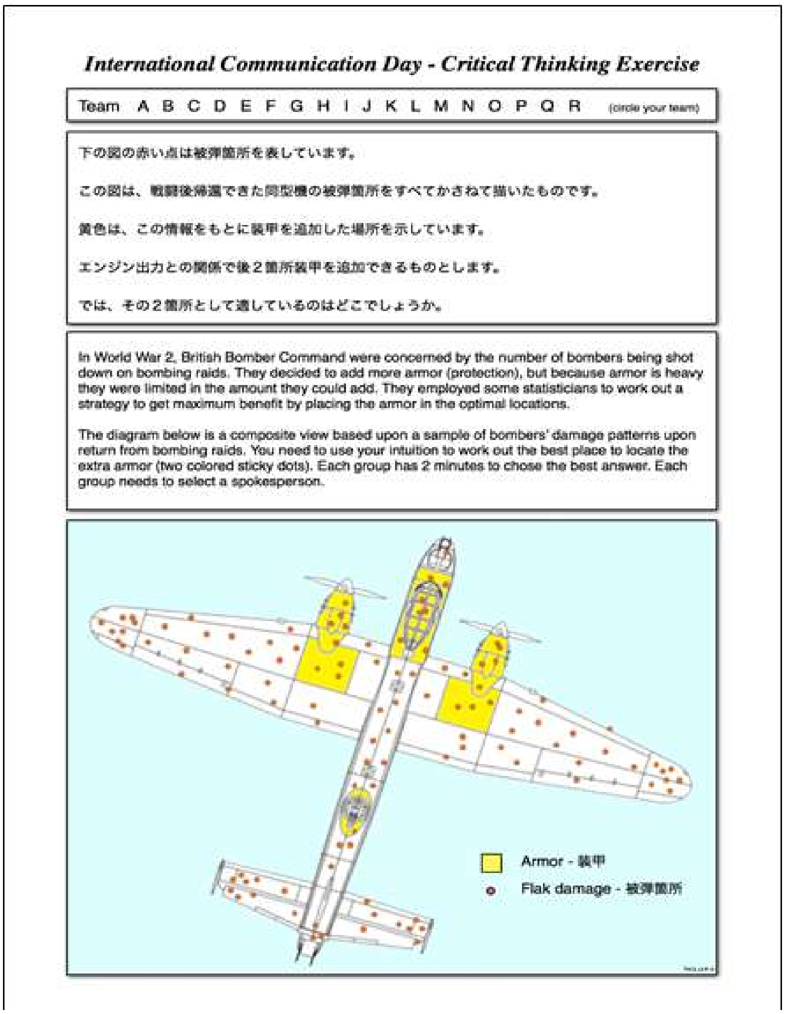
Note. Modifications by author.

The problem was slightly adjusted for use in class. The students were told that given the weight of the planes, bombs, and associated aerodynamic factors, armor could only be added to two additional places. They were also told that areas marked in yellow were unable to have further armor added. The students were asked to decide where the armor should be added and why.

PROCEDURE

This problem was presented to 252 first-year students at a university in Japan, as part of an international communication day event. Students were organized into 18 groups of 14, given a handout similar to that shown in Figure 2, and asked to find a solution to the problem. Each group was given two round stickers to adhere to the bomber drawn on the sheet, indicating the area that they thought needed the additional protection. Groups were given 10 minutes discussion time, after which the designated group leader would report their decision to the teacher, who would enter the results on a composite digital diagram (see Figure 3), along with those of the other groups. After recording results, group leaders were asked to explain the rationale behind their chosen locations.

FIGURE 2. Handout Given to Each Group



International Communication Day - Critical Thinking Exercise

Team A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R (circle your team)

下の図の赤い点は被弾箇所を表しています。

この図は、戦闘後帰還できた同型機の被弾箇所をすべてかさねて描いたものです。

黄色は、この情報をもとに装甲を追加した場所を示しています。

エンジン出力との関係で後２箇所装甲を追加できるものとします。

では、その２箇所として適しているのはどこでしょうか。

In World War 2, British Bomber Command were concerned by the number of bombers being shot down on bombing raids. They decided to add more armor (protection), but because armor is heavy they were limited in the amount they could add. They employed some statisticians to work out a strategy to get maximum benefit by placing the armor in the optimal locations.

The diagram below is a composite view based upon a sample of bombers' damage patterns upon return from bombing raids. You need to use your intuition to work out the best place to locate the extra armor (two colored sticky dots). Each group has 2 minutes to chose the best answer. Each group needs to select a spokesperson.

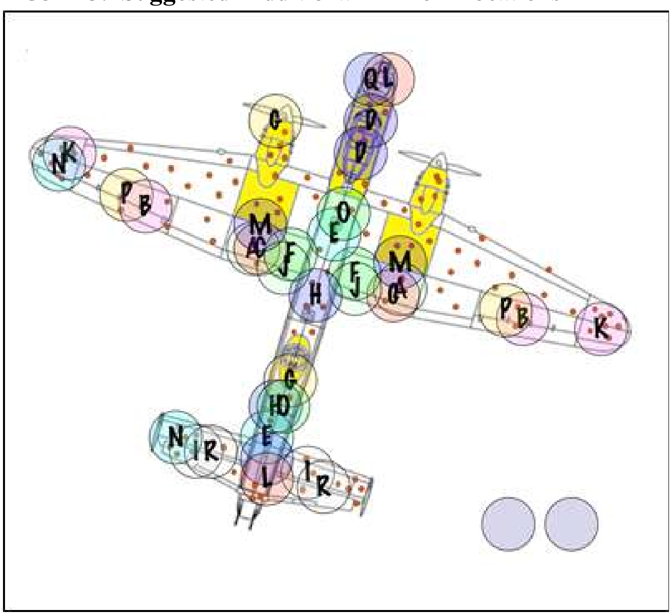
Note. A brief synopsis of the story is provided in both English and Japanese. The diagram is sized such that commercially available round stickers can be used to designate the area chosen by the group to receive the extra armor.

STUDENT RESULTS

Of the 18 groups, only two groups were able to attain the correct answer. Furthermore, both groups were able to justify and explain the reasoning behind their choices. This represents approximately a ten-percent success rate, which the author had noted to be the case with other classes that were earlier given the exercise while it was being developed. A number of groups chose to add the extra armor to the areas that had sustained significant damage, their rationale being that the most damaged areas needed more protection (see Figure 3).

This was the case with groups K & N, who added extra protection where there was the most damage, arguing that the areas were badly damaged and therefore needed further protection. Similarly, despite instructions that adding to the yellow areas (engines, fuel tanks, cabin, and top gunner) would have no effect due to maximal protection having already been attained, two groups (G & M) marked those areas as needing extra protection, due to much apparent damage. Other groups, such as B, I, P and R, argued that flight control surfaces needed to be protected to keep the plane in flight, selecting the elevators and ailerons. Several other groups (E, G, H, O) felt that protecting the integrity of the fuselage was the main priority.

FIGURE 3. Suggested Additional Armor Locations



Note. After group leaders had submitted their handouts indicating their suggested additional armor locations, all results were superimposed on a digital image in a computer, which was then projected on a screen for all students to see.

As noted, only two groups attained what could be defined as the correct answer. However, despite other groups not arriving at the correct answer, each group was able to justify their choice and the rationale behind their decision-making process. This seems like a valuable outcome, even if the problem was not solved correctly.

The Eureka Effect

As Wald noted (Samaniego & Samaniego, 1984), the holes should be interpreted as showing where a bomber could be shot and still survive. Even with such damage, the crews and aircraft were able to safely return after the mission. The planes that did not return had needed the extra protection. In other words, the holes in the surviving planes actually revealed the locations that needed the least additional armor. As noted by groups F and J, the two correct selections, the only areas that had no damage, thereby implying vulnerability if hit, were the rear trailing edges of the wings where they meet the fuselage.

Upon realizing what the correct location was, and the logic behind the choice, the other groups experienced "aha moments." Students were able to understand the reasoning behind the placements and were pleased that they were able to do so. Some of the language used in placement justifications was simplistic – "No holes here. If hit, don't come back" – but the choices were logic-driven.

This exercise was one of four conducted at an international day held by a middle-ranked Japanese university. The majority of students enjoyed this exercise more than the other three language-based games. Comments included "I learned something" and "I never would have thought of that." Several students could be hear saying, "Oh – I get it!"

Conclusions

Selecting appropriate material to engender critical thinking is crucial if the exercise is to be meaningful. As noted, Rezaei et al. (2011) suggest various approaches to develop CT skills in the language classroom, such as debate, media analysis, or peer reviews. While these may be beneficial, problem-solving seems to offer the most effective strategy. While undoubtedly helpful, high-level language skills are not essential in attaining a successful outcome. In the case described here, a simple description of the problem, in both English and Japanese, and helpful new vocabulary (*flak*, *armor*) were enough to create a genuine feeling of inquiry among the students. The use of a survivorship bias problem, where groups have to consider many variables before offering an answer, provides a good platform to help students develop CT skills. The author hopes to extend this research with further examples in the future.

The Author

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Integrating an Intercultural Communicative Approach into the Language Classroom

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The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to explore how an intercultural communicative approach in the language classroom can affect students' intercultural competence. Intercultural communication (IC) entails being able to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations through the application of one's intercultural skills, attitudes, and knowledge (Deardorff, 2006). There has been an increasing need for EFL teachers to nurture intercultural competence in the classroom. One way to accomplish this is through the implementation of an IC teaching approach that employs techniques such as critical incidents and D.I.E. This action research took place at a Japanese private university over a 15-week semester with eighteen third-year students enrolled in an elective IC class. A mixed-methods research (MMR) approach was utilized through surveys, self-assessment tools, and semi-structured interviews. Through the analysis of the different data sets, the researchers were able to see how the IC approach affected students' IC competence.

Introduction

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is a relatively new concept in the field of foreign language teaching, with publications on the subject going back only as far as the late 1950s (the earliest recognized publication on ICC is *The Anthropology of Manners* by Hall, 1955). Whilst in Europe and North America ample research and employment of IC is currently taking place, the authors find that there is a lack of research on developing students' ICC in Asian contexts. As such, IC remains a lesser-known approach in foreign language teaching. The authors hope through this research to raise awareness of what ICC is, how to employ it in the EFL classroom, and the possible effects it might have on students in the Asian context. To achieve these goals, the authors posed the following research question:

RQ1. How does an ICC-oriented teaching approach affect EFL learners?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Intercultural Communicative Competence

The first step to the incorporation of ICC in the EFL classroom starts with teachers familiarizing themselves with the existing frameworks. However, to this day, there is no universally accepted definition or framework for ICC. Hence, the definition that the authors have chosen to abide to for this study states that ICC is “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2006, p. 247). According to Deardorff’s model, ICC skills relate to observing, listening, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting, and relating; ICC knowledge relates to cultural self-awareness, culture-specific knowledge, understanding worldviews, and sociolinguistic awareness; finally, ICC attitudes relate to respect, openness, curiosity, and discovery. Aside from the importance of the acquisition of the three basic components, Deardorff’s framework illustrates that the process of gaining intercultural competence begins with learners’ desired internal outcomes (e.g., adaptability, flexibility) and concludes with external outcomes, where learners display appropriate and effective use of ICC in intercultural situations. Moreover, Deardorff refutes the idea that ICC can be acquired through a short space of time, such as the duration of a university course. Her process model demonstrates how complicated ICC acquisition is and how the process leading to it is a lifelong one.

ICC Approach in the Classroom

In order for educators to get accustomed with the paradigm of ICC and help younger generations progress towards becoming active members of a global community, teachers must reflect on the following:

- What does the ICC instructor teach?
- How does the teacher assess ICC?

To the novice ICC teachers who debate about what to teach, Byram et al. (2002) respond by emphasizing that the teacher’s task is not to provide the answers but to help learners ask questions:

> The best teacher is neither the native nor the non-native speaker, but the person who can help learners see relationships between their own and other cultures, can help them acquire interest in and curiosity about “otherness,” and an awareness of themselves and their own cultures from other people’s perspectives. (p. 10)

However, this does not imply that the teacher does not need to educate her/himself about ICC. Deardorff (2016) clearly states that “faculty need a clearer understanding of intercultural competence in order to more adequately address this in their courses (regardless of discipline) and in order to guide students in developing intercultural competence” (p. 121).

The first thing that should be developed in the ICC classroom is cultural awareness. Influenced by Hall, Louis Damen (1987) defines cultural awareness as a process that involves "uncovering and understanding one's own culturally conditioned behavior and thinking, as well as patterns of others" (p. 141). Byram (1997) also stresses the importance of cultural awareness, including it as the central element of his ICC framework under the title *savoir s'engager*. Byram (1997) calls it "critical cultural awareness," and defines it as "an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices, and products in one's own and other cultures and countries" (p. 53). Through cultural awareness, students become aware of aspects of cultures that are not visible. "Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough, what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants" (Hall, 1959, p. 39). Through this quote from his first book *The Silent Language*, Hall stresses the existence of a culture beneath the surface. Culture can in fact be categorized in *big-C culture* and *small-c culture*: the first one being objective culture that people learn at school, the second being subjective culture concerned with the psychological aspects of a group. In order to illustrate what objective culture and subjective culture actually indicate, in 1976, Hall depicts the similarity between an iceberg, of which one can only see the tip above the water, and culture, of which one can only see the surface behaviors.

Nevertheless, one must not forget that ICC in language teaching is not restricted to the introduction of cultural knowledge but is also strongly defined by the communicative element. As such, a significant aspect of ICC is that of the consideration of the complexity of both verbal and non-verbal communication.

The first to specifically address the existence of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and its relevance in ICC was Hall (1959), who declared that "formal training in the language, history, government, and customs is only a first step. Of equal importance is an introduction to the nonverbal language of the country" (p. ix). According to Hall, each culture could be separated into one of two kinds of cultures, and coined the terms *high-context culture*, the more indirect one, and *low-context culture*, which is more direct. Awareness of nonverbal cues is indispensable to avoid misunderstandings in situations that require the implementation of ICC.

Deardorff (2016) argues that ICC is "a complex, broad, learning goal and must be broken down into more discrete, measurable, learning objectives" (p. 121). As such, assessing ICC should also be conducted in a multi-method approach.

Amongst the tools employed for assessment, one might find the following:

1. Self-assessment
2. Critical incident analysis
3. Reflection journals and e-learning portfolios
4. Summative assessment (e.g., final test or demonstration)
5. Interviews
6. Observations of learners' performance or behaviors
7. Role-plays or simulations
8. Surveys

The advantage of assimilating various methods lies in the possibility of looking at both direct and indirect evidence, which can either support each other or offer an explanation on why one method might show contradictory results.

Practical Techniques

Promoting ICC in the classroom should help learners develop as intercultural speakers, hence the teacher must consider which activities and topics might be most beneficial to the learners in terms of enhancing their skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Over the years, several techniques have been developed.

Amongst the most frequently adopted techniques, one can find the critical incident technique (CIT), first developed by psychologist John Flanagan in the 1950s. Hughes (1986), who gives it the name *culture assimilator*, defines it as "a brief description of a critical incident of cross-cultural interaction that would probably be misunderstood by the students" (p. 167). The technique is often presented as a written and/or illustrated story or incident where a misunderstanding has taken place. Students are then asked to discuss and offer interpretations, explanations, and possible solutions to the situation.

Similar to CIT, another commonly employed activity in ICC is the role-play. Role-plays offer learners the opportunity to experience unfamiliar behaviors and situations first-hand in a safe environment. Kramsch (1993) highlights the need for a "third space" (Ryan, 2012, p. 247), a place that is not restricted within the community of the target culture nor their own community, where students feel safe experiencing the target culture.

Finally, D.I.E, which stands for "describe, interpret, and evaluate," is a popular tool for promoting intercultural learning developed by Bennett and Bennett in 1975. During the D.I.E. activity, students are asked to describe an ambiguous object or photograph as objectively as possible, then interpret what they see through their own cultural perceptions, and finally evaluate, where they are free to express their judgements (Bennett et al., 1977).

Mixed Methods Research

The preferred research method for this research, mixed-methods research (MMR), is concerned with the collection and analysis of quantitative data as well as qualitative data sets. Dörnyei (2007) lists four major purposes for employing MMR:

1. Increasing the strengths while eliminating the weaknesses.
2. Multi-level analysis of complex issues.
3. Improved validity.
4. Reaching multiple audience.

As the analysis of the effects ICC requires a multi-level analysis of various data instruments, an MMR approach appeared to be the best suited to answer the research question.

Method

Participants

The participants of this study were nine male Japanese students, eight female Japanese students, and one male Nepalese international student. All eighteen students were third-year university students majoring in the International Cultures Department of a private Japanese university. The participants were enrolled in an Intercultural Communication class for one semester that met once a week for ninety minutes over fifteen weeks.

Procedure

The authors created and implemented original class materials that utilized the ICC techniques critical incidents, D.I.E., and role-plays to engage the students in group and class discussions on big-C culture and small-c culture. Every week students sat in groups of four and held a group discussion on the material they received. Following their group discussions, the instructor facilitated a class discussion whereby students could hear the various opinions of their classmates.

Quantitative Data Instrument and Collection

The participants were given a pre- and post-course survey to analyze their ICC levels based on Deardorff's (2006) framework. The questions assessed student's intercultural knowledge/awareness, attitudes, and skills by assessing six sub-factors associated with each ICC factor. In terms of intercultural knowledge, participants were questioned about their cultural knowledge, and cultural curiosity; for attitudes, confidence in sharing their opinions, and confidence in communicating with foreigners; for their cultural skills, whether participants felt they reflected on their own values and reflected on the values of others. The pre-course survey contained two sections that used a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Section 1 focused on fourteen Likert-scale items, while section two focused on six Likert-scale items. Section 2 also contained four open-ended questions. The post-course survey reiterated the same questions with an additional open-ended question section to ascertain their opinions on the ICC techniques used in the course.

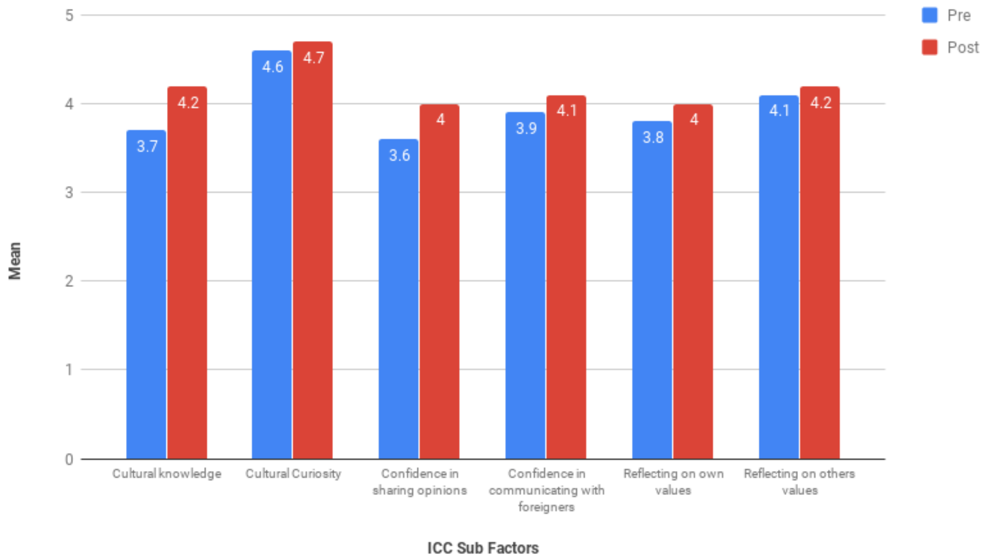
Qualitative Data Collection

As part of their homework for the course, students were instructed to hand in a weekly self-reflection that focused on what their opinions had been on each week's class content, their experiences with that week's topic, and what they would like to learn for the next class. Five students also volunteered to participate in semi-structured interviews on whether they believed they had experienced any changes in perceptions or not during the course. The weekly self-reflections, the five interview transcripts, and the open-ended questions from the pre- and post-course surveys constituted the qualitative data sets.

Results and Discussion

Quantitative Data

Figure 1. Pre- and Post-course ICC Level Comparison



The pre- and post-course survey results were taken and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Specifically, the averages of each of the six categories were taken and compared as seen in Figure 1. Overall, from the pre-course survey of students ICC levels to the post-course survey, the average of the class rose in every category positively. This reveals that, as a class, there seems to have been a rise in students ICC levels following a one-semester ICC-oriented course. For the purpose of understanding more about the effects on the students, the student self-reflections were analyzed for changes in cultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills. This paper will include a small sample of the qualitative data that was collected to showcase changes in each of the three ICC factors that determines an individual's ICC level.

Qualitative Data

Attitudes

A change in attitudes was best showcased by Mako, who wrote the following on June 4th in her reflection journal:

> Because studying Japanese and Korea is important but people are not intelligent well. However people in Europe is very genius than [us].

On July 9th, she wrote,

> I learned any things from this activity. Dont judge people by appearance. I mean

> for example it is not born in Africa just because the skin is black. I can know we have a lot of prejudice and stereotype. A misunderstanding is born from such prejudice. Sometimes I hurt my opponents.

In the first reflection, she is relying on negative self-depreciating stereotypes as her reference place to judge people's intelligence. As she is Japanese, this could also indicate how she views herself. However, the latter reflection admits she has become aware of prejudices and stereotypes that could hurt other people. This demonstrates a more open-minded attitude then this student had before in this course and points to an awareness of how misunderstandings can arise from close-minded attitudes.

Cultural Skills

The importance of the skill to reflect on one's values and the values of others was present in student reflections and interviews. During an interview, Kintaro said,

> If I didn't take the class, maybe there's no opportunities to get a opinion by the other people. So that's important to grow up my mind, my personality. So that's necessary to grow up the mind to adapt.

He displays here the skill of reflecting on other students' values and thinking about his in turn. His quote states how important it was to hear other opinions through this course. Another student, Takeshi, wrote,

> I thought what is gender until this class because I never studied it in Japanese school. Male society is usual for me, but that is right? and why I think that? I never understood.

Takeshi's comments also illustrate skills through the strong reevaluation of his values based on what he heard and learned in class.

Cultural Knowledge

In regard to cultural knowledge, during his interview, the international student Ram said,

> I can see after the intercultural communication class how people see me like a foreigner on the train, they see me up in the class. So I have to power myself and care myself for presenting all foreigner.

Ram's statement reflects a heightened sense of cultural awareness and knowledge after listening to the opinions of his Japanese classmates. He gained a deeper insight into Japanese culture through the ICC-approached class and felt more aware of how he is perceived as a foreigner in Japan. In the open-ended section of the post-course survey, when asked about what she had learned, Kaho wrote,

> I [have] started to question things.

This hints that she is now more aware about the gap between the cultural knowledge she thought she had and how much she actually still had to learn. As Deardorff (2006) has stated that she does not believe a short-term course is enough to become adept in ICC, a student realizing after a short-term course that they do not know about culture as much as they thought they had could be deemed a positive effect.

Conclusions

As can be seen from both the quantitative and qualitative results shown above, one can find a positive change in participants' ICC levels after the implementation of an ICC approach in the classroom. Participants themselves report that they have become more aware, especially of how much cultural knowledge they actually do not have. Whilst outcomes are promising, one drawback of this study is the duration. The study was conducted over a short period of time, yet in order to guarantee that the impact of the ICC approach was effective, there is a need for a more longitudinal study to be conducted. Deardorff (2006) herself has stated that the acquisition of IC competence is a lifelong process, and as such, participants should continue to be exposed to the ICC approach in order for the authors to observe the impact over time. As a result, the authors have been developing further material and continuing the research during the second half of the school year with the same participants, hoping to gather more data about the effects of the ICC approach. Moreover, the continuation of this research would allow for further insights for research to be conducted in the ICC field in the future.

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Workshop Reports

SLA Benefits of Student-Centered Character Creation for Tabletop Role-Playing Games

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This paper is a review of a workshop that was a guide for helping teachers assist their students in developing characters for tabletop role-playing games. It seeks to point out the many SLA benefits associated with this process. This paper offers a twofold critique of standard ESL role-playing activities and suggests a method that avoids these pitfalls. At the conference, once the characters had been created, everyone got to play out a tabletop role-playing scenario to experience first-hand the many benefits of using these sorts of games in their classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional ESL role-playing activities (RPA) can often be boring. As the author has argued elsewhere (Johnson, 2018a), two major problems are that (a) the standard RPA is grammatically awkward and (b) the end result of the standard RPA is known and inevitable, which may result in the students losing interest. It was suggested that the use of adventure style, tabletop role-playing games (TTRPG) for second language acquisition gets around these two problems. In this paper, the focus is on the character creation aspect of TTRPGs and their second language acquisition benefits.

Here are two problems with standard character creation:

1. Standard character creation lacks student *investment*.
2. Standard character creation takes character creation for granted, thereby missing out on language acquisition opportunities.

STANDARD CHARACTER CREATION FOR RPAS LACKS STUDENT INVESTMENT

In a standard RPA, characters are typically generated in one of two ways: They either come pre-constructed as part of an activities sheet or the instructor laboriously spends time individually creating them. Let us look at each of these in turn.

Character Sheets Come Pre-generated as Part of an Activity Sheet

There are numerous downsides to this method: Firstly, it lacks character *investment*. The students will care much more about the success or failure of their characters if they created them themselves. In this teacher's experience, student motivation is the number one hurdle to be overcome in the classroom. Why would a student be invested in a pre-constructed character (*pre-con*)? This leads us to the second way characters are typically generated.

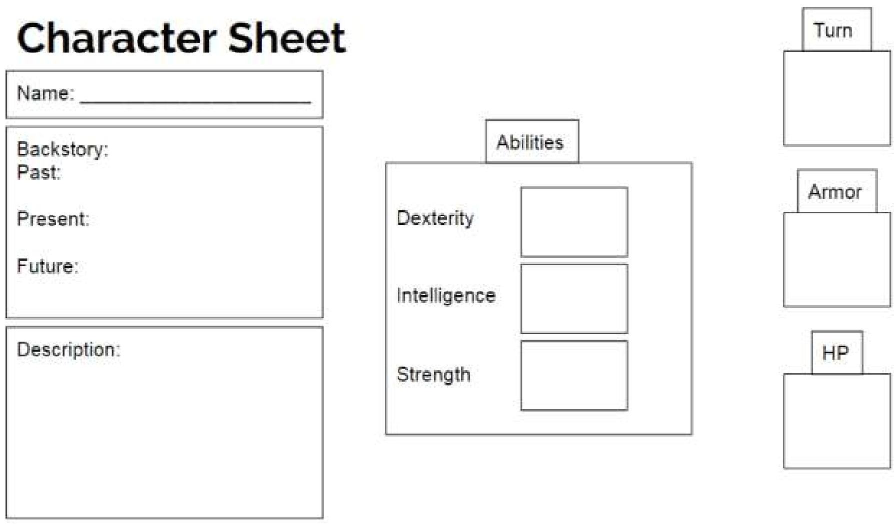
The Instructor Laboriously Spends Time Individually Creating Them

In order to generate student investment in pre-cons, the author has used the following techniques: (a) inserting some amount of drama or conflict into the scenarios, where the goals of the characters are in direct opposition to one another; (b) in an email RPA for business English, making sure students have time to think and plan out their messages before writing back, so that they can better "role-play" their characters, and using an "inbox" system to cut down on dead time; and (c) inserting a bit of humor into the situations the pre-cons find themselves in. However, it's hard coming up with interesting pre-con characters and situations for all of your students all of the time. One might counter with "Teaching is hard. Just do it." However, this critique seems to fail to properly answer the following questions: "Is this the best use of prep time?" and "Is there a better way to do this?"

Standard Methods Take Character Creation for Granted

In order to illustrate the benefits of TTRPG style character creation, let us go through the process of character creation together. Figure 1 is an example character sheet that was used with the author's student gamers.

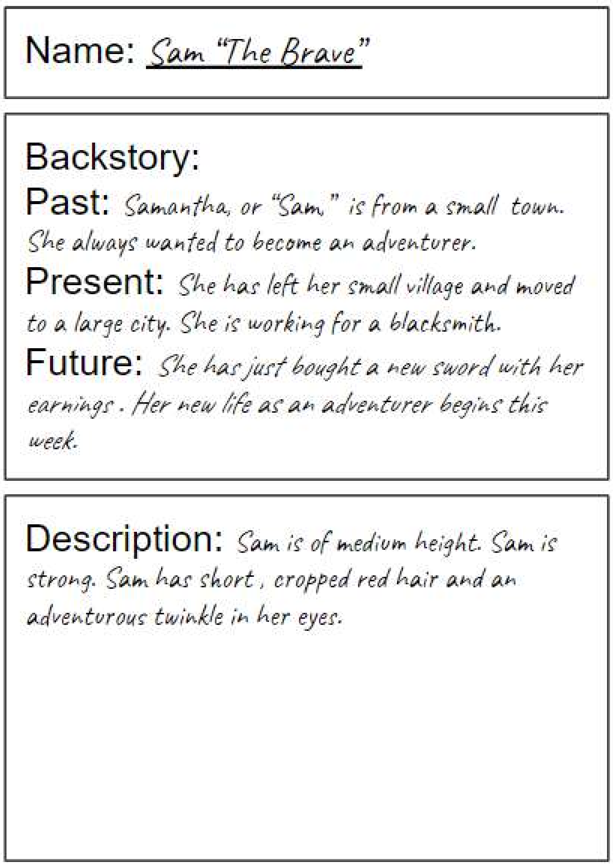
Figure 1. Example Character Sheet



Once this sheet is given to the student/player, the instructor's job is, in many ways, already done. Of course, the instructor will be available to assist the students in any way necessary, but it's about being available to help assist the student's creativity, rather than limiting it by telling the students what their character is going to look, think, and act like.

Let us start by filling in the leftmost column, and then break it down section by section (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. Name, Backstory, and Description



Name: Sam "The Brave"

Backstory:
Past: Samantha, or "Sam," is from a small town. She always wanted to become an adventurer.
Present: She has left her small village and moved to a large city. She is working for a blacksmith.
Future: She has just bought a new sword with her earnings. Her new life as an adventurer begins this week.

Description: Sam is of medium height. Sam is strong. Sam has short, cropped red hair and an adventurous twinkle in her eyes.

Name

With the author's student gamers, it's only insisted that they not use their own name. Besides this one qualification, they are free to choose any name they want. Choosing a different name helps create a separate identity for their character, which creates a safe space for failure ("I didn't make a mistake, my character did") and increases opportunities for role-playing their characters (Reed, p. 164). Depending on how one customizes their character, they can create all sorts of different people, some of which might be quite different from the player themselves. Having this separation helps the student gamer role-play, to act as their character would act rather than how they might act.

Backstory

Creating a backstory is an important part of character creation. It tells the other players what one's character is about. It is also an excellent way to have your students practice grammar in an organic way. A good description of a character will involve its past, present, and future.

The students at this teacher's school are working hard, but their English level is quite low. So it is best if they only have to write two or three sentences per part. The best part about having students create these kinds of backstories is that they typically practice some of the most useful grammar structures: simple past, present progressive, and "*want to* + *be*-verb." Let's look at Sam's backstory in more detail:

Past – Samantha, or "Sam," is (**to be**) from a small (**adjective**) town. She always wanted (**simple past**) to become an (**a/an/the**) adventurer.

Not only do we get to practice four of the more important grammar structures (i.e., *be*-verb, adjectives, simple past, and articles), we also learn something about Sam's personality. She's *always* wanted to be an adventurer. Never satisfied with life in her small village, she dreams of more.

Present – She has left (**present perfect**) her small village and moved (**simple past**) to a large (**adjective**) city. She is working (**present progressive**) for a blacksmith.

Here again, the student has the opportunity to practice some of the more popular grammar structures: present perfect, simple past, adjectives, and present progressive. We also learn more about Sam's personality. She is the sort of person that moves towards her goals. She not only has dreamed about being an adventurer her whole life but has taken concrete steps towards achieving her goals. But, she's not there yet. She has moved to the big city, where exciting things happen, and is working in a field that will benefit her (learning how to make weapons and armor seems like the ideal job for an aspiring adventurer) and is saving up money for her journey.

Future – She has just bought (**present perfect**) a new sword with her earnings (**unique vocabulary**). Her new life as an adventurer begins this week.

In addition to organic grammar practice, the student gamers also get the chance to learn new vocabulary, interesting synonyms for common words they may already know, in a natural way.

Description – Sam is of medium (**adjective**) height. Sam is strong (**adjective**). Sam has short (**adjective**), cropped (**adjective**) red (**adjective**) hair and an adventurous (**adjective**) twinkle in her eyes.

Student-centered character creation is a great way to focus on descriptive adjectives in an organic way.

One might counter with "Yeah, this all seems well and fine, but my students are *low*-level students. They can't write all of this fancy stuff!" The response is twofold: Firstly, low-level students can do this! This was done in this author's gaming club, at a university in Korea. They were quite excited to come up with new and interesting characters. Secondly, these sorts of games, TTRPGs, are all about *customization*. They are famous for their flexibility and can be tailored to almost any level of language learner.

Opportunities for Public Speaking Practice

Character creation avails students of a great opportunity to practice their public speaking skills. There are several ways one might go about doing this:

Method 1: A straightforward character introduction. This kind of introduction would go something like this: "My character's name is 'Sam, The Brave.' She is from a small town and has always dreamed of being an adventurer. She has left her town and moved to the big city. She is working as a blacksmith and was saving up for a new sword, which she has recently purchased. She begins her journey this week. She is of medium height, strong, and has short, cropped red hair. She has an adventurous twinkle in her eyes.

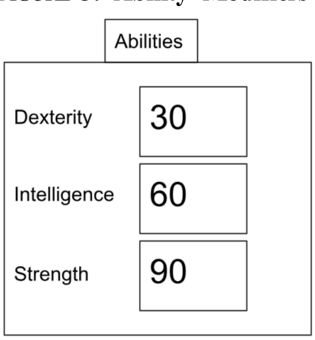
Method 2: Our student gamers could role-play their characters a bit, exchanging *she* for *I*.

Method 3: Our students might role-play their introductions almost entirely, after a brief description of their physical characteristics, only introducing their characters to the group in the course of the game itself. The method one chooses depends on the level of the student gamers.

Ability Modifiers

Now that Sam's backstory and description are completed, it's time to move on to the ability modifiers. What are these strange boxes? The ability modifiers help determine the success or failure of a character's action. Each player is given the three percentages 90, 60, and 30 to assign to their character. The higher the better. Let's do this with Sam (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3. Ability Modifiers



It's important that one assigns the ability modifier numbers in line with the character's backstory and description. We know that Sam's strength is one of her defining physical characteristics, so we give "Strength" the highest number. Next, we get the feeling that Sam is smart. She knows what she wants in life, and she's taking the right steps to get it, so we assign the next highest number, 60, to "Intelligence." Finally, we've only got one number left and, while we'd love to give Sam 90 for everything, the player is forced to choose some things their character is good at and some things they're bad at. Sam is not too dexterous. We give her a "Dexterity" score of 30.

What does all of this mean? Whenever Sam wants to do an action, the instructor chooses the ability that makes the most sense, the player rolls percentile die and, if the role is under the number, they succeed. Let's look at some examples:

Example 1: Sam wants to lift a large boulder. The player rolls the dice and gets a 26. Sam successfully lifts the boulder.
Example 2: Sam wants to figure out where a secret door is. The player the rolls dice and gets a 59. Yikes! A close one, but Sam succeeds.
Example 3: Sam wants to dodge an oncoming wagon. The player rolls a 40. Oh no! Sam is hit by the wagon and takes 4 points of damage.

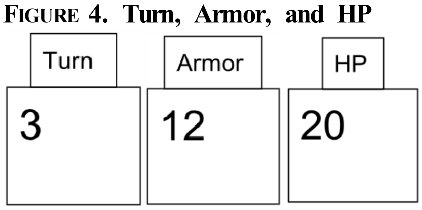
Encourage the students to give detailed descriptions and maybe even act out what happens to their characters.

Turn, Armor, and HP

Turn: When an adventuring party finds themselves in a fight (or other situation requiring a turn order), they roll for place in the initiative order, highest to lowest, with the highest roll going first.
Armor: Armor is how hard a character is to successfully attack. The attacker rolls a twenty-sided die and, if their roll is higher than the armor of the thing they are attacking, they succeed. They then roll damage dice based on whatever weapon they have at the time.
HP: HP is health points.

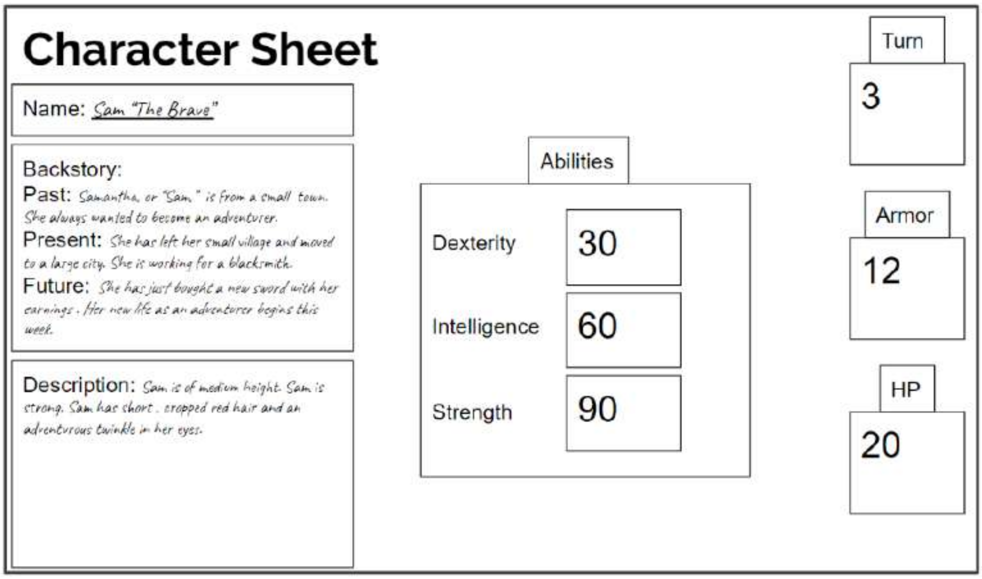
Let's see how we've filled in Sam's sheet (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Turn, Armor, and HP



The student playing Sam rolled well, but not as well as the two other students, so she's third in line for action. A typical human has an armor of 10, but she's not typical, right? She's strong. So she gets an armor of 12. And while she's got grand aspirations of being a hardcore adventurer, she's only just about to get started, so she's got a beginner's level of HP, at 20. The character sheet for Sam ends up looking like Figure 5.

FIGURE 5. Completed Example Character Sheet



A Character's Secret

Once the character sheet is all filled out, I have my students flip it over and write their character's secret on the back, sharing it with no one. It's up to them to role-play in line with their secret and, when the moment's right, spring it! Or, keep it tightly held to their chest for the whole game. It's completely up to the player.

What's Sam's secret? . . . Wouldn't you like to know? You'll have to play if you want to find out!

CONCLUSION

In addition to the many other benefits of playing tabletop role-playing games (Johnson, 2018b), student-centered character creation fosters character investment and takes advantage of second language learning opportunities.

THE AUTHOR

Paul Johnson was born and raised in Southern California, has an MA in philosophy, and has been teaching English as a foreign language internationally for seven years. He is the editor at Tabletop English, a resource for educators interested in using tabletop role-playing games for language education, and the designer of Virtue: The Game: A

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LGBTQ+ Community in the Korean Classroom

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This workshop was to create community among educators committed to making inclusive classrooms. Participants were welcome to share their experiences around teaching (or not teaching) LGBTQ+ topics in Korean classrooms, and how to better scaffold lesson planning for inclusive dialog. Participants were encouraged to bring resources and materials to teach English in their context, from elementary school to the adult community classroom. Discussion questioned materials and practices that sanction heteronormativity as well as how to deal with bullying in the classroom. Discussion also focused on how to write up experiences into publishable critical memoirs as a path to continued professional development in social justice pedagogy.

Starting the Workshop: Negotiating the Space

The workshop started by opening decision-making to attending participants. This approach is similar to Pennycook's (1990) negotiated syllabus. Participants decide about how to welcome late comers; whether pictures, videos, or audios are acceptable; and how to arrange the room space for collaboration. Attendees are invited to agree to a "tacit contract" as a goal to safeguard the learning space. Goal-setting decisions are framed by connecting to prior learning around LGBTQ+ issues in education at past KOTESOL events. This beginning acts as an exemplar for how to make inclusive classrooms.

KOTESOL members have been meeting at conferences to discuss how they as educators can be more inclusive especially around LGBTQ+ issues. Some of the goals that they have set for themselves have been to open spaces safe for discussion about their classrooms, schools, learners, and selves. The experience at the Korea TESOL International Conference in October of 2019 was an extension of these discussions initiated at the Gwangju-Jeonnam Regional Conference in 2018. A series of workshops and presentations have been given at KOTESOL chapter and conference events since the spring of 2018. It is important to note that educators and members are coming together to discuss topics that are sensitive within the conservative host country of South Korea. Additionally, at the 2019 Korea TESOL International Conference there were several other workshops, panels, and research presentations on LGBTQ+ topics. This particular workshop welcomed participants to share their experiences around teaching (or not teaching) LGBTQ+ topics in Korean classrooms and how to scaffold inclusive dialog. This workshop was conducted on Sunday morning after many participants had attended the Saturday events and gatherings, allowing for Saturday's panels and research to act as prompts for discussion.

In the opening time of this workshop, we cultivated our class culture by tapping into the values and objectives of past KOTESOL events. In March of 2018, previous workshop experiences focused on "Participants' Perspectives on LGBTQ" (Collado, 2018), "Making Our Classrooms Safe for LGBTQ+" (KOTESOL Social Justice SIG, 2018), and "How to Be Better Allies" (Kaufman, 2018). In October 2018 at the Korea TESOL International Conference, there was a panel on "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities: Fluency for School and Society" (Jones, et al., 2018) as well as a special workshop by Scott Thornbury, "Gay is a Global Issue." The visibility of LGBTQ+ topics within the domain of English language teaching has been an important collaborative effort by KOTESOL members since 2018. This initiative continued with the Daejeon-Chungcheong November Symposium in 2018 accepting the session "Students Discuss Queer Topics: How Educators Can Foster Communication" (Lisak, 2018). In 2018, Luis Roberto Caballero Orozco attended all chapter conferences presenting on using critical pedagogy in the EFL classroom. These workshops highlighted inclusive practices for LGBTQ+ topics. A social justice poster presentation was also initiated at the Daejeon Symposium, which created dialog around LGBTQ+ issues: "Social Justice A-Z" (M. Kaufman)

Rubric Discussion and Creation

Participants discussed in small groups their experiences around teaching (or not teaching) LGBTQ+ topics in Korean classrooms. In between discussion times, examples such as the Bechdel Index, the Heteronormative Quiz (Rochlin, 1995), and the Queer Literacy Theory Frame (Miller, 2015) were briefly introduced as models to help create inclusivity rubrics for educational purposes. The Bechdel Index looks at the gender balance in speaking roles in movies. The Heteronormative Quiz de-centers the focus on heteronormativity in daily discourse. The Queer Literacy Frame shares principles to guide classrooms. This experience of making an inclusivity rubric helps to assess materials as welcoming or unwelcoming attitudes for diverse perspectives. Participants shared with their small groups as well as to all attendees how they evaluated openness and welcomed diverse perspectives, especially when dealing with bullying situations that arise both inside and outside of their classrooms that impact their learners.

Next Steps

Time did not allow for more sharing around how to write up experiences into publishable critical memoirs (Burns & Johnson, 2019) as a path to continued professional development in social justice pedagogy (KOTESOL Social Justice SIG, 2015). An invitation for collaborative support systems is open to participants to write about their experiences teaching in South Korea while supporting needs of the LGBTQ+ community. The workshop closed by discussing future KOTESOL opportunities to continue to discuss inclusivity on LGBTQ+ in education contexts.

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Promoting Language Production Through Classroom Games

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Games in the ESL classroom have potential to increase student motivation and engagement, while creating a more learner-centered classroom (Cervantes, 2009). This interactive and practice-based workshop showed teachers how to use different games to promote language learning and motivation in their classes. The presenters introduced a variety of games that facilitate rapid production practice of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation to increase English fluency. Attendees got to participate in several short demonstrations of games and hear an outline of other games that can be used. At the end of the session, attendees gained an improved understanding of which games are suitable for their own students' learning needs and gained an increased confidence to apply these games in their own classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

Games in the ESL classroom have the potential to increase student motivation and engagement, while creating a more learner-centered classroom (Cervantes, 2009). They also allow students to improve language functions such as communication strategies and vocabulary acquisition (Peregoy & Boyle, 1993). Students stop thinking about language and begin using it in a spontaneous and natural manner within the classroom (Schutz, 1988). Celce-Murcia and Rosensweig (1979) state that in games, language-use takes precedence over language-practice, and games bring the student closer to the real-world situation through its task-oriented characteristics. Games can be a perfect tool to create a space for students to put their vocabulary and grammar lessons into authentic and real-time practice. In summary, rationale for using games in the classroom include increasing student motivation and engagement, lowering the affective filter, allowing students to practice production in a spontaneous manner, and creating a more learner-centered classroom while preventing over-lecturing by teachers.

This presentation was interactive and practice-based. Attendees participated in several short demonstrations of games and were shown how to use others that facilitate rapid production practice of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation to increase English fluency. All of the demonstrated games are adaptable for university students, high school students, and younger learners of all cultural contexts. The presenters aimed to help attendees develop an improved understanding of which games are suitable for their own students' learning needs and feel increased confidence to apply these games in their own classrooms. This report will summarize the workshop proceedings with the goal of allowing readers to implement games as appropriate for their own context.

Workshop Procedure

The workshop took place in the afternoon with around fifty KOTESOL members attending. In the forty-five minutes allotted, the authors reviewed the strengths of games in the classroom, and introduced the procedures and recommendations for eight games they personally use in their classrooms with great success. There was time to give demonstrations for five games. The authors presented the games as they would in the classroom, and attendees participated as if they were students themselves. This allowed them to learn the procedures of the games and to see them from a student perspective. Additionally, three more activities were presented without a demonstration.

What follows are descriptions of the games that were introduced in the workshop.

Back-to-Back

Skills Targeted: vocabulary, confidence, and English speaking volume
Procedure: Students work in pairs. Each student has a different handout with a picture that uses lesson vocabulary and phrases. Students stand with their backs together so that they cannot see the other's picture. They then ask questions about the picture using target vocabulary and grammar to try and guess what it is. A possible extension is to have one student describe a picture while the other tries to draw it.

Board Race

Skills Targeted: grammar and spelling
Procedure: Put students into two or three groups and have each group stand in a line facing the board. The teacher writes a question in the center of the board. A student from each team goes to the board and writes the answer. Teachers may have students start once they are both at the board, or can make the starting line towards the back of the room to implement a TPR approach. If the teacher struggles with classroom management, the authors advise starting students from the board. The first team to write the correct answer with no mistakes gets one point.

Back to Board

Skills Targeted: vocabulary and speaking
Procedure: Create two or more teams with the class. One student from a team will sit at the teacher's desk in the front facing towards their team and away from the board. The teacher then writes a word, phrase, or sentence on the board behind the student. The student sitting at the desk may not turn around to see

the word. The team is given a certain amount of time to give clues in English so that their representative can guess the item behind them. The authors recommend not allowing spelling as hints, especially for more advanced classes. The authors also recommend setting penalties for speaking in the L1, such as losing a turn or a point. The other team keeps track of the time with their smartphones. Afterwards, the other team has a turn.

Clothespins

Skills Targeted: vocabulary, image association, spelling, reading comprehension
Procedure: Create two or more teams with the class. Give each team an equal number of different colored clothespins. Spread pictures of target vocabulary items around on the floor. The teacher then chooses one of the images and calls its name out loud. The first team able to throw a clothespin on the correct picture without it skidding off wins a point. This reinforces the association of the image with the pronunciation of its name. This game can be made more complex by placing sentences or definitions of the target vocabulary on the floor instead of pictures.

Attendance Hot Seat

Skills Targeted: class names, class rapport, speaking, and targeted vocabulary or grammar
Procedure: Choose a student to take the attendance for you. The student needs to ask classmates a question and receive an answer before being able to mark persons as present. The teacher can give guidance to the type of vocabulary or question structure that must be used to target certain lesson items. Examples could include *wh*-questions or the current topic of the unit in the textbook. This activity also demonstrates that the teacher trusts students to help maintain the classroom by involving them in attendance recording, which can improve class rapport.

Reinforcing Grammar Structure Challenge

Skills Targeted: grammar, sentence, and question structure; vocabulary; and speaking
Procedure: Group students into small teams of two or three. Ask teams to make you say a certain grammar structure as many times as possible in a given amount of time. The next team will complete the same activity, but be instructed to make the teacher say a different answer. For example, if a teacher is reviewing questions with *do*, they could ask the first team to make them say “Yes, I do” as many times as possible in one minute. That means the first team would have to ask questions such as “Do you like teaching?” or “Do you eat breakfast everyday?” The next team could be asked to make the instructor give a different short answer such as “No, I don’t” or “Yes, she does.” The third team could be instructed to make the instructor say “Yes, we do,” and so on. Each time the instructor says the target phrase, he or she marks a point down on a paper. The team with the most points at the end wins.

Giving Directions

Skills Targeted: class rapport, social awareness, imperatives, and direction vocabulary
Procedure: Students work in pairs. Give each pair one blindfold and a target location. One partner must give careful directions to the blindfolded partner in order to help them reach the location. Once all partners have reached the location, partners trade the roles and then return to the classroom. For safety, please reward students for the best directions, and not the fastest to arrive or students may accidentally harm themselves. This game can also be modified as a building activity.

Scavenger Hunt

Skills Targeted: class rapport, knowledge of campus resources, vocabulary, understanding directions, reading comprehension
Procedure: Put students into groups of three or four. Give each group a list of items to be found during the scavenger hunt, which may include target vocabulary, places, and other useful campus resources, or just for fun clues. Set a predetermined time for students to return to class, and tell them they will be disqualified if late. In their groups, students should find as many clues as possible, and take a picture of the item, person, or place.

CONCLUSIONS

Games in the classroom can make lessons more engaging, and promote spontaneous and authentic language use in real time. The games demonstrated in this workshop can be incorporated into a variety of topics and learning objectives. This presentation was well-attended and received enthusiastic response and questions. The authors hope attendees left feeling empowered with new activity ideas to improve student motivation and engagement in their language classrooms, and encourage readers of this summary to try implementing the suggested games as appropriate for their student needs.

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A Blended Approach to Positive Washback for the IELTS Test

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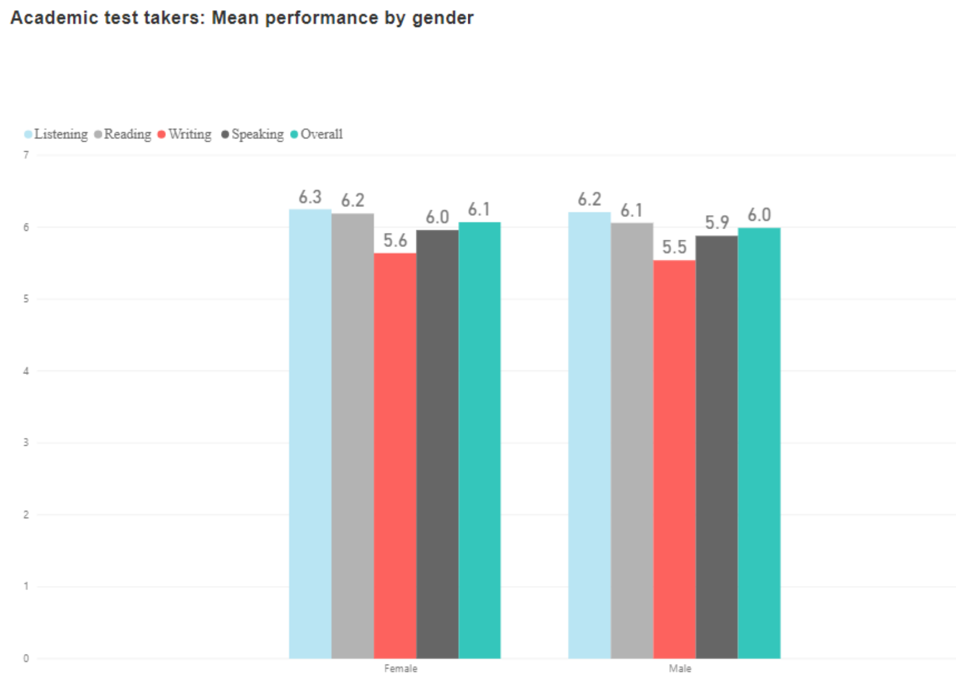
With the International English Language Testing System (also known as the IELTS test) now the most widely taken English proficiency test in the world for higher education and migration purposes, there is an increasing demand for high-quality IELTS teaching. This workshop outlined three activities that IELTS teachers can use to develop both test familiarity and some of the key skills needed to perform well in the speaking and writing tests. In keeping with the conference theme of blended approaches to learning, each activity can be completed both online and offline. I also argued that each activity ought first to be completed online (via messaging app or video conference software) in order to minimize learner anxiety and ensure that the in-class version can proceed more smoothly. During the workshop, the participants were given the opportunity to perform the activities and consider how they could be used in their own teaching contexts.

Introduction

In recent years, the International English Language Testing System (more commonly known as IELTS) has become the leading English language test for higher education and migration purposes. In 2018, for example, the number of IELTS takers worldwide reached 3.5 million in a single year (IELTS, 2019a). With such significant growth, it is not surprising that the demand for IELTS teaching has grown along with it.

Over the past 12 months, my colleagues and I in the East Asia Assessment Solutions Team (see British Council China, 2020) have been conducting IELTS Speaking and Writing workshops for teachers across the East Asia region. These workshops train teachers in how to recognize and apply the IELTS public band descriptors (see, for example, IELTS, n.d.), while also focusing on how to more effectively teach the skills required for success in the IELTS Speaking and Writing modules. Global scores for IELTS (see Figure 1) indicate that the Speaking and Writing modules pose more difficulties for test-takers than do the Reading and Listening modules, and as far as the teachers are concerned, such score discrepancies are largely related to their own lack of expertise in teaching speaking and writing skills.

Figure 1. Mean IELTS Performance by Gender



Note. From IELTS (2019c).

In my workshop at the Korea TESOL International Conference, I outlined three activities that target some of the major difficulties that IELTS test-takers are faced with. Each activity can first be conducted in an online environment, before then being modified for in-class settings. By taking a blended approach such as this, I proposed that confidence would be built up before in-class performance, allowing for greater efficiency when the activity is then performed in the classroom. The first activity, to be discussed after the next paragraph, relates to the IELTS Speaking test.

The IELTS Speaking Test

A Blended Approach to Improving Fluency

As I mentioned at the beginning of the workshop, IELTS teachers in China typically encourage students to use a narrow range of fixed expressions to improve their spoken production. Phrases such as “Every coin has two sides” and “With the development of ...” are common phrases used by IELTS candidates in China to conceal their lack of spoken fluency, and Chinese IELTS teachers tend not to devote much time to developing fluency in class. The washback effect of IELTS in China leads to intensive memorization of sometimes entire speeches, the content of which is clearly beyond candidates’ natural proficiency level. Moreover, IELTS classes in China are usually teacher-centered, with Chinese used to a much greater extent than English (Badger & Yan, 2008).

Having conducted an IELTS workshop for Korean teachers of IELTS just two days before my Korea TESOL workshop, I learned that this problem is by no means confined to China. The good news for IELTS teachers is that mobile messaging apps can complement an in-class approach to fluency development. There is a plethora of messaging apps that can be chosen, from KakaoTalk in South Korea to WeChat in China, and they can all be used to develop fluency using an activity called, as I will explain, "Just a Minute."

Activity 1: Just a Minute

Based on a popular TV and radio show of the same name, the activity Just a Minute targets the skills needed to reach higher levels of spoken fluency. By choosing a simple and familiar topic (the student's favorite movie, for example) with a one-minute time limit (see Nation, 1989, for the importance of time limits in fluency practice), Student A speaks to Student B for one minute, uninterrupted, while Student B makes note of how many times Student A hesitates.

The teacher would first assign pairs of students to instant-message each other as part of the out-of-class activity. This would work, first, by again using a simple and familiar topic. Student A would give Student B the topic (from a list developed by the teacher) and Student B would then send a one-minute-long voice message offering their response to the topic. Student A, rather than being a passive listener, could count the number of hesitations or discourse markers, both of which are measured according to the Fluency and Coherence category in the IELTS public band descriptors. To reach Band 7 for Fluency and Coherence, for example, the candidate would need to use "a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility" (IELTS, n.d.). For more advanced classes, Student A (the listener) could even provide the score they think Student B's performance merits.

Students may question why they are participating in activities that seemingly have little relevance to the IELTS test. This is normal and something that teachers are very conscious of. Is there a way, then, to focus on the content of the IELTS Speaking test while continuing to use Just a Minute as a fluency-building activity? The answer, as it turns out, is yes, even though it may need to be extended from one minute to two.

Part 2 of the Speaking test requires candidates to speak for one to two minutes on a personal topic following one minute of preparation time. A typical example of a Part 2 topic would be "Describe a time in your life you remember well." This is something familiar to everyone and, with a 1-to-2-minute time limit, teachers can implement the activity by using Part 2 sample questions (see IELTS-Exam.net, 2019) and an activity, Just a Minute, that students have already performed. By asking students to attempt an IELTS Part 2 question with a 1-to-2-minute time limit, they can then be given the opportunity to develop test familiarity as well as fluency and coherence.

Before outlining another activity aimed at improving performance in the IELTS Speaking test, I took a brief detour during the workshop and focused on a persistent difficulty that IELTS candidates face when taking the Academic Writing test.

IELTS Academic Writing Test

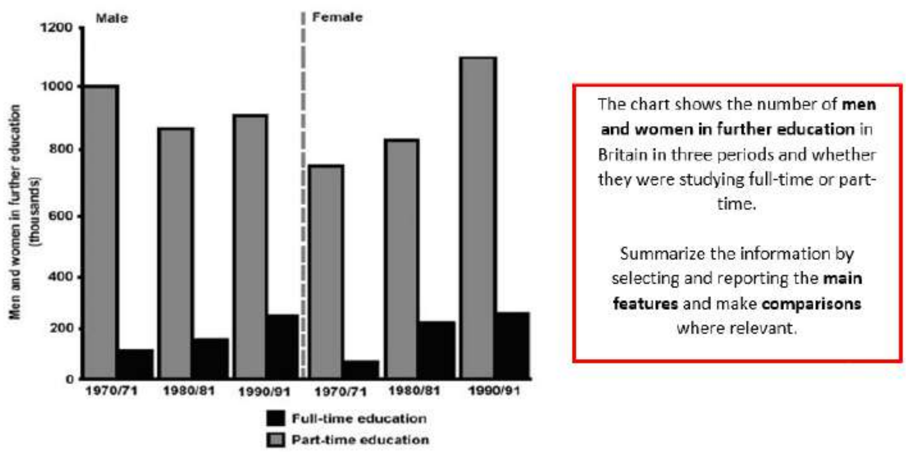
Task 1: Problems Identifying the Key Features

On Day 1 of the conference, my British Council colleague, Kate Chodzko, presented some interesting data that showed that even college-educated native speakers have difficulty achieving high scores on the Task Achievement section of Academic Writing Task 1 (Chodzko, 2019). One likely reason for this concerns the difficulty in identifying the key features of a graph or diagram, something that is essential to success in Academic Task 1. There can, and often is, disagreement surrounding whether a feature of a diagram is, in fact, a key feature or just a detail. With this in mind, an activity aimed at identifying the key features constituted the second part of my workshop. As with Part 1, blended learning can again be used.

Activity 2: Find the Key Features

Consider Figure 2, a typical example of an IELTS Academic Writing Task 1 question.

Figure 2. Sample Academic Writing Task 1



Note. Adapted from Recine (2017).

Rather than identifying every single detail on this chart, IELTS candidates instead need to recognize and compare trends across both data sets, in other words, the key features of the diagram. In the case of Figure 2, they would be well advised to identify and compare trends that are evident in both the "male" and "female" data sets. For example, the chart above shows:

An increasing trend in the number of males in full-time education.
A fluctuation in the number of males in part-time education.
An increasing trend in the number of females in full-time education.
An increasing trend in the number of females in part-time education.

A consistently larger number of males and females participating in part-time education, as compared with full-time education.

The activity I proposed to identify these key features works like this:

1. Student A, having been provided with several sample Task 1 questions by their teacher, sends one of these samples as a screenshot to Student B's messaging app.
2. Student B, given about 2 minutes to interpret the graph or diagram, then sends a 30-to-45-second voice message (or a text message) to Student A in which they identify what they think are the key features of the chart.
3. Following this, Student A sends their own message (either voice or text) to Student B in which they, too, identify the key details of the graph.
4. If there are any discrepancies between them, both students can send new messages in which they try to come to an agreement as to what the key features are.

Moving to an in-class setting, this online activity could simply be repeated as a pair discussion using new sample tasks, while the teacher could also assign groups to report on what they thought were the key features of the task they discussed online. It is possible, even likely, that the groups will not agree on all key features, but a discussion (in English) would make it more likely for a consensus to be reached, while also allowing for further opportunities for fluency development.

Activity 3: Examiner – Candidate Role-Play

The central thrust of our IELTS Speaking and Writing workshops is that, when building test familiarity, key skills and subskills should be targeted simultaneously. Examiner–candidate role-plays are a case in point, and I outlined this as my third activity of my Korea TESOL workshop.

There are numerous mock IELTS Speaking videos available online, for example, on *IELTS.org*. Viewing these and making note of the step-by-step process involved would build test familiarity but would not do much to focus on oral fluency. This is where role-plays can be helpful.

After asking the attendees how such role-plays might work online and offline, I made my proposal as to how they could work. For the online component, there are numerous video-sharing platforms, such as Skype, that could be used, but my recommendation was for Zoom (https://zoom.us/).

With its clear picture and option for recording the conversation, Zoom can be a suitable online platform for students to perform their own mock Speaking test. Using one of the sample videos on *IELTS.org* (see IELTS, 2019b), Student A could play the role of the examiner, first making note of the examiner's questions prior to the Zoom interview and then asking these questions of Student B. The interview, having been recorded, could then be sent to the teacher for feedback on the students' performance.

Moving the activity into the classroom, there are numerous ways for this activity to be extended. For example, Students A and B (as examiner and candidate, respectively) could perform the role-play, while two more students, C and D, could rate different aspects of Student B's performance. Student C, for instance, could offer feedback on Fluency and Coherence, and Lexical Resource, while Student D could offer feedback on Grammatical Range and Accuracy, and Pronunciation. Student C could also act as a transcriber of Student A's questions, while Student D could note the key points made by Student B in their responses. Such an activity would allow for a more integrated focus on speaking, listening, and even writing.

Conclusions

With many IELTS candidates unfamiliar with the structure of the test, teaching activities ought to build test familiarity as well as develop key sub-skills of, in this case, speaking and writing. The activities discussed in this report would be transferable across different teaching contexts, for the standardized format of the IELTS test ensures that each candidate, no matter where they are located, would need to demonstrate the same core competencies to excel in the test. The technology suggested (i.e., messaging apps like KakaoTalk and WeChat) is widely available and user-friendly, with virtually all students familiar with at least one kind of instant messaging app. As a potential area of research, moreover, there remains much room to investigate the effects of this blended approach on IELTS test-taker performance.

The Author

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Techniques and Activities Reports

Transforming Students' Pronunciation Problems with Haptic Touch

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Despite years of mandatory study, Japanese learners of English tend to struggle with certain aspects of English pronunciation into adulthood. This paper outlines how the haptic pronunciation techniques developed by Bill Acton, PhD can help improve pronunciation of English phonemic sounds via the technique of Pedagogical Movement Patterns. Initially, mistakes that commonly befall Japanese learners of English are outlined. This is followed by an analysis of this author's adaptation of the techniques in order to tailor them to the urgent needs of his Japanese first-year university students at Tokyo International University. Finally, the way the haptic system was administered as a means of treatment is summarized, and how it helped move the author's classes towards a goal of developing highly intelligible, comprehensible speakers of English as a second language is described.

Introduction

Grammar, register, and punctuation – these are building blocks of English. There is a distinct set of rules that can be transmitted from teacher to student, and errors can be corrected then and there on the page by following set guidelines. Pronunciation, however, is different. Pronunciation is felt in the mouth and body. Countless unseen obstacles can prevent a second language learner of English from imitating the sounds of a native speaker. One of the most challenging obstacles is incorrect instruction from their own teachers. Students around the world suffer from a distinct lack of adequate pronunciation practice, largely because their teachers themselves do not know the mouth formations necessary to correctly pronounce English to a native speaker standard. This is crushing to the development of so many students, as the most critical aspect of whether a student succeeds or fails is the quality of the instructor (Darling-Hammond, 2000). As a result, students' pronunciation problems can often become fossilized early on with little hope of redemption, especially in an EFL context. Haptic pronunciation aims to rectify this by allowing teachers to retake ownership of the classroom pedagogy when it comes to pronunciation at the phonemic level.

HISTORY

Linguistics luminary Bill Acton, PhD developed the Acton Haptic-English Pronunciation system™ over a decade ago. After more than forty years in the field, he discovered that using touch, gesture, and movement helped fix his system of correct pronunciation forms in the brain. Thus, the haptic way uses the triumvirate of body movement, gestures, and touch to guide students to the correct forms required for clear, intelligible pronunciation. However, unlike other methods of gesture used to learn language, haptic pronunciation is grounded in systematic and coordinated behavior. This is done by presenting the techniques necessary to mimic the sounds of a native speaker of English, modeling the methods for the students, providing feedback on students' attempts, and finally offering corrective feedback (Acton, 2016).

JAPANESE PRONUNCIATION ISSUES

This author's first exposure to the haptic method was during his MA TESOL work with Dr. Acton at Trinity Western University in British Columbia, Canada. Prior to undertaking graduate studies, I had worked for five years as an English teacher in Japan. There, I had run the gamut teaching kindergarteners in private conversation schools in the Japanese countryside, right through the public Japanese K–12 education system, all the way to educating high-flying executives in the shiny office towers of downtown Tokyo. It was while teaching the executives that I began to realize something was wrong with my pronunciation teaching. Japanese students have great difficulty with reproducing many English sounds, but despite my best efforts, their issues were not getting fixed. At the time, I couldn't understand why.

Much research has been devoted to the root causes of the difficulties Japanese learners face when attempting to make the sounds of English, and a common recurrent theme suggests their first language severely impedes the production of their second. English rhythmic patterns are quite distinct from those of Japanese, and as a result, Japanese learners of English often suffer in terms of their comprehensibility and intelligibility (Omar & Umehara, 2010). For over 100 years, English has been a compulsory subject in Japanese schools, yet despite this legacy, the vast majority of students still continue to underperform on standardized tests such as the TOEIC or TOEFL (Browning, 2007). Such struggles continue on into the workplace, which is a major worry as English is becoming an increasingly necessary skill in the age of internationalization. One possible reason is that in spite of dramatically increased attempts to improve English education in Japan, for the past half century the means of instruction has remained largely static. Grammar translation is still the preferred method, as its staid practicality fits snugly with the precepts of Japanese society and is the way Japanese teachers themselves likely learned their English.

Furthermore, there are major differences between the syllable structures of English and Japanese. Tokyo Japanese, largely considered the de facto standard, has been described as being absent of both consonant clusters and obstruents in its syllable codas. English, however, contains 47 consonant clusters in initial position, and a further 169 consonant clusters in final position (Prator & Robinett, 1986). This results in Japanese students having great difficulty pronouncing English words containing consonant clusters. Japanese, after all, permits no word to end in a consonant cluster, nor offers words with initial or final consonant clusters (Ohata, 2004). Naturally, with almost all of their English education relegated to an all-Japanese environment with a Japanese teacher of English, many Japanese students possess a distinct accented English directly connected to their L1 (Riney & Anderson-Hseih, 1993). This is most notable, perhaps, in the pronunciation of the English /r/ and /l/. Whereas English has two liquids, only one exists in Japanese, a lateral apical postalveolar flap (Saito, 2011). Since the equivalent sound is not available in their own pronunciation lexicon, Japanese students attempt to cope with whatever tools they have at their disposal. Hence, they often employ a strategy of substitution, omitting /l/ and /r/ in favor of similar consonants available to them. Thus they turn to the postalveolar flap, which exists almost between the English /l/ and /r/. This can result in Japanese learners mistakenly replacing /r/ with /l/ and /l/ with /r/. As a consequence, words like "light" and "arrive" often sound like "right" and "alive" to native speakers of English (Ohata, 2004).

Thus, when experiencing misunderstanding and miscommunication conversing with a native speaker in English, Japanese learners can become both frustrated and demotivated. This is understandable. Owing to their years of English language education in the Japanese school system, Japanese often have a sound command of the grammar and structure of English (Hewings, 2005). Yet when their poor execution of their pronunciation of segmentals such as English /l/ and /r/ is exposed, vexation and defeatism often result.

Treatment

In the current climate of English language education at the tertiary level in Japan, students' abilities, motivation, and identity are disconnected. Though highly motivated to improve their English skills, many students fall victim to a lack of identity in the classroom due to improper pronunciation leading to lack of confidence. After years of English study, the majority of Japanese students still fail to build a classroom identity imbued with the self-assurance needed to overcome traditional fossilized pronunciation errors. This is often a direct consequence of a lack of accurate instruction on behalf of their teachers. The haptic system is designed to change that. It lets teachers retake ownership of the classroom pedagogy when it comes to pronunciation at the phonemic level by providing a how-to format. It shows how to mimic pronunciation through systematic techniques that place the tongue and mouth in the positions necessary to utter sounds as a native speaker would. Furthermore, it uses movement and touch to anchor those correct positions in the brain for future retention, recollection, and use. Teachers who study the haptic pronunciation system learn the techniques essential to convey mastery of North American phonemes and vowel sounds to their students, who in turn gain autonomy over their own pronunciation proficiency and awareness of where their current failures lie.

In 2018, this author adopted the haptic pronunciation system of Dr. Acton and amended it to his needs in a classroom full of Japanese first-year university students. By tweaking the system, adjustments were made to ensure the techniques matched the students' own particular issues, issues often unique to Japanese learners. Such is the beneficial flexibility of the haptic way. It can be chopped and changed, adapted and modified to fit any classroom with any students of any level. As a result, it is not only applicable to Japanese university students, but can be applied to any context and any learner group, and requires no previous phonetic training. Prior to returning to Japan to take a position at Tokyo International University, this author taught employees at Amazon's head offices in Vancouver, Canada. There, he was tasked with improving the intelligibility of workers from a range of nations such as Russia, China, Argentina, Brazil, and Ukraine. Though accomplished in their fields, they were having great difficulty communicating both with their Canadian counterparts in the office and with locals around Vancouver. Over a ten-week program, the haptic pronunciation methods of Dr. Acton worked exceptionally well at reducing their accents and the communicative issues that plagued their everyday lives, and helped imbue confidence in these highly capable but intelligibility-challenged second language learners of English.

Throughout my decade of teaching English around the world, I have never seen a more effective, easily implementable system as Dr. Acton's haptic pronunciation methods. The haptic methodology works with pupils from any background and can transform students' pronunciation problems through its systematic approach, applicable to any classroom and any learner group. The effects are immediate, long lasting, and transformative, and once the students become accustomed to the outside-the-box procedures, they almost universally embrace the system and adopt its routines into their daily lives.

The Author

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Purposeful Annotation: Strategies for Effective Academic Reading and Writing

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As instructors of academic English, we realized that international students coming from different cultural backgrounds face reading comprehension challenges and have limited exposure to practice annotating skills. In response, we came up with a few approaches that students could use to overcome cultural barriers and be motivated to actively participate in learning annotating skills. This article will begin with a discussion on teaching annotating skills and describe the annotating strategies that we used to assist students. Finally, we will explain how we incorporate the latest technological tools to encourage participation for both independent and collaborative work on enhancing annotation skills.

Introduction

When teaching academic English, we usually face challenges when it comes to improving students' reading skills. Often, when we provide students with an article or textbook chapter and ask them to read thoroughly, we see them pull out their electronic dictionaries or cellphones and start looking for the meanings of difficult words. For most of our students, understanding the vocabulary is of paramount importance. They usually read without a purpose and hardly engage with the text. Therefore, the text is usually left untouched. Perhaps, most students are of the opinion that in order to understand a particular text, it is necessary to be familiar with every word, and if students know the meanings of all the words in the text, then they have succeeded in reading well. In an attempt to simply enhance their lexical resources, students forget to focus on other important aspects of reading skills. This poses challenges for students in that they struggle to interact with the text and identify the main ideas or arguments made by the author. Another challenge faced by students is comprehending reading and transferring the information from the reading into writing. This is one of the requirements for students when writing academic papers in colleges and universities. Through annotation skills, students could overcome challenges in understanding and synthesizing ideas to enhance academic reading and writing.

Why Annotation Needs to Be Taught Explicitly?

Learning to annotate is essential in preparing students for university because it is a powerful strategy for building confidence as active and motivated readers.

Most students in EAP (English for academic purposes) programs have acquired considerable proficiency in basic reading skills like skimming and scanning. What they need is further practice with annotating their reading to comprehend difficult academic texts and complex ideas, facilitate critical thinking, reinforce ideas, and communicate effectively. Annotation helps to retain information, understand text organization, and visualize as you read. According to Porter O'Donnell (2004), annotating "makes the readers dialogue with the text" (p. 82). It helps students to focus on the content, clarify stages of reading (pre-reading, reading, and post-reading), and helps to respond, question, critique, comment, interpret, summarize, evaluate, and analyze the text. Learning to annotate will enable students to not only engage with the text but also comprehend the text in a way that will facilitate transferring their knowledge into written form, which is the ultimate goal of reading for academic purposes. Not only that, it reduces the need to memorize and discourages the idea of reading to simply pass a test. Therefore, we believe that it is essential to explicitly teach annotating skills in EAP classrooms.

Our Approach to Teaching Annotation

Aiming to maintain a coherent and purposeful approach to teaching annotating skills, we divide the teaching strategies over a period of six weeks. Each week, students are introduced to the strategies they would be required to use during annotating as well as the short activities that would allow them to practice the annotating skills, and finally, they are assessed based on writing assignments that focused on synthesis writing.

Week 1: Journal Writing and Discussion

In the first week, we begin by simply asking students to ponder over their reading style. We ask students to write a 150–200-word journal entry highlighting their approach to reading an academic text. Students begin their journals by reflecting on their first reaction to a given text. Students expand on their ideas by answering some of these guiding questions:

Do you preview and predict before reading?
Do you skim for main ideas?
Do you scan for key terms and specific details?
Do you try to guess the organization of the text?
Finally, do you annotate?
If so, what tools do you use?

It is interesting to note that students usually struggle to answer the last two questions because they have had little or no experience with annotating skills. Thus, through this journal-writing activity, students have a chance to self-reflect on their reading skills and strategies, and get the motivation to start thinking about annotating.

Week 2: Elicit the Need to Annotate

In the second week, we begin by sharing exemplars with the students. We provide short annotated texts and ask students to discuss in groups what they see. Once again, we provide them with a few guiding questions to discuss:

What are some of the tools used for annotation?
What portion of the text is highlighted?
Why are some parts underlined?
What is the purpose of the margin notes?
How does highlighting with different colors help the reader?

We believe that when students engage in this discussion, they are able to get a visual perception of an annotated text.

Week 3: Teach Annotation

The third week is the action week! We distribute three to four paragraphs of varying levels of difficulty from an academic text. We provide clear instructions for this activity. For example, students are asked to highlight the main idea, underline supporting details, circle key terms and unknown vocabulary, put brackets around referents, and write on the margins commenting on the main ideas. Students begin with some hesitation, but towards the end of the week, most students seem confident annotating longer texts independently.

Week 4: Provide Feedback

By the fourth week, students have not only had considerable practice with annotating, but they have also developed confidence in analyzing their work and differentiating between good and bad annotations. This is when they are ready to provide constructive feedback to their peers on their work and also learn from others' work. This is also the time for detailed feedback from the teachers on further enhancing their annotating skills. Sharing work with peers encourages passive learners to reflect on their learning style and develop their annotating skills. Through short discussions and by asking meaningful questions that focus on the specific text, students get an opportunity to collaborate and learn from each other.

Week 5: Purposeful Annotation

In week five, students are expected to practice annotation skills independently with each reading text assigned in class or for homework. With practice, they start to realize that the process of annotation has helped them to become active readers. More precisely, the students find annotation beneficial, especially before they attempt to write a summary of a text because they need to have a good grasp of the main ideas and the main supporting details, as well as understand the purpose of the text. Annotation does just that. Annotation leads to a good summary and provides a thorough overview of the text. Alternatively, when writing commentaries, students use the margins to comment on the main arguments, tone, and bias in the article. Thus, when students submit similar assignments, such as summaries or commentaries, they are encouraged to submit hardcopies of their annotated texts.

Week 6: Annotate Texts for Synthesis Writing

By the sixth week, there is a shift in the focus. Until now, students annotated to comprehend the text, summarize information from the text, and write commentaries on the text. Now, it is time to introduce annotation as an integrated source, not merely as a separate task. Students are reminded that annotation is a critical strategy that promotes a deeper understanding of the text and that through purposeful annotation, students can succeed in synthesizing their ideas with the ideas presented in the text. Easy as it may sound, this is one of the most challenging tasks for students as it involves strong research skills. In order to write from textual resources, students are expected to analyze and think critically, integrate information from sources, and synthesize prior knowledge with new information. To achieve this outcome, it is essential for students to practice consistently and hone their annotating skills.

Incorporating Technological Tools

Keeping in mind the growing trend in educational technology, we used Google Docs, a simple yet effective tool for annotation "since recent research has found little difference between annotating digital documents with an electronic pencil and annotating in a traditional paper and pencil condition, digital librarians have every reason to expect that electronic annotation will soon be as common as paper and pencil annotation is today" (Wolfe, 2000). Using Google Docs is a great way to engage learners in having a dialogue with the text. Students are provided with the same text and work collaboratively on the same Google document. The teacher can provide feedback while the students are annotating their text. It is a fun way of completing a task efficiently.

Another online tool that students can use to practice annotation is the online platform Hypothesis (hypothes.is). This free online platform provides the students with the opportunity to annotate and save all their annotated texts in their own folders. Students can annotate collaboratively, they can comment on each other's annotated work, and they can search and explore samples of other public annotated articles. We specifically use this tool with our students during the essay writing process, when students have to do research, and read and interpret various articles. Students accomplish this task with great ease and enthusiasm due to their flair for technology.

Recipe for Success

Everyone wants success, and so do we! Now that we have developed an approach on teaching annotating skills, encouraged our students to participate actively in various annotating activities, and engaged in collaborative and independent tasks, we would like to share our secret mantra. We believe that we succeeded in enhancing our students' annotating skills due to regular practice and maintaining consistency throughout the six weeks, and beyond. Introducing this skill early on and taking one step at a time is essential. In addition, reminding the students regularly on the importance of enhancing their annotation skills is crucial. A good balance of group and independent work allows for more opportunities to participate. One-on-one peer and teacher feedback enhances learning and creates a supportive learning environment. The convenience of using online tools to annotate creates enthusiasm and increases students' engagement with the readings and collaboration amongst peers. Finally, on a job well done, reward them: Offer praise or treats, or simply send them off to a homework-free weekend.

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Lessons from Four-Skills "General English" Coursebooks

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Recent research has been exploring the phenomenon of EFL classroom silence. Well catalogued in the East Asian context, the tendency for students toward reticence, or to engage only minimally, when tasked with speaking in English in class is an ongoing frustration for EFL instructors. In Japan, fingers are often pointed at cultural elements: Japanese students are naturally shy, too embarrassed to express opinions, or don't even have opinions. In the classroom, students are accustomed to receiving teacher-talk passively. While these are not inaccurate observations, the conclusion that East Asian learners are uncommunicative is not at all foregone. This paper illustrates how common coursebooks used in EFL classes contribute to a mechanism of reticence, and that a healthy awareness of their limitations can allay the presupposition that East Asian EFL classrooms are, by default, quiet zones.

"Education consists mainly of what we have unlearned." – Mark Twain

INTRODUCTION

Every semester, universities in East Asia are blanketed with a volley of coursebook catalogues. These catalogues offer a dizzying array of coursebooks from a variety of publishers, tailored to every denomination of class on the EFL spectrum. There are coursebooks for reading classes, listening classes, ESP (English for special purposes) classes, grammar classes, debate classes, and critical thinking classes, among others. Invariably, an assortment of coursebooks geared toward so-called "general" English classes that attend generically to the "four skills" of EFL: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In many cases, communication tasks that provide opportunities for open-ended conversations appear at the end of each unit or chapter – if they appear at all.

For example, in Book 1 of the *American Headway* series (Soars & Soars, 2009), the second of five levels of proficiency from low to high, Unit 1 reviews the verb *be* and possessive adjectives in the context of simple greetings between fictional characters of various nationalities. Page 6, the last page of the unit, calls for students to practice saying the numbers 1–20 aloud, then listen to an audio file and reorder sentences provided on the page. And then, students listen and repeat simple phrases, including "How are you?" "I'm OK, thanks," "Have a nice day!" and "See you later!" while paying attention to word stress. Instructions for the very final task (p. 7) tell students to "Practice the conversations with other students. Then practice again using *your* name and number." Unit 2 ends in a similar way, following a listen-repeat exercise of a short dialogue between a customer and a server at a café: "Can I help you? / A cup of coffee, please. / Anything else?" "Here you are," and "How much is that?" Instructions for the very final task (p. 15) read: "Practice the conversations with your partner. Make more conversations." The end of subsequent units employ the same phrase: "Make more conversations."

In the Level 1 book of the *World Link* series (Douglas & Morgan, 2016), which similarly offers coursebooks for five proficiency levels, each unit consists of a Lesson A and a Lesson B. The subheadings for each unit follow one of two sequences:

Lesson A: video → vocabulary → listening → speaking → grammar → communication
Lesson B: vocabulary → listening → reading → grammar → writing → communication

The end of the Unit 7, Lesson A "Communication" task (p. 101) asks students to solve a murder mystery through asking each other a series of statements that describe a number of fictional characters living in the same apartment building, for example, "Ms. Smith lives in apartment 305," "Mr. and Mrs. Busby live across from Ms. Smith," "Ms. Sanchez lives between Dr. Lewis and Mr. and Mrs. Busby," and so on. The end of the Unit 7, Lesson B "Communication" task asks students to present a brochure that the previous "writing" task calls for making a brochure to advertise their home city for the 2032 Summer Olympics. The class must choose the best brochure.

Teachers of "general" (four-skills) classes, which are often a component of liberal arts courses that are required by many universities for students of all majors, often complain about what they observe to be student apathy. A particular point is their students' reluctance or outright refusal to engage in open-ended conversation tasks such as the ones described above. A re-echoing complaint goes like this: "They've had the material before in junior high school and high school. We've gone over it in class. We went through all of the other activities, and then finally when we get to the free-talk part, they just sit there. They don't say anything. They just look at me and say "finish." That's why I usually just skip those activities" [recollection of personal conversation].

This reluctance among students, particularly in East Asian contexts, is well noted in the literature. It stems from a variety of cultural factors, including the "culture" of the classroom environment. East Asian classrooms are still very teacher-dominated and oriented toward the one-way transmission of information from teacher to student. The tendency for students to be passive inputters of teacher lectures seems no less manifest at tertiary institutions, even as there is no longer a need to fill their heads with knowledge in order to prepare them for taking high-stakes examinations. At the tertiary level, there is a much greater opportunity for teachers to employ materials and assessments of their own design. Why, one may ask, do four-skills coursebooks seem to be the norm?

Any teacher will agree that the creation of good materials and assessments is intensely time-consuming. This, arguably, is the primary appeal of coursebooks: They are ready-made materials, the vetted product of a major publisher, and as such, they appear to carry more face validity than, for example, photocopied handouts that individual teachers make. On the other hand, Thornbury (2013, p. 205) argues that coursebooks "are fundamentally flawed, to the extent that they may actually be detrimental, hindering rather than helping the business of language learning (although not, of course, the language learning business!)." With respect to open-ended speaking tasks in particular, I will illustrate how following the structure of coursebooks may unwittingly contribute to a reluctance among students to take chances with and to play with language. Coursebooks geared especially for classes with so-called lower levels of proficiency may be particularly detrimental to in-class conversation. While they can serve as a guide and a crutch for newer teachers to rely on, they are in essence a prescription for the same vocabulary and language forms as students have already encountered twice before: in middle school and high school. Dutifully followed, therefore, they further the mentality among both students and instructors that students are incapable and/or unwilling to showcase, much less reveal, whatever language they may have garnered in their pre-tertiary English careers. Not only is this mentality wrong, but it needlessly demotivates both teachers and students of compulsory English classes, even in classes that are deemed to be low proficiency.

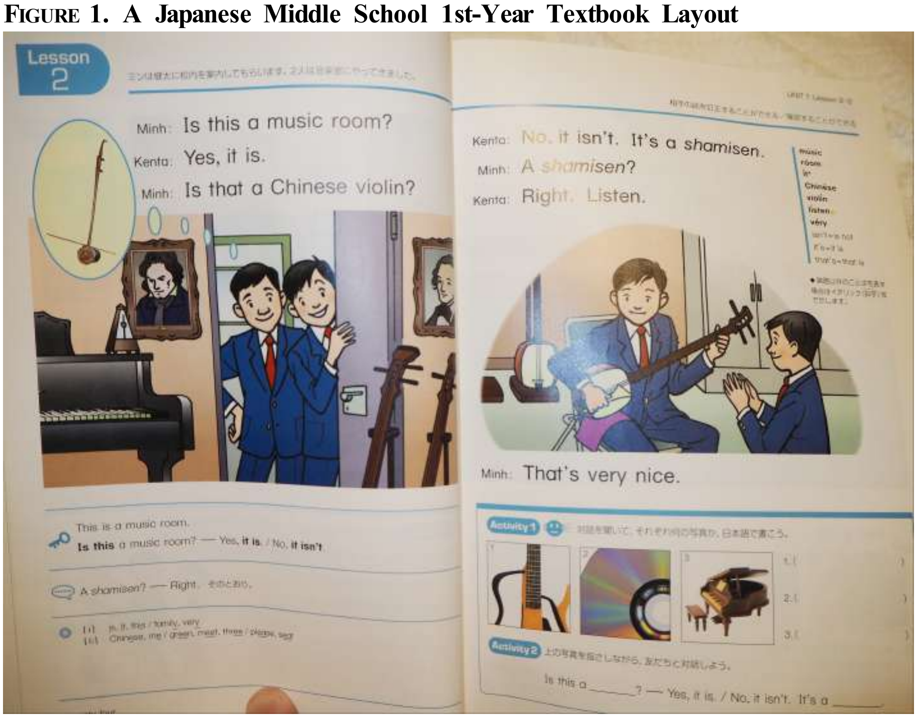
There are three basic reasons why instructors of lower-proficiency general English classes use commercial coursebooks: They must, they want to, or they think that they should. At some universities, a coursebook is mandated by some kind of authority that presides over a language program – often where multiple classes of the same title (English II, etc.) are taught by multiple teachers. In these cases, there may be little choice but to adopt the basic structure of a coursebook into one's classes. In other cases, teachers may want to use a coursebook either because they have established a rapport with it or they feel comfortable relying on the structure it provides. In these cases, without question, teachers *should* use coursebooks, as teachers who are confident about what and how they teach will almost inevitably achieve a degree of success. This paper is an appeal, and is intended as a comfort, to those who are at liberty to *not* use a coursebook but who think that they should because they are afraid (a) of deviating from what appears to be a widely accepted norm that everyone else abides by or (b) that their students will be unwilling to engage in open-ended speaking tasks – notwithstanding at least six years of prior compulsory exposure – without being first told, again, what to say and how to say it.

Middle School Textbooks vs. University Coursebooks

My first experience as a teacher in Japan was as an assistant language teacher (ALT) with the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, which recruits younger college graduates to serve as ALTs in Japan's public elementary, junior high, and high schools. The first English textbooks I encountered were a junior high school series titled *One World*. There was one text for each of three grade levels. Each was B5 sized, relatively thin, and fit neatly into book bags and on shelves. Each had an accompanying teachers' manual (in Japanese, of course), as well as an additional workbook. This series was one of several – each of strikingly similar size, composition and contents – that were approved for use in Japan's public junior high schools by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). At the junior high school level (where I primarily taught), *New Horizon*, *New Crown*, *Sunshine*, and *One World* were among the longest-running and most widely used English textbook series. These series were not written by MEXT but by publishing companies that cater to MEXT's Courses of Study, a set of "broad standards for all schools, from kindergarten through upper secondary schools, to organize their programs in order to ensure a fixed standard of education throughout the country" (MEXT, 2020a). The Courses of Study establish the types of classes, numbers of classes, and number of classroom hours to be taught. The Course of Study for middle school foreign language education (MEXT, 2020b) outlines a variety of language use situations (e.g., greetings, self-introductions, talking on the phone, shopping, asking and giving directions, traveling) and language-use functions (e.g., expressing gratitude, apologizing, offering, promising, giving opinions). It refers to these as "language activities." The middle school Course of Study then lists a core set of vocabulary of about 1,200 words and language structures to be used within the situations and functions suggested beforehand. It refers to these as "language elements." Publishers create series of textbooks that follow these guidelines, and MEXT approves these series for use at public middle schools. The board of education presiding over each school chooses which series will be used.

There is a striking similarity to the structure of middle school-approved textbooks such as *New Horizon* and *One World*. Each features English dialogues between an array of Japanese and non-Japanese characters in a would-be typical Japanese middle school setting. These dialogues appear as text, flanked by lists of new vocabulary in the margins (see Figure 1). The bottom margins contain key language patterns and grammar.

FIGURE 1. A Japanese Middle School 1st-Year Textbook Layout



MEXT does not, in its Courses of Study, prescribe how any of the content it specifies is to be taught. With respect to language forms and grammar, however, it does – both directly and indirectly – call for accuracy. With respect to the treatment of the language elements, the MEXT middle school Course of Study states the following (pp. 2–3):

> (4) Treatment of the Language Elements
> A. For spelling instruction, both the letters and the corresponding pronunciation should be taken up.
> B. Language activities should be conducted in such a way as grammar is effectively utilized for communication, based on the idea that grammar underpins communication.
> C. For the treatment of "(3) D. Grammatical items," consideration should be given so that instruction does not center on issues like explaining grammatical terms or differentiating between usages, but on actual use of grammatical items. At the same time, instruction should be provided in the awareness of the differences between English and Japanese in terms of word order, modification relation and other aspects.
> D. Effective instruction should be devised in order to have students understand the unique features of English, such as organizing mutually related grammatical items in a cohesive manner.

My five-year tenure as an ALT afforded me an intimate look at how, in fact, these textbooks tend to be taught. Aside from the games I was asked to provide as an ALT, the majority of non-game English classes followed this pattern:

1. The teacher wrote lines from textbook dialogue on the blackboard in English. Students would do the same in their notebooks, in the same layout as the textbook: dialogue in the middle,
2. The teacher solicited Japanese translations of words and sentences from individual students s/he called on. Students' answers either matched or did not match the teacher's answer, which s/he wrote in Japanese between the lines of English. Students carefully recorded these Japanese translations into their notebooks in the same interlinear fashion.
3. In classes when I was present, I would often be called upon to lead choral repetitions of the textbook lines. Students repeated after me chorally.

This was the extent of speaking in English in most cases. When I created and led games, they were usually questions that practiced a given grammar pattern. I asked questions, and students answered either correctly or incorrectly. In Figure 1, for example, the correct answer to "Is this a music room?" is "Yes, it is." A simple "Yes" would be incomplete and flagged as incorrect.

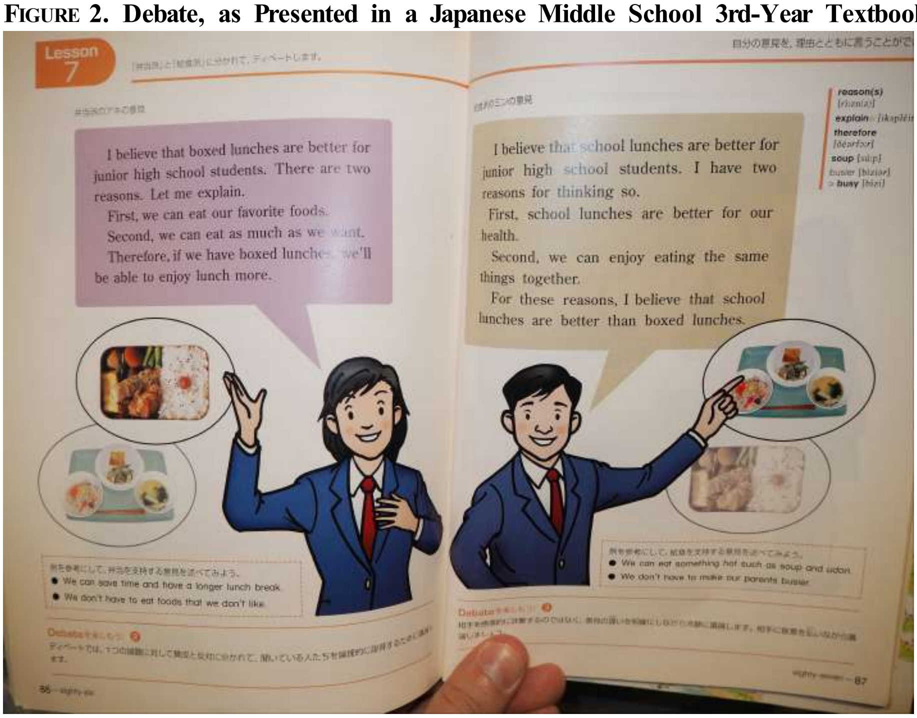
Junior high school tests, meanwhile, were the same: They solicited translations and manipulations of language forms that had been prescribed by the teacher during class. Getting a good score, therefore, came from one's prowess at memorizing vocabulary and solving grammar puzzles according to rules outlined during English lessons.

There was, however, something else that was being taught to students, ironically, through the scripted dialogues. The textbook setting was allegedly a non-special, everyday Japanese middle school. In it everyone spoke to each other in flawlessly unbroken sentences. The audio files that accompanied these texts, too, featured all characters, including average Japanese middle-schoolers, speaking in perfect North American accents, albeit at speeds that would sound plodding and deliberately slowed to anyone who had grown up in North America.

Phillipson, (1992) referred to textbooks' focus on native-speaker norms as a form of linguistic imperialism, manifested in their adherence to native-speaker models of word structure and pronunciation. This mentality helps maintain the propensity to idealize what Holliday (2005) termed "native-speakerism," wherein native speakers are viewed as standard-keepers of both language and language teaching methodology (Thornbury, 2013). Thus, Japanese middle school textbooks can be thought of as self-imposed linguistic imperialism, whether advertently or otherwise.

The objective and the message of the junior high school textbooks are, therefore, at odds with each other. Through study of these textbooks, a student is, ideally, supposed to be like an Aki or a Kenta or any of the other non-special Japanese characters, and to progress from "Hi, my name is ____" in the first year to being able to hold spirited in-class debates on the merits and demerits of school lunches in class in the third year – all in flawless North American English (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. Debate, as Presented in a Japanese Middle School 3rd-Year Textbook



The progression of the textbook appeals to common sense: Words and language patterns are presented in a written dialogue. The structure of the language is analyzed, translated (to confirm understanding), and rehearsed. At the end, students are tested on their ability to remember these words and language patterns, and their test scores are considered a measure of their having "learned"

English. I would learn later that I was witnessing a "textbook example" of *yakudoku*, Japan's unique foreign-language classroom method that scholars have argued is either akin to, or a hybridized version of, the Western-based Grammar-Translation Method and the Reading Method (Gorsuch, 1998; Hino, 1992; Jannuzi, 1994). Richards et al. (1985) define the Reading Method as one through which

(a) the foreign language is generally introduced through short passages written with simple vocabulary and structures,
(b) comprehension is taught through translation and grammatical analysis, and
(c) if the spoken language is taught, it is generally used to reinforce reading and limited to the oral reading of texts (pp. 238–239).

As an ALT, I was party to the execution of *yakudoku* often. Although I was allotted time for classroom games and enjoyed good working relationships with the Japanese teachers I taught with, I felt underutilized – a common complaint among ALTs in Japan (Amaki, 2008; Turnbull, 2018), who are sometimes relegated to a stereotypical role of "human tape-recorder" (Takeda, 2017). More than anything, I wanted to allow my students to try talking in English – any English at all – out from under the specter of the accuracy demanded by written tests. These tests are, namely, the entrance examinations to high schools and universities, and are a hallmark of East Asian education. The so-called "washback effect" (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Ingulsrud, 1994; Kwon, Lee, & Shin, 2017; McKinley & Thompson, 2018; Watanabe, 2000) of the way tests influence the way English lessons are carried out in pre-tertiary classrooms has been a subject of sustained research attention. Because entrance to higher-prestige schools in East Asia is competitive and because the entrance tests for these schools are almost exclusively written ones, it follows that schools' foremost responsibility is to help students achieve good scores on these tests. Fostering communicative ability, let alone promoting interest, must by nature remain a subordinate goal and, when or if it is achieved, its success remains incidental.

At university, however, where high-stakes tests are no longer an issue, there is a much better opportunity to focus on speaking, and on the experience of conversation. However, the majority of four-skills coursebooks that are marketed to general English classes at the university level, specifically for classes of so-called "beginner" or "introductory" levels of learners, are little more than a re-packaging of vocabulary and forms that students have encountered in middle school, and by extension, in high school as well. Thus, middle school texts are, in a sense, a predictor of four-skills coursebooks for lower-proficiency learners, arguably who make up the majority of learners in compulsory university courses, especially those without English departments or humanities-related majors.

As Thornbury (2016) observes, the ELT publishing industry not only reflects trends in classroom practices but also drives them. The commercial four-skills coursebooks geared toward this group of learners – more precisely, toward teachers of these learners – not only cater to this market but also help maintain a status-quo within it. They offer structure along with more opportunities for student–student interaction than what students encounter in middle school and therefore seem to promise a more communicative outcome. At the same time, however, they are solidly founded in the same structural syllabus that governs their pre-tertiary precursors, which the communicative language teaching (CLT) movement of the 1980s and 1990s sought to reverse; or at best, they are soundly predicated on the "weak" version (Howatt, 1984; Littlewood, 1981) of CLT, whereby the "mastery of linguistic systems is viewed as being a precondition for communication" (Thornbury, 2016, p. 229). As a result, they facilitate a belief system among university instructors that their students cannot and will not attempt communication without carefully measured instruction. Students, too, subscribe to this belief, and – doing exactly as they have been trained to do in the past – wait to be instructed in what exactly to say, how to say it, when to say it, and to deviate from what has been prescribed as little as possible.

Four-Skills Coursebooks for University EFL

Four-skills coursebooks for university EFL classes bill themselves as *the* item that will get students talking. Many feature the words "communication" (*Communication Spotlight* series by Abax), "talking" (*Keep Talking* by Kirihara Shoten, *Now You're Talking* by EFL Press, *Let's Talk* by Cambridge), or "conversation" (*Conversations in Class* by Alma) in their titles. Sometimes the first few pages of these coursebooks include explanations of their intent. For example, in a review of Book One of the *Fifty-Fifty* series for a first-year university EFL class in Korea, Jones (2009, p. 10) observes that "The authors of *Fifty-Fifty* address difficulties with large class sizes and 'student talking' time by promising meaningful exchanges during pair work and group work as well as 'realistic and manageable listening tasks' (Wilson & Barnard, 2007a, p. vi). The coursebook authors claim their listening and speaking tasks are 'designed to reduce learner anxiety and promote language acquisition via student participation in purposeful interaction' (p. vi)." Similarly, in a review of the same book for first-year EFL at a junior college in Japan, Miyamasu (1997) comments that "its emphasis on pair- and groupwork activities provides plenty of opportunity for learner-centered activities, training students to assume more responsibility for their own learning" (p. 174).

However, a sampling of unit structure in Book One of *Fifty-Fifty* finds little in terms of open-ended speaking tasks. Unit 1 of *Fifty-Fifty* Book One (2nd ed., 1998), titled "Can You Speak English" and focusing on abilities and using the "can you" structure, begins with a model conversation that is listened to and then rehearsed by students, who take turns as characters (Bernice and Andrew). The dialogue (Wilson & Barnard, 1998, p. 4) goes as follows:

Bernice:	Oh, hi. Are you the new guy?
Andrew:	Yes, I am. I started yesterday.
Bernice:	Do you know how to use a fax machine?
Andrew:	No, I don't. Sorry.
Bernice:	That's okay, I can show you. Can you use a computer?
Andrew:	Yeah, but only a little.
Bernice:	Oh. Well, I hear that you can speak four languages.

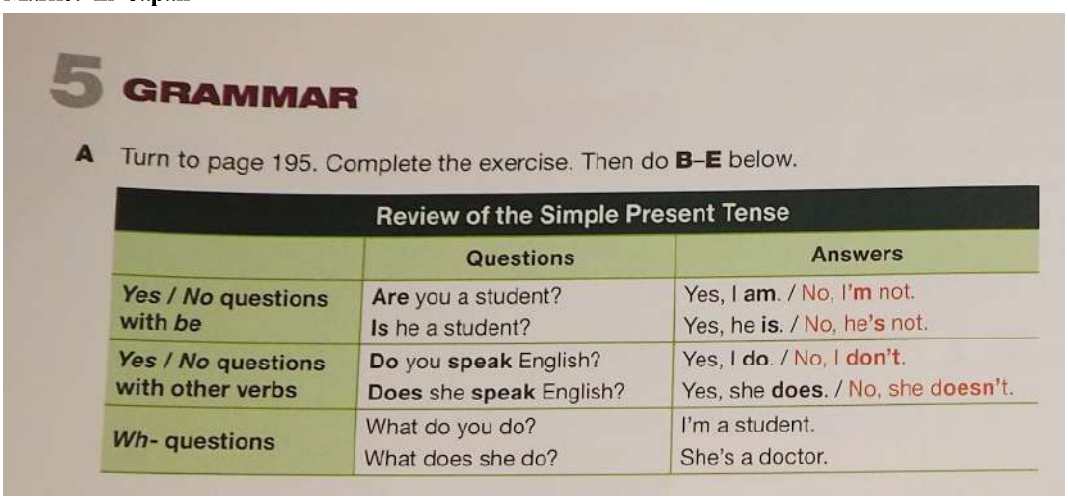
Andrew: Yeah, I can speak French, Greek, Hindi and Chinese. Oh, and English too.

The conversation is practiced several times, substituting other office items (color copier, cell phone, answering machine). Next, a listening task calls for students to listen to a dialogue and check boxes in a table, featuring images of various actions on the vertical and “DICK, DAD, MOM” on the horizontal, as to which things each character can do. Next is a speaking task, featuring images of Mary, Larry, Bob and Sue, and Student B alongside other images from the previous task, with blanks. Students ask each other what each can do (e.g., “Can Mary play the piano?”) and fill in the blanks with “yes,” “no,” or “a little.” Finally, a second speaking task is a find-someone-who exercise with various random questions. Students ask other students who can do what (e.g., say “thank you” in French, use a fax machine, play basketball) and fill in names in blanks next to the questions. The unit ends with this.

Unit 12 of *Fifty-Fifty* Book One (Wilson & Barnard, 2007, 3rd ed.), titled “About Tomorrow” and focusing on future plans using the “going to” structure, follows exactly the same pattern: model dialogue → listening task → speaking task 1 → speaking task two. Tasks consist of filling in blanks with responses to mostly closed-end questions (e.g., “Are you going to ~ ?”). The unit ends with a “language focus” table with various permutations of questions using the “going to” structure. Open discussion tasks are completely absent.

These language structures are essentially the same level as what Japanese middle-schoolers encounter in their first year. An example of a grammar point from Unit 1 of the Level 1 book in the *World Link* series (Douglas & Morgan, 2016, 3rd ed., p. 8) is given in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3. Unit 1 Grammar Pattern in a Popular Four-Skills Coursebook for the University EFL Market in Japan



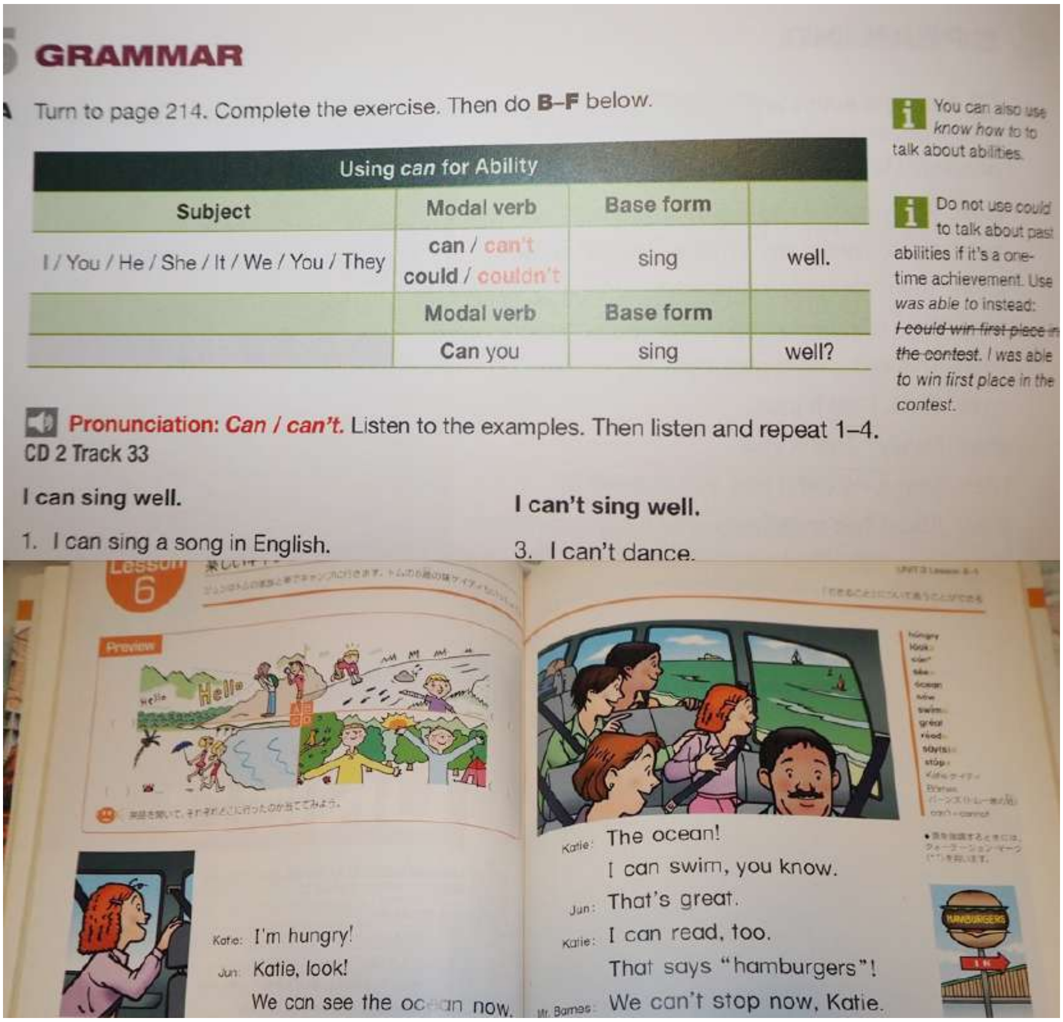
5 GRAMMAR

A Turn to page 195. Complete the exercise. Then do **B–E** below.

Review of the Simple Present Tense		
	Questions	Answers
Yes / No questions with *be*	**Are** you a student? **Is** he a student?	Yes, I **am**. / No, I**'m** not. Yes, he **is**. / No, he**'s** not.
Yes / No questions with other verbs	**Do** you **speak** English? **Does** she **speak** English?	Yes, I **do**. / No, I **don't**. Yes, she **does**. / No, she **doesn't**.
Wh- questions	What do you do? What does she do?	I'm a student. She's a doctor.

Unit 11 in the same coursebook treats the same pattern as appears in the first-year middle school textbook (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4. Contrast of University Coursebook with Middle School Textbook



Note. University coursebook (above), middle school textbook (below).

This is, literally, a textbook example of what Jack Richards commented on in his plenary speech at the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) Conference in 2011. He used the term "eternal false-beginner syndrome," whereby EFL learners in Japan learn and re-learn the same English in the same way, stating, "They get to university and they start all over again. So, they are starting with the basic-level English books when they get to university again." There is perhaps some irony in the fact that Dr. Richards was speaking from experience, having himself co-authored several series of coursebooks.

It is easy for university instructors to assume that students come to university wanting a chance to finally use the English they learned before university in speaking tasks. However, many instructors are faced with what Wiltshier and Helgesen (2019) have termed a "wall of silence." The tendency toward silence in the Japanese EFL classroom has been well noted in the literature (Harumi, 2011; King, 2011; Korst, 1997; Tamura, 2014). Some factors can be ascribed to fundamental differences in how East Asian and Western cultures approach interpersonal interaction, both inside and outside of the classroom. The culture of classrooms, as a subset of culture, is another oft-referenced factor. King (2013), for example, calls out the silencing effects of *yakudoku*, stating, “The only time many learners may be able to actually speak the language is during rigidly structured drill practices involving the repetition of sentences read out by the teacher. Thus, students are silenced not only in the pre-tertiary classroom but also, it would seem, in their later lives, as their generally poor English oral/aural skills are so greatly hindered by such archaic pedagogical practices (p. 73).” According to the literature, therefore, it is either the students’ nature or the classroom conditioning that they had been subjected to before university that engenders a tendency toward silence.

Wiltshier and Helgesen (2019) advocate coursebooks – if they are used – that “activate their previous knowledge” as well as activities that offer students “purposeful speaking practice” (p. 52). From what I have suggested, however, the basic structure of university EFL coursebooks seems not to activate previous knowledge but merely to re-hash it. If we consider, too, that university coursebooks feature language structures introduced in a middle school setting, it is likely students’ third encounter with the same language patterns. This time, they are not analyzing the structures through reading and translation, but they are given little more than an opportunity to utter patterns to one another.

Stronger CLT in University EFL

Murphy (2013a), who taught first- and second-year compulsory EFL classes at a Japanese university, catalogued his decision to abandon a four-skills coursebook in favor of a small-group discussion/debate activity setup that he had been using successfully in classes with much higher levels of proficiency and motivation. He compared the total speaking time and the number and length of pauses, and video-recorded with a digital camera in a set of group-conversation tests in two classes of roughly the same (lower) proficiency level. One class was based on a four-skills coursebook (*Fifty-Fifty*, Book Two, 3rd ed.) with conversation tests that were a rehearsal of a dialogue in the coursebook. The other class employed freestyle debate. In the latter, groups of students were given a topic that could be argued for or against. The rules were to keep the conversation going, to stay on subject, and to use only English. Results indicated longer speaking times and relatively fewer pauses in the free-discussion group compared with the coursebook group. He described this as a “less is best” versus “more is better” mentality: With the coursebook class, students avoided straying from the prescribed dialogue, as doing so would risk being marked down. With the free discussion class, the opposite was true: The more one participated in the conversation, the more points one could get. Murphy (2013a) also observed much higher levels of engagement among classes of students even with markedly low levels of proficiency. As a result, he abandoned use of the coursebook altogether the following year.

It is easy for instructors of compulsory university EFL classes to assume that students with lower levels of proficiency and motivation will do no more than the absolute minimums of what it takes to “complete” a speaking task. These frustrations are echoed in the literature on classroom silence in Japanese EFL classes at the tertiary level. As Snyder (2019) observes, however, this perception of students is more a matter of what teachers perceive as levels of engagement, rather than motivation, and that it is easier to address and improve the issue of engagement, which is directly observable, rather than motivation, which is not observable. He offers, too, the suggestion that many Japanese students have learned to become disengaged in their classrooms as a result of their pre-tertiary experience and that it is just as possible to re-engage these students.

Further, while Anderson (2019) acknowledges the results of recent studies, such as King's (2013), which revealed that less than 1% of talk was initiated by students, he reiterates a position he took 25 years earlier: "The question is not simply why Japanese do not talk in class, but rather, in what situations do they talk and why?" (Anderson, 1993, p. 102). While it has been noted that less proficient students may approach open-ended dialogues in a shallow way (Wiltshier & Helgesen, 2019), Murphy and I have observed that this is not at all a default, and that lower-proficiency students can, in fact, become highly engaged when presented open-ended discussions that do not, in the end, demand accuracy (Murphy, 2013b; Murphy & Rian, 2014; Rian, 2014, 2018, 2019). These students are, in fact, capable of generating unrehearsed dialogue. A collection of written test excerpts by students for a first-year compulsory EFL class that I teach at Hokkaido Information University (HIU), a small, non-prestigious IT-based university on the outskirts of Sapporo, are given in the Appendix. HIU has no humanities-related departments, and all students have an estimated TOEIC score averaging not higher than 300. I do not use a coursebook.

As is apparent, the language structure and vocabulary are highly deviant from what many teachers would demand – or perhaps would tolerate – from their students. This loosening of requirements for accuracy in favor of fluency is one of the tenets of a "strong" version of communicative language teaching (CLT) as proposed by Howatt (1984). This proposal underpins an earlier suggestion by Brumfit (1979) and Johnson (1982) to reverse the traditional P-P-P lesson structure (*present* new words and language forms, *practice* them, and then have students *produce* them in some kind of communicative activity), which is essentially the structure that four-skills coursebooks adhere to. Brumfit (1979) and Johnson (1982) advocated the production of language first, with presentation and/or practice following subsequently, and only as needed.

While this proposal would be unfeasible at the middle school level, opportunities are more plentiful at tertiary institutions. Not all English programs at all universities are amenable to affording teachers complete autonomy in teaching their language classes, as there may be pressure to establish cohesion among teachers and teaching materials, in order to address issues of reliability and uniformity that administrators (and even other teachers) demand. This is where a common coursebook appeals to a sense of cohesion, collaboration, and commonality.

The problem is when teachers buy too unquestioningly into the promise of coursebooks to get their students to engage in communicative acts in class. The reality, as Thornbury (2013) points out, is that the EFL publishing market is simply continuing its "endless reproduction of what is essentially the same grammar syllabus in coursebook after coursebook" (p. 216) as part of a "commodification" of language learning, or the act of "grafting a communicative 'veneer' on to what has remained basically language-focused stock" (Waters, 2011, as cited in Thornbury, 2016, p. 233). The P-P-P sequence is still glaringly evident in many of the commercial texts available for the Japanese university market. Only at the very end of a coursebook unit, if at all, do exercises that call for unscripted discussion appear. As an example, at the very bottom of Unit 11 on "can/can't" (see Figure 4), the following instructions appear: "What is something you can do now but couldn't do in the past? How did you learn it? Discuss it with your group." Instructors teaching with this text would often comment that their classes would get into groups and just sit there, uttering a few words but then falling silent, and simply waiting for the teacher to move the class on to the next task.

The result is, as Murphy (2013a) opined in his advocacy for a revisiting of Howatt's (1984) "strong CLT," that in a coursebook-based class, a "less talk is best" philosophy applies. Students have been taught, from middle school at the latest, to absorb and regurgitate vocabulary and native speaker-based language forms. Partially as a result of test washback and old-fashioned teaching methods and materials, they may have little speaking experience; when faced with demands for accuracy, there is little or no incentive for them to take risks by making errors. That is what much of their classroom experience has taught them. Conversely, in an open discussion-based class, necessitating negotiation of meaning where meaning – and when necessary, its negotiation – are paramount while accuracy requirements are significantly relaxed, the philosophy of "more talk is better" becomes enticing.

Conclusion: To Coursebook or Not to Coursebook

The lesson that instructors can learn from coursebooks is an elementary one: to maintain an awareness of how they are structured and for what purpose. Coursebooks adhere to a philosophy of language learning that appeals enormously to common sense: that language classes must follow a step-by-step sequence that accommodates the lowest common denominator of linguistic ability in any given class. Wilkins (1976) called this view of language learning a synthetic one, whereby "different parts of the language are taught separately and step by step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of pairs until the whole structure of language has been built up" (p. 2). These syllabi have been referred to as structural, grammatical, and linguistic syllabi. Four-skills coursebooks feature contexts and situations in which people communicate (notions, e.g., at a restaurant, in a shopping mall) and focus on how people communicate in these situations (functions, e.g., greetings, apologizing, giving opinions). The notional/functional syllabus seems to promise communicativeness, but as Ellis (2003) observes, a "'notional/functional approach' is still essentially a linguistic syllabus, as it still involves specifying the linguistic content to be taught, and it is still essentially interventionist and external to the learner" (p. 207). He also points out, however, that in terms of course design, it may be easier to predict what notions and functions a learner may need rather than what linguistic structures they may need.

The reality is that four-skills coursebooks for the university market, as much as they promise to get students talking in class, are not much less structurally or grammatically oriented than the middle school textbooks that precede them in the pre-tertiary EFL careers of students. Arguably, the more one reviews these structures for accuracy, the less incentive there is for students to risk deviating from what is being asked of them, or to engage in spontaneous or unscripted (unprescribed) talk. O'Neill (1982), while discussing some of the merits of textbook use, at the same time cautions:

> Since language is an instrument for generating what people need and want to say spontaneously, a great deal must depend on spontaneous, creative interaction in the classroom. Textbooks can help to bring this about, and a great deal in their design can be improved in order to do this. If that creative interaction does not occur, textbooks are simply pages of dead, inert written symbols, and teaching is no more than a symbolic ritual, devoid of any real significance for what is going on outside the classroom. (p. 111)

The lesson, then, is for coursebook users who want their students to talk in English in class to realize that coursebooks can only provide so much. The open-ended conversation tasks that coursebooks tend to lack are not writers' oversight. They are simply where coursebooks leave off. Unfortunately, in some cases instructors neglect open-ended tasks because coursebooks do not include them. This is, ultimately, a teacher oversight, and it is one of the reasons coursebooks can be said to hinder the very creativity that they claim to provide the linguistic building blocks for.

There are alternatives, too, for instructors to depart from coursebook use entirely. For example, a short, provocative article by Thornbury (2000) argues for a Dogme approach to teaching, using sparse materials and as much free-form, student-guided communication as possible. A follow-up volume titled *Teaching Unplugged* (Meddings & Thornbury, 2009) is filled with Dogme-based classroom ideas.

The other point I wish to underscore is that, through my own experience in particular (see Rian, 2014, 2018, 2019), the claims that lower-proficiency East Asian university students will not talk in class, offer opinions, or engage in speaking activities is, summarily, bunk. Four-skills "general English" coursebooks are in essence a third iteration of the same linguistic prescriptions that students have encountered before. Coursebook structure follows a P-P-P sequence. The first P could just as well stand for "prescribe" as it does "present," and the subsequent "produce" includes mostly closed-ended tasks. As the student-written excerpts in the Appendix suggest, collectively even so-called lower-proficiency students have a collective comprehension of enough vocabulary and language structure to cobble together coherent messages in open-ended conversations, if allowed an environment and grading criteria that provide the incentive and the encouragement to do so, by promoting fluency over the accuracy that coursebook use tends to hew students' utterances to.

It is also a question of how instructors choose to perceive the experience and the goal of the so-called four-skills EFL classroom. Is it, as the structure of four-skill coursebooks seems to suggest, a place where a set of vocabulary and sentence structures are introduced (or re-re-re-introduced!) and rehearsed, with open-ended conversation occurring only afterward and/or incidentally? Or, can it also be a place where open-ended communication using whatever language is available is put first, eliciting what students may already know (but that their instructor may not know they know)? The answer to this question does not lie in the categorical rejection of coursebooks. Rather, it lies in instructors' maintaining an awareness that coursebooks are unlikely to live up to their promises to foster spontaneous and creative language use in class if they are used as step-by-step manuals. This awareness is the best prescription for remedying the age-old fallacy that East Asian classrooms must be, by some inalterable nature, quiet spaces.

The Author

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APPENDIX

Excerpts from 20-Minute Writing Tests (2017)

A: I think video games are ☑ useful. ☐ not useful.
B: Oh really? I think video games are not useful.
つづき
A: why
B: Because, videogames are very hard
A: But, videogames are stlessfree.
B: I don't think so. for example, if you lose. You have stless. G Ans
A: Really? I don't think so. If i lose. I think why lose.
G Ans

A: why?
B: game is fun! for example FPS.
A: FPS?
B: FPS is enemy kill game.
A: Kids playing not bad. YM, bad?
B: many game play is old rimmit. G Ans 20 y.o. restricted
For example FPS to twenty rimmit.
Pokemon to free old rimmit.
A: You favorite game?
B: my favorite game is mario cart!
castamize cart have many item useful
victory is best fun!
A: Akibahara in real mario cart waching. i Really?
her bery fun
B: real world is banana No srip!
A:

A: I think video games are ☐ useful. ☑ not useful.
B: Oh really? I think video games usuful.
つづき
A: why?
B: image power up by video games.
A. But video games don't study time.
B. recenty There is study games. G Ans
A. WoW... forexmple.
B. math traning games and brain traning games etc...
A. I see But video game is see power down.
B. solve the see power down by eye drug.
A. might lost money.
B. There is eyetraning.
A. anyway! video games are not usuful.
B. why? plase tell me reason.
A. recently chaild is real world and fantasy world line mix
and don't understand.
B. oh... I see dut might don't teach real world and
fantasy world line by Pearent. G Ans
A. I see dut video game makes me tired.

A: I think university English classes ☐ should ☑ shouldn't be mandatory.
B: Oh really? I think English classes good.
つづき A: English class is boring.
B: But, boring is teacher or classes? GQ
A: ummm..... Maybe teacher.
B: Does your teacher ~~play~~ do?
A: Long time talking only.
B: Ah... That's OK.
A: I think English classes difficult!
B: why? You speak English now?
A: No, I speak English is low quality
B: But I think You speak English well.
A: No, American speaks English is very cool. I speaks English is easy.

A: Well... soso.
B: It's good.
A: why?
B: You can speak. soso, ~~v~~ very well, It's all can speak.
A: But, I can't true speak. May be American need true talk.
B: I don't think. American need interesting talk. soso, OK. Very well, good. not well, All lish

A: I think university English classes ☑ should ☐ shouldn't be mandatory.
B: Oh really? I think university English classes shouldn't be mandatory.
つづき A: Why you think so?
B: Because many English teachers' classes are boring. Teacher, talking student, writing. talking writing talk write talk write... it's not fun and I can't understand. GEx
A: Ahh. I like writeing. It not boring for me. But you think writing is boring.
B: Yes, I want to enjoy class. I want to choose teacher.
A: That's nice idea. But why you think English classes shouldn't be mandatory? You don't say answer. You said "I want to enjoy class". GAns!!
B: Oh sorry. Because I'm living in Japan. Why I have to study English? I don't use English.
GQ
A: Japan is becoming grobal world. Foreiner workers number is increasing. Maybe, They can't use Japanese, but they can use English. American can use English. Chinese can use English. Corian can use English. Japanes? can't use English? how to comunicate? So we must use English and study English.
B: But many of Japanese companys are only Japanese workers. GA
A: It is now situation. In future, those company will be decrees. maybe
B: Maybe?
A: I'm not time traveler. I do not know future!
B: Sorry man

Better Together: Leveraging Group Dynamics in Conversational English Classes

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Group speaking tasks in conversational English classes are common for adult learners. While some groups get along well from the beginning, others struggle with achieving their purpose. One key element for success is group dynamics, which refers to the ways in which individuals with diverse personal and social identities interact within and between groups. For learning to occur in groups, learners must feel a certain sense of belonging and identification with their group. Teachers can be intentional about supporting groups to form a positive community that stimulate speaking interaction and learning. This paper will explore the nature of group dynamics in the conversational English class for adult learners and ways to leverage different group dynamics to elicit conversation. Suggestions for task design are described that prompt reflection on group size, task type, repeated interaction, sources of power, diversity of voices, and leadership styles that aid healthy group formation processes.

INTRODUCTION

Class hadn't even started yet, but the students who had arrived had already switched their conversations into English and were deeply engaged in a discussion about the latest film that everyone had to see. One student hadn't yet, and jokingly begged "please, no telling the end, no telling the end!" while the others laughed good-naturedly. How was it that this group of first-year university students in a remedial conversation English program got to this point of enjoying chatting in English?

This was one of the 16 conversational English classes I recently taught that were designed identically. I was to teach the same content, lead the same activities and use the same materials to help learners to reach the same goals of conversational fluency in English. The classes had the same range of student backgrounds, the same mix of proficiency levels, but some of the classes were considerably more successful than others in achieving their English conversation goals. How could this be? While there could be differences attributed to individual personalities or the time of day of the class, the only significant variable that I observed that could make such an impact on their language learning was group dynamics. Interaction among students in each class differed significantly, as did the level of comfort and connection students had with others. This experience demonstrated clearly that positive group dynamics are a pivotal element for teachers and learners to leverage in maximizing language learning in conversational English classes.

DEFINING GROUPS IN ELT

Groups, as referred to in this paper, are not just a collection of isolated individuals but more like teams in that they are working toward a common goal or purpose. A group is a new entity that exerts an influencing force on members' behaviors, attitudes, and values; in essence, a group creates its own culture. The group culture that forms is related to the norms that emerge through the group members' interaction and their responses to following or going against the norms. Once a group fully forms, it can create the context for synergy that produces more effective and efficient work than what can be done by individual members working separately. This is particularly true in the language classroom. Language itself is a social process that is designed for interaction among people. Learning occurs best in healthy groups as people cannot learn when they feel isolated or anxious as our fight and flight systems kick in and take over our cognitive-emotive processes (Willis, 2014) It is when learners feel a sense of safety and belonging that the stress of language learning can be a motivating and productive factor rather than a detractor. As ELT teachers seeking to help our learners achieve their language learning proficiency goals for conversation, it is in our interest to have healthy functioning groups in our classrooms.

Reasons Groups Develop

While every class consists of potential members of a group, and teachers can try to create groups by directing them to work together, a collection of individuals becomes the new entity of a group with a unique set of norms and related dynamics because of at least one of the following situations (McMillan & Barnett, 2020): (a) A group can develop when people are physically close to one another frequently, such as meeting regularly for a language class. There, they interact with each other and develop common connections and feelings. (b) Groups also develop when they have common attitudes and values and want to keep this commonality balanced. This is less common in an English language learning setting, particularly in ESL settings with people from a variety of backgrounds in the class, but through conversation, people can find common attitudes and values to build on. (c) Another reason for group development is that members feel they can gain something from the exchange. The English classroom can maximize this if learners see classmates as potential sources and supports to reach their language goals. (d) Finally, groups develop because they feel secure to share of themselves and grow together. This is where careful facilitation and planning in the language class can support learners to develop a strong group.

Levels of Group Function

According to Glasl and Ballreich (2004), there are five levels of teamwork that need to be aligned for groups to work together in healthy ways, meaning dealing with conflict constructively and functioning to achieve the purpose of the group. The first is at the individual level. Each group member needs to function in terms of their own individual personalities, including their "perceptions, concepts and ideas, emotions, intentions, and behaviors" (Glasl & Ballreich, 2004). That is, each group member needs to have the capacity to deal with any conflict in the group and contribute effectively to achieving the group's purpose. Secondly, the level of content or issues needs to find alignment in the group. This is a matter of negotiating meaning using language, communicating ideas clearly and using different modes of dialogue or debate effectively. The third level is the psychosocial level of interaction, referring to the attitudes and quality of relationship between group members, as well as the emerging culture, roles, and patterns of behavior in the group. Fourth, the procedural level includes ways that groups solve problems together and makes decisions about process. Often conflict arises at this level and how the group responds can affect the sustainability of the group. The final level is external group relations, which includes how the group relates to the larger context, who represents the group to others, and how that representation happens. All five of these levels require rich language skills, which makes it particularly challenging for groups to form well in the ELT context without external support. However, with intention as well as scaffolded structure for groups to rely on built into the language tasks, healthy groups form, and learners can develop language skills in English that they may never have had the opportunity to develop in other English conversation class settings.

Group Dynamics in ELT

Teachers can facilitate positive group dynamics by learning and understanding the factors that affect group dynamics and subsequently considering them carefully when planning language speaking tasks in the classroom. Below are seven key elements that come up frequently in English conversation classes that teachers can observe and consider in task design.

Stages of Formation

Tuckman's (1977) model of stages of formation has been influential in group dynamics theory, stating that groups grow through cycles of forming (getting to know each other), storming (experiencing conflict and difference), norming (creating new patterns of behavior for the group that take differences into account), performing (functioning most efficiently to achieve the group's purpose), and adjourning (preparing to dismantle the group or reforming for a new purpose). Observing learners in their groups, teachers can note where the groups might be in the formation cycle and provide appropriate support. For example, forming would require more time for getting-to-know-you tasks. Storming could benefit from learning language for conflict resolution in English. Norming and performing could be the stages when a group would respond well to a challenging language task. Finally, adjourning could be an opportunity to learn language for farewell and wrapping-up with a group.

Group Size

The number of members in the group can greatly affect group dynamics. Depending on the purpose of the group, teachers can direct learners to create groups of the optimal size for the task and recognize the affective or emotional component that is a character of that size. For example, when the class is getting to know each other and strong groups or teams have not yet formed, dividing groups into pairs or triads can both maximize a sense of safety and promote active cooperation. Once teams are at a performing stage, groups of four to six can be more effective in achieving synergy to complete a creative or problem-solving task.

Task Type

Related to the content level of group function, the task type could be varied according to the needs of the group. Group tasks are generally either competitive or collaborative. However, for groups that have not yet gotten acquainted, competition within the group may actually work against their efforts to come together (Liu et al., 2014). Competition between groups is a frequently used solution for this to build cooperation and trust within the group, but even intergroup competition can backfire when groups are not ready. The pressure can result in conflict at the interaction level, which can be an obstacle for relationship-building that is required to be able to perform. While competition is not always negative, collaborative and cooperative tasks may be more effective until groups are functioning well. From a language perspective, competition usually requires communication in debate mode, while collaboration uses dialogue mode. Both modes are important to learn in English, but focusing on cooperative tasks gives learners the opportunity to strengthen more broadly applicable dialogue skills before adding the more specialized skills of debate. When groups have both language skill sets, they should be able to switch communication modes depending on the need of the context without confusion or misunderstanding.

Repeated Interaction

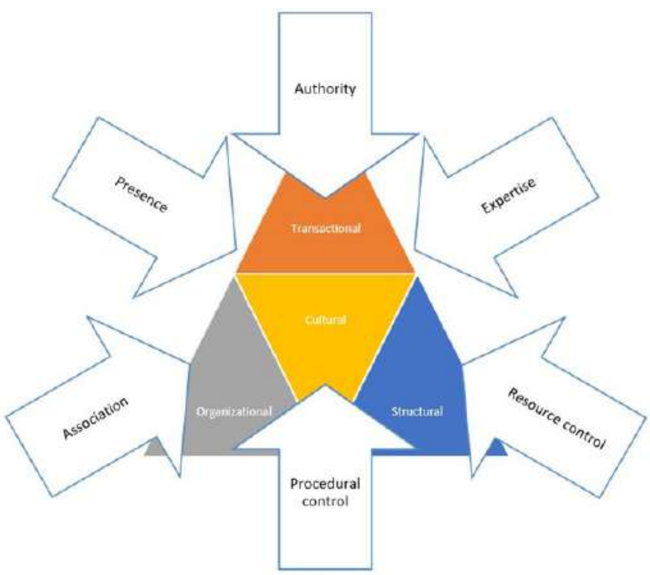
Particularly in large conversation classes, such as the ones described in the Introduction, it is difficult for students to get to know all their classmates well. While for some speaking tasks it may be beneficial to talk to as many people as possible for language repetition, group formation benefits from repeated interaction with the same groups of people. To maximize both purposes, grouping cards can be used. For example, I created a set of grouping cards, each with an animal of a different color, a letter, and a number. Each grouping was strategically arranged for students to meet with different people, such as grouping by similar proficiency level with the same animal, different proficiency level with color, pairs with number, and larger groups by letter. Depending on the task, I could call out which grouping to use and learners would know who they were going to interact with. If we needed variety in the conversation, we could easily switch groups. The grouping cards gave learners both the opportunity for repeated interaction with familiar faces with whom their language skills could be practiced in more depth, and the variety of interaction that fluency in language also requires. Using grouping intentionally is one effective way for teachers to support the development of healthy group dynamics in larger classes.

Sources of Power

An essential element of facilitating healthy group dynamics is observing the use of power in groups. When individual members of the group feel disempowered, they disengage from the group work or try to disrupt processes to gain a sense of power. The key is to pay attention to what sources of power groups have as a whole and what each group member has access to in order to help them use their power in ways that support the purpose of the group.

Generally, people often think of power as authority for decision-making. However, there are many sources of power and different domains on which the power can be used. It is important to recognize that power in group dynamics is a force of influence between people, not a limited resource that needs to be distributed (Dormer & Woelk, 2018). This means that all group members can find empowerment from multiple different sources and on different domains to maximize the function of the group. As shown in Figure 1, different sources of power can be accessed by different members of the group. Some group members may direct the process, others might have access to knowledge or ability (i.e. higher English proficiency), or connections to other members of other groups. The different domains certainly overlap in a classroom setting, and structural power is largely limited by the context of the educational setting, but within the organization of the class, the culture of the group, and the transactions that take place during the task, there can be many opportunities to access power. Teachers can design tasks to make sure that each group member always has some source of power on some domain. For example, one person can be in charge of getting supplies, another can facilitate the discussion, another is responsible for asking questions to other groups and bringing information back, and others could be supporting the group to work through conflict in ways they have decided on. Empowered learners are free to let go of power struggles and focus their energy on learning.

FIGURE 1. A Sources and Domains of Power



Diversity of Voices

Related to power, it is important for each group to have space for diverse voices in its work. While every large group contains those who are part of the mainstream (centered voices) and those who are on the margins (non-centered voices), healthy group dynamics make space for members to move back and forth between mainstream and margins depending on the needs of the individual and the group (Lakey, 2010). One way teachers can support this is using tools such as *circle processes* (Pranis, 2005), in which everyone sits in a circle and each person gets a chance to speak on the same topic without interruption, or *class meetings* (Styles, 2001), in which the group regularly holds a structured meeting in which all voices have a place. Using nonverbal methods of communication can also help with providing space for multiple voices. This is particularly important in conversational English classes. While personalities differ and some people are naturally more talkative than others, all learners should have the opportunity to practice their speaking and have space for their voice.

Leadership Styles

Leadership always emerges in groups, and often group members expect those who naturally tend toward leadership to continue to take the lead in any situation. However, in language learning, learners need to have opportunities to learn language used for multiple different roles in the group process. Exchanging and experimenting with different roles is also an excellent way to build trust and create transparency around the procedural and interaction levels of teamwork. Teachers can scaffold the use of Group Role cards (Dormer & Woelk, 2018) to help learners try out different roles. Group members can be given cards randomly, strategically, choose their own card or pick a card from the middle of the table and put it back based on the need of the group. Transparency with group roles and leadership is an excellent way to build cooperation skills and strengthen healthy group dynamics.

Conclusion

Paying attention to group dynamics in the English conversation class in these ways can be a good start in supporting learners to build effective groups that help them to achieve their language learning goals. As I worked at implementing these ideas in my university setting, some classes succeeded more than others. This shows that group dynamics are not ultimately the responsibility of the teacher but are co-created with effort from everyone in the class. With intention and some information about how groups work, teachers and learners can play at leveraging group dynamics to build a healthy learning community for communicating in English. We really are better together!

The Author

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Mapping CLIL Methodology from a Sociocultural Perspective

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This paper examines teaching methodology with respect to Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in foreign language learning contexts. CLIL, broadly including bilingual education, immersion programs, and Content-Based Instruction, receives positive appraisal in the field of second language acquisition (SLA). The author examines major CLIL methodologies adapting SLA theories proposed by distinguished practitioners such as Coyle et al. (2010), Ball et al. (2015), and others, and proposes an instructional framework, adopting two distinct theoretical perspectives: one from SLA theories, which include the Input-Interaction-Output Model (Gass, 1997) and Task-Based Language Teaching (Ellis, 2009); the other is from a sociocultural perspective, which includes the theoretical concepts of mediation, internalization, and transformation. The author suggests adopting SLA theoretical perspectives and a sociocultural perspective that include the aforementioned three stages proposed by Vygotsky (1978).

INTRODUCTION

Teaching second and foreign language (L2 and FL, respectively) using subject content has gained popularity in North America, European countries, and other countries, and for the past decades, the methodologies have been actively explored. It is widely admitted that learning academic content places an additional psychological burden on L2 learners, whose emergent language is still in the process of developing. Therefore, many of those methodologies commonly adopt pedagogical techniques to make content easier for learners with limited linguistic capacity, namely *scaffolding*. The term is defined by prominent scholars in social psychology such as Bruner and Vygotsky, and the instructional strategy is echoed by many CLIL practitioners (Ball et al., 2015; Coyle et al., 2010).

Scholars from the sociocultural camp also address the primary role of scaffolding in the course of development; however, in addition to this, they commonly argue the differences between learning and development. For example, Wood et al. (1976) observed an experiment on how children completed a problem-solving task and discovered that children gained their problem-solving skills only after learning the steps to complete the task after a series of teacher scaffolds. They claim that learning how to solve the task preceded the development. Vygotsky (1976) as well, claims that there are three stages in the course of development, namely, mediation, internalization, and transformation. At the final stage, children can transform their learned knowledge into their independent knowledge base so that it allows them to perform tasks independently. Sociocultural theorists argue that any development should be indicative of transformation of their learned knowledge. This assumption, the relationship between learning and development from a sociocultural perspective, has contributed significantly to designing curricula and methodologies in the educational field.

The purpose of this paper is to suggest possible ways to design CLIL methodologies by fusing Vygotskyan perspectives with current methodologies based on theories from SLA. In the first section that follows, I will review past research on CLIL in global educational contexts. Then, I will review established pedagogical techniques from SLA theories. Finally, I will describe a Vygotskyan perspective and its theoretical base.

PRACTICE OF CLIL

The Rise of CLIL Approaches

Learning L2/FL through content completely differs from traditional grammar-centered language learning. Researchers have warned that learning at the structural level of language, such as analyzing and labeling grammatical items, could give students false assumptions that learning is to memorize and analyze complex linguistic rules and formulaic language (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Learning language this way, on the surface, structural level, without grasping the core concepts, is unlikely to yield crucial skills in the long-run, as Bruner (1960) warned below:

> Teaching specific topics or skills without making clear their context in the broader fundamental structure of a field of knowledge is *uneconomical*. Such teaching makes it exceedingly difficult for the student to generalize from what he has learned to what he will encounter later. In the second place, [such] learning ... has little reward in terms of intellectual excitement. ... Third, knowledge one has acquired without sufficient structure to tie it together is knowledge that is likely to be *forgotten*. An unconnected set of facts has a pitiably short half-life in memory. (p. 31, italics added)

Since the rise of CLIL, its rationale has been accepted and adopted widely around the world for different reasons. One arises from societal demands, particularly in countries where more than one language is spoken. The countries adopt another language as a vehicular language to teach some subjects. For example, some counties in Sub-Saharan Africa where multiple distinct languages are spoken, adopt CLIL for junior and high schools under a national curriculum. The other reason arises from proactive needs, that is, to enhance linguistic capabilities. For example, the European Council recommended the adoption of CLIL throughout the entire European Union in 1994 and implemented it afterward. CLIL – L2 immersed programs – have swiftly spread in European countries for the purpose of enhancing educational outcomes (Coyle et al., 2010). Around the world, CLIL programs are commonly adopted in junior high and high school settings, and implemented in one or two academic subjects in an additional language, for example, in Argentina, Africa, China, Malaysia, and Europe (Ball et al., 2015; Coyle et al., 2010; Genesee & Hamayan, 2016).

Generally, in FL learning contexts, students enter CLIL programs when they have attained a threshold level in their L2 skills as well as cognitive maturity in their L1. It is because these two elements, namely, basic L2 and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in their L1, are considered valuable resources for them to make content comprehensible. To this end, teachers occasionally shift the medium of instruction from the students' L2 to their L1 to support conceptual learning. Thus, the amount of L2 used during instruction varies depending on the students' L2 level. The ultimate goals are to advance students' academic competence and their L2 proficiency simultaneously (Ball et al., 2015; Coyle et al., 2010; Genesee & Hamayan, 2016).

CLIL Pedagogies and SLA Theories

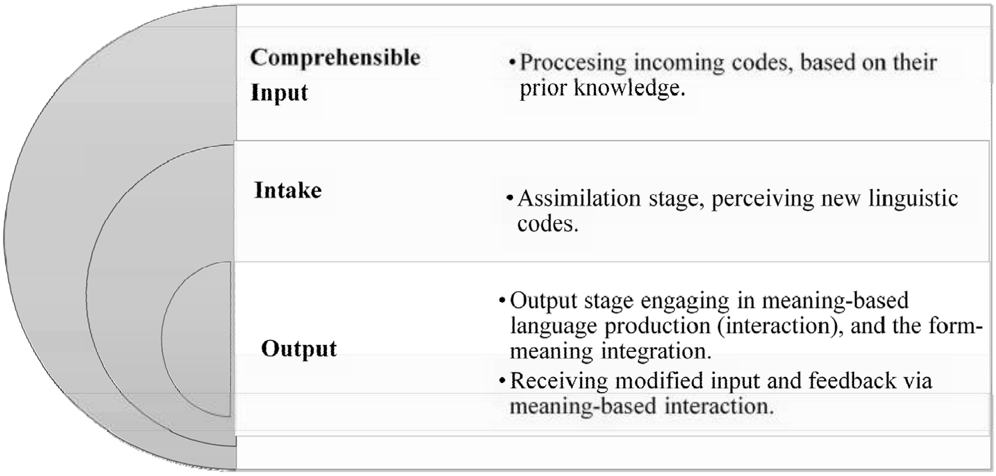
Learning subject matter and linguistic knowledge is considered equally important in CLIL pedagogies in that the target language is a chief means for learning concepts and subject matter (Lyster, 2007; Swain, 1988). In general, CLIL subjects are taught by the subject teacher and/or language teacher, and students access the subject content while cognitively engaging in deeper levels of thinking. Metalinguistic elements, such as vocabulary and forms, are explicitly addressed from time to time as needed to connect linguistic forms to the content. With regard to instructional approaches, established theories of SLA are often integrated into the teaching, offering solid practical building blocks for designing CLIL programs. In the following section, among these, I will describe the Input–Interaction–Output Hypothesis and task-based language learning.

Input, Interaction, and Output

In the late 1960s, successful L2 attainment by students attending French immersion programs in Canada drew attention, and many researchers sought out reasons for its success. Soon, it became acknowledged that the success was attributable to the huge amount of comprehensible input that they received in the programs (Swain & Lapkin, 2005). SLA researchers explained the students' almost native-like listening and reading skills from Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis: Language acquisition can be accelerated through exposure to the L2 when it is finely tuned to the students' current linguistic level (i +1). Currently, researchers still agree that providing linguistic input in L2 is a prerequisite condition for L2 learning.

Interaction, or meaning-based interaction, put together with output, has been quite dominantly applied to not only teaching but also research methodology (see Block, 2003 for an explanation of the Input-Interaction-Output model). Gass (1997) formulated the theoretical basis of the Input–Interaction–Output (IIO) model, combining Krashen's comprehensible Input Hypothesis with Swain's Output Hypothesis model to form a complete developmental loop (as cited in Block, 2003). The model illustrated in Figure 1 encapsulates the entire loop of input, intake, and output.

FIGURE 1. IIO Model of Acquisition Process (adapted from Block, 2003)



Gass states that learners' inherent prior linguistic knowledge base plays a significant role during the comprehensible input and intake stages. Learners' prior linguistic resources enable them to comprehend data; then, the codes begin to be assimilated into the learner's existing knowledge to structure a new linguistic knowledge base. In the output stage, learners formulate L2 texts to express creative meaning from their available linguistic resources, either from their knowledge base or external resources, through which the meaning is aligned with forms and through which the learner undergoes the process of hypothesis formation, hypothesis testing, and confirmation of their linguistic expression. The output allows the learner to engage in meaning-oriented language production, through which they interact with their interlocutors. In addition, during the interaction, the learner can receive further modified linguistic input or feedback from the interlocutor. The entire process, involving input, interaction, and output, can shift learners' attention to linguistic forms while engaging in meaning-oriented language production. The model has been adopted to FL/L2 pedagogies for some decades.

Task-Based Language Learning

Generally, there are two types of tasks, namely real-world tasks and pedagogical tasks. CLIL programs usually utilize pedagogical tasks, which are typically designed to increase learning outcomes and bring about real experience attached to the task. Characteristics of pedagogical tasks can be defined as follows (Ellis, 2009):

1. Tasks should be primarily meaning-focused.
2. Tasks should require learners to negotiate or communicate to accomplish the goals specified in the task.
3. There should be clear outcomes in terms of linguistic or non-linguistic outcomes.
4. There should be some "gap" between the participants so that it creates a need to convey information or to express an opinion.

5. Linguistic elements can be explicitly addressed or practiced during the pre- or post-task activities.

Tasks can be incorporated into content teaching in a variety of ways to bring about a meaningful learner experience during the input, interaction, and output stages. For example, problem-solving tasks (e.g., listing problems regarding energy production), opinion tasks (e.g., expressing and exchanging personal opinions, thereby forming better opinions), building physical objects, and the list goes on. Figure 2 illustrates a reading task during which students read the text and record the sentence according to the content. Tasks are an important strategy because they can provide learners with tangible experience to use the target language meaningfully.

FIGURE 2. Reading Task: Biofabrication (adapted from Bohlke, 2016)

Leather from a lab

The global leather industry kills over a billion animals every year. This has caused many to ask the question: Is it possible to meet the global demand of leather but not do any harm to animals? A process called biofabrication may be the answer. But how exactly does biofabrication work? To grow leather, scientists begin by taking some cells from an animal, not hurting the animal in any way. They then isolate the cells and grow them in a lab. This process takes millions of cells and expands them into billions. Next, the scientists take the cells and spread them out to form thin sheets. These thin sheets are then layered to combine into thicker sheets. After that, the scientists can tan the hide. Anyone can then dye and finish the leather and design it in any way they like—into bags, watches, or shoes.

Study the above text, then order the sentences to describe how leather is produced.

Scientists take cells from an animal.	*Scientists spread the cells and form thin sheets.*
Scientists grow the cells in a lab.	*Scientists can tan the hide*
The thin sheets are layered.	*Thicker sheets are formed.*
The leather can by dyed and finished.	*The leather is made into different products.*

Sociocultural Perspectives

Capturing Conceptual Knowledge

For sociocultural theorists, the major premise is that development involves internal, psychological transformation processes. Vygotsky (1978) claims that as humans grow and their cognitive capacity matures, they become capable of planning a course of action to solve complex problems, utilizing their abstract thinking skills. For Vygotsky, learning can have more impact when one learns to capture conceptual knowledge than to recall or memorize rule-governed, form-based textual features, as he states below:

> For the adolescent, to recall means to think. Her memory is so "logicalized" that remembering is reduced to establishing and finding logical relations.... This logicalization is indicative of how relations among cognitive functions change in the course of development. At the transitional age, all ideas and concepts, all mental structures, cease to be organized according to family types and become organized as abstract concepts. (p. 51, quotation marks in original)

Vygotsky (1978) explains how language mediates our thinking. Mediation is a process through which humans form a new psychological state of mind as a result of comprehending the concepts in the external world. New knowledge can be formed by first engaging in activities or by operating tools and signs in the external world; tools are external objects that direct or control our activities, and signs refer to symbolic representations. He states that both are intrinsically linked to one another, and humans use tools and signs to solve psychological problems, such as remembering, comparing and choosing something, and so forth (Swain et al., 2011). For Vygotsky, language cannot be learned independently of concepts and interactions with the surrounding social environment.

Scaffolding and the Zone of Proximal Development

Scaffolding is widely used in educational fields to provide learners with various forms of aid to complete a range of learning tasks or particular goals. Scaffolding can be provided via various mediums, for example, *visually* presenting content, *aurally* rephrasing key words, and *rewording* into easier words. Whichever way it is done, the purpose is to provide easier access to the concept and keep the task demands at a manageable level for the learners (Wood et al., 1976).

Vygotsky (1978) postulates three stages of the developmental cycle over the course of learning, namely mediation, internalization, and transformation stages. For him, learning undergoes evolving processes, in which the learner reaches advanced states of mind at each stage. He states that any learning that occurs happens first in the external world while interacting with others and engaging in activities. Then, through the process of interacting with the external world, the learning goes *inward*, internalizing the concept deeply. Speech acts – communicating with others – facilitate internalization processes (i.e., comprehending meaning). Vygotsky posited that development is a transformational process from the interpersonal plane, by interacting with surrounding social environments, to the intrapersonal plane, which goes inwards to our mind:

> Signs and words serve children first and foremost as a means of social contact with other people. The cognitive and communicative functions of language then become the basis of a new and superior form of activity in children, distinguishing them from animals. (p. 28)

> Development, as often happens, proceeds here not in a circle but in a spiral, passing through the same point at each *new revolution* while advancing to a higher level. (p. 56, italics added) ... The internalization of cultural forms of behavior involves the reconstruction of psychological activity on the basis of sign operation. (p. 57)

Unlike cognitive accounts of the Input–Interaction–Output (IIO) model, the sociocultural theory view is that learners go through pivotal stages, and at each stage, they transform their knowledge to form a new psychological mind. At each transformational stage, learners pass through the Zone of Proximal Development, the potential learning zone. Researchers suggest that teachers should play an active role in creating this potential learning zone by helping them interact with signs and concepts and with others so that the learning goes to the internal mind of the learner (Lantolf, 2011). Figure 3 illustrates an instructional model of CLIL pedagogy integrating a sociocultural perspective, the IIO model, and task-based learning, and in each of the three stages, instructional frameworks are outlined.

FIGURE 3. Mapping Instructions from a Sociocultural Perspective

Concept learning: Mediational stage	**Scaffolding**: Making content accessible and easier to the learner. **Providing linguistic support and explicit instruction**: Teaching vocabulary and forms.
Internalization stage	**Interacting with signs and with others**: Providing activities to cognitively engage with the concept, e.g., summarizing the text, investigating metaphorical expressions, etc. **Implementing task-based learning:** Maximizing negotiation of meaning, providing meaningful learning. **Accelerating linguistic input and intake**: Building a new knowledge on the learner's prior linguistic knowledge.
Transfromational stage	**Personalizing the learning**: Giving opportunities to independently demonstrate their own learning, e.g., having learner give a speech or presentation, writng a report, etc. **Maximizing output**: Promoting form-meaning mapping to structure new linguistic knowledge base.

CONCLUSIONS

CLIL pedagogies are being implemented globally across European, African, and Asian countries, which means developing effective methods for CLIL has been raising important questions for many practitioners. This paper has attempted to illuminate important theoretical foundations discussed among SLA theorists in the past. Drawing on the developmental process formulated by social psychologists, this paper has outlined three instructional stages, namely mediation, internalization, and transformation, and mapped out suggested instructions, adapting the IIO model and task-based learning.

The central premise presented in the instructional framework addresses that, although the learning environment and the scope of learning activities can provide significant learning opportunities, ultimately it is the learner, as agent, who transforms the learning (Swain, 2006), and the teacher should help the learner to undergo the process by providing appropriate activities and tasks.

THE AUTHOR

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Improv as Classroom Activity and Teacher Development

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Improv is short for improvisational theater. This is a kind of spontaneous theater that is based on theater games rather than a script. Improv builds skills and attitudes that teachers generally value among their students. For example, improv builds acceptance, justification of ideas, trust among performers, a need to listen, and a strong sense of play. Activities discussed include simple warm-ups, scene games for two people, and ideas for three or more people. Suggestions for how to manage improvisation and how to apply such ideas to classroom objectives are also investigated.

Introduction

Improvisation is the kind of activity that all teachers should experiment with at least once. *Improvisational theater*, or *improv* for short, is a spontaneous form of theater based on simple theater games. These games almost always avoid scripted work of any kind and actions and choices taken by performers emerge in the moment. The following observations draw from my experience as an English teacher in Korea over the last few years, my own experience as an improviser, and resources I have consulted on occasion.

Improvisational Principles for Teachers

Despite seeming fluid and shapeless at times, improvisation has a structure and its own set of goals, many of which overlap with our own goals as teachers. The following principles are based on Morris (2012), adapted and shortened.

Two ideas worth considering together are acceptance and justification. Acceptance is saying yes to the input you're given. In improv, no ideas are considered wrong, and it is the goal of the performers to make them right. Do not contradict the performer, but instead accept his or her idea. What then? After that, one sees justification. If acceptance is saying yes to the input given, justification is saying "and" to it. Let's say one person says, "It's a beautiful day for fishing, isn't it?" To justify the response, you add information to the scene that works with the idea. This may mean one or more of many possible choices, such as discussing the fish, the scenery, find oneself catching a fish in any moment, something happening in the boat or on the shore, etc. One builds upon the suggestions of one's partner in co-creating a scene. You would not, however, just say "Yes it is a beautiful day for fishing" or say "We're not fishing at all."

Both these principles feed into or require other principles such as trust, listening, and play. As teachers, we can think of trust as accepting someone as valid and worth support. It does not matter who one's partner is. The show, however brief, must go on, and that works better with trust than with mistrust or alienation of one's partner. Listening is also required, and that means listening to the character, the happenings in the scene, what your partner is saying, etc. This is a more global kind of listening than listening for discrete-point items on an exam. To listen, accept, and justify in a scene, one must also play. That means doing something challenging for the joy of doing it, not necessarily for its learning potential. It also means following the rules, since every good game has rules to follow, within which a performer can do almost anything.

IMPROV GAMES

Many of these games are adapted from *Improv Encyclopedia* (n.d.), each with a game name such as those below, or the game comes from my own experience as an improviser. This is only a very brief list of games.

Warm-Ups

These are activities meant to generate energy between students. The following games can be played with you and the students standing up in a circle. The same exercise is repeated for everyone in a circle.

Awesome!

The performer says his or her name and then says some recent experience. The happening could be something that day, the day before, or any other recent time frame. This is brief, about one or two sentences. After a performer says this, everyone says "Awesome!" For example, Me: "Hi, my name is Roger, and today I studied at a coffee shop." Others: "Awesome!"

Here Is Your...

This is good for lower-proficient students. Student A pantomimes an object, then passes it to the next person (B) saying "Here is your...," followed by the name of the object. Student B says, "Thank you!" then takes the object. Student A says, "You're welcome!" Student B changes the object carefully into a new object, using pantomime alone. Objects could be of any size or shape, including objects impossible to lift or hold.

What Are You Doing?

Student pantomimes some activity; let us take fishing again as an example. Student B asks, "What are you doing?" Student A says, "I'm..." followed by a description of what he or she is clearly not doing at all. So in this case, the student would not say "I'm fishing," but something completely different, such as "I'm flying a helicopter." Student B must then do that action – in this case, fly the helicopter – and the same cycle of question, statement, then new pantomime continues through the circle.

Where Have Your Fingers Been?

In a sing-song fashion, everyone performs with occasional clapping: “Where have your fingers been / Oh where have your fingers been?” Do this twice, whole group. Then give a location suggestion to a student. The student lifts his or her index fingers and performs a very short scene, with each index finger talking and moving around. At the end of this very short scene, say, “And that’s where my fingers have been!” Then continue the cycle again.

Games in Pairs

Alphabet

The student and his or her partner are in a specific location (e.g., department store, bank, etc.). Choose a letter in the alphabet. Start a scene with your partner with a sentence beginning with that letter. Your partner responds with a sentence beginning with the next letter. Continue the scene in that back and forth until you have finished all the letters. You can skip some low-frequency letters, such as J, K, Q, X, and Z.

Story Spine

Tell a story one or two sentences at a time. Use these transitions to get started:

- Once upon a time (meant to establish characters)
- Every day (the regular routine of the protagonist)
- But one day (an event that possibly could change the protagonist’s life)
- Because of that (a chains of events that result from the earlier actions)
- Because of that
- Because of that
- Until finally (the climax of the story)
- And ever since then... (the new normal circumstances of the protagonist)

This activity is adapted from Kenn Adams (2007) and is also described on *Improv Encyclopedia* (n.d.) briefly by Adams (n.d.) himself.

Games in Groups of Three or More

Word at a Time Story

Tell a story one word at a time. Go for about four to five sentences. Try to keep to using the past tense. It is fine to use dialogue and other storytelling tools.

Word at a Time Proverb

Tell a random sentence as a proverb one word at a time among your group members. When the sentence finishes, the next person explains completely what the proverb means.

Getting Students Ready to Improvise

Part of running an improv activity is using suggestions to get the scene started. These can come from you, the students, or ideally both. If a context for a scene has been established early, such as a coursebook dialog that could suggest a sequel, this allows the students greater ability to make a scene occur. Even simple textbook exercises can trigger scenes; if exercise three of a grammar page is a question or a sample of dialog, another spoken dialog (not written) can be improvised from it. If necessary or helpful, entire structures for scenes or discourses can be taught to students, then broken down. Such forms could be scenes such as a break-up conversation, an informercial pitch, a wedding, a newscast, or any other structure that would either lead into your students' needs or interests, or would fit the coursebook or other materials your course is using.

Managing Improvisation

Using suggestions in the classroom with the instructor's curatorship can make the activities more effective. It helps to assign or add parts to the situation when students may experience difficulties. Instead of asking who the antagonist might be in a scene, ask instead "Who is the problem person?" Evolution from the suggestion is acceptable. If the suggestion starts out with the word *drugstore* but evolves into a scene on the moon, or if a suggestion is more or less abandoned, that is acceptable.

Motivation is an important consideration when running such activities. For students with a highly instrumental focus, suggest that improvisation is a study technique, one that can help them retain information or principles or content by acting them out, making them physically real. Whatever the results of an activity, praise the attempt, not its success as a scene. The teacher does not have to be an exacting drama coach. If the class needs more writing, one could adapt some improv activities into writing activities. This may make such a task less demanding.

One aspect of an activity's motivational qualities is its physicality. Encourage gesture and pantomime in the classroom. Experiment with posture, with standing up or sitting down. The chairs and desks need not inhibit a scene. The physical set-up has its options as well. One can try scenes with two or three performers, or as circle activities. With circle activities, start at the end of the circle with higher proficiency, so that learners with lower English proficiency can see model examples to clarify the goal of the task.

Conclusion

More research on your own into this area can be both fruitful pedagogically and enjoyable by itself. The website *Improv Encyclopedia* (n.d.) has hundreds of games organized alphabetically and by different categories, and it explains more about the principles of improv. An easy-to-read account of improv can be found in Close and Halpern (1994), accessible for native and nonnative speakers alike. More TESOL-friendly texts include Wilson's (2008) collection of activities for English language instructors. Also in this regard, see Bilbrough (2007) for some adaptations from improv to the classroom. However, I recommend choosing one or two games from any available resource that you regard as ideal for or adaptable to your students, and trying these games in the days or weeks to come.

The Author

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Conference Overview

Presentations of

The 27th Annual Korea TESOL International Conference – 2019

Advancing ELT: Blending Disciplines, Approaches, and Technologies

October 12–14, 2019, Seoul, Korea

The 2019 Korea TESOL International Conference Committee gratefully recognizes the following individuals for presenting research papers, conducting workshop sessions, and leading discussions of various types at the 27th Korea TESOL International Conference.

Invited Speaker Sessions

Rod Ellis	Task-Based Language Teaching: Where Did It Start and Where Is It Going?
Rod Ellis	Assessing L2 Learners' Pragmatic Competence
Andrew D. Cohen	Fine-Tuning Word Meanings Through Online and App Technologies: A Close-up Look at Successful and Unsuccessful Strategy Use
Andrew D. Cohen	Exploring Ways in Which Being a Native or a Nonnative Teacher May Influence the Teaching of Target-Language Pragmatics
Thomas S.C. Farrell	Advancing ELT by Becoming an Expert Teacher
Thomas S.C. Farrell	Reflection-As-Action: Implementing Reflective Practice in TESOL
Boyoung Lee	The Organic Development of Successful Learning Experiences
Curtis Kelly	Key Concepts in the Neuroscience of Language Learning
Curtis Kelly	10 Principles of TBLT Task Design: Author Insights
Heyoung Kim	Building an AI Chatbot and L2 Tasks for Young Learners
Kara Mac Donald	Drawing on Skillsets Outside of ELT to Inform Instructional Practice
Peter Roger	What Can ELT Learn from Medical Education...and What Can They Learn from Us?
Stephen Ryan	A Person-Centered Approach: What It Means and Why It Matters
Stephen Ryan	Learning from Older Language Learners

Birsen Tutunis	Positive Psychology, Positive Discipline: Blending Disciplines in ELT Classroom Management
Birsen Tutunis	Teacher Education and Training Policy for the Development of Teacher Identity
Bodo Winter	New Research on Gesture: Implications for Language Learning and Teaching
Bodo Winter	How to Publish Your Research in International Journals, Conference Proceedings, and Books

Invited Panel Sessions

Ji-hyeon Jeon, Chimed Suren, Issy Yuliasri, & Camilla Vizconde; Grace Wang (Mod.)	Women in Leadership in ELT
Kyungsook Yeum, Boyoung Lee, Sung Nam Ryoo, & Gye Hyeong Yoo; Lindsay Herron (Mod.)	Women in Leadership in Korea
Rod Ellis, Kara Mac Donald, & Bodo Winter; Kevin Kester (Mod.)	Tips for Doing Research and Writing a Graduate Thesis or Dissertation

Invited KOTESOL Sessions

Mikyoung Lee & Kevin Kester	Writing and Publishing Academic Papers Well: Tips for Success
Kevin Kester	Decolonizing Higher Education: Practical Examples from Intercultural Educators in Korea
Casey Lartigue Jr., Eunkoo Lee, & Megy Kim	Supporting Low-Income Single-Mother Households and North Korean Refugees ["KOTESOL Gives Back!"]
Jungkeun Oh	Dialogue About Student's Mental Health
Heidi Nam & Tory Thorkelson	KOTESOL International Conference Orientation Session

Assessment / Testing

Daniel Dusza	Preventing Plagiarism: An Integrated Technology, Pedagogy, and Content Knowledge Approach
Weixian Huang	Using Text Analysis Tools to Improve Students' Writing Performance

Young Ae Kim	Online Self-Marking Typing, Speaking, Listening, or Reading Vocabulary Levels Tests
Kent Lee	Grading with Rubrics and Spreadsheets
Stuart McLean	Online Self-Marking Typing, Speaking, Listening, or Reading Vocabulary Levels Tests
Chimed Suren	Using Divergent Questions to Assess Higher-Order Thinking

Classroom Management

Nicole Ashley Domay	Behavior Management in the English Foreign Language Classroom
Jennifer Groat	Co-teaching: How to Involve Both Teachers in Elementary School Classrooms
Michael Darryn Swartz	Using Novel Instruction in the Asian Classroom
John Westby	Rewarding Classroom Participation and How It Affects Language Learning

Classroom Management "101"

Jeff Baldwin	Keep Calm: Effective Classroom Management Skills for Young Learners
James Kimball	Classroom Management Techniques in the Spotlight
Candace Lake	Classroom Management: Coping with Possible Disabilities and Behavior Issues
Joel P. Rian	The Ecstasy of Liberating Your University EFL Classes from Coursebooks
Jeff Shelley	The Dreaded "D" Word: The Role of Discipline in ELT
Jeff Shelley	Classroom Anthropology: An Exploration of Culture and Class Management
Katrina Sten	Keep Calm: Effective Classroom Management Skills for Young Learners
Hazel Watling	Integrating Motivation into Young Learner Classrooms Through Effective Classroom Management

Content-Based Instruction

Joff P. N. Bradley	Engaged Pedagogy Outside the Japanese University
Charles Cabell	Engaged Pedagogy Outside the Japanese University

Chandrakala Raman	Integrated Pedagogy and Instructional Efficacy in Optimizing Learning
Yoke Chin Yap	Integrated Pedagogy and Instructional Efficacy in Optimizing Learning
Akie Yasunaga	Developing Instructional Frameworks to CLIL with Cognitive and Vygotskian Perspectives

Culture & Identity in Language Teaching "101"

Kara Mac Donald	Multicultural Households: Student Identity Negotiation and Implications for the Classroom
Sun Young Park	Multicultural Households: Student Identity Negotiation and Implications for the Classroom
Michi Saki	Interculturally Speaking: Tips for Teaching Intercultural Communication in the Classroom

Developing Learner Creativity

Ediri Okoloba Anderson	The Power of a Growth Mindset for English Language Learners
Rhoda Makhanya	Project-Based Learning: A Method to Spice Up Lessons
Robert Morel	Activities for Developing Learners' Ideal L2 Selves

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Heehwa Choi	Fostering Global Citizenship Education Through Secondary School Pen-Pal Projects
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Donna Fujimoto	Parental Choices in Education: An Intercultural Awareness Approach
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Margaret Kim	Parental Choices in Education: An Intercultural Awareness Approach
Minji Kim	Fostering Global Citizenship Education Through Secondary School Pen-Pal Projects
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Jessica Zoni Upton	Integrating an Intercultural Communicative Approach into the Language Classroom

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George MacLean	How Can Cloud Computing Help Your Teaching?
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Christopher Redmond	A Blended Approach to Positive IELTS Washback
Joel Rian	Getting Your Students Talking: A Communicative Versus Structural Approach
Adrienne Lee Seo	Picture Books: Tools for Teaching Pronunciation
Pornpimol Sukavatee	Effects of Speaking Instruction Using Differentiated Flipped Learning on Speaking Ability
Simon Thollar	Getting Your Students Talking: A Communicative Versus Structural Approach
Doan Thu Tran	Using Peer Review Through Blackboard to Improve Presentation Skills in Vietnam
Chika Urabe	Factors Affecting Peer Assessment of Student Speeches in English

Technology-Enhanced Instruction / CALL / CMI / MALL

Christopher Dalton Austin	Coding for Communication: BBC micro:bit in the Language Classroom
Carla Bianca Baronetti	Coding for Communication: BBC micro:bit in the Language Classroom
David Berry	Exploring *SpaceTeam EFL*: Video Game in the Classroom
Thomas E Bieri	Engaging Digital Natives with Gamified Learning Apps: Quizlet and Kahoot!
Daniel Corks	How to Use Google Classroom: For Beginners and Experts Alike
Mik Fanguy	The Post Is Greater Than the Reply: The Learning Effects of Online Discussion in EFL Writing Courses
Ka Lee Carrie Ho	Cohesion Model: Effective Multimedia Usage Cultivates Secondary Students' Academic Success
Ka Lee Carrie Ho	Cohesion: An ELT Model That Fits All School-Based Curricula
Na-Young Kim	A Study on Chatbots for Enhancing EFL Grammar Competence
Becky Lawrence	Using Google Docs Mobile Application for Autonomous Pronunciation Practice

Dragana Lazic	Use of an Automated Writing Evaluation System for Improving Academic Writing
Stephen Ostermiller	How to Use Google Classroom: For Beginners and Experts Alike
Duc Thuan Pham	Integrating Kahoot in Teaching English for EFL Young Learners
Andrew Prosser	Diagrammatical: Using an Interactive, Digital Infographic as a Grammar Reference.
Eric Reynolds	Engage and Motivate Your Students: Gamify Your Classroom
Xiaofei Tang	English Majors' Perspectives on University SPOC Embedded Flipped Classrooms in China
Ben Taylor	Engage and Motivate Your Students: Gamify Your Classroom
Vi Lam Ngan Tran	Increasing Motivation for Learning English Pronunciation in a MALL Classroom
Vanessa Virgiel	Utilizing DIY Text-to-Animation Software in an EFL Classroom
W. L. Hailey Wong	Cohesion: An ELT Model That Fits All School-Based Curricula
W. L. Hailey Wong	Cohesion Model: Effective Multimedia Usage Cultivates Secondary Students' Academic Success

Vocabulary

Atsushi Asai	Silence Recognition of Consecutive Bilabials
Leander S. Hughes	Contextualized Versus Decontextualized Vocabulary Learning
Samantha Rose Levinson	Greek Mythology Vocabulary Building as a Dual Literacy Approach for Korean ELL's
Stuart McLean	An Online Vocabulary Program Ensuring Vocabulary Review with Expanding Test Ranges
Kunihiko Miura	Semantic-Based DDL Using Specialized Corpora for Japanese EFL Learners
Philip Riccobono	Towards English for 2020 Games: Corpus-Based Investigation of Summer Olympics Vocabulary
Kevin Reay Wrobetz	Font Choice and Second Language Vocabulary Retention

Writing

Claire Bower	Peer-Led Work Stations to Enhance Academic Writing Skills
Matthew Coomber	Student Attitudes Towards Two Types of Peer Review
Laurence Craven	Effects of Flipped Pedagogy on Students' Written Complexity and Fluency
Darren Elliott	An Integrated Approach to Creative Writing
Yutaka Fujieda	Complex Emotions and Sense of Writing in English
Kathryn Jurns	Peer-Led Work Stations to Enhance Academic Writing Skills
Akiko Nagao	Evaluating a Genre-Based Approach to Teaching EFL Writing
Matt Saunders	Increasing Student's Writing Complexity by Learning to Identify Sentence Types
Keiso Tatsukawa	Using a Radio Drama as Input in English Writing Courses
Joseph Tomei	Metaphor in the Writing Curriculum

Poster Presentation Sessions

Mayuko Matsuoka, Tomoya Tsukahara, & Takeshi Mizumoto	Variety of Discussion Patterns and Students' Shared Regulation
Mayuko Matsuoka & Atsushi Asai	Changes in Reading Process of EFL Learners in Four Years
Atsushi Asai	Silence Recognition of Consecutive Bilabials
John Westby	Rewarding Classroom Participation and How It Affects Language Learning
Mina Westby	Utilizing Sociocultural and Psycholinguistic Theories in the Language Classroom
Philip Riccobono	Towards English for 2020 Games: Corpus-Based Investigation of Summer Olympics Vocabulary
Barton Robert Colmerauer	University Students' Perceptions and Opinions on Informal Coffee Talks
George MacLean	Using Cloud Computing to Enhance Feedback for Oral Presentations
Chika Urabe & Kanako Cho	Factors Affecting Peer Assessment of Student Speeches in English

Daniel Mortali	Japanese University English Students' English Use Out of the Classroom
Reginald Gentry	Students' Assessment of a Study Abroad Program
Hannah Bradbury	Knowledge Speaks: Video Blogging to Promote Fluency
Ji-young Suh	Developing Integrated CBI and Situational Language Teaching Materials
Maria Teresa Martinez-Garcia	Beyond the English Divide in South Korea
Kathryn Jurns & Claire Bower	Peer-Led Work Stations to Enhance Academic Writing Skills
Thi Mai Thanh Do & Thi Van Quyen Phan	Developing Intercultural Communication Competence via Raising Self-Awareness
Simon Thollar	Developing Critical Thinking Skills in the English Language Classroom
Ramon Mislang	Transforming Conversations Outside the Classroom
Jack Ryan	A Peer Writing Support Center in a Japanese University
Chimed Suren	Using Divergent Questions to Assess Higher-Order Thinking

Promotional Sessions

Peter Roger [Macquarie University]	Putting Language to Work: Applied Linguistics/TESOL at Macquarie University
Bodo Winter [University of Birmingham]	The University of Birmingham: MA TESOL / MA Applied Linguistics
Allen Davenport [Cambridge University Press]	Encouraging Speaking in the Second Language Classroom
Ally Zhou [Oklahoma City University]	Providing Negotiated Corrective Feedback for ESL Students in Non-ESL Classes
Marcos Benevides [Atama-ii Books]	Widgets Inc.: A Task-Based Workplace Simulation

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