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# The Korea TESOL Journal

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## Editor's Note

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**K**OTESOL presents the second issue of the *Korea TESOL Journal*, which covers diverse areas of English teaching in Korea and Asia. KOTESOL, as a professional society of teachers, has traditionally put more emphasis on teaching practices, and consequently commanded more respect from practitioners rather than scholars. In recognition of this situation, the leadership of KOTESOL has made considerable efforts to improve the research aspect of the organization while still maintaining the practitioners' interests. The visible result of these efforts is *Korea TESOL Journal*, the first and second issues. The first issue was guest-edited by Prof. Thomas Farrell of Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, who was a long-time teacher and scholar in Korea. His considerable efforts and contacts gave birth to this vehicle, and the second issue has extended our new tradition by pulling together research produced by our own membership in addition to that of overseas scholars.

As is natural and proper, this second issue follows in the footsteps of the first. In reaching beyond the forerunner, however, one must find one's own way, so too the *Korea TESOL Journal*. In moving forward, this issue has returned to the grassroots of TESOL in Asia -- all the articles were written by individuals with years of experience teaching in Korea and Northeast Asia. In years to come we will undoubtedly seek out articles from internationally renowned scholars, but for this issue we stayed closer to home, balancing our first issue, where all articles were solicited from abroad.

English education in Korea has undergone a series of important changes, including the new implementation of the elementary English educational curriculum, the design of a differentiated curriculum, more emphasis on self-directed learning and the accordance of curriculum and testing. The articles within these pages begin to consider some of the issues related to these changes. Journals to come in years ahead will continue to do so.

The value of this journal lies in the many different perspectives it offers on the issues of English education in Korea. There are two articles from outside Korea: one from Japan, and another from Taiwan. The article by Gibb (now based in Hong Kong), concerning attitudes towards language varieties, is based on his work conducted here in Korea, while a member of KOTESOL. In fact, both the Hong Kong- and Taiwan-based authors have spent several years teaching in Korea. Wright's study of English content courses is a continuation along the lines of work reported in *KOTESOL Conference '97 Proceedings* while she was an active KOTESOL member.

It has been noted on numerous occasions that students throughout Northeast Asia share many important similarities. Thus, diversity of authors helps build a broader perspective of our students, and a wider area of research to balance with the strong image of KOTESOL being a practitioners' organization -- an image which we all are very much proud of. Still, it is our growing reputation as an organization of teacher-researchers that will ultimately award KOTESOL with the attention and respect of the scholarly community of English educators in Korea. Our Korea-based teacher-researchers have produced the remaining articles for this issue. We are proud to present the first articles for KOTESOL that emerge from classroom-based research, as well as more traditional research studies.

This second issue opens and closes with Korean authors writing about their classrooms. Five of the seven articles examine student wants and attitudes, which is entirely consistent with KOTESOL's learner-driven focus. Cheongsook Chin trialed different learning strategies for the all-important vocabulary acquisition, her investigation is followed by Barbara Wright's analysis of her content-based instruction course. Michael Gibb considers attitudes by students and society towards varieties of English, and Robert Dickey and Sang-ho Han discuss the benefits and directions of Classroom English. Louie Liviu Dragut discusses the techniques and benefits of computer assisted learning for the reading classroom, then Gregory Hadley and John Naaykins compare methods of scoring cloze tests. Finally, Myoung-sook Jung discusses her learners' attitudes towards tests in her middle-school English classroom.

I would like to express my appreciation for the devoted efforts of Prof. Dickey (the assistant editor) and to YBM Si-sa-yong-o-sa for their financial support in printing during this still difficult economic period. I am sure that this issue of the *Korea TESOL Journal*, like the first, will be a useful tool for many students, practitioners, and scholars alike.

Jeong-ryeol Kim  
Korea National University of Education  
Editor

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# The Effects of Three Learning Strategies on EFL Vocabulary Acquisition

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**CHEONGSOOK CHIN**

*Inje University*

This study explored the effects of three learning strategies (context, word form analysis, and combined context-word form analysis) on low level EFL readers' vocabulary acquisition. Eighty five college freshmen were randomly divided into three groups and received one of the three treatments. Both fill-in and multiple-choice tests were administered to measure effects immediately after vocabulary instruction. Results revealed that treatment effects on EFL vocabulary acquisition varied according to the assessment tasks. We found that there was a significant treatment effect in the fill-in test scores. Specifically, students in the context and the combined treatments significantly outperformed students in the word form analysis treatment; however, the combined treatment group did not significantly produce higher scores than the context treatment group. In contrast, there was no significant treatment effect found in the multiple-choice test scores. It is noteworthy that regardless of the treatment, students performed better on the multiple-choice test than on the fill-in test. Implications of the findings for vocabulary instruction in EFL classrooms are discussed.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary development is a critical aspect of fluent reading. For years learners have been insisting that they are in desperate need of enlarging their vocabularies but this has been neglected by most curricula. Today's language teachers and researchers have realized the important role of vocabulary in reading comprehension. Educators are investigating vocabulary acquisition. English texts include not only unfamiliar vocabulary but also unfamiliar concepts and culture-specific ideas so EFL readers undergo great difficulties interacting with the text. It is essential, therefore, that classroom teachers give more emphasis to exploring the most effective approaches for enhancing and solidifying EFL readers' vocabulary (Alderson, 1984; Taglieber, Johnson, & Yarbrough, 1988; Seal, 1991).

Based on previous studies on vocabulary acquisition of native English speakers, Nagy and Herman (1987) estimated that a typical high school student has learned 40,000 words, an average of around 3,000 words per year. Thus it can be drawn that in learning academic English, nonnative English speakers would need to learn a larger vocabulary than this per year on the average (Cited in Brown and Perry, 1991). How then can students develop their vocabulary proficiency? Traditionally, context, word lists, dictionary use, word roots, and affixes were most common vocabulary techniques and are still broadly employed in classrooms at present (Carrell, 1984; Crow & Quigley, 1985; Swaffar, 1988; Aebersold & Field, 1997).

### 1. CONTEXT

It has been suggested that learning vocabulary through context should be employed as the main approach to enhancing vocabulary knowledge. In order to facilitate this enhance-

ment, teachers need to encourage learners to complementarily do a substantial amount of reading and develop their skill in guessing from context. Learners' success in guessing can be affected by several factors such as the number of times they encounter a word and the variety of contexts where it is embedded (Nation & Coady, 1988; Mikulecky, 1990; Brown, 1994). Carrell (1984) argues that vocabulary learning does not usually occur through a single reading context, no matter how rich the context is. Clearly, students should be exposed to a word repeatedly, in multiple contexts, to learn new vocabulary items.

According to Im (1994), reading enhancement correlates with readers' vocabulary proficiency level; the stronger vocabulary a reader has, the better he is able to understand the text that he interacts with. Since context is what determines the meaning of words, context guessing may be the most effective strategy for students to learn vocabulary. Hence, the ratio of known words in a text, the less difficult it is for students to guess the unknown words. To be more specific, students are expected to possibly guess about 60 to 80 percent of the unknown words in a text when the ratio of unknown words is low (Nation & Coady, 1988; Seal, 1991).

Vacca and Vacca (1989) points out that teachers should provide instruction when the author employs a context in which students come across content area terminology that is quite challenging for them to deal with. Although authors use deliberate contexts for unknown words, the degree to which context discloses word meaning is restricted by the students' own background knowledge and/or constraints in the text itself. Hence, both the teachers and the students must be aware of how context functions to restrict meaning as well as to disclose it. Deighton (1970) specifies several variables that limit the use of context: 1. a reader's experience determines what a context may disclose to him/her; 2. the portion of context where the unknown word is embedded ought to be placed close to the word for the sake of effectiveness; and 3 there must be an evident link between the unknown word and its context (Cited in Vacca & Vacca, 1989). According to Vacca and Vacca, context use surely needs inference which urges students to identify an explicit and implicit connection between the unknown word and its context or apply their background knowledge to the unknown word; however, most developing students are not able to perform it on their own.

## **2. WORD ROOTS AND AFFIXES**

It is recommended that students are taught to identify affixes and Greek and Latin roots in English words in order to predict the meanings of unknown vocabulary. Through analyzing words into recognizable roots and affixes, classroom teachers can demonstrate that each isolated element of words can provide informational clues (Brown, 1994; Aebersold & Field, 1997). Certain affixes are more useful than others, so when students are instructed to which affixes they should pay more attention to, they can be less frustrated. The most important affixes are claimed to be the combining forms, prefixes, or suffixes that carry single, invariant meanings. However, students should not be exposed to long lists of affixes in isolation. Rather, teachers should present affixes as they are in need; to analyze the structure of the words that students will encounter in an assigned reading text (Vacca & Vacca, 1989; Seal, 1991; Johnson & Steele, 1996). Nation and Coady (1988) strongly insist that the use of the word form is delayed until the available context clues have been fully employed. Less skilled students often produce mistakes that result from guessing based on the form of the word rather than the context. If that is the case, students would attempt to make sense of the

context to fit the incorrect guess. Hence, it may be ideal that students use clues based on word form analysis as a means of examining context-based guesses.

### **3. WORD LISTS AND DICTIONARY USE**

According to Carrell (1984), vocabulary instruction should be associated with both students' prior knowledge and other pre-reading activities intended to construct background knowledge. Merely providing lists of words in class would not help students connect the new concepts to their pre-existing knowledge and consolidate the new words into their vocabulary. Using a word list could prohibit students from doing contextual guessing while context training enhances students' success in interpreting the meanings of vocabulary encountered in texts (Swaffar, 1988). However, in several experimental studies, students were presented a list of words in isolation with short definitions or synonyms and directed to demonstrate their knowledge of the words on various assessments (i.e., a multiple-choice test or sentence writing). The findings revealed that subjects under such conditions performed as well as those who were under context use (Carnine, Kameenui, & Coyle, 1984; Schatz & Baldwin, 1986; Jenkins, Matlock, & Slocum, 1989).

Summers (1988) claims that dictionary use plays an important role in EFL learning. Along with other learning strategies (e.g., contextual guessing or asking the teacher for interpretations), foreign language teachers should encourage students to make use of the considerable information in their dictionaries. There is a widely agreed notion that when coming across new words, students should make an effort to decode the meanings only through contextual clues in reading texts. In actual reading process, however, they often discover that unknown words in texts are not always "deducible" by means of contextual clues. There is a common pedagogic principal that vocabulary instruction should be somehow systematically performed such as in semantic sets or morphological analysis. Nevertheless, it is not always easy to systematize language. Thus, in addition to inferring the meaning of unknown words from the text, dictionary use is a worthwhile strategy in language learning. When unknown vocabulary is an impediment to reading comprehension, students should be allowed to consult a dictionary.

Presently, there is a prevalent view that EFL teachers should discourage students from consulting dictionaries because students' extensive dictionary use can lead to word for word reading. Dictionary use can also interfere with the flow of concentration and is decontextualized (Summers, 1988; Swaffar, 1988; Nist & Olejnik, 1995). However, in reality, teachers often face the situation that they cannot completely keep students from looking up words in a dictionary. For example, in a case where context and word form analysis provide very few clues as to a word's meaning. If that is the case, or when an exact definition is required, dictionary use would be necessary as a valuable resource for students. In light of a dictionary's effectiveness, it is of importance that teachers know both when and how to use a dictionary. As one viable strategy to make a dictionary as a logical alternative, teachers can guide students to consult a dictionary to verify their "educated" guesses about the meanings of unknown words disclosed from context or word form analysis. As students access a dictionary, teachers should make sure to help them determine the best choice of a definition from several possible ones (Vacca & Vacca, 1989).

It is notable that dictionary value is reported to vary depending on students' age range. Previous research findings reveal that it is not advisable to allow students to use a



dictionary as an exclusive tool of building vocabulary, especially for younger children. It's not always negative, however. For college students, the dictionary might be the sole aid when left alone without help or interference in defining word meanings (McKeown, 1993; Nist & Olejnik, 1995).

#### **4. PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY**

To sum up, we see that when appropriately employed, context, word roots, affixes, and dictionary use significantly contribute to learners' vocabulary development. It is believed that a mixed approach (i.e., a combination of these strategies) would be more profitable than relying on a sole strategy. However, there seems to be little research conducted to explore how these learning strategies would actually influence EFL students. Kim (1993) found that word analysis and context use were employed among Korean EFL readers, but she did not make a further investigation to compare those two strategies in terms of the EFL vocabulary acquisition enhancement. The idea that EFL students can easily learn an enormous vocabulary through context is impulsively appealing; however, it has not been proven through experimentation (Seal, 1991). Also experimental studies concerned with word roots and affixes seem to be lacking in both L1 and L2 research. When developing curricula and preparing materials for EFL students, teachers must have an understanding about how specific strategies would affect students' vocabulary enhancement in relation to varying proficiency levels. That way, teachers would be better able to help EFL students become independent learners of the tremendous amount of unfamiliar words they will encounter in their texts.

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of the above three learning strategies on low level EFL readers' vocabulary acquisition: the context method, a word form analysis method (i.e., word roots and affixes), and a combined context-word form analysis method.

The specific research questions explored in the present study are listed below.

1. In promoting EFL vocabulary acquisition, does the context method yield superior results in comparison to the word form analysis method?
2. Does the combined context-word form analysis method facilitate more EFL vocabulary acquisition than either the context or the word form analysis methods used alone?
3. Do treatment effects vary according to the type of assessments?

## **II. METHOD**

### **1. SUBJECTS**

The present study had the participation of 113 freshmen students who were enrolled in an English class at a university located in Kyungsang province. During the first week of the spring semester of 1999, a pretest was administered. All of the students took a 60 item English proficiency test that covered vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. The test was a shortened version of the TOEIC practice test of *The Complete Guide to TOEIC* (Rogers, 1997). Since this study focused on low level EFL readers, only those who had scored in the range of 20-30 items were selected as the subjects for this study; the final data pool consisted of scores from 85 students. The subjects were randomly placed into three groups. The result

of the analysis of variance in the pretest showed that there was no significant difference among the three groups' scores,  $F(2, 82) = 0.76, p = 0.47$ . Therefore, each group was randomly assigned to a different type of separate teaching condition.

## 2. MATERIAL

The target words in the study were selected according to the following criteria. First, they were chosen based on frequency; we believed that the words that are most frequently used are the most essential for EFL readers to learn (Laufer, 1990). Second, the probability that the words would not already be familiar to the students was taken into account (Taglieber et al., 1988). Two native English instructors who teach English courses at the university that the subjects were enrolled were involved in determining target words. As source textbooks, they consulted *Quick Vocabulary Power: A self-teaching guide* (Romine & Ehrlich, 1996) and *Koreaone Vocabulary 22000* (Levine, 1982) and made a list of 40 possible target words. The researcher administered a pretest a week before conducting the actual experiment in order to verify students' unfamiliarity with the target words. Students were presented with a list of the 40 words without any contexts and were instructed to identify any known words and provide definitions in Korean; a time limit was not imposed. Based on the pretest result, 16 words that they already knew were eliminated, leaving 24 words for the experimental instruction.

## 3. PROCEDURES

In the present study, treatment consisted of three different vocabulary instructions: (a) context method, (b) a word form analysis method, and (c) combined context-word form analysis method. With regard to the general procedures, the three experimental groups of students were randomly assigned to a different type of vocabulary instruction: Context, word form analysis, and a combined context-word form analysis. Immediately after each vocabulary instruction was treated, students took a 12 item, four choice multiple-choice test and another 12 item fill-in test as vocabulary posttests. Based on the time required during the pilot study, students were directed to finish both tests within a time limit of 15 minutes.

In the multiple-choice test, each item composed of an incomplete sentence that needed the use of one of the 24 target words. The distractors were selected out of the target vocabulary and were the same part of speech as the correct answer (Brown and Perry, 1991). Since there were 12 items on the multiple choice test, 12 words out of the 24 target were used as the right answers. Consequently, the remaining 12 target words were tested with a fill-in test. With regard to the fill-in test, a table containing the second half of the target words (3 nouns, 3 adjectives, and 6 verbs) was constructed and a sentence that had a blank was provided for each of the 12 items. Thus students were required to fill each blank with the most appropriate word selected from the table; unlike the multiple-choice test, they were supposed to determine what part of speech was needed in each blank. The following is a description of each vocabulary treatment in detail.

In the context analysis treatment, the teacher presented the 24 target words on a handout where each word was introduced in meaningful multiple contexts; there were three contexts provided for each word. It is claimed that students can have difficulty learning a new word if it is presented in a sentence which includes other unknown words in it. Therefore, the teacher made sure that the words employed in presenting a new word were all familiar to the

students (Tierney, Readence, & Dishner, 1990). Based on the time allotment necessary during the pilot study, first of all, students were given forty minutes by themselves with directions to guess as to the meanings of the words using given contexts. As the second step, students were invited to offer their own guesses with the whole class. In doing this, they had to reach some consensus as to the best meaning of each individual word presented. Finally, they were allowed to consult an English-Korean dictionary to verify their guesses and write down the correct definitions on a separate copy of the vocabulary list; dictionary definitions were shared with the whole class. This context treatment took about 80 minutes.

In the word form analysis treatment, the teacher presented the 24 target words on a handout where the meanings of the corresponding prefixes, roots, and suffixes were provided in English. First, using the given clues, students were asked to construct meanings of the target words by themselves on a separate copy of the vocabulary list; a time limit of 30 minutes was set based on the time required by students in the pilot study. The following is an example:

\*Prefix: *Ag-* = to, toward \*Root: *Grav* = serious, worse \*Suffix: *Ate* = verb ending  
Based on the above clues, guess the meaning of *Aggravate* = \_\_\_\_\_

As the second step, students as a whole were invited to offer their guesses about the meaning of each word. Like the context group, they were encouraged to reach some consensus, referring to the best meaning of each word. Finally, students were allowed to consult an English-Korean dictionary to check their guesses and write down the correct definitions on a separate copy of the vocabulary list. Dictionary definitions were shared with the whole class. This word form analysis treatment took about an hour.

In the context-word form analysis treatment, basically the above procedures were repeated one after another. In other words, students were first asked to guess the meanings of the target words using only the given multiple contexts. Then they were exposed to the word form analysis treatment to check their guesses. In doing this, they were allowed to reconstruct their guesses. A time limit of one hour was set based on the time required by students in the pilot study. As the final step, students were allowed to consult an English-Korean dictionary to verify their guesses and dictionary definitions were shared with the whole class. This context-word form analysis treatment took about two hours.

#### **4. DATA ANALYSIS**

In the present study, two dependent measures were employed to examine treatment effects on EFL vocabulary acquisition immediately after instruction: a 12 item multiple-choice test and a 12 item fill-in test. One point was given to a correct answer to each item on both tests. The scores on the multiple-choice test and the fill-in test were separately analyzed using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Tukey's HSD test was explored for making post hoc comparisons.

### **III. RESULTS**

The analysis of variance on the fill-in test scores is shown in Table 1. As can be seen, the main effect for treatment was significant,  $F(2, 82) = 6.20, p < .01$ . Further investigation of

the treatment effects, using Tukey's HSD test (See Table 2), revealed significant differences between the context treatment ( $M = 6.66$ ) and the word form analysis treatment ( $M = 4.83$ ) and between the combined treatment ( $M = 6.86$ ) and the word form analysis treatment. Based on the results of the fill-in test scores, we can figure that the context and the combined treatments were significantly more effective than the word form analysis treatment in promoting subjects' vocabulary acquisition. On the other hand, the analysis of variance on the multiple-choice test scores (See Table 3) showed that the main effect for treatment was not significant,  $F(2, 82) = 2.52, p = 0.087$ . Consequently, the findings of this study indicated that treatments' effects varied according to the given types of assessment tasks.

It is noteworthy that on the whole, subjects in all the three treatments scored higher in the multiple-choice test than in the fill-in test (See Table 4). With regard to the performance on the multiple-choice test, although not to a significant degree, subjects under the combined treatment performed better than subjects under word form analysis and under context treatments; subjects under the word form analysis treatment yielded the lowest scores. All in all, we figure that students' performance varied depending on the assessment tasks; treatment

<b>TABLE 1: Analysis of Variance on the Fill-In Test Scores</b>				
Source	DF	SS	MS	F
Bet. Groups	2	70.74	35.37	6.20**
Within Groups	82	468.09	5.71	

\*\*  $p < .01$

<b>TABLE 2: Tukey's HSD Test for Differences among Vocabulary Treatments on the Fill-In Test Scores</b>			
Different from			
Treatments	M1	M2	M3
M1 = 4.83		-1.83*	-2.03*
M2 = 6.66			-0.20
M3 = 6.86			

\*  $p < .05$

Note: M1 = word form analysis, M2 = context, and M3 = combination of word form analysis and context

**TABLE 3: Analysis of Variance on the Multiple-Choice Test Scores**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F
Bet. Groups	2	23.80	11.90	2.52
Within Groups	82	386.97	4.72	

**TABLE 4**  
**Table of Means and Standard Deviation**

Treatment		Fill-In Test		Multiple-Choice Test
Word Form Analysis	Mean	4.82		5.96
	SD	2.06		2.32
Context	Mean	6.66		6.79
	SD	2.78		2.18
Combination	Mean	6.86		7.25
	SD	2.26		2.01

effects yielded mixed results

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

The primary goal of this study was to investigate the effects of three strategies (context, word form analysis, and combined context-word form analysis) on EFL vocabulary acquisition. The results of the present research reinforce the idea that treatment effects varied according to the given assessment tasks (Wolf, 1993). In the fill-in test, students under the context and the combined treatments significantly scored higher than students under the word form analysis treatment; however the combined treatment group failed to significantly outperform the context treatment group. In contrast, all three of the treatment strategies did not significantly affect the scores of the multiple-choice test. This finding may be attributed to the differences in the types of assessment tasks. As Nist and Olejnik (1995) indicated, we believed that one type of assessment would not enable us to investigate varying degrees of word knowledge. That is why we employed two different assessments in the present study.

With regard to the four-choice multiple-choice test, the distractors on each item consisted of the same part of the speech as the correct answer, so students merely had to

recognize and select an appropriate word that could fit each blank semantically. In other words, the multiple-choice test did not require students to have the ability to use the syntactic cues provided in each sentence of each item. On the other hand, in the fill-in test, there was a list of 12 target words and 12 incomplete sentences provided. Unlike the multiple-choice test, the 12 target words consisted of different parts of speech: 3 adjectives, 3 nouns, and 6 verbs. In providing each missing word on each item, students needed to have the ability to produce both semantically and syntactically appropriate responses. Specifically, students first had to be able to figure out the appropriate part of speech required in each blank. Thus it might have been challenging for students to supply the correct word on each item in the fill-in test. It is of importance to note that in performing the task, quite a few students provided words that did not fit even syntactically, not to mention semantically; for instance, they supplied a noun in a blank which needed a verb or vice versa.

In short, the multiple-choice test items merely assessed students' semantic knowledge of the target vocabulary while the fill-in test items assessed not only students' semantic knowledge of the target vocabulary but also their knowledge of syntax for recognition of syntactic cues which might have yielded a faltering effect on students' performance (Wolf, 1993). Since students were assessed to demonstrate their word knowledge at a deeper level in the fill-in test, it is not surprising that students produced lower scores in the fill-in test than in the multiple-choice test.

The conclusions drawn from the present study provide a mixed picture of vocabulary treatment effects. The results of the multiple-choice test show that none of the three treatments significantly facilitated students' ability to comprehend the semantic usage of the target vocabulary while the results of the fill-in test reveal that both the context and the combined treatments, to a significant degree, enhanced students' ability to understand the syntactic usage of the target vocabulary. It may be that since students in the context and the combined treatments were exposed to a variety of contexts where the target words were presented, they could get a clear sense of how to use them not only semantically but also syntactically. Students in the word form analysis, however, were required to unlock the meanings of the target words based on the information of word roots and affixes but not aided to explicitly figure out under what contexts, including sentence structures, the target words could be used. Thus, we concluded that simply analyzing words into parts did not ensure that students were successfully accessed for grammatical use of the target words in a context.

Besides, it was found that due to lack of practice and experience, students had difficulty drawing appropriate information through conducting word form analysis. For instance, many of the students were not aware that suffixes were the word parts that follow the root and they were not able to identify their grammatical functions. In other words, a majority of the students did not have a general concept of prefixes and suffixes. Therefore, we figure that word form analysis would not be beneficial for EFL readers to conduct on their own unless they have a certain level of knowledge of word parts. Rather, we concur that teachers implement word form analysis strategy not for individual work but for a whole class. It may be useful that teachers demonstrate how to analyze words into parts on an OHP or a chalkboard. In addition, teachers may administer this strategy in the classroom discussions that take place when students are interacting with a text. Say, when dealing with a certain paragraph where a multisyllabic word is embedded, teachers may encourage students to analyze it into parts, searching for familiar prefixes, roots, and suffixes and to find out if their guesses make sense in the context of the paragraph they are reading (Aebbersold & Field, 1997; Hunt & Beglar, 1998).

Strikingly, the findings of this study demonstrated that students who received more instruction did not significantly outperform students who received less instruction in terms of EFL vocabulary acquisition; a sole strategy (i.e., context analysis) was as powerful as a mixed approach (i.e., context-word form analysis). We interpret that relying on contextual information, students were able to elicit enough clues to comprehend both the semantic and syntactic usages of the target words; the knowledge drawn from the word form analysis did not make a substantial difference.

The results of this study provide some definite implications for EFL classroom teachers. We suggest that EFL teachers employ a multiple context instruction as a promising option to help low level readers promote vocabulary acquisition. As mentioned earlier, compared to the combined treatment, context treatment is easier to prepare and takes less time to present in class; the combined treatment doubles the teacher's preparation and presentation time. As a follow-up activity, teachers may encourage students to elaborate their knowledge of learned words. For example, students can create sentences using the learned words on their own. Or they may construct a semantic map using familiar synonyms in a suitable grammatical category so that they can make meaningful connections between newly learned words and with those they are familiar (Johnson & Steele, 1996).

Clearly, however, we do not imply that low level EFL readers should attempt to guess the meanings of unknown words through contexts in all instances because not all contexts provide an equal amount of clues. It is claimed that a guessing strategy based on local context excels guessing based on global context. Accordingly, we recommend that students should be encouraged to use context guessing strategy only if clues are embedded in the immediate context. They should avoid guessing if it needs global context; in that case, they should rather consult a dictionary or some other references. It is obvious that the larger vocabulary students have, the better they are able to guess from context. Thus, for students who still need to learn the first 3,000 most common words, direct vocabulary instruction should be also emphasized along with context guessing strategy (Dycus, 1997; Hunt & Beglar, 1998).

In implementing the present study, we realized that 24 words were too many for students to deal with at a time. It was possible that students were overwhelmed and confused with the newly learned meanings of the target words when responding to the assessment tasks. Moreover, words that have similar forms (e.g., aggregate and aggravate) were selected to study simultaneously and they were used as distractors on the multiple-choice test.

Surely, we confirm the view that in general, 8 to 12 words at a time may be appropriate to be presented in one lesson. Teachers should also avoid presenting words with similar forms simultaneously; to begin with, it will be desirable to focus on words that are semantically unrelated and have different forms. Likewise, dealing with words that have similar, opposite, or closely associated meanings at the same time may lead to confusion. It should be, however, noted that teachers should consider the type and the length of words in determining the number of words to teach in one lesson. For example, technical terminology and culture-specific words may be presented in smaller numbers than words that are commonly used in daily life. Furthermore, concrete items that are easy to picture and derivatives of known words take less time to explain and practice and need relatively less effort to memorize. If that is the case, it will be possible to study more than 12 words per lesson. As far as retention is concerned, students should be exposed to the syllable structure and stress pattern of the new word and taught to listen and repeatedly practice the correct pronunciation out loud as well. In addition, teachers should make efforts to provide students with opportunities to encounter it in both reading and writing materials. That way, they will be better able to store newly learned vocabulary knowledge in memory (Hunt & Beglar, 1998; Laufer, 1990).

The findings of this study suggest several directions for further research. First, this study could be replicated with various L2 proficiency levels over a longer period of time. Students with different levels may yield different treatment effects in terms of vocabulary acquisition and retention. Moreover, students may perform differently if they are assessed when they have fully developed each vocabulary strategy. Second, reading comprehension utilizing these three vocabulary treatments should be assessed. That way, we can investigate which vocabulary strategy will be the most effective on EFL reading comprehension enhancement. Third, it might be worthwhile to explore students' reactions to the specific aspects of their assigned vocabulary instruction and to allow them to indicate the needs and difficulties that they experienced. Findings of such studies might significantly contribute to EFL reading course development.

## THE AUTHOR

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# Asian EFL Students in English Content Courses

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A number of content courses are currently being taught in Asian universities using English texts, English speaking faculty, and English as a medium of communication in the classroom. This article discusses factors influencing success, methods which promote success, the best time to introduce content EFL courses, and the alternative of introducing a bilingual program.

While describing one such course, Introduction to Linguistics, taught to 45 freshmen students for two semesters, multiple factors affecting the success of students in such courses are discussed including various methods used in teaching these courses.

## INTRODUCTION

A number of content courses are currently being taught in Asian universities in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan using English texts, English speaking faculty, and English as a medium of communication in the classroom (Sagliano and Greenfield 1998, Wright 1995, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c). This article discusses factors influencing success, methods which promote success, the best time to introduce content EFL courses, and the alternative of introducing a bilingual program. Statistics are taken from a one year course in Linguistics taught in English to Taiwanese college freshmen.

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

### *Reading Level*

Most important of the factors affecting success may be the students' ability to read academic texts in English. Allerson and Grabe (1986) identify a way to tell if the text is accessible to students. The teacher can administer a cloze test based on the reading material. If the results are 50% or more correct, the material is appropriate for independent reading. Scores of 35 to 50% correct indicate instructional reading level, while less than 35% correct indicates student frustration in reading the text.

### *Reading Speed*

Students' slow reading speed in a foreign language is an important factor when using authentic reading texts. According to Mahon (1986), "ESL students often resist reading

English any faster than the 80 wpm they are likely to enter the classroom with." In the experience of this researcher, intermediate college ESL students were averaging 100 words per minute when reading at their appropriate reading level but much more slowly when they needed to use a dictionary. However, native speaking college students average 300 or more words per minute, according to Jensen (1986). This means that non-native readers (EFL or ESL) would take at least three times longer to complete an assignment than their native counterparts.

### ***Vocabulary***

Technical vocabulary needed to understand a beginning linguistics text is considerable. See the sample vocabulary test in the appendix. Students may think they will be able to understand the text more easily if they translate all the technical terms into their native language. In fact this is probably a false assumption unless they are already familiar with these terms; they are complicating their study by needing to learn the definitions and terms in both languages instead of only in one.

### ***Listening Ability***

In addition to reading ability, listening ability is an important factor when offering a course in English because a certain part of the class will be lectures and another part will be giving directions on what assignments to complete and how to go about completing them. A common complaint among college teachers is that students do not listen to and follow directions. While this may be due to general inattention or students talking to neighbors, the process is further complicated for EFL students whose English listening ability is insufficient to understand either directions or lectures. Thus giving written directions in addition to oral ones is a necessary part of the class. A question and answer period or a translation into the students' native language by one of the more able students may also help.

## **METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### ***Goal of the content course***

The goal of this course was to familiarize the students with the basic vocabulary and concepts of linguistics, not to teach English. In offering such a course in English to EFL students there is an assumption that students have attained a level of English sufficient to understand the material and complete assignments. Ideally, the students' level of English would be similarly high, but this was not the case. Thus, methods were found which did not rely on the students' individual level of English skill nor jeopardize anyone's mastery of the material merely because of insufficient English ability. Ideally, students could both learn linguistics and improve their level of English, but in fact only the knowledge of linguistics would be tested.

### ***Individual Differences***

Skehan (1989) makes it clear in his book, *Individual Differences in Second Language Learning*, that language aptitude, motivation, language learning strategies, cognitive and

affective factors influence our students ability to learn a foreign language. Ignoring these differences and treating all students the same, even in a large class, will interfere with learning. As a result, the tasks that the teacher asks students to complete must be varied so as to allow for individual responses.

### ***Cooperative Learning***

Cooperative Learning takes many forms and has many uses which are not limited to the ESL/EFL classroom. I first began using cooperative learning in English Composition classes with native speaking English students in the early 1980's as a means to allow students to discuss composition topics before they wrote their compositions and to allow them to peer review each other's essays after they were written. Using the method was effective in motivating students who were really not very interested in the assignments. The work groups were very structured and had specific tasks to perform. They reported their results in written form to the instructor.

Later, (in the 1990's) I used this method for Public Speaking students (a mixed class of Americans and Koreans) to help them prepare persuasive speeches and debates to present to the class. These groups were randomly selected and did not always work well because of cultural differences among the group members. These groups served a dual purpose of acquainting members of the group with different ways of thinking about controversial issues and cultural differences between nationalities. I explained that in their present jobs and future jobs they would need to be able to use these skills to get along with others.

In Japan, (1992-5) while teaching at an American university, I successfully employed the cooperative learning method to overcome the Japanese students' reluctance to speak in class and to express opinions. Japanese students did not need to have structure or group dynamics explained to them because they had been using the method in their classrooms since early childhood.

During the 1995-6 school year in California, I taught very large classes of Teacher Credential candidates. I employed cooperative work groups as a means to encourage participation of the whole class, teach social skills, demonstrate teaching methodology, and motivate students. The method did not always work well because there were often a few students who did not know how to work effectively with others or chose not to do any work, letting classmates work for them.

In Korea, (1996-98) I used the method of cooperative work groups with students in my American Studies class, English through Film (Wright 1997a). Students worked in groups of three to five on particular tasks such as the theme poster which they then shared with other classmates. Many of these students were competing for grades and preferred individual assignments. They had to be taught to work in groups and needed to understand the benefit of getting ideas from their classmates. These groups were structured so that each member had a specific assignment within the group: the scribe, the leader, the English facilitator, and the spokesperson.

In Taiwan, (1998-99) I used the cooperative learning method in the Introduction to Linguistics course described in this study. The students' level of English ability was low intermediate and some students' listening ability was much lower than their reading ability. The size of the class made it difficult to meet with students individually who were having problems. Students did not seem to be motivated although the course was required of all freshmen.

Students made excuses for their lack of understanding; they could not hear, could not understand or could not read the blackboard. Students were assigned randomly to work groups for each group assignment. Use of cooperative work groups had the double effect of motivating students to try harder and synergistically increasing their ability to solve the practical linguistic problems. Each group could meet privately with the instructor while individual students were reluctant to do so. Statistical results show that the cooperative work assignments received much higher grades than the individual work assignments: on average 86.7% vs. 72.4%. Without the work groups many students would not have been able to understand the material or complete the course with a passing grade.

## **RESULTS OF THE STUDY: FACTORS AFFECTING SUCCESS**

*(see the appendix Table 1 for results for each student)*

### ***Variety of Assignments***

In accordance with individual differences in learning styles and individual difference in language ability, the assignments of the course were divided into individual and cooperative work assignments (see appendix for the syllabus).

#### ***Individual Work***

This kind of assignment is given to each student separately. In some cases the whole class received an identical task but in other cases each student received a different but similar problem to solve. Students performed individual work on phonology, syntax, etymology, and languages in contact based on the texts.

#### ***Cooperative Work***

This can be defined as work done outside of class in which all students participated in solving a problem and then presented their solutions in class. The students were assigned randomly to groups of from 3 to 7 and given a written assignment from the textbook. There were three group work activities during the year long course based on morphology, historical comparative reconstruction, and the history of the English language. Johnson and Johnson (1994) outline five elements which benefit the students engaged in cooperative learning in an article for the *JALT Language Teacher*: positive interdependence, individual accountability, face to face interaction, social skills, group processing. In this group of Taiwanese college freshmen, these five elements were promoted to the advantage of the students' mastery of the subject matter. Group processing allowed students to solve problems they could not solve individually.

### ***Variety of Assessments***

The assessments were of four kinds: individual or group and in-class or out of class. Students were graded individually on the individual assignments or received a group grade for work done cooperatively. See Table 1 for scores. In general the group work resulted in higher grades, better motivation, and less anxiety than individual work.

## ***Individual Assessments***

Each student received an individual number grade based on a comparison of the number of answer correct and scaled from highest to lowest grade for the class. There were four individual assessments during the year long course. The average score was 72.7% correct.

**Midterm #1 (MT#1)** was a written phonology test that included listening to and identifying phoneme sounds as well as defining terminology from the phonology chapters of the text books. On this exam the scores ranged from 46 to 93 indicating a difference of 47 points between those with a good mastery of the subject and those with a poor mastery. The average score was 70.2% correct. The results of the listening portion of the exam are reported separately.

**Listening: (Listen)** Students were asked to listen to minimal pairs and identify the phonemic spelling and the regular English spelling of the words. Each word contained a different vowel phoneme. The answer was correct if either the phonemic spelling or the English spelling was given correctly. The scores ranged from 30 to 100 indicating a range of 70 points. The average score was 63.6% correct. Presumably all students were equally motivated, so the results show a range of ability in the class.

**Final #1 (F#1)** was an oral exam on the syntactic structure of sentences in English. Each student received a different sentence and was allowed 15 minutes to explain in English everything about the sentence that he or she could. The results of this exam ranged from 70 to 95 indicating adequate mastery of the applied syntactic concepts by all the students. The average score was 82.8% correct. On this exam, although the terminology and tree diagrams were new, many of the concepts had previously been learned in grammar classes in high school.

**Midterm #2 (M#2)** was a take home etymology exam on terms or phrases which have been borrowed from Chinese into English. Students were given one week and needed to consult a dictionary to find out the Chinese source of the term and what the term means in English. The range in scores was 49 to 93 indicating a range of 44 points. The average score was 73.7% correct. Some students had special problems because they did not follow directions and others because they did not spend enough time consulting dictionaries. Although the dictionaries in the library didn't have all the terms from the exam, there were dictionaries on-line which had most of them and all students had access to the computer lab. Another problem was that most borrowed Chinese words in English came from Cantonese, not the Mandarin which the students speak.

**Final #2 (F#2)** was a written exam based on the historical and sociolinguistic chapters in the texts. It consisted mainly of vocabulary and their definitions. The range of scores was 26 to 95 indicating a very large difference of 69 points between the highest score and the lowest. The average score was 63.9% correct. It could be that some students are better at memorizing definitions than others or that some students did not study enough.

## ***Group Assessments***

There were three group assessments during the course of the year. See an example of a group assignment in the appendix. It is interesting to note that students working together always achieved passing grades while those who worked separately didn't. Most students

were able to work together although one in particular disliked this process. The average score was 86.4% correct.

**Group Work #1 (G#1)** students were divided randomly into groups of four and given a morphology problem from the text. Students probably enjoyed this assignment the most and found it useful especially when the task involved the English language data. Scores ranged from 80 to 90 indicating that most students performed equally well. The average score was 86.3% correct. Each group member was expected to participate in solving the problem and presenting the solution to the class. Groups made posters of their solutions or wrote the answers on the board.

**Group Work #2 (G#2)** this was a group effort to historically reconstruct proto-languages based on limited data given in the text. Here the comparative method was being used so a description of the process was just as important as the solution. Students worked in groups of 3 to 5 to solve the problem and explain it to the class using posters of their solutions. There was some motivation problem here with groups who didn't want to work on obscure South American Indian languages and didn't understand that the point of the exercise was to teach the method rather than to arrive at the correct solution. Each group spent time with the instructor during office hours discussing their solutions. The scores ranged from 70 to 95 showing that some groups has a better understanding of the process involved. The average score was 84.5% correct.

**Group Work #3 (G#3)** Students watched a PBS film series called The Story of English and took notes. Each group was assigned one film to work on. They put together their notes on the film and did additional research on the topic which they then copied and distributed to their classmates. The films corresponded to material on Languages in Contact from the textbook presenting special information about English in various regions of the world where it is spoken. Each group could spend a week watching their film as many times as they needed. By putting their notes on the film together each group was able to come up with an adequate summary of their film. Scores on this assignment ranged from 80 to 95 indicating a good mastery of the material and maximum effort towards completing this assignment. The average score was 88.3%.

## ***Questionnaire***

In an attempt to determine some factors of the students' individual differences, a questionnaire was administered to each students asking questions about entrance exam scores, study habits, attitudes, and motivation. See appendix for a copy of the questionnaire. In general, the students indicated a positive attitude and good motivation toward taking a course in English. Three areas of interest are included in Table 1 in the Appendix: Entrance exam scores, Preference for Chinese/English, and Amount of Time spent studying.

## ***Results of the Questionnaire***

**Entrance Exam Score:** The average score for those who reported it was 45.5 out of 100. The scores ranged from 32 to 67. 43.3% of the students scored between 41 and 50 out of a hundred on the Entrance exam, 23.3% below 40, 30% between 51 and 60, but only 3.3% over 61.

**Preference for lectures and textbook in Chinese:** The average score was 5.7 out of 10

maximum indicating no preference either for English or Chinese. 10 points shows strong preference for Chinese and 2 points shows strong preference for English. The scores ranged from 2 to 10. 45% of the students professed no preference for English or Chinese as the medium of instruction, 7% had a strong preference for Chinese, 25% had a slight preference for Chinese, but 14% had a slight preference for English and 9% had a strong preference for English.

Time spent studying. The average score was 144.9 minutes per week spent studying for this course. The scores ranged between 60 and 300 minutes per week of study time. The largest group of students (41%) spent between one and two hours per week studying, 22% spent less than this, 27% spent up to four hours studying, and 10% spent up to five hours.

### ***Correlations between various factors***

Correlations were run on the various factors to see which influenced the outcomes of the course. A correlation of .5166 was found between the reported entrance exam scores and the final grade for the second semester indicating that students who were weaker at the beginning of the course remained weaker until the end. However time reportedly spent studying did not affect any of the scores except the second midterm grade which was a take home exam (.3735).

Since some of the tests were interrelated and became progressively more difficult throughout the year, statistics are based on an average score for similar kinds of exams: individual exams vs. group assessments and vocabulary based exams vs. practical applications. The Average score for individual theory based exams was 67.1 compared to the average individual practical exam score of 78.3. There were no group exams based on theory. The average group practical score was 86.4.

## **CONCLUSION**

The method used in the EFL content course was very important. Methods had to be found which did not rely on the students' individual level of English skill nor jeopardize anyone's mastery of the material merely because of insufficient English ability. When content courses are taught in English as a Foreign Language to Asian students, the small group cooperative method of instruction is recommended. The results of this study show that students would not have received passing grades and would have become extremely discouraged had they been required to complete all assignments individually.

An important aspect of the cooperative method is the individual attention students receive. It is important to note that when students worked in groups, they received more individual attention from the instructor. They were required to present their solution to the problem during office hours before they gave their presentation in class receiving immediate feedback, answers to their questions, and suggestions on solving the problems. As they worked with the group they synergistically learned more and accomplished their tasks.

The cooperative method facilitates the traditional Asian practice of placing students with different skills levels in the same classroom. Multilevel students can be taught in the same class because each student contributes to the success of the group by bringing what skills he/she has to the group. This method has been used successfully with university



classes in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan by this researcher (Wright 1997a, 1997b, 1997c).

Use of bilingual texts or bilingual lectures is not a priority. The questionnaire revealed that students did not feel they needed texts and lectures in the students' native language. Preference as to language did not correlate highly with any other factors in the course.

Critical thinking skills carry over from one language to another. It is interesting that non-native speaking students who could not define linguistic concepts in English could still accomplish the practical tasks of solving linguistic problems based on the key concepts. They understood the method to be used and were able to apply this method to solve the problem.

Concepts that are not understood in the students' native language are harder to learn in a foreign language, but this does not mean that college students have to be taught the concepts in their native language first. Linguistic concepts covered in the course were difficult no matter what language students were using.

## THE AUTHOR

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1. COURSE SYLLABUS: LINGUISTICS FOR APPLIED LANGUAGE MAJORS

#### Required Texts:

Victoria Fromkin and Robert Rodman. *An Introduction to Language*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. 1993.  
 Nick Cipollone, Steven Keiser, and Shravan Vasishth. *Language Files*. 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Ohio State University. 1998

#### Course Description:

The course is designed to help students understand the nature of human language. Students will be able to examine their linguistic beliefs and attitudes, and to acquire a theoretical and practical knowledge of languages especially English.

#### Grading Policy:

Students will receive letter grades of A through F based on the average course grade.  
 A 90 to 100 Reserved for those few students who demonstrate exceptional scholarship.  
 B 80 to 89 Indicates the student has exceeded the required level of scholarship.  
 C 70 to 79 Satisfactory performance of required work.

D 60 to 69 Marginal work.

F below 60 Failing grade for unsatisfactory work: no credit.

W withdrawn from a course.

**Grade Criteria:**

The final grade will be calculated according to the following criteria:

- |                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. Classwork and homework | 20% |
| 2. Quizzes and Final      | 60% |
| 3. Participation          | 20% |

**Attendance Policy:**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. Students will be responsible for the work that they missed and should make it up as soon as possible upon their return to class. A student who misses the final exam must arrange with the administrative offices for a make-up date and time. Repeatedly arriving late or leaving early may be considered an absence.

**Plagiarism Policy:**

Students who intentionally plagiarize (take the words of others as their own) or copy the work of others on tests will not receive a passing grade.

**Student Behavior:**

Students are required to speak in English as much as possible in the classroom. Students are asked not to use beepers or cell phones or to engage in other disruptive behavior during class.

**FIRST SEMESTER: SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:**

Week 1: (10/9) Introductions. Discuss the course requirements

Basic vocabulary and concepts in Linguistics: phoneme and minimal pairs.

Week 2: (10/16)

Language Files Read 4.1 (pp 88-96) Try to solve problem.

Language Files Read 3.1 (pp 34-36) Practice the sounds of English.

Week 3: (10/23)

Language Files Read 4.2 (pp 97-102) Try to solve problems.

Language Files Read 3.2 (pp 37-42) Try to compare the sounds of English/Chinese

Week 4 (10/30)

Language Files Read 4.3-4.4 (pp 103-123) Try to solve problems 1.8 and 2.6

Language Files Read 3.3-3.4 (pp 43-48) Practice the sounds.

Week 5 (11/6) Quiz #1 on Phonology. (Also read An Introduction to Language: Ch. 6 and 7)

Language Files Read 4.5 and 4.6 (pp 124-131)

Language Files Read 4.1 (pp 88-96) Do exercises.

Week 6 (11/13) Morphology

Language Files Read 5.1-5.2 (pp 134-139) Try to solve problems.

Week 7 (11/20)

Language Files Read 5.3-5.4 (pp 140-147) Try to solve problems.

Week 8 (11/27)

Language Files Read 5.5-5.6 (pp 148-163) Try to solve exercises 1.8, 2.4, 3.4

Week 9 (12/4)

Language Files Read 5.7 (pp 164-168)

Quiz #2 Morphology (Also read An Introduction to Language: Ch 3).  
 Week 10 (12/11)  
     Language Files Read 6.1 (pp 170-176) Try to solve problems.  
 Week 11 (12/18)  
     Language Files Read 6.2 (pp 177-183) Try to solve problems.  
 Week 12 (12/25) Christmas Holiday  
     Language Files Read 6.3 (pp 184-188) Try to solve problems.  
 Week 13 (1/1) New Year's Day Holiday  
     Language Files Read 6.4 (pp 189-191) Try to solve problems.  
 Week 14: (1/8)  
     Language Files Read 6.5 (pp 192-203) Try to solve problems.  
 Week 15 (1/15) Final Exam: Syntax (Also read An Introduction to Language Ch 4).

**SECOND SEMESTER: SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:**

Week 1: (2/24) Language Files, 10.1 and 10.2. Introduction to Language 473-480  
 Week 2: (3/3) Language Files 10.3, 10.4, 10.5.  
     Introduction to Language 450-454 and 464-472.  
     Watch video The Origin of Language.  
 Week 3: (3/10) Language Files 10.6 and Introduction 456 Reports 10.3 #1, 2, 3, 4.  
 Week 4 (3/17) Language Files 10.7 and Introduction 462 Reports 10.5 #1, 2, 3, 4.  
 Week 5 (3/24) Language Files 10.8 and Introduction 457 Reports 10.5 #5, 6, 7, 8.  
 Week 6 (3/31) Language Files 10.9 and 10.10. and Introduction 463.  
 (4/2 - 4/11) **Spring Break**  
 Week 7 (4/14) Language Files 10.10 Reports  
 Week 8 (4/21) Midterm on Language Files Unit 10 (307-338) and  
     Introduction to Language: Chapter 11 (450-480)  
 Week 9 (4/28) Language Files 11.1, 11.2, 11.3. and  
     Introduction to Language (421-425 and 443-447)  
     Watch The Story of English Video  
 Week 10 (5/5) Language Files 12.1 and 12.2 (write ex. 373)  
     Report 1 and 2. Watch The Story of English video.  
 Week 11 (5/12) Language Files 12.3  
     Report 3 and 4. Watch The Story of English video.  
 Week 12 (5/19) Language Files 12.4  
     Report 5 and 6. Watch The Story of English video.  
 Week 13 (5/26) Language Files 12.5 and Introduction (412-416).  
     Report 7 and 8. Watch The Story of English video.  
 Week 14: (6/2) Language Files 12.6  
     Report 9 and 10 Watch The Story of English video.  
 Week 15 (6/9) Language Files 12.7 Do exercises  
     Report 11 and 12 Watch The Story of English video.  
 Week 16 (6/16) Language Files 12.8 and 12.9 Do exercises.  
 Week 17 (6/23) Final Exam: Definitions from Language Files Units 11 and 12,  
     Also read Introduction to Language: Chapter 10 (399-443).

## APPENDIX B

### Example: Vocabulary Test: Match the definitions with the terms.

Idiolect, dialect, taboo, sociolinguistics, euphemism, isogloss, historical linguistics, Register, slang, comparative method, lingua franca, standard English, Pidgin, language contact, Ebonics, code switching, Dialectology, jargon, creole, borrowing, calque.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ African American English.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ a so-called correct dialect.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ words that express forbidden or dirty actions.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ the study of regional language forms.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ a major language used in an area where speakers of more than one language live that permits communication and commerce among them.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ words and phrases used in casual speech by a close knit group.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ simplified but rule-governed language which is used for communication by speakers of mutually unintelligible languages.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ special words peculiar to the members of a profession or group.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ a technique that compares words of similar form and meaning in languages that are assumed to be related in order to establish historical relationships among them.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ a word or phrase that replaces a taboo form or used to avoid certain terms.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ social varieties of a language.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ the study of how languages change through time.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ the study of the interrelationships of language and social structure, of linguistic variation, and of attitudes toward language.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ an individual's way of speaking reflecting that person's grammar.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ a pidgin language adopted by a group of speakers and learned by children as their native language.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ situation in which groups of speakers of different languages come into contact with one another.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ process by which one language adopts a word or phrase from another language.
18. \_\_\_\_\_ process of inserting words or phrases from one language into another sometimes within a single sentence.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ a language variety used by a particular group of speakers.
20. \_\_\_\_\_ loan translation (word for word).
21. \_\_\_\_\_ the boundary separating one regional dialect or dialectal characteristic from another.

### For extra credit give examples in English of the following:

Taboo word: \_\_\_\_\_  
Slang word: \_\_\_\_\_  
Euphemistic expression: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jargon word: \_\_\_\_\_  
Borrowed word: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### Example: Group Assignment (based on Introduction to Language).

#### Morphology:

In English, the ending -ed denotes the past tense. When a morpheme has alternative phonetic forms, these are called allomorphs. Note that we are not talking about alternate spelling but alternate pronunciation. Look at the following examples and answer the questions about the data.

Walked	appeared	turned
Reached	represented	caused
Looked	heated	headed
Cried	caged	Xeroxed
Copied	tested	bridged
Carried	treated	pealed
Brushed	bleached	deleted

1. How many different allomorphs can you find for the morpheme -ed?
2. List them and write rules for their occurrences.
3. Do they rules have to be ordered rules?
4. Why or why not?
5. Write the rules.
6. Make a chart to explain the occurrences and rules to your classmates.

#### QUESTIONNAIRE: STUDENT SURVEY ABOUT ENGLISH

This is not a test and it will not affect your grade in this class. This survey is being conducted by members of the TESOL organization of English Teachers. Your participation is appreciated. Please circle the number that best fits your answer. Your individual answers will be confidential. Thank you.

#### Anxiety

I feel anxious about my English ability (usually) 5 4 3 2 1 (never)

I feel anxious about my English listening ability (usually) 5 4 3 2 1 (never)

I feel anxious about my English speaking ability (usually) 5 4 3 2 1 (never)

I feel anxious about my English reading ability (usually) 5 4 3 2 1 (never)

I feel anxious about my English writing ability (usually) 5 4 3 2 1 (never)

#### Motivation: I want to improve my English

to get a high grade in my class (strong reason) 5 4 3 2 1 (weak reason)

to get a job in business (strong reason) 5 4 3 2 1 (weak reason)

to teach English (strong reason) 5 4 3 2 1 (weak reason)

to read newspapers, books, magazines (strong reason) 5 4 3 2 1 (weak reason)

- to watch movies and videos (strong reason) 5 4 3 2 1 (weak reason)
- to listen to songs (strong reason) 5 4 3 2 1 (weak reason)
- to talk with foreigners (strong reason) 5 4 3 2 1 (weak reason)
- to travel to foreign countries (strong reason) 5 4 3 2 1 (weak reason)
- other reason \_\_\_\_\_ (strong reason) 5 4 3 2 1 (weak reason)

**Study Habits**

For all my classes I usually study \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week.

For my English class I usually study \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week.

For this class I usually study \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week.

**Self Perception (rate yourself in your English ability)**

- My English ability is (good) 5 4 3 2 1 (poor)
- My English listening ability is (good) 5 4 3 2 1 (poor)
- My English speaking ability is (good) 5 4 3 2 1 (poor)
- My English reading ability is (good) 5 4 3 2 1 (poor)
- My English writing ability is (good) 5 4 3 2 1 (poor)

**Likes and Dislikes**

In high school English classes were my (most favorite) 5 4 3 2 1 (least favorite)

At university English classes are my (most favorite) 5 4 3 2 1 (least favorite)

At university this class is my (most favorite) 5 4 3 2 1 (least favorite)

**Opinions about this class**

- I would prefer the lectures be in English (strongly agree) 5 4 3 2 1 (strongly disagree)
- I would prefer the lectures be in Chinese (strongly agree) 5 4 3 2 1 (strongly disagree)
- I would prefer lectures in both (strongly agree) 5 4 3 2 1 (strongly disagree)
- I would prefer the textbook be in English (strongly agree) 5 4 3 2 1 (strongly disagree)
- I would prefer the textbook be in Chinese (strongly agree) 5 4 3 2 1 (strongly disagree)
- I would prefer the textbook be in both (strongly agree) 5 4 3 2 1 (strongly disagree)

**Test scores**

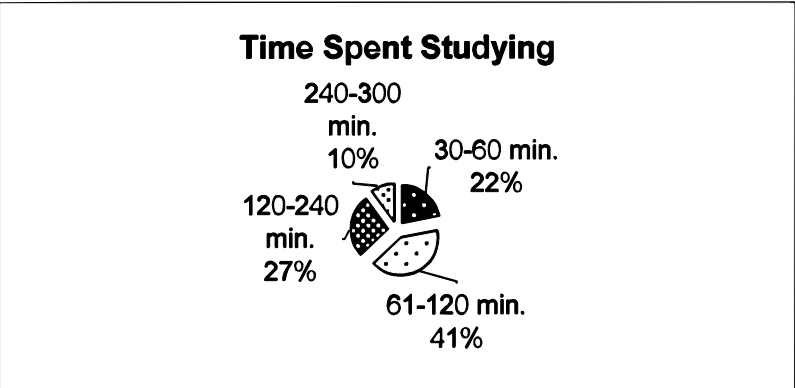
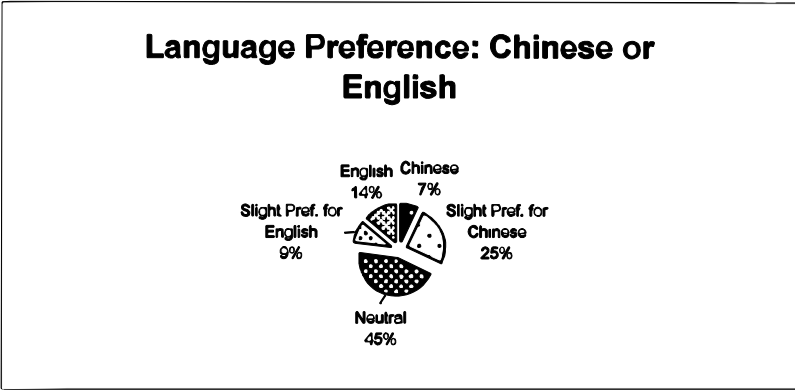
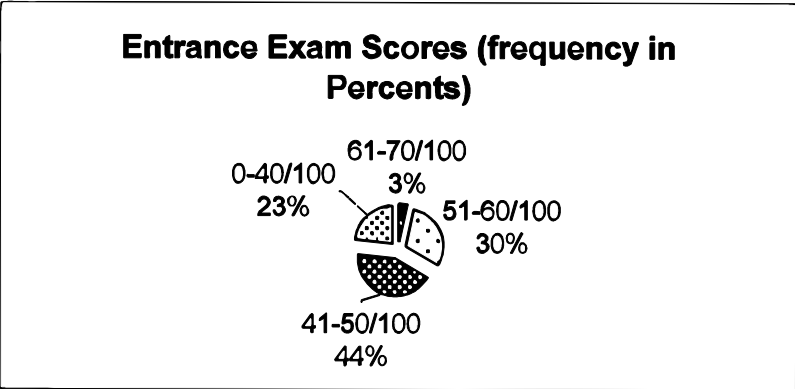
My grades in English are usually (high) 5 4 3 2 1 (low)

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Your student number \_\_\_\_\_

Your score on the entrance exam \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX D**





**APPENDIX E**

**Table 1**

<b>ID</b>	<b>Listn</b>	<b>Entr</b>	<b>LgPr</b>	<b>StTi</b>	<b>MT#1</b>	<b>F#1</b>	<b>MT#2</b>	<b>F#2</b>	<b>FG#1</b>	<b>FG#2</b>	<b>G#1</b>	<b>G#2</b>	<b>G#3</b>
1	80	48	10	30	68	80	54	31	77	67	80	95	85
2	70				63	85			80		90		
3	50	38	6	60	69	85	60	47	78	72	85	90	90
4	70	54	8		70	90	69	55	81	85	90	85	85
5	30		4	120	61	80	73	61	77	85	90	85	90
6	60	48	2	240	56	85	79	49	73	90	90	90	85
7	40	36	6	120	60	80	73	35	77	85	85	85	90
8	70		5	120	74	90	76	50	80	80	80	80	80
9	50	44	9	60	60	85	71	74	78	80	90	80	90
10	60	45	2	240	83	90	73	90	82	85	80	85	90
11	40		6	120	69	80	71	54	48	70	90	70	90
12	70		6	300	72	75	74	72	77	80	80	80	85
13	70		6	240	93	95	93	90	92	90	90	90	95
14	30		7	300	62	85	81	45	81	70	90	70	85
15	70		10	120	55	90	79	33	77	85	80	85	85
16	80	49	8	60	62	90	54	55	75	85	85	85	90
17	90		5	180	77	90	79	69	84	85	90	85	90
18	40		6	180	55	85	76	38	81	85	90	85	90
19	100	67	6	60	64	70	77	64	75	90	90	90	95
20	50	45	7	60	78	85	81	61	85	85	90	85	90
21	60		7	120	66	90	81	67	79	84	80	90	95
22	80	53	7	30	92	85	71	90	85	81	90	70	90
23	50	43	6	120	71	80	77	61	80	79	90	95	85
24	70	40	6	120	87	88	76	69	87	80	90	95	90
25	50	52	4	120	77	80	81	71	80	81	80	85	85
26	70	33	4	120	81	75	80	35	84	74	85	90	90
27	60	35	2	180	46	75	81	26	76	70	80	80	90
28	70		6	120	93	88	83	54	90	77	85	75	90
29	90		7	60	84	80	77	63	80	80	85	90	90
30	90	32	5	240	68	85	77	54	82	77	85	85	90
31	80	55	6	60	79	80	80	83	82	81	90	90	85
32	80	41	8	180	80	90	63	85	82	80	90	75	85
33	70	55	7	120	49	80	76	95	75	90	85	90	95
34	60	50	2	120	84	85	79	85	82	85	90	85	90
35	80		5	120	87	88	81	86	85	89	90	90	95
36	80	46	6	120	76	78	61	78	82	78	90	80	80
37	70	51	5	120	69	70	53	88	76	81	80	80	85
38	60	47	2		50	80	49	50	74	69	90	90	80
39	30	40	5	180	40	75	70	57	76	76	85	85	90

**Table 1 continued**

<b>ID</b>	<b>Listn</b>	<b>Entr</b>	<b>LgPr</b>	<b>StTi</b>	<b>MT#1</b>	<b>F#1</b>	<b>MT#2</b>	<b>F#2</b>	<b>FG#1</b>	<b>FG#2</b>	<b>G#1</b>	<b>G#2</b>	<b>G#3</b>
40	50	51	6		52	90	63	81	74	78	80	85	80
41	50	35	3	120	80	70	74	77	78	77	85	70	85
42	70		7	300	71	80	81	53	80	76	80	75	95
43	60	36	8	180	53	85	76	64	77	78	90	85	85
44	60	50	2	300	84	85	80	93	87	88	90	90	90
45	50	46	6	180	87	70	80	74	74	86	85	95	90

Listn = Listening Exam

Entr=Entrance Exam

LgPr = Language Preference

StTi = Time Studied per week

MT = Midterm Exam

F = Final Exam

G = Group Work



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# A Comparative Study of Attitudes Towards Varieties of English Held by Professionals and Tertiary Level Students in Korea.

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Previous research has revealed that university students in Korea usually prefer American English (AmE) to other varieties (Gibb 1997). Previous research has shown that students about to enter to the workforce appear to believe that AmE would be economically more advantageous to their future careers than, for example, British English (BrE). Gibb (1997) tentatively suggested that position and status in the workforce might be a significant factor in determining university students' attitudes to varieties of English. This investigation, then, extends the initial study by comparing the university students' attitudes with the attitudes of people already in the full-time employment, the rationale being that attitudinal differences might exist between these two groups, thus supporting the suggestion that position in the job market influences attitude.

## INTRODUCTION

Attitudes are intrinsically interesting to language teachers because they tend to reflect certain beliefs and preconceived ideas about the target language community (TLC) and the speakers of that language variety (Edwards 1982, p.20). By investigating attitudes, in particular attitudes to varieties of English, a researcher can identify useful information about a group of learners, for example, their beliefs about language, language learning, their motivations, and their likes and dislikes, preferences and choices.

It should be noted, though, as Trudgill and Chambers (1991) observe, varieties of English are linguistically very similar and often mutually comprehensible (p.2). The most noticeable difference is often phonological, yet, as Strevens (1983) points out, with regard to BrE and AmE, these variations in pronunciation rarely impede communication (p.90-91). In fact, Strevens (1972) argues that, apart from phonological features and localized vocabulary, the differences between English language varieties are few and trivial.

However, although native speakers (NS) might regard the differences between AmE and BrE as trivial, non-native speakers (NNS) find them problematic. Bobda (1998) argues that "confusion, embarrassment or sheer incomprehension will arise in many real-life situations when the listener or reader who is not familiar with the other variety encounters features or messages involving features pertaining to the other variety" (p.16). Bobda suggests that English teachers often underestimate the extent of the differences between varieties of English, for example the differences in stress, rhoticity, lexis, vowel quality, spelling, accent variation, and use of phrasal verbs. To the NNS, these variations and contrasts in usage can make the difference between successful and unsuccessful communication. If this is the case, then the issue is no longer trivial.

The rationale for this study, therefore, is that the question as to which variety of English should be taught in class needs to be addressed because it has important implications for the EFL classroom. To address this question, this study identifies four objectives. First, it is necessary to confirm that Korean learners of English prefer to learn American English (AmE). Second, we need to establish whether or not the two groups are homogenous in attitudes to language varieties. Third, reasons for this preference should be identified. Finally, the implications of the findings need to be evaluated in terms of their impact on the Korean EFL context.

## **PREVIOUS STUDIES**

### ***Definitions***

Firstly, in this study an attitude is defined as an evaluatory relationship between an individual and a referent. This relationship is dynamic rather than static, transitory rather than stable, and it is heavily influenced by an individual's feelings/ beliefs/ experience of the world (Gardner 1985a; Fazio 1986). Secondly, motivation is defined using the integrative and instrumental distinction suggested by (Gardner 1985). In this study, Gardner suggests that integrative motivation is the desire to learn a language in order to integrate with the TLC, whereas instrumental motivation is the desire to learn a language to enhance socioeconomic status. These terms, though, are not regarded as mutually exclusive; there is an overlap, since the desire to live in a particular TLC might be fueled by the desire improve one's career prospects (Svanes 1987; Dornyei 1990).

### ***Political/Historical Familiarity***

Previous research suggests attitudes to language varieties are often influenced by political and/or historical familiarity. Shaw (1983), for example, argues that the choice between BrE and AmE variety is influenced by historical factors. In a study of attitudes towards varieties of English among Indians and Singaporeans, he noted that, whereas Indians and Singaporeans preferred BrE to AmE, Thais preferred AmE. He observes that, since India and Singapore are former British colonies, it is understandable that learners have more positive attitudes towards learning BrE. Kachru (1983), in a study of Indian learners of English, found two-thirds of the sample chose BrE as their preferred model, whereas only 5.17% chose AmE. Furthermore, in a study of Korean learners, Gibb (1997) notes that familiarity is a possible explanation for learners' strong preference for AmE. In the study, 91.4 % of respondents stated that Koreans are more familiar with American culture than with that of any other country.

### ***Economics and Prestige***

Learners' attitudes may well be influenced by the economic prestige attributed to certain language varieties. The English language has gained great economic value, acting now as the lingua franca within most global markets, and, subsequently, the English language has become a valuable commodity (Holly 1992, p.16). Therefore, it is likely that the economic advantages associated with acquisition of English as a second language will influence learners' attitudes. This influence can be seen in terms of employment, prestige and practicality.

First, it is possible that the domestic and/or global job market will influence attitudes towards a language variety. In countries such as Korea, English language skills are often a prerequisite for a number of different areas of work. Lord (1987) with reference to Hong Kong, explains that

English has changed from being a purely colonial language whose use was largely restricted to government circles, the law, high-level business and a few other sectors, to becoming an indispensable language for wider communication, for a growingly large range of people all the way down from top brass to secretaries. (P.11)

Similarly, in countries such as Korea, English is not only a compulsory part of the school curriculum, but also an integral part of enhancing career prospects, and getting promotion. Gibb (1997) noted that Korean university students' preference for AmE was significantly influenced by concerns about employment, and there was overwhelming support for the idea that AmE is more advantageous than other varieties.

Second, it is possible that attitudes will be affected by the degree of prestige associated with the TLC and its language varieties. It is reasonable to argue that economic success and achievement leads to higher status. Subsequently, learners' attitudes towards a variety of English might be influenced by their perception of the prestige value attached to that variety. Kahane (1982) argues that a particular variety becomes prestigious because "the evolving of a new style of life, of modernism, of dynamics in the culture behind the source language, makes it dominant at a certain point in history" (p.233). He suggests that AmE has become a prestige variety in many communities because of political, economic and technical preponderance of the United States after World War Two. In light of these assertions, Gibb (1997) concluded that Korean university students believe that i) AmE is more useful for their future careers, ii) they would prefer to study in America than in Britain or Australia, and iii) they would prefer their teacher to be American than British or Australian.

Third, learners' attitudes are often subject to practicality. That is, a learner will probably want to learn a language variety that is the most practical in a given situation. Edwards (1985:164) has said that the "relationship between language and economics is, I believe, a very strong one, and practical considerations underlie most linguistic patterns and alternations." So, Korean learners' perception of practicality might influence their attitudes. For example, a learner might believe that Korean businesses have closer economic ties with American companies than with British ones. Therefore, a learner might find it more practical to learn AmE.

### ***Geographic Proximity, Learning Materials and Accent***

Geographic proximity usually affects attitudes to language. In a study of French learners' reactions to speakers of English, Flaitz (1988) found a preference for BrE over AmE. It is reasonable to assume that geographical proximity, as well as other variables, helped shaped their responses.

The materials used in the classroom are also likely to influence the learners. Matsuura et al. (1994) found that Japanese learners at university are more positive towards AmE because the models of English used in secondary education are primarily North American-based and occasionally British. The taped material used as instructional material tends to present AmE pronunciation models. In a study of Korean learners, Gibb (1997) notes that there was mild agreement among university students that AmE is easier to understand than BrE or AusE. This

suggests that Korean learners are more familiar with the AmE pronunciation model, probably because it forms the basis of English courses in secondary schools.

## THE SURVEY

The sample (N) consisted of 118 respondents who were studying in a pre-intermediate class at a language institute in Seoul. The sample was divided into two sub-groups: Group 1 (G1) consisted of 68 professionals, and Group 2 (G2) consisted of 50 university students. There was a significant difference in age between the groups as would have been expected: average age for G1 was 32.7 years, and for G2 it was 23.0 years.

A questionnaire was the primary research instrument, consisting of 8 closed and 2 open-ended questions plus one self-report section (See Appendix A). A five-point Likert scale was used on the closed-type items, and the open-type ones offered the respondents five choices, including No Preference (NP) and Other. A t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the closed-type items, and chi square was used to compute the frequencies.

A follow-up interview was used to provide more detailed responses. A research assistant conducted the interview in Korean, and the subsequent data were analyzed and categorized thematically by the researcher. With the help of an independent observer, the thematic patterns were crosschecked, enabling the researcher to check for reliability and validity. The data was then analyzed in terms of the frequencies with which the categories occurred.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first part shows the data collected from the closed/open-type items on the questionnaire. This is presented as 1) respondent orientations, and 2) principal attitude findings. The second part looks at the information gathered from the self-reported section of the questionnaire.

### *Respondent Orientations*

The results clearly indicate the homogeneity of the sample group and reinforce the suggestion that North America plays a defining role in influencing the learners' orientations towards education, jobs, and teachers/ the classroom. Table 1 provides a summary of the data:

The data establish that the respondents sense a stronger affinity with the USA than with the other countries offered as choices: Britain, Australia, or Other. It is likely that the responses are interrelated and are not mutually exclusive since a desire to study English in the

1.	Given a choice, the two groups report that the USA is the most popular place in which to study English
2.	Both groups report that they would prefer to work in the USA than in any other country except Korea
3.	There is general agreement between the groups that Korea is more familiar with and has closer economic relations with the USA than with any other country.

USA probably precipitates a desire to have an American teacher and American textbooks. It is also interesting the respondents believe that information about studying in the USA is more accessible than about other countries reflecting the way American schools and colleges have secured a majority share of the overseas language learning market.

It is fair to say that this strong orientation towards the USA is bound to influence the respondents' attitude to the variety of English they wish to learn, as demonstrated in the next section.

### *Attitudes to Language Varieties*

An analysis of the data reveals two interesting sets of results. Firstly, it is quite clear that the respondents are very keen to learn AmE and an American accent (See Table 2). Regarding Variety 1, (Which varieties do you want to learn?), G1 and G2 respond that the AmE is the most popular variety. Support is slightly stronger in G1 with 55.9% in G1 and 60.0% in G2 preferring AmE, indicating that support is slightly stronger among university students. Similarly, Variety 2 (Which accent do you want to learn?) suggests that American pronunciation is the most popular.

Variety 1: Which varieties do you want to learn?	N f(%)	G1 f(%)	G2 f(%)	Variety 4: Which accents do you want to learn?	N f(%)	G1 f(%)	G2 f(%)
AmE	68 (57.6)	38 (55.9)	30 (60.0)		77 (65.3)	44 (64.7)	33 (66.6)
AusE	3 (2.5)	2 (2.9)	1 (2.0)		1 (0.8)	1 (1.5)	-
BrE	25 (21.2)	14 (20.6)	11 (22.0)		21 (17.8)	10 (14.7)	11 (22.0)
Other	2 (1.7)	2 (2.9)	-		1 (0.8)	-	1 (2.0)
NP	20 (16.9)	12 (17.6)	8 (16.0)		18 (15.3)	13 (19.1)	5 (10.0)
Total	118 (100.0)	68 (100.0)	50 (100)		118 (100.0)	68 (100.0)	50 (100)

There are a few marginal variations, for example, there is slightly stronger support to learn BrE and its accent in G2, and there is slightly stronger support for NP in G1, but these are not statistically significant differences. These results not only confirm the previous study's data (Gibb 1997), that AmE is clearly more popular, they also emphasize the homogeneity of the groups' preferences.

In addition, the respondents' failure to choose the NP option highlights the extent to which respondents regard varieties of English as distinct linguistic groups. By opting for NP, a respondent is suggesting that the variety is less important than the language itself. However, less than 20% of respondents chose NP in either Variety 1 or Variety 2, giving the majority to those who choose AmE.



Secondly, in Table 3, the data reveal areas of agreement and disagreement in attitude toward varieties of English, and in addition suggests interesting differences in learner preferences. In terms of attitude towards the linguistic aspects of varieties of English, both G1 and G2 are neutral to the notion of grammatical differences. Variety 7 shows that neither group perceives major grammatical differences, although G2 takes a much less neutral stance, reflecting perhaps an over-analytic approach compared to G1. Both G1 and G2, though, believe that there are significant differences in pronunciation/ accent and lexis (Variety 2 and Variety 6). These results appear to support the claims of researchers who believe that phonological variations are likely to cause learners the most problems (Stevens 1972 1983; Trudgill & Chambers 1991).

Upon further analysis of the data, it would appear that differences in language learning preferences exist between the two groups. The results imply that G1 is more concerned with the learning environment and affective factors, whereas G2 adopts a more analytical approach. G1 maintains higher mean scores on the items related to affective factors, such as level of excitement (Variety9), BrE accent difficulty (Variety5), degree of politeness (Variety8) and comprehen-

	N	G1	G2	t	sig
	X (S. D.)	X (S. D.)	X (S. D.)		(2-tailed)
Variety 7: There are grammar differences between AmEm, BrE and AusE	3.08 (.81)	3.01 (.84)	3.18 (.77)	-1.094	.276
Variety 9: AmE is more exciting than BrE or AusE	3.32 (.76)	3.38 (.77)	3.24 (.74)	1.004	.317
Variety 10: AusE is more exciting than BrE or AmE	2.81 (.63)	2.76 (.63)	2.88 (.63)	-.988	.325
Variety 2: There are pronunciation differences between AmEm, BrE and AusE	4.29 (.66)	4.25 (.72)	4.34 (.56)	-.736	.463
Variety 6: There are vocabulary differences between AmEm, BrE and AusE	3.63 (.76)	3.59 (.78)	3.68 (.74)	-.646	.519
Variety 5: The British accent is harder to learn than the American or Australian accent	3.12 (.94)	3.15 (.97)	3.08 (.92)	.380	.705
Variety 8: BrE is more polite than AmE or AusE	3.72 (.75)	3.74 (.80)	3.70 (.68)	.252	.802
Variety 3: AmE pronunciation is easier to understand than BrE or AusE	3.46 (1.02)	3.47 (1.06)	3.44 (.97)	.161	.873

sibility of AmE accent (Variety3). G2 on the other hand maintains higher means scores on the linguistic factors, such as grammar differences (Variety7), pronunciation differences (Variety2) and vocabulary differences (Variety6). It would seem, therefore, that G1 respondents focus more on more personal aspects of learning, but that G2 focuses more on the linguistic and academic differences. The implication is that G1 respondents tend to personalize the learning process, but that G2 respondents regard learning more as a discipline, i.e. a subject to be studied. Older learners are possibly more preoccupied with affective/personal factors which relate the learning to themselves because i) they might have been away from the classroom for an extended period because of work, ii) they regard the learning process in terms of its social and cultural value. They are concerned with their own performance in the classroom, and are aware of the potential communication problems that result from failure to understand different accents. On the other hand, the younger respondents (G2) view language academically, concerning themselves with its formal aspects, such as grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary, a possible reflection of their recent experience of learning languages in secondary education. In other words, G2 appears to view language learning as the study of rules; G1 appears to recognize the psychosocial problems of communication and interaction.

### SELF-REPORT SECTION

The two groups appear to be homogeneous in their attitudes towards studying in either America or Britain. The thematic analysis of the data reveals that the most frequent comment about studying English in America is that Koreans are more familiar with America, American culture and American society, as summarized in below:

The frequency for the other categories - economic power of the USA, cultural interest and education - is fairly evenly distributed in both G1 and G2, though slightly more G2 respondents commented on education and interest in culture. There were fewer comments on

<b>Table 4</b>					
Reasons for Studying English in America			Reasons for Studying English in Britian		
	G1 f	G2 f		G1 f	G2 f
Sociocultural Familiarity	16	13	High Status/ Cultured	3	2
Economic Power/ Influence	5	4	Tradition/ Original Form	3	2
Interest in Culture	5	7	Interest in Accent	2	5
Education	5	8	Interest in Culture	1	3
Other	5	5	Other	3	4

studying English in Britain, but, interestingly, different categories emerged. For example, both G1 and G2 commented on the perception of BrE as high class/status, and stressed that BrE is the 'original' form, the traditional form of English.

Firstly, comments about studying English in America tend to cluster around the socio-economic themes, whereas comments about studying in Britain gravitate towards the prestige/status theme. A closer look at the selection of representative quotes, summarized in Appendix B, suggests strong instrumental reasons for studying AmE in America. Both G1 and G2 respondents focus their comments on the issues of opportunity, and education, implying that they will benefit economically by learning AmE. Comments such as "useful", "influential", "opportunities", "standard", and "powerful" all suggest that the respondents regard America in terms of progress towards economic/ career goals.

In addition, the respondents focus their attention of the familiarity of AmE and America. Comments such as "more usual", "more usual in the world", "more comfortable", "used in secondary schools", and "more familiar" further underline the notion that the respondents choose AmE because it is perceived as familiar. It is not surprising, then, that there are few comments that can be interpreted as integrative. Few respondents refer to their interest in American culture or people. Of course, this might be a consequence of the extent to which they feel familiar with AmE, i.e. because the culture is so familiar, the respondents do not feel compelled to comment on their interest/ disinterest. The main point, though, is that there are no obvious differences between the comments made by G1 and G2, suggesting a certain amount of homogeneity of attitude.

Secondly, there are no discernible differences between G1 and G2 in comments related to studying English in Britain; most comments relate to a perceived prestige and status attached to BrE.

The most striking comment is that BrE is more "high-class/traditional" than other varieties because it is considered the "original" form of English. This notion can be interpreted both integratively and instrumentally. In integrative terms, there appears to be a certain amount of interest in BrE as a cultural phenomenon, with references to perceived friendliness/politeness and to the fact that Britain is less well known than America in Korea, and, subsequently, might be of greater interest to some. In instrumental terms, interest in the high-class/traditional aspects of BrE might reflect a desire to achieve higher social status by acquiring what is perceived to be the "original" form of the language. What is clear, though, is that there are fewer references to career improvement or opportunity, and subsequently the general tenor of the comments suggests cultural/integrative rather than economic/instrumental motivation.

## CONCLUSION

The objectives of this study were to 1) confirm that Korean learners of English prefer to learn American English (AmE), 2) establish whether or not the two groups are homogenous in attitudes to language varieties. 3) identify reasons for this preference, and 4) assess the implications of the findings for educators and learners in the Korean EFL context.

The first two aims of this study are easily confirmed. The two groups do appear homogenous in attitude to language variety thus refuting the initial hypothesis that place in the work force might affect attitude to language variety; both groups did express a desire to learn AmE above any other variety. Choices were offered, including a NP option, yet still a significant majority chose the American variety.

These results are interesting for two main reasons. First, the results clearly indicate that, given a choice, both G1 and G2 prefer AmE. Even though the respondents were given the option NP or Other, the majority still selected AmE as the most preferred variety. Second, the results mean that a person's present occupation does not appear to significantly influence attitudes, as was initially hypothesized. It was thought that the strong preference for AmE was related to position in the work force (Gibb 1997). However, this study indicated that those already in the work force also maintain a strong preference for AmE. In which case, support for AmE can be found across the social/professional spectrum in Korea, from tertiary-level education through to senior management.

With regard to the third aim of this study, the most likely explanation for the strength of this desire for AmE is that Koreans are more familiar with American culture and Korea maintains closer economic links with the USA than with other English speaking countries. It is fair to say, then, that both G1 and G2 relate language variety choice to economic power: they want to learn AmE because it is the variety used in the world's leading economy. These results tend to reflect the findings of other researchers who have also noted the correlation between economic prestige and choice of language variety (Edwards 1985, Lord 1987). This attitude appears to be based on the perception of America as an economic power, with its advanced technology and facilities for education.

Finally, regarding the fourth aim, the implications for EFL in Korea are two-fold. First, it is important to recognize the problems that learners experience when they encounter different varieties of English. There is always a danger that employers and teachers might not fully appreciate that extent of the frustration and confusion some learners might experience. NS understandably down play the differences whereas to a NNS, variations in accent or lexis can mean the difference between successful and unsuccessful communication.

Secondly, although the two groups are homogenous in terms of attitude to language varieties, they are not homogenous in terms of learning preferences. G1 respondents focus on the affective factors of language learning, such as levels of difficulty, excitement, politeness, and comprehensibility; G2 focuses on the linguistic factors, such as differences in grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Although it might not always be practical to do so, teachers with both students and professionals in class might find certain lessons work better if they take into consideration the differences in age, experience, and learning styles.

The most important implication, though, is one that has significance beyond the Korean EFL context. What is at issue here is the variety that should be taught in class. Taking the results presented here to their logical conclusion, it would seem prudent to offer the learners AmE, since that is what they want. However, such a policy would be extremely restrictive, especially since learners are likely to encounter different varieties of English in professional and overseas leisure pursuits. That said, basing a syllabus on British English would seem inappropriate, unless the learners had specific reason to learn that particular variety. In Korea, at least, there needs to be a balance between a staple diet of AmE and a regular intake of other varieties, the ones that are most likely to satisfy the learners needs. After all, AmE is not necessarily representative of the varieties of English Korean learners are likely to encounter, given the number of Englishes spoken world-wide.

## **FURTHER RESEARCH**

Given the extent to which G1 and G2 prefer AmE, qualitative follow-up interviews would enable the researcher to gain greater insight into the reasons i) why Korean language learners

maintain such a strong preference for AmE, and ii) why relatively few learners chose the NP option. A third interesting line of research would be to investigate other potential variables, such as proficiency level and sex, and determine the extent to which they influence attitudes towards language varieties. Finally, it would be useful to assess whether or not introducing more varieties of English into a syllabus, for example, incorporating more diverse and representative accents and lexis, would benefit the learners and enhance a language course.

## THE AUTHOR

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## APPENDIX A:

### QUESTIONNAIRE (VARIETY 1-10)

- |     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 1)  | Which varieties of English do you want to learn ?<br>a) AmE                      b) AusE                      c) BrE<br>d) Other(s)_____                      e) NP               |  |
| 2   | There are pronunciation differences between AmE, BrE and AusE<br>1                      2                      3                      4                      5                    |  |
| 3   | AmE pronunciation is easier to understand than BrE and AusE.<br><br>1                      2                      3                      4                      5                 |  |
| 4   | Which accent do you want to learn ?<br>a) American                      b) British                      c) Australian<br>d) Other(s)_____                      e) NP              |  |
| 5   | The British accent is harder to learn than the American or Australian accent<br><br>1                      2                      3                      4                      5 |  |
| 6   | There are vocabulary differences between AmE, BrE and AusE<br><br>1                      2                      3                      4                      5                   |  |
| 7   | There are grammar differences between AmE, BrE, and AusE<br><br>1                      2                      3                      4                      5                     |  |
| 8   | BrE is more polite than AmE or AusE<br><br>1                      2                      3                      4                      5  |  |
| 9   | AmE is more exciting than AusE and BrE<br><br>1                      2                      3                      4                      5                                       |  |
| 10  | AusE is more interesting than AmE and BrE<br><br>1                      2                      3                      4                      5                                    |  |
| 11. | General Comments  |  |

## APPENDIX B

### Select Comments: Reasons for Studying English in America

G1: reasons for studying English in America	G2 : reasons for studying English in America
<p>America is the most influential country            America has good technology            I am more familiar with American accent</p> <p>It is easy to travel            AmE is more usual in Korea            I want to travel in America            AmE is useful for my major            Koreans study AmE in High School            Korean companies like AmE            AmE is more informal            I plan to emigrate to USA            America has more opportunities for life</p> <p>I have family members in America            AmE is standard in the world</p>	<p>In Korea AmE is more usual            AmE is more powerful            AmE is more familiar            I like the culture            It's cheap to study            Good technology for major/study            AmE more usual in world            We don't need exact accent            AmE is used in Korean secondary schools</p> <p>We have opportunities for life in America</p> <p>I heard that it better to study in US            Am is more free            My friends study there            It's more comfortable to learn AmE</p>

### Select Comments: Reasons for Studying English in Britain

G1: reasons for studying English in Britain	G2 : reasons for studying English in Britain
<p>Britain is the origin of English            BrE is more traditional form of English            I want more high class accent</p> <p>BrE more familiar in world</p> <p>BrE is more friendly</p> <p>My father worked there</p> <p>I want to visit there</p> <p>I want more European culture            AmE is too familiar to me</p>	<p>BrE is more high-class            BrE is more traditional            BrE is beautiful            BrE teachers found everywhere            American teachers are not diligent            I always know AmE and culture</p> <p>BrE more polite            BrE is the origin of English            BrE more cultured            It is easier to travel            I like accent            BrE interesting, not known in Korea</p>

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# Classroom English for Enhanced Student Learning

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Despite the fact that they may have minimal proficiency in English themselves, Korean teachers are expected to become models of English for their students. Merely running a video or audio player is not enough, and using native-speakers of English as models of English is no longer an option. This paper presents one option for teachers to present authentic in-context English to students, who will not only learn the language more rapidly, but also be further convinced of the usefulness of English and the English abilities of their instructors. Various terms used in the topic area are examined to promote clarity in the discussion: Classroom English is defined as a subfield of teacher talk, and distinguished from dialogues loosely centered in the classroom. The merits and concerns of teacher talking time and a bi-lingual approach to teaching are discussed. It is noted that teachers in a teacher training program indicated that Classroom English should be granted more time in that program. Specific guidance for developing personalized Classroom English language is offered.

**D**espite all those countless books and articles that press for minimization of teacher talking time, as we face the new century Asian students expect their teachers to be models of the language. While moving away from the Grammar-Translation Method to more communicative approaches, students are not satisfied with "high tech" solutions, which include computers/multi-media, audio-cassette tape recorders, and video players, as their sole source of spoken English. Teachers may be uncertain of their own proficiency, yet guidelines under the 6th National Curriculum and the widely-anticipated upcoming changes to the secondary schools' English curriculum are propelling change.

Many English educators in Korea, having received TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) instruction from contemporary western sources (including formal academic studies, practical teacher trainings, and reading current literature) are encouraging the use of "Classroom English."

## **TERMINOLOGY**

Classroom English is based on several concepts. Perhaps the most important of these is that students want to learn "authentic English" (or "real-life English"). Unfortunately, in researching the area of Classroom English we are faced with a number of conflicting definitions, and authenticity is foremost in the list of terms in dispute. The problem has been stated as follows: "if many of the leading lights in the profession have failed to agree on a common definition, then a similar -- or even exaggerated -- condition probably exists within the profession in general" (Adams, 1995).



Nunan has suggested (1989, p.54) "[a] rule-of-thumb definition for 'authentic' here is any material which has not been specifically produced for the purpose of language teaching." This definition competes with numerous others, such as "the degree to which language teaching materials have the qualities of natural speech or writing." (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 22.)

Under Nunan's definition, in an EFL environment a teacher faces a challenging task in obtaining "authentic" materials. Furthermore, there are questions of freshness: do authentic materials, once removed from their natural environment, remain authentic (at least in the eyes of the students); and at what point materials become dated, thereby losing authenticity? The second definition allows for teacher- or textbook-generated language, but does not address the need for student-perception of authenticity: is this authentic language for them?

However, Adams (1995), in his discussion of authenticity, quotes Taylor (1994), "there is no such thing as an abstract quality 'authenticity' which can be defined once and for all." Adams then adds a comment from Widdowson (1979):

Authenticity is realized by appropriate response and the language teacher is responsible for designing a methodology which will establish the conditions whereby this authenticity can be realized."

Under Widdowson's framework, authenticity is generated within the classroom itself, that is: language produced not for the purpose of language teaching, but for authentic communication. This is the direction for the remainder of this paper.

When teachers use English in the classroom for a purpose other than just teaching that specific language, and the students understand the message, they are *communicating* in English. It is easy to forget how exciting that can be for the students. On the other hand, once again we are faced with difficulty in defining this event -- there is little agreement on terminology.

Some terms to consider are "Teacher Talk," "Classroom Language," and "Classroom English." Yet again there is conflict in defining these terms. strange that English teachers cannot define their own words!

Teacher Talk is a term in general use in the field of pedagogy to refer to the form of language used by teachers with their younger and less-skilled learners. Specialists in Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition might explain Teacher Talk as follows:

Teachers address classroom language learners differently from the way they address other kinds of classroom learners. They make adjustments to both language form and language function in order to facilitate communication. (Ellis, 1985, p.304.)

This definition is roughly equivalent to a Caretaker Speech or Foreigner Talk that has been imported to the L2 classroom (where students are learning a second or foreign language). Chaudron (1988) has identified several characteristics of teacher talk, including providing context through restricting the topics to the "here and now," modifying and simplifying the language to meet the level of the students, and generally using teacher talk for functions of teaching: explaining, questioning, and commanding. This description includes the length and frequency of silence, repetitions and restatements, shortening the utterances, and the speed and clarity of speech.

Many ESL/EFL teacher-trainers would suggest, however, that Teacher Talk is better understood as the words and utterances spoken by the teacher in the classroom. This description includes words spoken by the teacher to intentionally model English, as well as instructions given in English to accomplish any particular classroom task. Some would go so far as to include **any** utterance by the teacher (in any language) before student(s) in the classroom. It is

"utterances" which reflects the concern of teacher trainers, when teachers nervously fill silent time with idle talk, ask meaningless questions, or fail to give students valuable silent thinking time. Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis also comes into play here. Teachers that speak in a manner inaccessible to their students may be merely uttering, though they speak perfect English. This may be one part of the rationale behind the argument that although Teacher Talk "can aid comprehension and language acquisition, not all teacher input is as helpful as might be supposed" (Bowen, Madsen and Hilferty, 1985, p.60).

Nunan has emphasized the benefits of teacher talk: "In language classrooms, it is particularly important because the medium is the message" (1991, p.7). This statement, however, helps point out one of the common presumptions of teacher talk -- that it is a native-speaker of English or a near-native-speaker doing the talking. In the EFL environment, however, this is often not the case. It therefore becomes all the more important to ascertain what the teacher is saying, and in which language. Not to minimize the contributions of a bilingual classroom, but when the teacher is not speaking in English, they are not modeling English. The term "teacher talk" carries many inferences.

Classroom Language has been offered as a term for teacher talk that has been planned for use in the L2 classroom. This is an attempt to isolate the positive components of teacher talk: teachers don't plan those negative components identified above. Classroom Language, as a refined form of teacher talk, makes use of the spontaneous and unconscious acquisition processes that take place when learners are placed in an immersion context rather than in a teaching/learning context.

Classroom language helps promote acquisition in a variety of ways -- the language is highly contextualised with many extra-linguistic clues to help comprehension and it appeals to the young learners' previous experience. (Salaberri, 1995, p.3.)

The term Classroom English is offered by the authors of this paper as a modification of the term Classroom Language. Unfortunately, the term Classroom English has been used by a large number of Elementary School English teacher training programs in Korea to refer to dialogues which only coincidentally occur within the classroom. These dialogues are used to instruct the teachers (as trainees) in English, as well as to offer them teaching material for their own classrooms. However, the term does positively convey the idea that the teacher will attempt to limit her language to English, at least while using Classroom English.

The authors wish to suggest the following definition, which will be used for the remainder of this paper: Classroom English is the English used in the classroom, in context, in a planned and appropriate level of language, together with extra-linguistic clues, for any purpose other than the teaching of that language. An example would be "Please sit down and open your books to page 29." Or "Young-Ae, are you sleepy?" Naturally, in the initial sessions, the learning of Classroom English may appear not so very different from any other lesson under a communicative approach to language learning. The principal difference in this case is the outcome of the lesson -- it should have an immediately evident and purposeful use.

## **SOME ASPECTS OF CLASSROOM ENGLISH**

### ***Using Classroom English***

It may be observed that Classroom English is a logical partner to the various issues of classroom management that teachers face on a daily basis. We may also note that instructions are given in English, not that the instruction is about English.

On the other hand, Classroom English is certainly a form of teacher talk, which is a topic of concern for communicative approaches to language instruction. Unfortunately, teacher talk is often viewed suspiciously as "Teacher Talking Time" (TTT), rather than as valuable "language modeling." Studies in L2 classrooms have shown that through lecturing, explaining a grammatical rule, leading drill work, or asking questions to the whole class, teachers do most of the talking, as much as 75% of the talking time (Ernst, 1994). The quality of the students' talking time (STT) which remains is also suspect as a result of the restrictions on the students' responses or topics of discussion.

Any number of TEFL training books would suggest a much lower level of teacher talking time, perhaps by including classroom management issues such as taking the roll and fulfilling various disciplinary or administrative functions as English language time. Perhaps the clearest summary of the argument for less TTT is by Scrivener (1994, p.16):

The more a teacher talks -- the less opportunity there is for the learners. They need time to think, to prepare what they are going to say and how they are going to say it.

Hubbard (et.al., 1983, p.249) suggest that, by using the various stages of language instruction as a guide, we can anticipate the levels of TTT as follows:

At the presentation stage, the teacher is firmly in control and doing most (if not all) of the talking. . . At the controlled practice stage, the teacher remains in control. . . At this stage, STT is equal to or greater than TTT. At the free practice stage, the teacher relaxes control. . . STT will be much greater than TTT, and the teacher will only intervene if serious problems arise.

It was overheard during a teacher training course that "teachers shouldn't talk more than 33% of the time during the lesson... Start them (the students) off, then get out of the way." Bowen and Marks (1994, p.7) suggest, however, that teachers should consider whether their talking time is productive; that "simply taking a quantitative approach and minimizing teacher talk is probably too crude a solution."

Harmer (1998, p.7) points out that "good TTT may have beneficial qualities." He describes "rough-tuning," when the teacher has identified the students' skill level and reduced her speech to a level at or slightly above the students' ability to understand, as valuable lesson time. As Phillips (1993, p.17) points out, "When, as a teacher, you go about the daily business of organizing the class, you provide some truly authentic listening material."

Clearly the literature shows that there is a high level of dissension about the amount of time teachers should be speaking. As noted earlier, Asian students now expect their Asian teachers to model the language. This is a change from the past, when traditionally this "modeling" was limited to native-speakers of English (NSEs), most of whom were hired for just that purpose (regardless of their level of professional qualification). Modeling English has been considered fairly straightforward for most native-speakers of English: open the mouth, English comes out. Jack Richards has used the description "walking tape recorder" for untrained native speakers of English, where teaching skill is neither expected nor required. The fiscal realities of the late 1990s are reducing the availability of NSEs. But as more and more Korean teachers are sent to various types of English Language Teacher trainings, and more Korean teachers are entering the profession with higher English skills, English modeling expectations are rising. Teachers are aware of these rising expectations, and they are seeking a higher level of Classroom English instruction in the Elementary School English teacher training institutes (Yoo, 1998).

During the past few years, the modeling of English in the Elementary Schools has been largely carried out through audio and video recordings. Though certainly enjoyable to the

students, tapes lack the spontaneity needed to take students from mere listeners to active participants.

Despite not being NSEs, many Korean speakers of English can more effectively model the language than even highly trained NSEs, though there is a common belief otherwise. Who is a better role-model, who comes closer to the students' own experiences? Who knows better the areas of contrast and difficulty between the languages? And of course we must also consider well-trained non-Korean non-native-speakers of English as well. Each teacher has something to offer. Considering the economic situation that most Asian nations now face, it is the local teachers who will have to carry most of the burden.

In addition to merely offering the sounds of English to the students, teachers can accomplish a number of classroom objectives using Classroom English. Classroom management issues such as taking the roll are only a beginning: depending on the students and the hours available for instruction, meaningful communication between teacher and student can occur in only a few months.

Another opportunity, of course, is using English to teach English. Some English can be used as "building blocks" in teaching more English. The basic words, the "building blocks," are not understood because of translation, but because students have understood why they are used. The idea is that the students learn these words for their real function, not just as phrases from a textbook or video.

The arguments continue over whether teachers should "only use English" in the classroom. Fujimoto and Ogane (1996) have pointed out that not all scholars agree whether this is a good idea, particularly in the EFL setting where all students share the same L1 (e.g. Korean). Phillips (1993, p.8) also notes that there may be occasions when "it is more economical and less frustrating for all concerned if you give instructions for a complicated activity in the children's mother tongue" or ask them to translate and report back in their L1, then move back into English to continue. However, one of the goals of Classroom English is to keep the students in English as much as possible. Everyday activities are a perfect area to focus on. Teachers also have the option and opportunity to move into Korean language when it appears most beneficial to do so. The authors encourage teachers to try English first. And second. And again, before moving to Korean.

An important part of modern teaching is the Total Physical Response method (TPR). TPR is usually based on imperatives, and it is a very useful teaching tool that can be included as a component of Classroom English. Many games and activities to help students remember their language lessons can be developed with TPR. It should be recognized, however, that Classroom English is much more than just telling students to "pick up the red ball." The Imperative (command) statement, which is the primary language form of TPR, is not particularly enjoyable to the students. What else can be done, in English, in the classroom?

Everything we do in the classroom, we can do in English. Start with what is known to the students -- their routines, the things they already understand and like to do, and "international body language." By the time Korean students are in the third grade of elementary school, they have already developed a number of routines, they know what they like, and their teachers have been using "international body language" to supplement instructions in the Korean language since kindergarten, or even before. The students are ready.

By using English for routine communication with the students, teachers are displaying to them in the most concrete and immediate fashion the usefulness of this secondary language. English can certainly be a fun class, and learning English can be a playful time. Art class is

also fun. Both Art and Language help students to grow into complete human beings, but Korean society says this foreign language is much more useful for most people later in life. Korean society is arguing that English is important -- by showing how it is useful, teachers can make it also important to the students.

Classroom English occurs throughout the classroom hour. It can occur outside of the English hour as well. An additional point concerning Classroom English is where it is used. It starts, obviously, in the classroom. But it grows from there. When a fourth grade student asks his teacher to "Please come here" at the playground, it may be seen that Classroom English has become part of the student's language, instead of just a lesson that was memorized.

***Some Introductory Phrases***

What phrases do teachers repeat throughout the day (in Korean)? What are common student responses? Can teachers translate their Korean into English accurately? One probable common instruction to young students is "ANJEUSEIYO". A common student response, throughout the day, is probably "YEI". Figure 1 identifies some of the first phrases a teacher would be expected to say each day (in English or Korean):

<b>Figure 1. Classroom English Samples</b>		
Please sit down.	Let me call the roll.	Please say "Here".
Please be quiet.	No talking now.	Please talk quietly.
Please come in.	Please look at ____.	Let's begin.

Note that polite forms are used. Polite forms can still remain as short sentences. There is no reason why students should be taught coarse language, which is really only a slightly shorter than more polite forms.

Before considering more phrases, however, teachers should consider what they are presenting to the students, and why. Notice that the word "teaching" wasn't used. Why? Because this should not be thought of as routine teaching/lecturing. This is not "teaching" -- this is Communicating with our students through the medium of English.

***Presenting Language -- Decisions to make***

In the phrases presented in the Figure 1, certain words were chosen, others were not. In the case of Classroom English, what the teacher chooses to say is often less important than consistency. For instance, many teachers in America "call attendance" or "call the roster" instead of "call the roll." They could also "check" or "mark" instead of "call." It's really not important which is chosen. But students should hear the same phrase consistently, so they associate the phrase with the action. Only after students understand, and can independently respond appropriately in association with the action, should the teacher consider offering a substitute phrase to further develop students' understanding of English.

A bilingual approach is not necessarily considered the best way to present Classroom English. This is not meant to suggest that translating or explaining in the native language is

wrong. But the point of Classroom English is that students will not associate this language with a lesson to be learned, or with a Korean language equivalent, but rather as communication to be understood. Teachers should also recognize the power of body language as a substitute for Korean language when further support for student understanding is needed (Han, 1998).

How much Classroom English is presented how fast? Every class will be different, but one consideration is not to overload students. Students need to feel that they are succeeding in this communication, otherwise the purpose is lost. It's a building process. Once language has been presented, the goal is to accomplish the purpose of the communication, without going back to Korean in the future for this activity. Even though the body language and time needed to accomplish a rather simple task may be burdensome, if Classroom English is thought of as valuable lesson time instead of "merely taking attendance," teachers can justify the time and effort that may be required.

Pronunciation issues can be a major consideration. But perhaps less than many teachers fear. Of course all want to model correct English before the students. But students' awareness through use of the value of communicative English is far more important than merely reciting perfect pronunciation from a video or audio tape. One consideration in selecting language for classroom English may be the teacher's own comfort with particular words or phrases. Obviously, teachers need to speak clearly enough that students can identify the words spoken. But there are not many occasions when a mispronounced word is going to confuse a student, if the word is within the context of a sentence they already have learned. "L" & "R" are frequently identified as problems for Korean speakers of English, but the chances of confusion are small. For example, do we ever "turn on the right"? Inside the classroom, we can safely expect this to mean, "turn on the light." Pronunciation will be an issue less often than many teachers expect.

Forms of language can be a difficult decision to make. As pointed out earlier, simple forms need not be impolite. Levels of formality, contractions, forms of sentence constructions, verb tenses, all these should be considered. Rather than keeping all phrases in the same forms, teachers may want to consider presenting a number of different forms. It should be remembered that the students are not being asked to analyze the sentences, only to comprehend them. From this view, using more forms offers more possibilities for further expansion in the future. "Let's begin" instead of "Please begin" allows for further development in group language, as well as the use of suggestions. "No talking now" allows for development in present continuous, and the possibility of introducing past and future tenses.

Another concern in selecting words and form in Classroom English is consistency between languages. What form of Korean language does this teacher use with her young learners? A very "high," formal register of English doesn't match well with the type of Korean most used with children. Individual teachers may vary in their classrooms -- so English may vary too. The point is that each teacher should be consistent with their students, whichever language they use!

Classroom English should not usually be selected "in the heat of battle" while the classroom is underway (note the contrast above between teacher talk and classroom language). Of course it can happen. But in general, the language should be planned in advance, so that the teacher can construct plans for constant reinforcement in the days and weeks ahead. Using "Please don't run" for only a single class session is probably a waste of energy -- students will forget the words before the hour has ended. But repeated over a two-week period -- they might remember. (Of course, the teacher might choose "Please don't run" or "Please walk" or any number of other options.)

## CONCLUSION

As Asian students expect their English teachers, whether Korean or native-speaker of English, to model the language despite contemporary teaching philosophy to the contrary, it is in the interests of students and teachers alike to deliver language models which maximize the value of this "teacher talking time." Many Korean teachers have little confidence in their own English speaking ability: developing in-context authentic language in advance, and using this language to accomplish real classroom tasks, will help satisfy student and teacher needs. This special language may be called "Classroom English," but is not the prepared dialogues that are commonly identified with this term in Korea. This useful language, which may be in part classroom management language, raises the teacher (whether NSE or Korean) beyond a simple "walking tape recorder" and invites active student learning. Teachers need to analyze and plan the language they wish to use, to ensure proper choice of language and proper follow-up.

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# 'Pedagogically Correct' Computer Assisted Language Instruction (CALI) for the Reading Classroom

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This article explores the advantages of Computer Assisted Language Instruction (CALI) in enhancing comprehension in the reading classroom. Literature on reading instruction (focusing on L2 [second-language]) is reviewed to determine the rationale for the design and implementation of CALI in the L2 reading classroom. It is advocated that CALI offers many new opportunities for language learning, and when integrated with sound reading pedagogy it can provide a rich source of teaching and learning material. Then, the implications of CALI in the L2 reading classroom are explored. Lastly, responding to critics who claim that current programs are technologically rather than pedagogically driven (Swan and Meskill, 1995), recommendations are made as to the essential characteristics of effective CALI for the reading classroom.

## INTRODUCTION

There is no justification for further comparisons of human language instructions vs. computer-assisted language instruction. Rather, it is more appropriate to initiate research on those aspects of language learning that can be implemented effectively using technological resources (Doughty, 1992, cited in Oxford, et al. 1998).

In view of the rapid progress in recent multimedia applications, how can such technological advancements promote language learning? This article attempts to outline how pedagogically appropriate CALI (Computer Assisted Language Instruction) can assist or even transform the language reading classroom. The effectiveness of CALI however, depends on (a) the appropriateness of the CALI program for specific aspects of language learning; (b) the ability of the language teacher to utilize such programs in particular instructional situations; and (c) how well it deals with the students' needs and interests (Oxford, et al. 1998). Simply stated, if CALI programs are to be effective for (language) reading instruction, they must be pedagogically designed and pragmatically implemented in the language classroom.

Focusing on the reading 'interactive-compensatory' approach, that is, using both top-down and bottom-up processing, this article proposes that CALI (and especially its current focus on multimedia) can provide a variety of authentic texts and significantly enhances reading comprehension. The writer is interested in using CALI (and its ability to present visual information) to assist Korean high school students who are preparing for the crucial university entrance exam, which focuses on reading competence. The recommendations made however, can be applied in a variety of contexts if they are appropriately adapted (see Note 1).

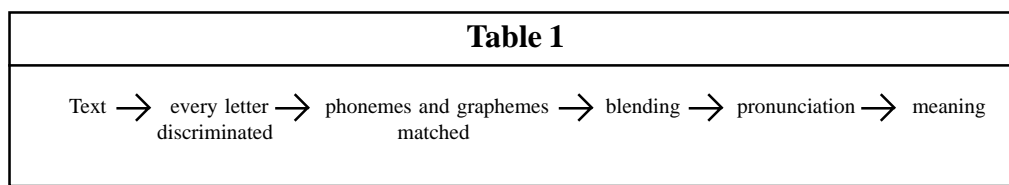
The main issues addressed in this article are:

- A review of reading comprehension theory (as outlined by recent publications) - What effective strategies do reading theories offer?
- Implications for the reading classroom - Based on the outlined theories, how can CALI enhance the reading classroom?
- Applications for the reading classroom - What characteristics should effective CALI reading programs possess and how can teachers exploit them in particular instructional situations?
- Other applications - What other benefits do CALI and other computer programs offer the language teacher?

### A REVIEW OF READING COMPREHENSION THEORY

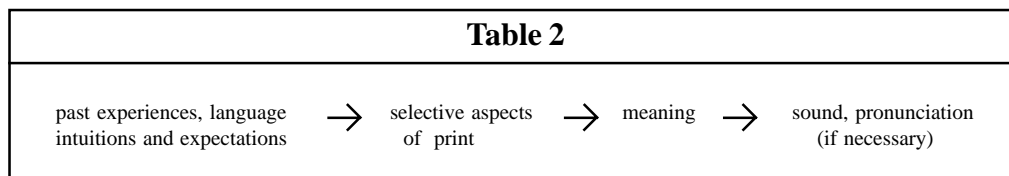
This section outlines some of the central theoretical and empirical perspectives on the nature of reading and learning to read. Of key interest are the 'bottom-up', the 'top-down' and the 'interactive-compensatory' approaches to reading.

The *bottom-up approach* suggests that reading is primarily a matter of decoding written symbols. The process works from 'text' to 'meaning' in the following sequence:



The focus is on linguistic factors and the task of the reader is to decode the forms of the text. While such a model seems a reasonable and logical explanation of what happens when we read, research findings have highlighted a number of limitations to the bottom-up approach (for further information see Nunan, 1995). As a result, an alternative top-down approach to reading has been postulated.

The *top-down approach* advocates that reading itself is at the heart of the reading process rather than the text and that the process operates from background knowledge to meaning in the following sequence:



The top-down approach emphasizes the reconstruction of meaning rather than the decoding of forms. The reader is perceived to interact with the text, and in this interaction the reader's knowledge of the subject, expectations about how the language works, interest and attitude toward the text, and motivation are the key factors to successful reading rather than linguistic factors (Nunan, 1995, p. 66).

Reading however is a complex process consisting of multiple interacting factors. As a result of this realization and due to perceived deficiencies of the bottom-up and top-down approaches, an interactive-compensatory approach was proposed. The *interactive-compensatory approach* suggests that readers process text by using information provided simultaneously from different sources (Lomicka, 1998, p. 43). They compensate for deficiencies at one level by drawing on knowledge from another level (either higher or lower) (Nunan, 1995, p. 67). Consequently, the interactive-compensatory approach includes all the processes of both the top-down and the bottom-up approaches: phonological, vocabulary, grammatical and discursal knowledge. The next part of this section briefly explores the processes involved in vocabulary, structural/grammatical and discursal learning (see Note 2).

First, the status of learning and teaching *vocabulary* has varied considerably over the years. Current trends in language teaching however, perceive vocabulary as an essential part of language learning (Nunan, 1995, p. 116-7) and focus on teaching and learning vocabulary in context. In teaching vocabulary in context teachers use strategies such as; (1) focusing on word elements such as prefixes, suffixes and roots; (2) using pictures, diagrams and charts to illustrate; (3) giving clues of definition such as parentheses or footnotes and synonyms and antonyms that occur with other clues like clauses; (4) assisting learners to make inference clues from discourse such as example clues, summary clues and experience clues; and (5) using general aids which encourage inductive learning (for further details see Kruse in Nunan, 1995).

Current trends further advocate that successful vocabulary development can be achieved when learners are actively involved in the learning process through regular periodic revision and make a continuous attempt at achieving cognitive depth by investing intellectual and emotional effort in the learning process. In order to achieve this, learners should also be given a variety of learning strategies such as word morphology, mnemonic devices, paired associates, word families and other strategies.

Secondly, effective ways of teaching *grammar* have been the focus of much research. Prior to the 'communicative era' the focus of research on grammar teaching was in finding the most effective way to present and practice progressively difficult grammatical forms. After that, with the rise in popularity of the natural approach, explicit grammar instruction was perceived as unnecessary or even destructive for L2 learning. Current research however, focusing on 'practical knowledge' or pedagogy that teachers can apply in the classroom, indicates that there is a need for 'focus-on-form' (that is defined as any pedagogical effort which is used to draw the learners' attention to the language form) instruction (Ellis, 1998) or a grammatical awareness-raising (Nunan, 1995, p. 149).

As a result, recent research has sought to find the most successful kind of form-focused instruction. Ellis outlines a computational model of L2 acquisition where "L2 learners are viewed as intelligent machines that process input in a mental black box" (1998, p. 43). This model indicates a number of options where form-focused instruction can be implemented in a learner's interlanguage development. It can take the form of 'structured input', 'explicit instruction', 'production practice' and 'negative feedback', and form-focussed lessons can use a combination of these options.

Furthermore, Ellis points out that structured input combined with explicit instruction resulted in durable learning that was useful in both comprehension and production tasks (1998, p. 45). He even suggests that structured-input practice may provide a useful alternative to production practice (p. 47). With regard to explicit versus implicit instruction, Ellis reported that both options resulted in statistically significant gain. He outlines however, that the implicit option may be more motivating for learners than simply giving them the rules, while the explicit

option may be more advantageous when the structure is relatively simple. Likewise Spada indicates that form-focused instruction, when used in both of its implicit learning and explicit instruction modes, can be superior to either alone explicit instruction or implicit learning (1987, p. 82).

Thirdly, context or *discoursal knowledge* is brought to a text in the form of the learner's knowledge of the subject, knowledge and expectations about how language works, motivation, interest, and attitudes toward the context of the text. This process advocates that the reader forms hypotheses about the text and then determines whether or not such hypotheses were correct, rather than decoding symbols.

A caution is appropriate at this point in the discussion. The above text seems to indicate that the bottom-up approach focuses on vocabulary and grammar learning while the top-down approach focuses on discoursal or contextual knowledge. We must recognize however, that an instructor can teach vocabulary, grammar and contextual knowledge with different approaches. For example, vocabulary can be taught through a bottom-up or top-down approach. Within the theoretical framework outlined above, the next section explores how CALI (especially with multimedia capabilities) can facilitate reading comprehension.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE READING CLASSROOM**

As indicated, recent theories of L2 reading processes have focused on the interactive-compensatory approach, that is using both the bottom-up and the top-down processing models. It was pointed out that proficient readers utilize both the bottom-up and the top-down processing, and that successful comprehension is the result of an interaction between both types of processing" (Chun and Plass, 1996, p. 503). Teachers therefore must strive to integrate both processes in their teaching.

On a micro-level, a variety of annotations (which are links to short definitions or notes) for individual words and phrases such as graphics, video and sound must be provided. Filippatou and Pumfrey (1996, p. 260) in their extensive review of reading accuracy and reading comprehension research, indicate that 'organizational' pictures (which depict the content of the word within its rational context) assist both to compensate comprehension for the lower ability students and to enrich comprehension for the higher ability students.

Likewise, using annotations facilitated reading comprehension processes for L2 learners (Lomicka, 1998, p. 41), and text combines with images and speech compensated for deficiencies in basic reading skills (Hillinger, 1994). Lomicka also found higher recall for visual annotations (words annotated with text and pictures or video) than words annotated with text alone and she further indicates that while different types of annotations were available, students primarily utilized L1 (first language) definition (p. 42). This suggests that such programs must also incorporate L1 support. In addition, she points out that immediate access to textual, audio and visual annotations (which are not as intrusive as the steps required in using a dictionary) allows for better reading fluency (p. 24).

On a macro-level, video visual advance organizers (such as video clips) have been found to be more effective facilitators of comprehension in L2 learning than text and/or pictures (Chun and Plass, 1996, p. 504). This may be due to the inherent ability of video to contextualize and to provide a more memorable background store of information than still images (p. 505). Hadley advocates that "the best visual context for subjects at relatively low proficiency levels is one that provides enough background knowledge to aid them in finding an appropriate

overall scheme for comprehending the story, providing cues to the general nature of the passage as a whole without being confusing" (cited in Chun and Plass, 1996, P. 504). Without connections or a gestalt however, information is harder to organize in working memory and hence becomes harder to link to structures in long-term memory (p. 515).

Similarly, Zin, et al. (1996) indicate that vocabulary is enriched by providing contextual information, introducing new vocabulary words in context and reviewing target vocabulary within the video contexts. Moreover, Taglieber et al., comparing the effects of the three kinds of pre-reading activities on reading comprehension, indicate that pre-teaching vocabulary (in the form of world lists) was the least effective in facilitating comprehension (cited in Chun and Plass, 1996, p. 505).

Through the use of textual annotations and hypertext support, learners can access a variety of deductive explanations or inductive activities that can aid comprehension. Applications of such activities are further discussed in the next section.

The next part of this section attempts to understand the interaction of CALI with the language learner in enhancing reading comprehension.

Studies in reading comprehension propose that there are at least three different levels of mental representations that must occur during reading comprehension. These include a 'surface level' (linguistic processes), 'text base level' (propositional meaning of textual constituents), and 'situational model' (integration of text base with background and other world knowledge) (Lomicka, 1998, p. 45). This implies that comprehension is achieved at many different levels, not only at the text base or surface level. Lomicka's study indicates however, that students seemed concerned mainly with an immediate construction of the text base (p. 48).

Further, it is suggested that critical and higher level thinking, (involving such abilities as analysis, reasoning, decision making, problem solving, and evaluation,) occurs as a function of reanalyzing and restructuring information, and that multimedia programs can assist students and teachers to handle such restructuring (Hedley and Ellsworth, 1993). While multimedia instruction provides motivational and dynamic tools that can foster expressive and reflective skills (Sponder, 1993) it is only when teachers exploit it appropriately that effective learning can take place.

It must also be pointed out that students may benefit from explicit discussion on reading models. Schraw and Bruning (1996) look at reader engagement by exploring the many different kinds of beliefs that affect the way one reads. They point out that in order for students to see certain features in a text, they must first believe that such features exist, otherwise they just overlook them (Schraw and Bruning, 1996, p. 290).

Then, if the CALI program is designed with a response-based pedagogy, it encourages the exploration of multiple perspectives and supports the student's construction of defensible interpretations (Swan and Meskill, 1995). Hence, efficient use of such multimedia can focus learners' attention to specific elements contained in a general text (Yi, 1996). That is, by using multimedia the language teacher can encourage students to explore a text from various perspectives.

Besides the reading comprehension enhancing attributes of CALI, there are a number of other benefits of integrating multimedia instruction into the reading classroom as well as in any language classroom. First, it creates a risk-free learning environment since learners have more time to get assistance on the text than in face to face interactions. Next, "computer programs that emphasize student-centered activities can successfully shift primary responsibility for learning from the teacher to the learner" (Johnston, 1988, p. 88), hence increasing students'

empowerment. In addition, it provides opportunities for students to practice skills in meaningful contexts and increases interest in reading (Stuhlmann and Taylor 1996).

CALI can also provide effective feedback. Recent research on feedback effectiveness indicates that correction may be more effective when it takes place in the context of activities in which the primary focus is on meaning rather than on form (Ellis, 1988, P. 52) and this can accelerate interlanguage development (p. 53). A multimedia environment is the closest thing to a real environment where such interchange can be simulated. Furthermore, an "intelligent" CALI program can go beyond simple notification of error (such as a missing or incorrect word) and offer the learner a full range of structure-related consciousness-raising options such as explicit, implicit, positive and negative feedback (Oxford et al. 1998).

An additional major advantage of using CALI is the motivational factor. Dugdale (1996) argues that interesting and enjoyable activities that motivate students to continue their language learning on a regular, preferably daily basis, and which maintains interest in the long term is absolutely essential for success. Likewise, Goertzen advocates computers as a potentially powerful medium for reading since students find multimedia instruction much more enjoyable than text reading. He further indicates that the relationship between enjoyment and effectiveness is "circular and mutually reinforcing that enjoyableness enhances effectiveness, and that the belief that something is effective tends to make it more enjoyable than it would be otherwise" (1998).

Similarly, Hess and Jasper state that "the visual medium attracts and engages. It gives our students just the push they need to become committed to the reading of a longer text" (1995, cited in Johnston, 1988, p. 88). In contrast O'Brien, et al. (1997) pointed out that failure of the teaching system to stimulate interest leads to a cycle of disengagement since students lack competence, and therefore avoid reading.

While CALI offers many benefits for the reading classroom, it must be remembered that the emphasis on CALI to enhance reading comprehension must be viewed as a support to instruction rather than as the content of instruction. CALI does not 'save' a dull teacher but it goes give the language teachers a powerful tool if they are willing to effectively explore and implement it in their classrooms. It is not the "miracle cure" for all language teaching (Oxford, et al., 1998) and the "myth that the computer can replace the teacher is subtly perpetuated by the plethora of extravagant marketing claims," when in reality it is only a powerful tool (Johnston, 1998, p. 90).

Yet another caution: Sharma (1993) highlights that techniques such as illustrations, annotation of texts with commentaries, explanations, word meanings, and maps may not be sufficient for conveying the message in culturally displaced texts. A further criticism that is explored in the next section, is the argument that while multimedia reading programs are of high technical quality the applications currently available are technologically, and not pedagogically driven (Swan and Meskill, 1995). What characteristics should effective CALI reading programs possess and how can teachers use such CALI reading programs?

## **APPLICATION OF THEORY AND IMPLICATIONS**

Refocusing on reading comprehension, the first section of this article highlighted effective strategies advocated by recent reading theories. The second section pointed out what CALI has to offer to the reading classroom. This third section attempts to emphasize what characteristics pedagogically driven CALI programs must possess in order to be effective in enhancing students' reading competence. While their primary focus should be on developing

*communicative competence*, they must provide an abundance of *interesting, authentic* L2 input. In order to ensure motivation, a program must have at least two characteristics. First of all, its content should be *comprehensible* and relevant to students' needs and interests. Secondly, the content should be *engaging*, that is, learners should be able to explore the content in various ways through *meaningful tasks* and learners should be able to progress at their own pace.

Next, the teacher has to select CALI programs which are the most *appropriate* for developing the desired language skill(s) within a particular period of time. Programs provide various modes of learning such as drill and practice, tutorial, problem solving or dialogue, simulation and interactive game modes. Some programs may provide better acquisition of certain language skills than others.

With regard to exploring vocabulary there should be various forms of *annotations* such as video, pictures, text and multilingual support. If the material is to be used in multilevel classes it should allow learners to have access to annotations for most of the essential vocabulary. It may also be beneficial to have a tracker available in case the teacher or learners want to later focus on the vocabulary they looked up.

Concerning *exploring structure* CALI should offer various options. While focusing on communicative competence, learners should be able to access both *inductive activities*, such as asking learners to discover the rules, and *deductive activities* such as explanation and practice opportunities. *Eliciting production* of the target structures range on a continuum from highly controlled text-manipulation exercises such as substitution drills and cloze text, to much freer incidental reading tasks in which learners have to interact with more authentic language.

Activities should move from '*mechanical drills*' to '*meaningful drills*' to '*communicative drills*' activities, while remembering that for durable learning the communicative activities are preferred. The program should also have an *integrated review strategy* since structures require continued reinforcement if long term retention is desired (Zakaluk, 1996). This suggests that an *integrated approach to vocabulary*, grammar and context is the most effective mode in which CALI can assist learners to move through linguistic competence to communicative competence.

In addition, CALI should offer appropriate *error correction strategies*. Effective CALI programs ought to identify parts of the text that students have misunderstood and offer explanations or assistance through various options such as help on vocabulary, structure, and context. Such help may be in the form of text annotations, pictures, or video clips. Furthermore, they must be designed for use by students with different *learning styles*.

An advanced CALI program should be able to constantly *evaluate the learner* and offer various forms of *feedback* including *learning strategies*, *cultural hints* for words, expression and text, and options that can be explored according to the *needs and interest of the learners* (Oxford, et al., 1998). In the near future, through the use of integrated artificial intelligence and voice recognition CALI programs may be able to give verbal assistance to the language learner. In addition, by using of the Internet, streaming interactive video and 3D glasses the learner may even be expose to any remote part of the world.

## **OTHER APPLICATIONS**

There are various applications where CALI and other computer programs can be of



significant assistance not only to the language teacher in the reading classroom but in many aspects of language teaching. At present some of the options discussed below are not available in many Korean high schools, but they will be available in the near future. First the Internet, when adequately integrated into the reading classroom can provide a limitless resource of authentic material. Davies sees it as a "complement to 'real world' teaching" (1998, p. 19).

In addition, due to large classes in Korean high schools, computer programs can allow teachers to explore other options of grading students besides the end of term tests. Such programs can provide a constant up-to-date performance chart of all the students on a weekly or monthly basis. Since grades are a powerful motivation for Korean students, such feedback on their performance would lead to increased motivation while providing convenience for the teacher.

Furthermore, Email and WWW publishing offer motivating options that can expose students to fully meaningful, communicative language. Such options are only limited by the instructors' creativity and the technology available, but with the necessary resources they can be expanded from a local to national to international level.

## CONCLUSION

Although CALI is still in its infancy, its potential to revolutionize the reading classroom is possible if the focus is on pedagogy and not technology. If used efficiently, CALI programs offer many possibilities for reading instruction and learning. They can provide a variety of authentic texts, significantly facilitate reading comprehension through annotations and advanced organizers while at the same time engaging and motivating learners through their visual medium. The effectiveness of these programs however, depends on their appropriate use by informed language teachers (see Note 3). Just as a textbook cannot replace the live, reciprocal feedback and interaction of the language teacher likewise, CALI cannot replace the reading language teacher. It can however, be a powerful teaching and learning tool if exploited properly.

## THE AUTHOR

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## END NOTES

1. In order for a teacher to apply all the recommendations made in this paper, s/he must have access to a multimedia computer laboratory with at least one computer for every two students. Many of the suggestions made however, can be implemented with access to one computer and a large visual display unit.
2. It is assumed that high school students are beyond needing phonological instruction.
3. In this article it is assumed that research can provide a knowledge base for making pedagogical decisions. Such assumption is criticized because it implies a particular power relationship between the researcher and the teacher. (For further discussion on this topic see Carr and Kemmis, 1986).

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# Testing the Test: Comparing SEMAC and Exact Word Scoring on the Selective Deletion Cloze

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A number of questions surround the issue of cloze tests and their various scoring methods, with proponents on both sides making contentious claims to their validity or lack thereof. Before language teachers can determine which side they agree with, they should investigate the matter themselves and make an informed decision based upon their findings. This paper studies two issues: 1) The statistical correlation between Exact Word and Semantically Acceptable (SEMAC) scoring methods on a selective deletion cloze test and 2) The reliability coefficients of the selective deletion cloze test using both scoring methods under a variety of classroom conditions. In a series of four experiments, Exact Word and SEMAC scoring were found to be correlated very highly, suggesting that both scoring methods are measuring the same language quality. Depending upon the pedagogic concerns of the teacher, either scoring method can be used. Care must be taken, however, as this study also finds the reliability coefficients of SEMAC scoring to be significantly lower than Exact Word scoring.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

There have been traditionally two distinct methods for evaluating cloze tests: Exact Word scoring and the Semantically Acceptable scoring method (also known as SEMAC). For several years there has been some debate about the validity of these scoring systems. For example, Ikeguchi (1995) and Owen *et al.* (1996), state that when exact word and SEMAC scoring systems are compared, there is almost always a very high correlation between the cloze test scores -- usually up to +.90 to +.95. Owen explains:

When the correlation between scores on two tests is this high, it suggests that the two tests are measuring the same thing. In the present case the very high correlations suggest that the two scoring systems are giving us the same information, are measuring the same quality (p. 41).

On the other hand, some researchers (cf. Alderson 1979; Klein-Braley 1981) claim that neither the Exact Word or SEMAC method are very reliable, since most cloze test designs themselves are flawed. Klein-Braley and Raatz (1984) assert that:

- Scorers do not agree with individual solutions on SEMAC scoring;
- Exact Word scoring is frustrating for learners and scorers alike;
- Correlations between two cloze tests often could not be demonstrated in their studies (p. 135).

Because there is so much contention about cloze test scoring methods, language teachers are faced with a number of decisions: They can choose to ignore the conflict, choose to side with whoever's argument seems to "make sense", or teachers can investigate the matter themselves and make an informed decision based upon their findings.

## 1.1 PURPOSE

Following a discussion of the background of cloze tests, this paper will discuss Exact Word and SEMAC scoring, and investigate whether or not there is a tendency for high correlations between the two systems. A recent study conducted with Japanese EFL learners will be reviewed in this paper. The implications this study has for the current testing debate, as well as for classroom teacher concerns, will be examined at the conclusion of this paper.

## 1.2 THE CLOZE TEST: AN OVERVIEW

Cloze testing was first introduced by W.L. Taylor (1953), who developed it as a reading test for native speakers. He defined the term "cloze" from a gestalt concept which teaches that an individual will be able to complete a task only after its pattern has been discerned:

A cloze unit may be defined as: any single occurrence of a successful attempt to reproduce accurately a part deleted from a 'message' (any language product), by deciding from the context that remains, what the missing part should be (p. 416).

Cloze tests consist of a text (usually two or three paragraphs) which has had words or parts of words deleted from it. Students or test subjects must then draw upon their knowledge of the language to write words which appropriately fill in the blanks.

There are at least five main types of cloze tests available to language teachers: The fixed-rate deletion, the selective deletion (also known as the rational cloze), the multiple-choice cloze, the cloze elide and the C-test (Ikeguchi 1995; Weir 1990; Klein-Braley and Raatz 1984).

In the fixed-rate deletion, after one or two sentences, every *n*th word is deleted. Usually every fifth or seventh word is deleted, but Brown (1983) suggests that longer texts with every eleventh or fifteenth word deleted can be used with subjects who have a lower level of language proficiency. In the selective deletion or rational cloze, the tester chooses which items he or she wishes to delete from the text. This allows teachers to fine tune the level of difficulty of the text, as well as define the test's pedagogic focus. Multiple choice cloze tests provide the subjects with several possible items to choose from for each blank in the cloze test. The cloze elide inserts words which do not belong in the text. It requires the subjects to identify the incorrect words and write in more appropriate items in their place. The C-test consists of deleting only part of every second word in a text, and involves subjects in completing each truncated word.

None of these cloze test options, as Hughes (1993) suggests, should be seen as the panacea for our testing needs. However, if care and pretesting are included in the process of making a test, then cloze tests can be very helpful general proficiency indicators of where our learners are in their process of acquiring the target language (cf. Brown 1991, 1988b; Chavez-Oller *et al.* 1985; Perkins and German 1985; Bachman 1982).

Before teachers can make such inferences on their learners' progress, they must decide how to score the tests. And before scoring the test, they must resolve for themselves which scoring system is right for their purposes.

### **1.3 EXACT WORD AND SEMAC SCORING**

Except for the C-test and the multiple-choice cloze, most cloze tests use either the Exact Word or SEMAC scoring method. In the exact word method, the cloze test blanks are filled in by the subjects with the exact same word as was in the original text. Correct answers receive 1 point, while any other response receives no points. SEMAC scoring allows subjects to write answers which, though not the original words deleted from the text, are grammatically and lexically appropriate.

Many of the issues related to Exact Word and SEMAC scoring are dealt with in Owen *et al.* (1996, p. 40-42). They state that most teachers opt for SEMAC scoring, since they feel it is fairer to the subjects than with the Exact Word scoring method. However, SEMAC scoring can be much more difficult to apply, especially if foresight has not been used in making the cloze test. This is the major criticism of the method by Klein-Braley and Raatz (1984), Weir (1990) and Hughes (1993). Owen *et al.* (1996) maintain however that SEMAC and Exact Word scoring correlate strongly, giving teachers the choice to use either scoring system if they wish to, since both systems appear to be measuring the same language attributes.

Exact Word scoring tends to conceal the differences in ability between students, because answers that equally appropriate are not marked as correct, and the students are not affirmed for their collocational competence. For this reason, Owen *et al.* (1996) seem to fall on the side of SEMAC scoring, saying it is more internally-reliable than Exact Word scoring. They admit that this is a contentious claim, since cloze tests are rather organic in nature and probably shouldn't be measured by item facility (IF) statistics such as KR-20 (Griffiee 1995; Klein-Braley and Raatz 1984).

Do Exact Word and SEMAC scores correlate highly? Is the dispersion and reliability higher for SEMAC scoring? More importantly, what difference does all of this make for EFL teachers? These questions motivated us to conduct the following experiment in order to seek some possible answers to these questions.

## **2.0 METHOD**

This experiment studied two issues: 1) The statistical correlation between Exact Word and SEMAC scoring methods on a selective deletion cloze test and 2) The reliability coefficients of the selective deletion cloze test using both scoring methods under a variety of classroom conditions. The study was conducted in the 1996 Fall semester at Niigata University, located on the northwestern coast of the main island of Honshu in Japan.

### **2.1 SUBJECTS**

Two groups of subjects (see Table One) were selected for this study from Niigata University's First Year English 1B classes. All were native Japanese speakers from various

prefectures of the main island of Honshu. Group One consisted mostly of first year Science majors and two Elementary Education majors. Group Two was comprised of first year Engineering students.

<b>Table One: Subjects</b>		
	<b>Group One</b>	<b>Group Two</b>
<b>Language</b>	Japanese	Japanese
<b>Age</b>	18 (82%) 19 (18%)	18 (100%)
<b>Sex</b>	Male (55%) Female (45%)	Male (100%)
<b>Department</b>	Science (91%) Education (9%)	Engineering (100%)
<b>Skill Level</b>	False Beginners	False Beginners
<b>Total Number Subjects</b>	22	24

No special criteria was used in selecting or excluding the subjects. Neither group was tested on their English proficiency level before entering this course, except for the structuralist grammar-based entrance examination that all the subjects took a year before participating in this study. However, classroom experience with both groups led us to believe that most group members had limited speaking, listening and writing skills, typically representative of an EFL class of this level in a Japanese university setting (Wadden 1993).

## 2.2 MATERIALS

The learners were given the same selective deletion cloze on two different occasions (see Figures One and Two). The test adapted from a general interest reading text found in the first chapter of the course book (Richards et al. 1993, p. 7). While the subjects had read the text several months earlier, we were fairly certain that very few if not any had read the text again since that time. The cloze test consisted of a 133 word passage with 25 blanks, meaning that roughly 19% of the total text was deleted. This test was set up mainly as a criterion-referenced measure to help students assess for themselves whether or not they had adequately studied the key vocabulary, grammar and discourse elements which would be featured in the upcoming midterm exam. The first test was for the students' personal evaluation only, and the second was used as part of their grade for the course.

The selective deletion cloze is justifiable for this sort of evaluation. Bowen *et al.* (1985, p. 376) state that the selective deletion cloze is ideal for testing vocabulary and grammar. Bachman (1982, p 61-70) finds that the selective deletion cloze can be used to investigate a subject's knowledge of written discourse items such as context cohesion, syntax and strategic textual comprehension.

## 2.3 PROCEDURE

The cloze test was administered to both groups during their regular class period, and again during class two weeks later. On both occasions, the instructions were given to the students verbally and in written form, both in English and Japanese, to facilitate a clear understanding of the task. On each occasion, the cloze tests were collected after 20 minutes. According to Ikeguchi (1995), this is an acceptable amount of time to allow for Japanese college students to complete even short cloze tests. This allows for the "pre-testing strategies" often observed in Japanese students at this academic level:

Students look at the form of the test itself. Students then check to figure out if there is any "trick" to completing the test in a mechanical fashion without actually knowing the answer.

- If this cannot be established, the next step is to look for a puzzle-like consistency to the test.
- Once this has been investigated, then students begin tackling the actual test content and answer the questions.

This type of behavior has been re-enforced through years of testing and testing preparation in high school and *juku* -- private schools which teach how to pass university exams, and it is important to let them have time to go through this ritual. (Shimahara 1991; Fujita 1991; Tsukada 1991). One significant variable that was different, however, is that the first test was administered during a regular class session, while the other was given during their midterm test. While this is certainly not advisable when performing a test-retest experiment, we purposely attempted this in order to see how the test would react in under a variety of classroom conditions.

## 2.4 ANALYSIS

The tests for both groups were photocopied and graded by two scorers. The classroom teacher graded the tests using Exact Word scoring, while an expatriate TEFL lecturer who was unacquainted with the subjects graded the tests using the SEMAC method. We decided on this approach because SEMAC scoring often involves a subjective judgement on the subject's response. We did not want the SEMAC scores to be influenced one way or another by personal knowledge of the subjects. Before grading the tests, the blind marker was given a manuscript of the complete text, and instructed to allow any words in the cloze that were either synonymous, lexically and grammatically correct. Mistakes in historical accuracy, and minor spelling errors were to be ignored. If the scorer found himself in a situation where he had to think very hard as to if an answer was acceptable or not, he was free to mark it as incorrect.

After all the scores were figured, all of the data was analyzed using the VAR Grade for Windows 1.0 software package (Revie 1994). Often Kuder-Richardson formula 20 (KR-20) is used for single item tests where the reliability of a specific question can be tested (eg. multiple choice questions). While some have used KR-20 in testing the reliability of cloze tests, we take the position that the cloze test is much more of an organic test instrument whose parts cannot



be easily separated for valid analysis. Instead of using the KR-20, Test-retest was used in order to ascertain the reliability coefficients for the test using both scoring systems.

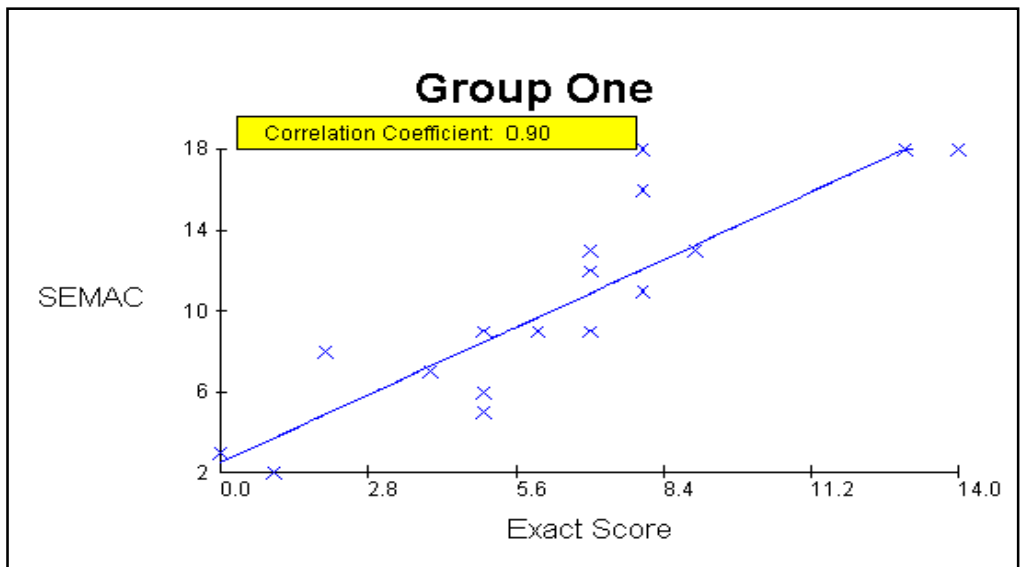


Figure 1

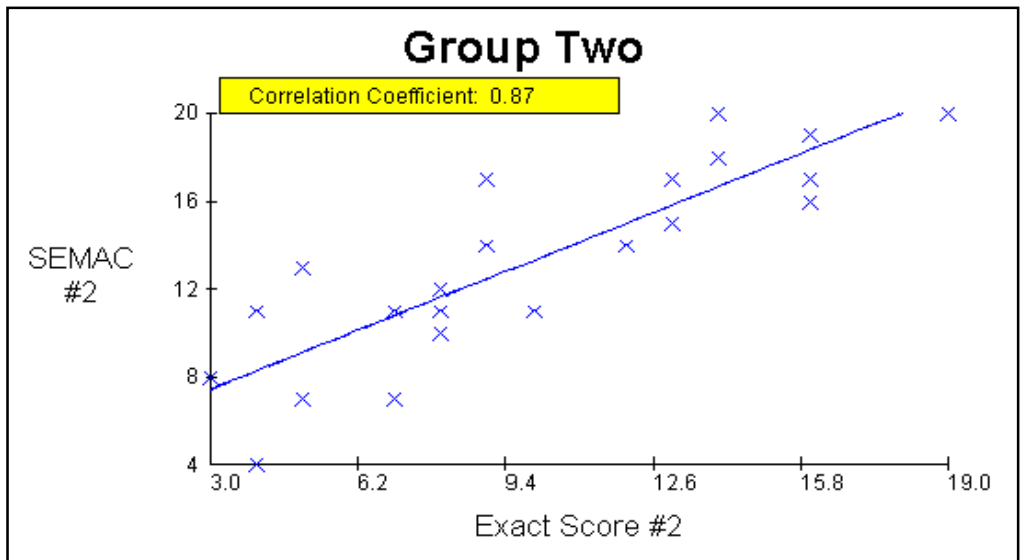


Figure 2

With Group One, the reliability co-efficient for the test using the Exact Word method was at +.60, while the reliability co-efficient for the SEMAC method was at +.56. Group Two's test-retest coefficients were considerably lower, with Exact Word at +.34, and SEMAC at +.31.

Correlating SEMAC and Exact Word scoring methods for Group One showed a correlation coefficient of +.90 on the first test and +.90 on the second test. Coincidentally, Group Two's correlation coefficient was +.87 for the first test, and +.87 on the second test (see Figures Three and Four).

### 3.0 DISCUSSION

It is true that the scoring methods were re-tested under very different conditions, because the first test was used as a diagnostic test, and the students were told that they would have a second opportunity to take the test again later for a grade. The higher means of the second tests (see Table Two) show that a students knew they hadn't studied enough, went back and searched for the text used in the cloze test, and most probably memorized it. Most did not take the time to study for the test even when they knew what was going to be on it. In our experience, many students feel confident that, once they have entered a university, studying is an option so long as they attend about 60% of their classes and get 60% on a final exam - an exam they will be allowed to take several times until they finally pass. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to administer the same cloze test after a period of two months to the same students and see if the scores correlate more strongly with the first test scores.

<b>Table Two: Descriptive Statistics for Both Groups</b>							
	<b>Task Name</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>High Score</b>	<b>Low Score</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Group One</b>	<b>Exact Score</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>Group One</b>	<b>Exact Score #2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>4.7</b>
<b>Group One</b>	<b>SEMAC</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>4.9</b>
<b>Group One</b>	<b>SEMAC #2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>4.7</b>
<b>Group Two</b>	<b>Exact Word</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Group Two</b>	<b>Exact Word #2</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Group Two</b>	<b>SEMAC</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>
<b>Group Two</b>	<b>SEMAC #2</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>4.4</b>

Yet even when taking into consideration all of these normal classroom variables, we can see that the selective-deletion cloze is a robust and reliable measure. It is probable that if other tests were subjected to the same sort of abuse as in this study, they would not come out with reliability coefficients as high as between +.31 to +.60.

## 4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

If it is simply a question of wanting to know which scoring system is more reliable for cloze testing, this study suggests that either Exact Word or SEMAC will do. As a quick diagnostic tool, Exact Word is quicker and easier to score than SEMAC. If the cloze test is used as a C-RT, then SEMAC scoring gives students more points that can be applied to their grade.

However, the convenience to the teacher cannot be the only factor in determining which scoring system to use. Teachers may need to seriously consider how the advantages and disadvantages of either system might complement or clash with the values of their students' culture of learning. For example, in Japan we have observed that many students prefer the Exact Word system, because it gives the impression that there is one and only one correct answer. If given the complete text after taking the test, some might even try to memorize the words which were removed from the text, although often out of context and devoid of any real understanding on how to use the word. SEMAC scoring can be distrusted by students who resist the possibility for successful communicative variation in test answers. We are given the impression from some students that SEMAC scoring leaves them at the mercy of an arbitrary standard determined by the teacher.

The effect of the actual test scores on students in Japan raises other considerations. International observers have noted that Japanese society has tried unsuccessfully to create a system of Capitalist Socialism, which often saves the mediocre rather than rewards the talented (Roche 1999). This has seeped into the educational system as well, where there is a student who receives 60% and the student who receive 90% on the a test are treated the same. If the cloze test is used as an N-RT, then our experience has told us that our Japanese learners are more concerned as to how close they fit in the middle of the group, rather than how much better or worse their grade is from the median.

This of course is our experience with learners in Japan. Teachers in other countries may encounter different responses to tests based upon their students' culture. There will not be easy answers to these issues, only informed decisions based upon careful consideration of the students' needs as language learners. Keeping these concerns in mind may allow language teachers the confidence to conservatively try cloze testing in their own unique classroom environment.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

This study stimulates a number of new questions, the answers to which would be valuable to classroom teachers. For example, this study relied upon one blind scorer to use the SEMAC scoring method. What would the inter-marker reliability be if the results of several scorers using the SEMAC method were compared on the same group of subjects? Or, how would the selective-deletion cloze compare with a C-test on the same text with a group of Japanese students? A number of studies (Hansen and Stansfield 1981; Stansfield and Hansen 1983; Hansen 1984; Chapelle 1988) suggest that field independence is an important factor in performing well on tests such as the cloze. Do Asian students, as a result of Confucian-based education systems that value conformity and homogeneity, tend to be more field dependent or independent? How would that change the way we look at cloze testing (or testing in general) for Asian ELT? If selective-deletion cloze tests do measure the level of a subject's knowledge

of vocabulary and grammar, would students with higher scores on the selective deletion cloze test also score higher on tradition grammar-based written examinations? If they did correlate highly, would that suggest that cloze tests could be used in place of or alongside of traditional paper tests, thereby providing a measure which is fair to students and easier for teachers to grade?

We hope these questions will motivate others to begin testing studies of their own. Such research not only helps us as teachers to improve our tests by making them more a productive part of the language learning process, but also helps us all to improve as language teachers.

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# **A Study of the Relationship Between Test Scores and Attitudes Towards Test**

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## **INTRODUCTION: LEARNERS, TEACHERS, TESTS**

**B**ecause tests are thought to guarantee a place in the superior high schools, and subsequently, higher status universities and jobs, they are a critical concern in the lives of middle school learners. Unfortunately, as Martin points out in a study on writing in American middle schools, learners often do not see "passing the exam" and broader learning aims as connected in any way (Martin 1983: 211). Taking their cue from their learners, teachers cannot help but emphasize tests over broader learning aims.

This in turn creates a difficulty known as "washback", for teachers who want to "negotiate" the syllabus or use their own materials. For example, according to Seo et al, students at Kwanchon Middle School preferred tailor-made materials developed specially for them to the text in class, but they were concerned about tests and therefore considered the text-book more "effective" (Seo et al, 1998: 51-52). Thus the effect of this "washback" is to cut short the aims of education, focusing attention prematurely on the result rather than the process and frustrating the well-meaning efforts of learners and teachers alike.

## **A CASE IN POINT**

This researcher/practitioner has personally observed one such frustrated learner, Sung-eun, who studied hard and steadily but could not consistently obtain satisfactory marks. After several tests, she was criticized for not concentrating on her studying any more. Sung-eun burst into tears, for her parents had similarly scolded her with similar results.

Is such critical pressure for exam success part of the solution or part of the problem? Perhaps learners like Sung-eun are trapped in a vicious circle: short-term motivation---intensive but narrow and inefficient studying---poor results---evenmore intense and even more short term motivation---more bad results---scolding from outside---dislike of studying English . . . still more frantic and short-sighted motivation, and so on and so forth down a spiral of despair.

## **CLASS DISCUSSION: FOR LESS COMPETITIVE AND MORE PRODUCTIVE FORMS OF ASSESSMENT**

The problem of demotivating test anxiety is certainly not confined to isolated cases like Sung-eun. It is, on the contrary, class wide, as this researcher discovered after final-term of second semester. A discussion about tests was held in my class, and a number of learners

made it clear that they thought the discrete point test was a far from accurate measure of productive ability. They argued that it was not appropriate to evaluate the learners according to indirect and passive tests in English, or, for that matter in music or art.

The alternatives they proposed were surprisingly sophisticated. Some learners mentioned that they preferred "direct performance measurement" in a pair-work or group-work writing task to the indirect discrete point mid-term and final examinations, which were usually grammar-focused. For example, during the class, teachers would show learners the topic or situation, about which the students could think and then cooperate to create text. Group work or pair work, according to these learners, would make the activity and the result better organized.

These suggestions were far from unanimously supported. Many learners expressed reluctance to cooperate with dull or different 'level' learners. They preferred to have tests like writing by themselves during class time, perhaps about a topic which teachers had previously suggested. It emerged that many learners considered writing the most adequate method of evaluating their productive skills, involving the recognition of vocabulary or grammar and moreover discourse organization at a high level. Translation was also suggested as a possible test format.

After this discussion, I hypothesized that these different suggestions and preferences were reflective of underlying anxieties and attitudes which might also be reflected in their test scores. Three constructs were operationalized for comparison with the normal test scores routinely given at mid-term and at the end of the semester: attitudes towards tests, attitudes towards English study, and writing proficiency. The first two constructs were operationalized using a questionnaire, while the last was measured by the administration of a simple writing task.

## **TEST ANXIETY, LANGUAGE ATTITUDE, AND PRODUCTIVE SKILLS: A BRIEF LOOK AT THE LITERATURE**

Previous research on anxiety and motivation has generally dealt with language or even socio-cultural anxiety and not focused on the specific stimulus of testing. (Ellis 1994: 481-482, Chaudron 1988: 101-104). Gardner and Lambert, for example, took their chief constructs from the ESL situation in Canada, distinguishing between people who were "instrumentally motivated" or interested in "integrally" assimilating to the host culture. These are clearly not appropriate categories for analyzing the attitudes and motivations of Korean middle school learners in an EFL situation (See Ellis 1994: 207-211). Nikolov (1999: 53) certainly found that these categories of motivation were irrelevant to EFL Hungarian children.

The latest research, however, does reflect many of the concerns expressed by the children in my class. Thus Dornyei and Csizer, also in Hungary, give categories of classroom motivation that are much more appropriate to Korea. They found that interim goal setting by teachers for learners was the most underutilized strategy of all of their motivational strategies. (Dornyei and Csizer, 1998: 220). Teachers often appear to simply rely on mid-term and end-term tests to motivate. Indeed, Nikolov reports that tests are the strongest negative motivation mentioned by children studying English (1999: 52).

But even where test-based motivation is not purely negative motivation, it may be too extrinsic to learners and too abstracted from their day-to-day interests to work consistently.

Ellis tells us:

"Whereas learners' beliefs about language learning are likely to be fairly stable, their affective states tend to be volatile, affecting not only overall progress but responses to particular learning activities on a day-by-day and even moment-by-moment basis." (Ellis 1994: 483)

This suggests, as some of my learners suggested in our discussion, a day-by-day or even moment-by-moment form of assessment--one that is part of the process rather than simply an evaluation of the product. Chambers, examining various classroom activities which motivate or fail to motivate learners, found that many learners enjoyed project work, pairwork, and groupwork, although he also found that these were rarely used (Chambers, 1998: 238).

Here in Korea, there is substantial recent evidence that our current forms of assessment favor learners who work by themselves over those who enjoy group oriented activities. Kim Jee-in, working with elementary children, found some evidence that more introverted and intuitive learners tended to do better in English than outgoing, sensitive ones (Kim Jee-in 1998: 104), and Lee Eui-kap argues that high school learners who are introverted tend to do better if their writing work is analytically assessed, rather than holistically (Lee Eui-kap 1998: 122). Similarly, a recent study by Ko Kyoung-hee showed that many learners believe that less competitive ways of developing and assessing language skills lesson emotional stress and may well be helpful in, for example, listening tests (Ko 1998: 22). Thus it may well be that in our testing we may be unknowingly favouring a particular type of analytic, introverted study style and punishing a different but perfectly valid one. This may be reflected in the anxiety and scores of the learners.

There are of course many disadvantages to looking at complex and very subjective elements like attitude and motivation, particularly in a naturalistic classroom setting. Like a case study, a classroom study may well be a unique phenomenon. Comparison from class to class is very difficult; many important variables must necessarily be left uncontrolled (e.g. hagwon [private education center] attendance, teacher enthusiasm, cheating, etc) by the researcher/practitioner with limited means for carrying out research. The very fact that the researcher is herself implicated as a practitioner in the research may bias the results, and these must therefore be considered suggestive rather than indubitable. All of these factors, of course, distance the classroom from the laboratory and weaken the internal validity of the study as research. But by the same token, they increase the proximity and immediate relevance to actual learning conditions, and thus offer external validity.

In addition to examining test attitude and study motivation, the relationship between test scores and productive ability will be scrutinized. Learners in the second year of middle school English have mostly reading and listening based mid-term and final-term exams. These have limitations as measurements of productive skill. Kellogg demonstrated a very weak relationship between exam scores and productive ability in English in a study among Korean middle school learners in 1998, but his study was restricted to a comparison of oral output and test scores. Here, we will extend Kellogg's finding to written output (Kellogg 1998, Kellogg 1999; Seo et al, 1998).

## SEVEN HYPOTHESES

The following seven hypotheses were formulated and examined in the light of data, that is, questionnaire results, test scores, and output on a writing task.

**Hypothesis 1.** Learners tend to have test-centered motivation in studying English.

**Hypothesis 2.** Learners who are high scorers on listening and reading tests tend to have



future oriented aims (career) or pleasure and interest in English. Learners who do not study English voluntarily, that is, those who have short-term motivation in comparison with those who have long-term motivation, get low scores on tests.

**Hypothesis 3.** Learners who are high scorers on listening and reading tests tend to prefer discourse questions to grammar questions or vocabulary recognition questions.

**Hypothesis 4.** Low scoring students on listening and reading tests prefer vocabulary recognition questions to grammar questions or discourse questions.

**Hypothesis 5.** Students prefer different test formats which need productive skills to discrete point tests like formal mid-term or final-term exam.

**Hypothesis 6.** High scorers on the tests prefer direct test such as writing or translation to indirect mid-term or final-term exams.

**Hypothesis 7.** Passive skills do not accurately predict actual production. That is, learners who score highly on listening tests do not necessarily do well on writing tasks.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **SUBJECTS**

The subjects were 42 girl students of second grade who are attending at Kwan-eum middle school in Taegu. They had been taught English for one year.

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire included as Appendix A was utilized to gather data on attitudes and motivation. It was discussed and thoroughly explained in Korean before it was administered.

### **TEST SCORES**

The test scores consisted of the outcomes of their regular mid-terms and final examinations. These are divided into written tests (which, contrary to their name, actually focus on the reading skill) and listening tests. The tests were written by me, and admittedly reflect my own teaching style. I generally do not require learners to memorize whole words or grammatical rules and prefer to check how much they comprehend the context. Thus the discrete point tests are heavily composed of discourse questions.

### **WRITING TASK**

In addition, learners were required to carry out a writing task about their plans for winter vacation. The duration of the task was approximately twenty minutes and it was executed in class. Their writing tasks were evaluated by four separate teachers using criteria such as structure, the number of correct or comprehensible sentences and the length of whole writing task. Each teacher gave one to five points to each writing task. This means that the highest score on the writing task is 20 and the lowest is 4 points. Inter-rater reliability was fairly high, varying from .7 to .85.

## **RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

Below, the data are presented in chart form against each hypothesis before deciding whether the hypothesis stands or falls. Let me therefore explain the conventions used in the charts beforehand.

The scores given in the charts are labeled as follows:

**'onetest'** are the mid-term listening test scores of second semester.

**'twoltest'** are the final-term listening test scores of second semester.

**'onewtest'** are the scores of mid-term discrete point written tests of second semester, which are focused on reading ability.

**'twowtest'** are the scores of final-term discrete point written tests of second semester, which are based on reading skill.

**'writing'** are the scores of learners' writing tasks which were done within a twenty-minute timespan in class and which had as their topic plans for winter vacation.

For ease of analysis, I use pie charts, boxplots and scatterplots, as well as statistical tests (Pearson product moment correlations). Pie charts are relatively straightforward--the proportion of the answers is indicated by the size of the circle segment.

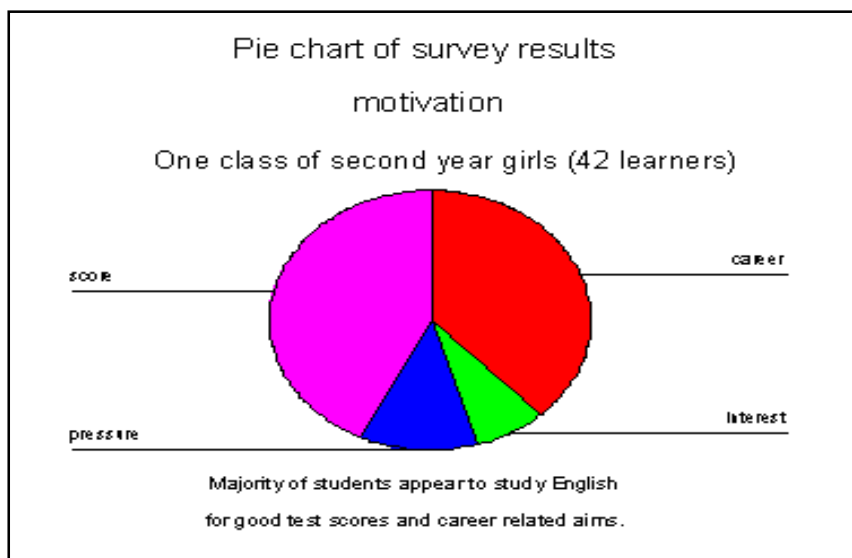
In the box plots, the mean is indicated by a black line. The large shaded "box" holds fifty percent of the scores nearest the mean. The extended "arms" of the box indicate the fifty percent of the scores furthest from the mean, and any extreme outliers are given as numbered points, with the student number next to the dot. At the bottom of each box, the number of students in the group is given. Note that the groups are very different in size, and that this impinges directly on the certitude of the result.

In the scatterplots, each student score is plotted along two axes, so that a strong relationship causes the scores to appear in a line, while a weak relationship shows them scattered in a "cloud". The strength of the relationship is also indicated by the Pearson correlations in the tables that follow hypothesis 7. A Pearson correlation of "one" is the same as a linear scatterplot; it indicates that the variables are firmly linked and vary together. A correlation of zero, on the other hand, indicates that they are completely unrelated.

## RESULTS (BY HYPOTHESIS)

### *Hypothesis 1*

Students tend to have test-centered motivation in studying English.



## *Analysis of data related to Hypothesis 1*

This confirms our initial conjecture that test scores are a big part of learners' lives. If we add the negative motivation of "pressure" (presumably pressure to improve a test score), we get a majority of the students.

## *Hypothesis 2*

Learners who are high scorers on listening and reading tests tend to have future oriented aims (career) or pleasure and interest in English; that is, they are intrinsically and not extrinsically motivated. The learners who don't study English voluntarily, that is, those who have extrinsic motivation, tend to get low scores on tests.

This hypothesis is generally confirmed by the data. Although the mean for those motivated by test scores is only slightly lower than that for those motivated by career interest, the much smaller group which is motivated by intrinsic interest in English has a far higher mean than the small group negatively motivated by external pressure.

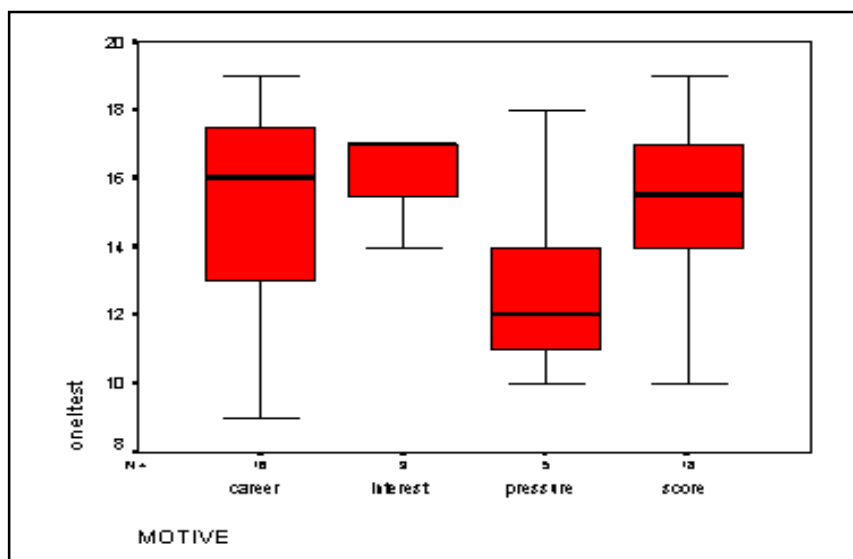


Figure 2 Boxplots of test scores and motivation.

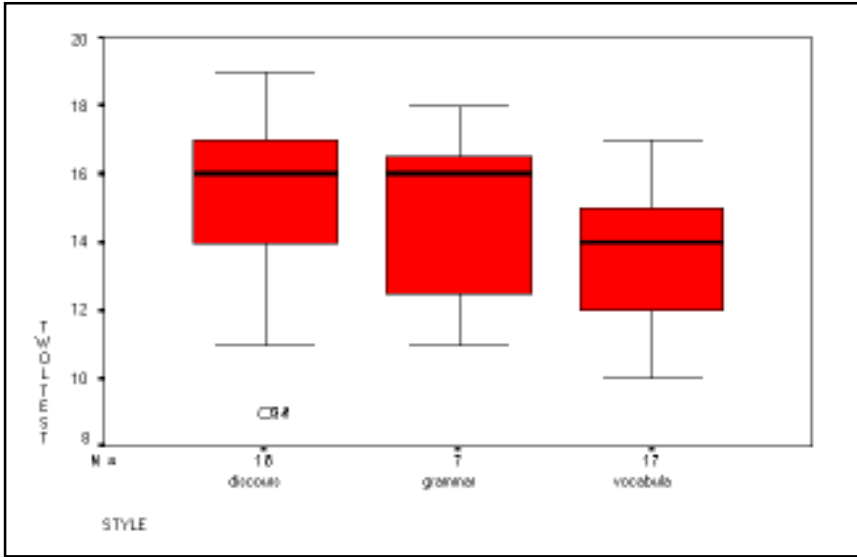


Figure 3

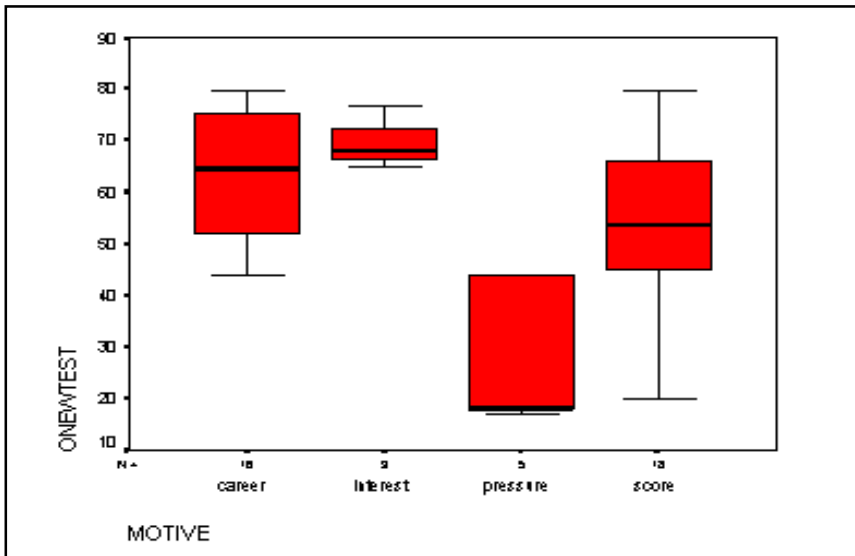


Figure 4

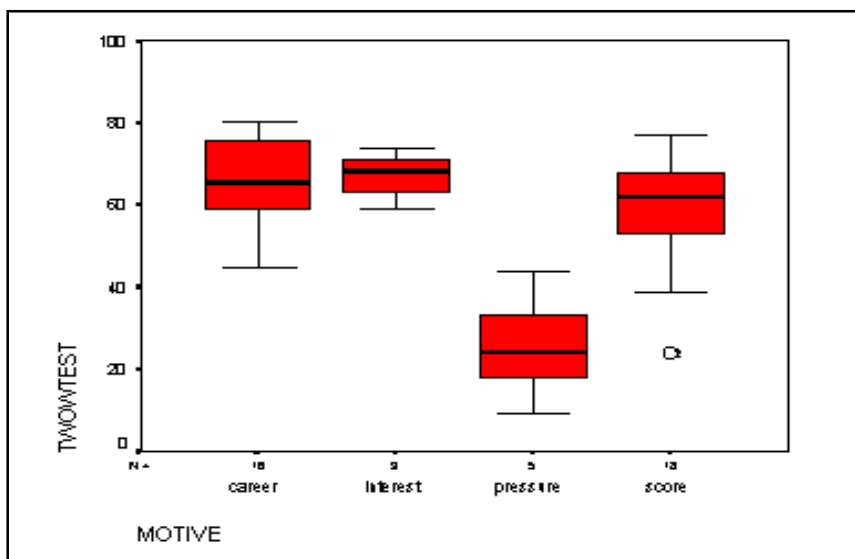


Figure 5

### *Analysis of data related to Hypothesis 2*

Interests and pleasure may cause learners to pay more attention to the class or the teachers and to participate in English related class activities autonomously and creatively.

Conversely, we can predict that learners who study English because of parental pressure or pressure from their teachers or others instead of inherent interest or career aims will generally perform poorly on tests. This pressure may cause the learners to dislike English and they are not likely to pay attention to English if they are not in the presence of observers or watchmen. Thus it appears that students who have intrinsic motivation are likely to do better on tests than those who have extrinsic motivation. This is a fairly consistent trend across all of the tests, reading and listening.

### *Hypothesis 3*

Learners who are high scorers on listening and reading tests tend to prefer discourse questions to grammar questions or vocabulary recognition questions.

This hypothesis is generally confirmed, although there does not appear to be much difference in level between learners who like questions about "discourse" and those who like questions about "grammar", and the distinction, which is a new one in testing in Korea, may be unclear to most students.

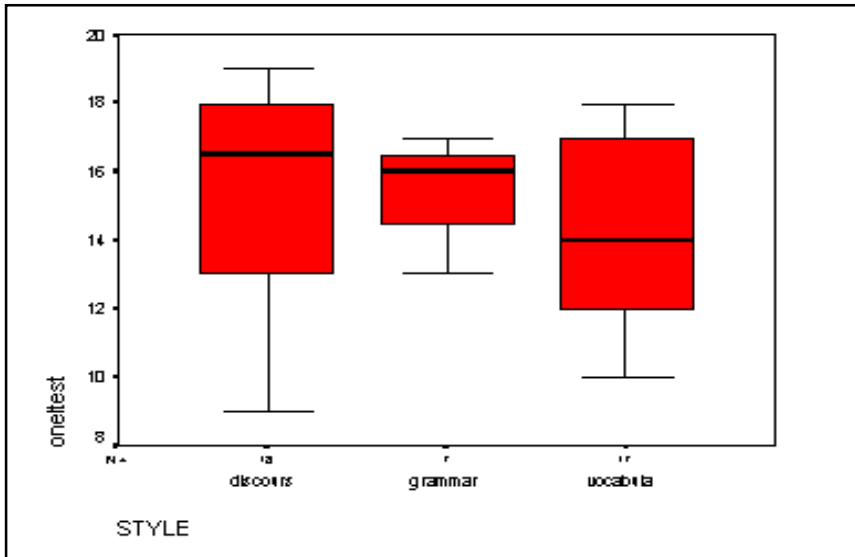


Figure 6 Boxplots of listening scores and question style preference (42 girl students)

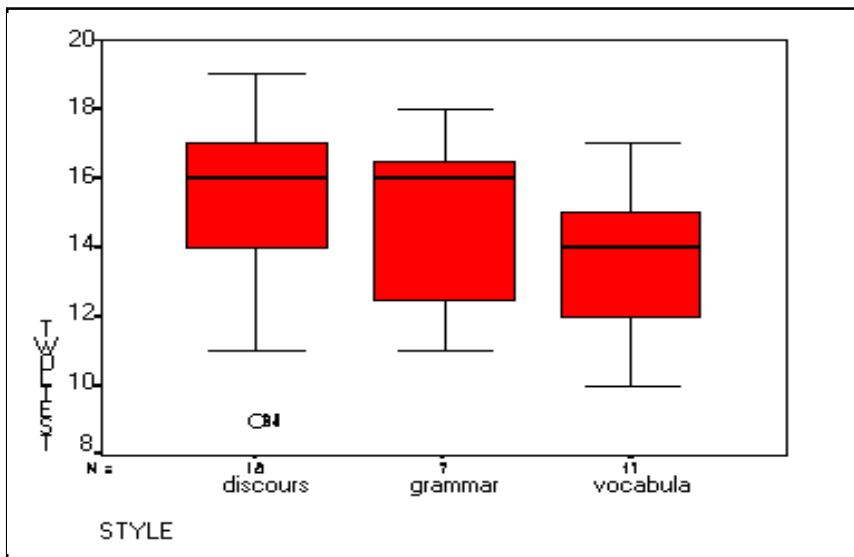


Figure 7

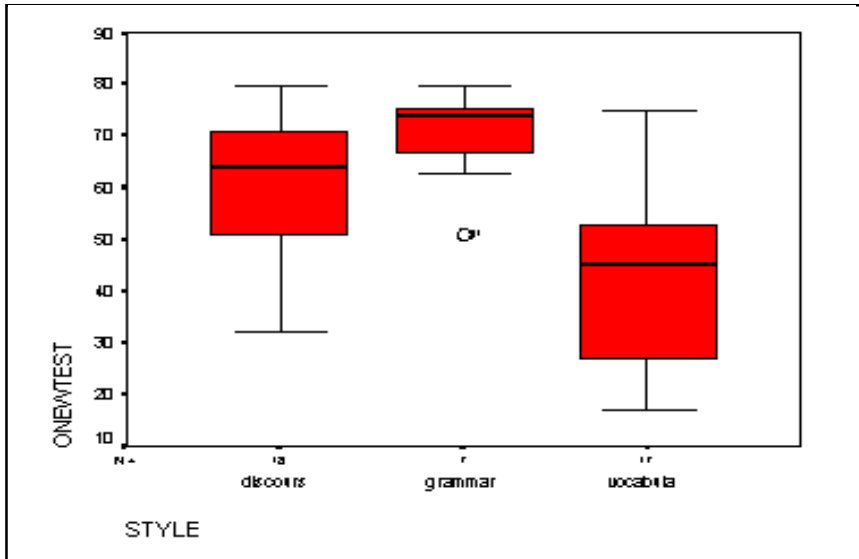


Figure 8 Box plots of scores of discrete point tests and the preference of question style.

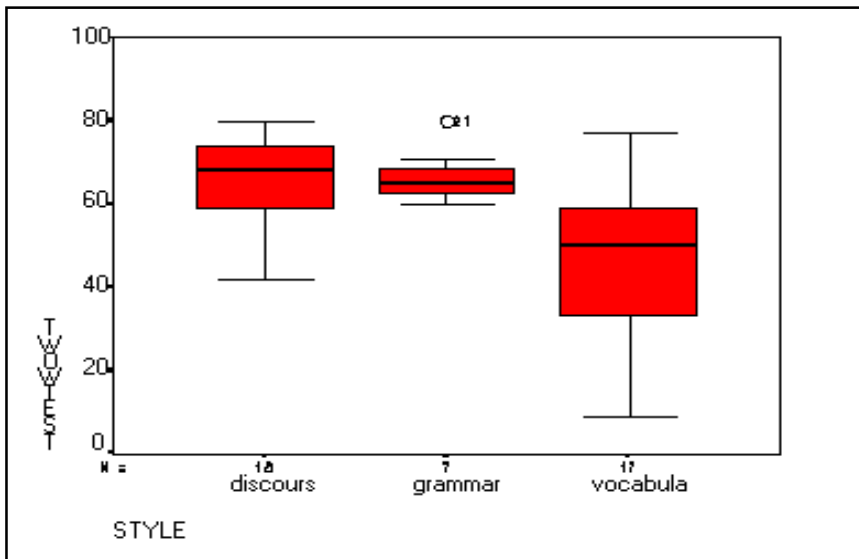


Figure 9

### *Analysis of data related to Hypothesis 3*

In general, high scorers on the tests appear comfortable with sentences and situations, and not simply words. Students who prefer discourse questions are likely to read the text or books which have large vocabulary, grammar parts and discourse organization, trying to figure

out context. Perhaps this makes students have ability to guess or comprehend. When they contact and acquire a large quantity of text with pleasure, they are likely to learn a good deal of language. As a result, they can get superior marks on the tests.

#### ***Hypothesis 4***

Low scoring students on listening and reading tests prefer vocabulary recognition questions to grammar questions or discourse questions.

This hypothesis is amply confirmed by the boxplots above.

#### ***Analysis of data related to Hypothesis 4***

Low scorers on the tests appear to prefer vocabulary recognition questions. We can hypothesize that they are uncomfortable with ambiguity, text, cohesive links between clauses or sentences, and other marks of coherence, and they instead concentrate their focus on relatively small chunks of familiar language. Therefore, they may obtain and acquire only reduced amounts of the language.

#### ***Hypothesis 5***

Students prefer different test formats which need productive skills to discrete point tests like formal mid-term or final-term exam.

This hypothesis is completely disconfirmed, as a look at the pie chart will show.

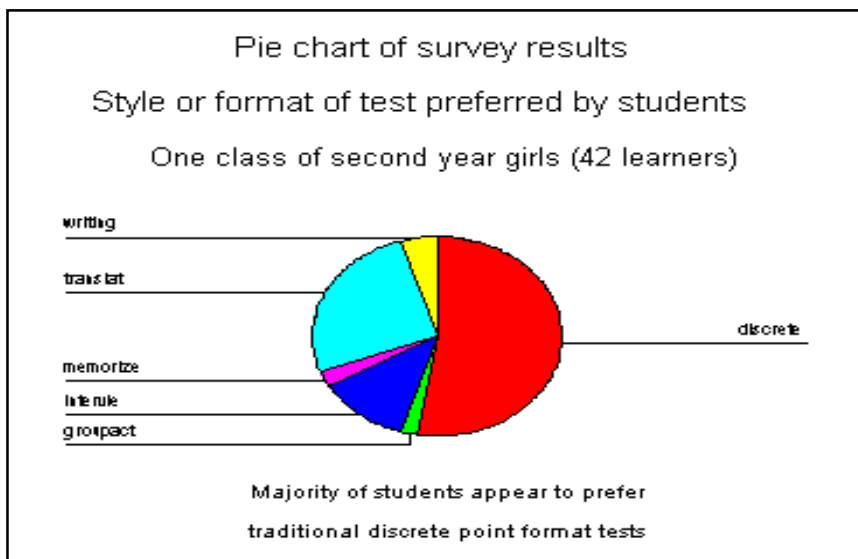


Figure 10



### *Analysis of data related to Hypothesis 5*

During the class discussion, most of the students expressed skeptical attitudes to the traditional discrete point tests as evaluation. However, contrary to expectation, this pie chart shows us that a large proportion of students selected discrete point tests among the methods of evaluation recommended by themselves. One obvious explanation for this result is that learners are profoundly conservative--they want what they are used to, or what authority has suggested, at any rate.

### *Hypothesis 6*

High scorers on the tests prefer direct test such as writing or translation to indirect discrete point mid-term or final-term exams.

This hypothesis is strikingly confirmed by the boxplot, where those who preferred translation and writing tests to the discrete point exams got far higher mean scores.

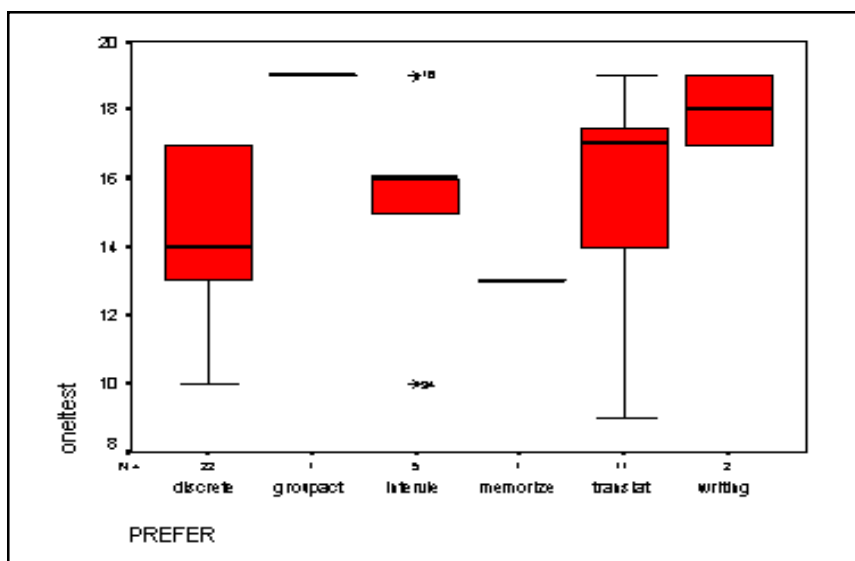


Figure 11 Boxplots of listening scores and preference of test format  
One class of second year girls (42 learners)

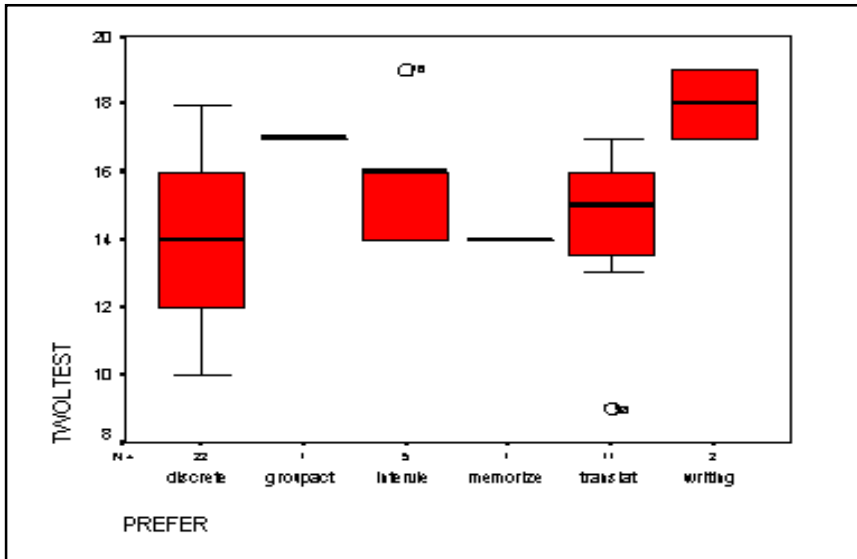


Figure 12

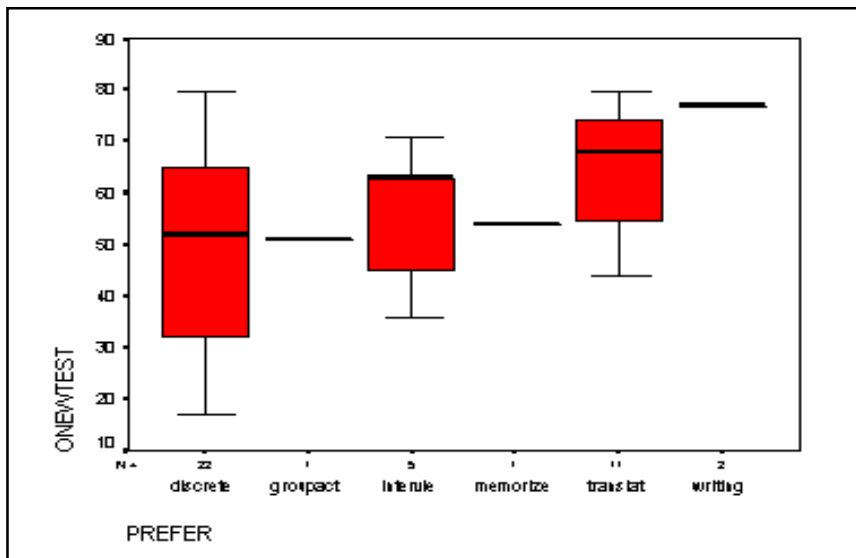


Figure 13 Box plots of discrete point test scores and preference of test style (42 learners)

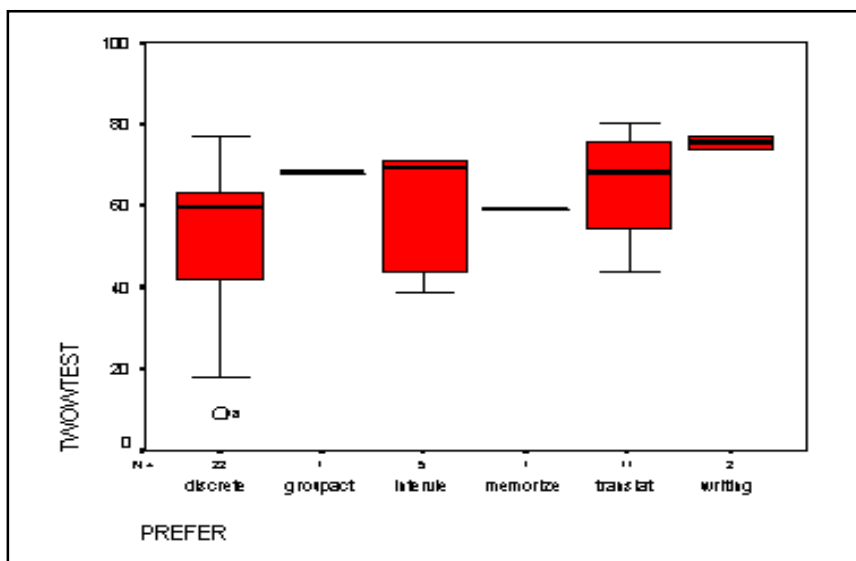


Figure 14

### *Analysis of data associated with Hypothesis 6*

High scorers tend to prefer writing or translating as tests. There are some possible explanations for this inclination. Writing and translating demand the ability to deal with vocabulary, grammar and discourse organization. Learners who know a large amount of language may well feel confident in writing and translating, and choose a test format which makes a clear distinction in their favour.

There was only one learner who preferred group activities, and it was a relatively high scorer. This single example does not of course disprove the findings of Lee Eui-kap and Kim Jee-in that our current assessment methods favor introverted students.

### *Hypothesis 7*

Passive skills do not accurately predict actual production. That is, learners who score highly on listening tests do not necessarily do well on writing tasks.

This hypothesis was proven so far as listening is concerned. However, the "written" tests, which were actually discrete point tests of reading, have a fairly strong relationship with the score on the writing task, as the correlations and scatterplots that follow will show.

**Correlations**

		WRITING	oneltest	TWOLTEST	ONEWTEST	TWOWTEST
Pearson Correlation	WRITING	1.000	.513**	.570**	.773**	.749**
	oneltest	.513**	1.000	.646**	.624**	.646**
	TWOLTEST	.570**	.646**	1.000	.541**	.685**
	ONEWTEST	.773**	.624**	.541**	1.000	.879**
	TWOWTEST	.749**	.646**	.685**	.879**	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	WRITING	.	.001	.000	.000	.000
	oneltest	.001	.	.000	.000	.000
	TWOLTEST	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
	ONEWTEST	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	TWOWTEST	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
N	WRITING	42	42	42	42	42
	oneltest	42	42	42	42	42
	TWOLTEST	42	42	42	42	42
	ONEWTEST	42	42	42	42	42
	TWOWTEST	42	42	42	42	42

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1

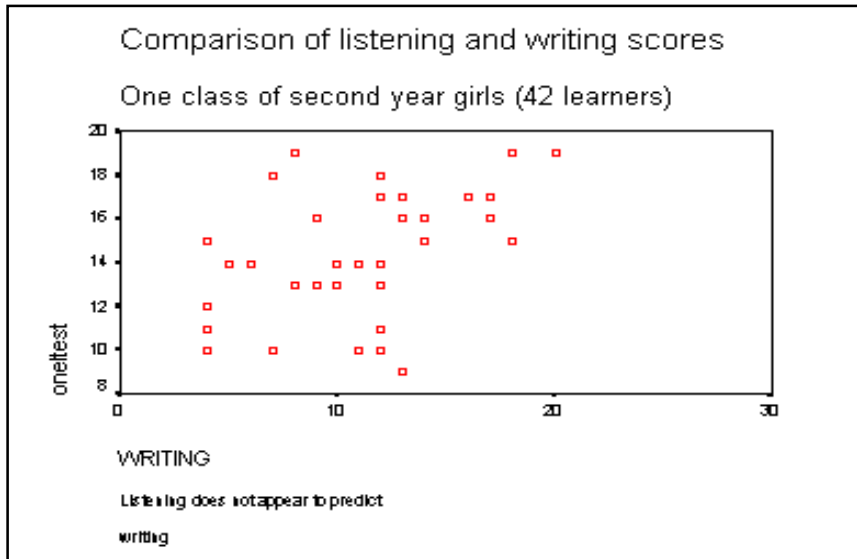


Figure 15

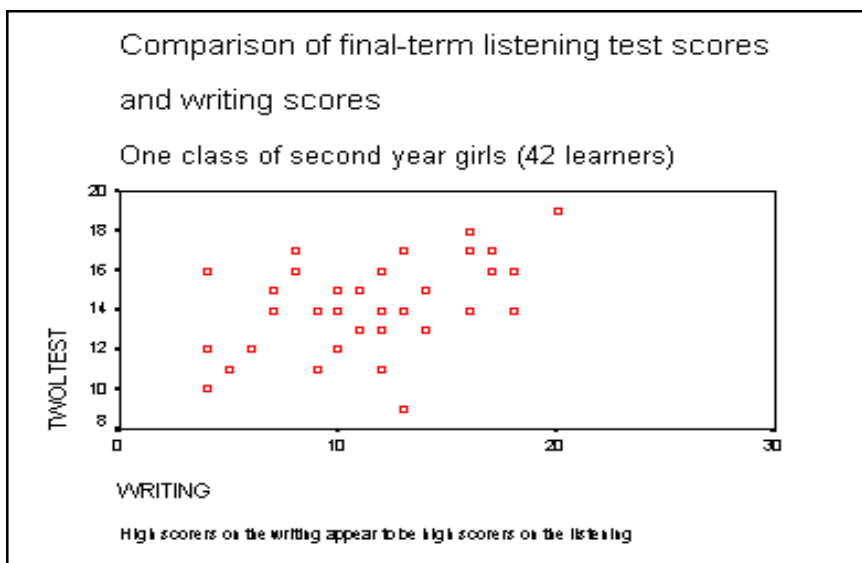


Figure 16

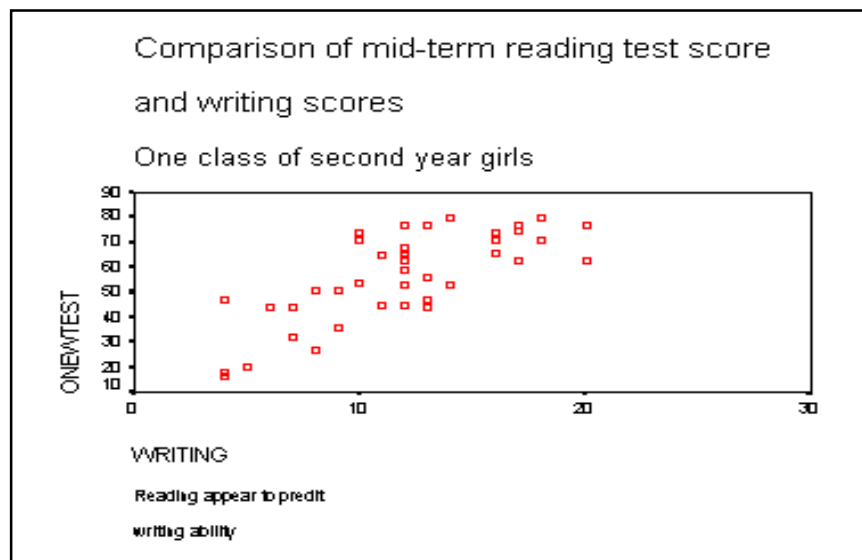


Figure 17

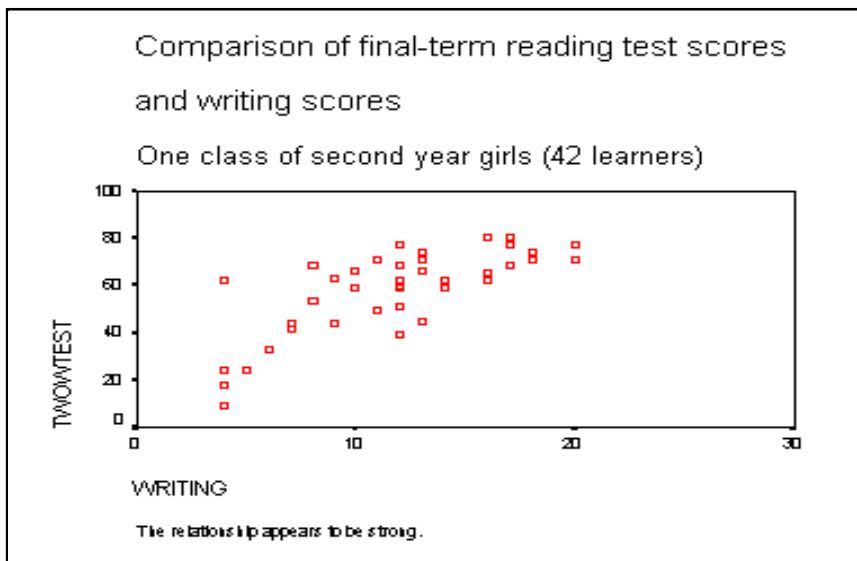


Figure 18

### *Analysis of data relevant to Hypothesis 7*

These correlations and scatter plots show us the relatively strong relationship of discrete point reading tests and the integrative, productive skill of writing. This is in contrast to the findings of Seo et al and Kellogg, who found correlations of only .468 to .603 between standardized discrete point tests and a very coarse measurement of spoken output. All the correlations are statistically significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

It seems that students who have the ability to produce more language in writing can get good marks on the reading tests that consist of vocabulary, grammar, discourse questions. These tests in particular, written by myself, were rich in high level discourse questions dependent on a grasp of meaning in context to work out coherence relationships in the text. Perhaps, if the tests are well designed, it is possible to take advantage of discrete point tests instead of writing in Korean schools, where writing has been largely neglected because of classroom size constraints and the difficulty of correcting written homework on a regular basis.

Although high scorers in the writing task tend to be good listeners, the reverse is not always true. Thus it remains difficult to predict writing scores with listening scores; the correlations of listening scores and writing task scores are relatively weak. In fact, the correlations are very similar to those found by Seo et al and Kellogg in 1998 and 1999 between listening tests and oral production.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

Numerous uncontrolled variables are at work, as with any study which uses actual learners in classroom conditions. Nevertheless, the factors we have looked at--attitudes towards tests, attitudes towards English, and writing proficiency--do appear to account for some interesting features of the test results.

Learners who are high scorers on tests tend to have future oriented aims (career) or fun as motivation in studying in English. Intrinsic motivation is apparently more characteristic of high scorers than extrinsic motivation. In addition, learners who are high scorers on written tests of mid or final term tend to prefer discourse questions or grammar questions to vocabulary recognition. When they study English, they read the text trying to infer the big picture, and obtaining context rather than checking and learning by heart only the words they don't know. They have fun in the process of doing like this. Thus they acquire the ability to guess and comprehend. Since they can process a large amount of text, they are likely to acquire many structures and a rich lexicon. As a result, they can obtain high marks on the test, and this naturally increases their appetite to learn more.

On the other hand, low scoring learners on tests prefer vocabulary recognition questions to discourse questions or grammar questions. They are uncomfortable with ambiguity, texts and links between the words such as cohesion or coherence. They focus on minuscule chunks of familiar, perhaps memorized, language. The failure of this strategy may be demotivating, cause them to focus even more on short term strategies and small bits of testable language and further damage their appetite to learn. Such learners may well be caught in a vicious circle, if we assume that the ability to deal with input affects output, which in turn can affect input.

Yet if this is the case, the learners are probably not aware of the effect of test anxiety on their learning strategies. In any case, learners are wary of change. Before the survey, it was expected, on the basis of the class discussion that a large number of learners would express aversion to discrete point tests on the questionnaire. The result was precisely the contrary. In addition to casting doubt on the efficacy of directly soliciting learner opinions, this may well reflect a conflict of interest. Learners who don't feel confident in English are concerned that a change in the evaluation method will impose further burdens, however much they might feel the need for that change.

Productive writing tasks as an evaluation method are relevant to current testing methods. Learners who got high scores on writing did well on listening tests and discrete point tests based on reading. However, it remains difficult to predict that students who are good at listening will do well on reading or writing. Perhaps, as the learners argued in our initial class discussion, this is because writing logically implies other skills. Another explanation might be that writing is so neglected in Korean schools that only the best or most autonomous learners go on to develop it.

Korea is moving in the direction of performance assessment. This is a desirable trend and may well be feasible in small size classes. Nevertheless, it poses a range of problems for teachers, like ensuring objectivity or diminishing the burden to teachers who are charge of large classes (over 40 learners a class) and have many classroom hours to teach (more than 20 classes a week) in addition to non-teaching paperwork on the job. If the test questions are well designed and consider various possibilities and not simply one possible right answer, perhaps written tests can also reflect a considerable measure of students' performance ability, as the close relationship between the test scores and writing appears to imply.

But it may well be necessary to take a more radical view of the necessity of testing. During this study, we have been preoccupied with the thought that the emphasis on testing may be cheating our learners of good test results. Indeed, we have found that learners who have a strong, non-test based interest in studying English and deal with large amount of English get superior results on tests. Perhaps if English were not a subject on entrance exams, this group of pleasure-motivated learners would be larger. Learners would feel relaxed in

dealing with large amount of English and would be able to approach to English through reading books, watching films, listening to music, talking with friends in English instead of analyzing grammar points and memorizing vocabulary. In addition, such learners would not be afraid of making contact with English or English speakers.

If this is the case, we ought not to reproach students just because they don't do well on tests; such reproach, and such pressure may in itself cause them to do badly. And after all, test scores may reflect a very small part of English ability although they impact a large portion of the motivation.

Tests may account for a large portion of motivation, but there is another factor, unexamined in this study, that is probably even more critical. Nikolov (1999), Chambers (1998) and Dornyei and Csizer's exhaustive survey (1998) have all pinpointed the teacher as being the single most important factor in learner motivation. Thus it is the teachers' role to make students develop an interest in English and do their best--despite the test, as well as because of it.

## THE AUTHOR

Jung Myoung-sook majored in french and minored in English at Kyungpook National University, graduating in 1985. She's been an English teacher for seven years and now works at Ku-am Girls' Middle School in Taegu. She's interested in writing and teaching higher level discourse skills, and also very interested in testing reform.

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## APPENDIX A

This questionnaire was utilized to gather data on attitudes and motivation. It was discussed and thoroughly explained in Korean before it was administered.

1. What kind of question do you like in the discrete point test?
  - (a) discourse questions
  - (b) grammar questions
  - (c) vocabulary recognition questions

I will show you examples of these questions.

\* Here is an example of a discourse question, based on discourse structure and coherence between the sentences.

"Choose the most suitable answer and fill in the blank."

"Jane and Mary were very good friends. Usually they did their homework and played together after school. On the weekend they often went to the park near their houses and had a good time.

But now they \_\_\_\_\_. Their parents don't know why, and they worry about it."

- (a) don't even talk to each other
- (b) are close friends
- (c) do their homework
- (d) want to study more
- (e) like to go to the park

\* This is an example of a grammar question, which is focused on a grammar point.

"Which pair of sentences is NOT the same in meaning?"

- (a) I am surprised that he didn't come.  
= I am surprised at him not coming.
- (b) I am sure that you'll pass the exam.  
= I am sure to pass the exam.
- (c) He couldn't come because of the rain.  
= He couldn't come because it rained.
- (d) Let me introduce you to my brother.  
= Why don't you meet my brother?
- (e) How about taking a walk?  
=Let's take a walk.

2. What makes you study English?

- (a) influence (pressure) of teachers or parents
- (b) fun and pleasure or interest
- (c) good test scores
- (d) future oriented aims

3. What kind of assessment do you prefer? (These choices are based on opinions drawn from our class discussion. Therefore you can make reference to the class discussion.)

- (a) discrete point test (mid-term or final-term listening reading exams)
- (b) group activities
- (c) interview
- (d) memorizing of contents in the textbooks
- (e) translating
- (f) writing

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