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What Teachers Can Do in the Pedagogical Trinity: Pragmatics, Grammar, and Communicative Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

While pragmatic awareness plays a vital role in developing communicative competence, it is less likely to be addressed in the Japanese EFL classroom partly due to lower pragmatic awareness among teachers. In fact, many cases of pragmatic failure are related to deficiencies of adequate teaching, which need to be urgently addressed in order to prevent learners from making unintentional mistakes. Towards that end, this study explores possible paths to promote pragmatic pedagogy and proposes one feasible approach, fully utilizing what is already available in the classroom – the integration of pragmatics and grammar pedagogy. Although grammar-oriented approaches are often cited as one of the causes for ineffective EFL learning, this integration can benefit the classroom where teachers need to satisfy various demands such as implementation of communicative language teaching (CLT) and preparation for college entrance exams. This approach will have great significance for teachers who struggle to balance those needs, especially for Japanese teachers of English (JTEs), many of whom believe that their strength is more likely to lie in their grammatical competence. The implications of this study may lead to more holistic approaches to L2 pragmatics with new teaching perceptions in the demanding EFL classroom.

INTRODUCTION

During my 13 years with an American company in Tokyo working as a communication consultant, I witnessed many communication breakdowns caused by Japanese speakers of English (JSEs) and their inappropriate utterances in cross-cultural contexts. For example, JSEs may surprise native speakers of English (NSEs) by requesting them to do something in an imperative manner, refusing NSE's requests by abruptly saying, "No," without providing any further explanations or reasons, or asking questions about personal matters such as their age during introductions.

When such disturbances occur in cross-cultural communication, they can be disruptive because native speakers are more likely to attribute the breakdowns to personality issues rather than linguistic causes (Gass & Selinker, 2008). It was frustrating for me to see those JSE employees being unaware that their inappropriate utterances may have caused seemingly "unfair" evaluations from their NSE managers, sowing the seeds of discord and mutual distrust between the JSEs and NSEs within the organization. Neither side seemed to realize

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what could have been the fundamental cause of the problem.

This type of communication breakdown due to a lack of contextual appropriateness is referred to by researchers as *pragmatic failure*. Thomas (1983) defines pragmatic failure as "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said" (p.91), and further analyzes that there are two types of pragmatic failure: *pragmalinguistic failure* and *sociopragmatic failure*. Pragmalinguistic failure is "basically a linguistic problem, caused by differences in the linguistic encoding of pragmatic force" (p. 99) and thus easier to overcome because learners are more likely to try to conform to the pragmalinguistic norms of the target language. Meanwhile, sociopragmatic failure is based on different beliefs and cultures in linguistic behavior, and thus more complicated and difficult to address. Both of the deficiencies appear to be deeply rooted among second language speakers, and it seems that even advanced-level learners may indicate marked imbalance between their grammatical competence and pragmatic awareness (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998).

Despite the importance of developing communicative competence, pragmatic awareness is still less likely to be addressed in the EFL classroom partly due to the lack of pragmatic awareness among teachers of the second or foreign language; naturally, teachers cannot teach what they are unaware of (Judd, 1999). While there are previous studies focusing on learners and raising their pragmatic awareness through explicit instruction (Fordyce & Fukazawa, 2004; House, 1996; Kondo, 2004; Rose, 2005), pragmatic awareness focusing on teachers and their perceptions has not been fully investigated to date. The purpose of this study is to explore ways to promote pragmatic pedagogy through raising pragmatic awareness among teachers, Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) in particular, while addressing the realities they are confronted with in the classroom.

TEACHING-INDUCED ERRORS IN L2 PRAGMATICS

A close examination of JSEs' pragmatic deficiencies reported by previous studies as well as those I witnessed in various business situations reveals that many of those cases are closely related to deficiencies of adequate teaching. This is a very critical issue because learners can make those mistakes as a result of their diligent classwork. For example, several researchers report pragmatic failure in JSEs' using *had better*, which stems from the classroom practice of teaching *had better* as being equivalent to *shita ho ga yoi* in Japanese, representing weak force instead of a warning (Fujioka, 2003; Rinnert, 1995; Stephens, 2003). The prevailing traditional practice of the grammar-translation method can mislead learners to believe that there are equivalent words across languages, without taking into account individual contextual factors.

Another example involving this type of negative transfer based on L1-L2 equivalence perception is seen in the overgeneralization of using *please*, as in saying, "Open the door, please," when extra politeness is actually required. The error can result from the instruction that *please* is a polite way of making a request (Gore, 1987), with no further explanation on pragmatic aspects. With the instruction, it is quite natural that many learners overgeneralize that they can make a request politely as long as they use *please*, without realizing it could be a command which expects compliance depending on the context. Furthermore, Matsuura (1998) reports JSEs are likely to perceive "Could I borrow a pen?" as being more polite than "May I borrow a pen?" because they have been taught that interrogatives with past tense modals are more polite than with present tense modals. Also, JSEs often use *I would like you to* inappropriately in making requests because they learn the phrase in high school and perceive it as being more polite than *Could you…?,* and the strategies are relatively

automatized (Rinnert, 1995; Rinnert & Iwai, 2010).

Furthermore, perhaps the aspect of directness in JSEs' speech could also be analyzed in view of teaching-induced failure. Beebe and Takahashi (1989) report that many JSEs claim that EFL classes in Japan stress the need for them to be more direct and explicit in English than they are in Japanese. While this instruction may be effective to improve presentation skills or logical thinking process, it is not necessarily helpful in improving communicative skills in human interactions. However, since teachers often fail to mention this latter factor and just emphasize the need for directness, JSEs may try to converge with what they perceive to be the NS norms and thus again put themselves at risk for pragmatic failure.

RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHERS

These teaching-induced mistakes seem to be closely related to pragmalinguistic failure, as Thomas (1983) explains that pragmalinguistic failure may arise from two identifiable sources: teaching-induced errors and pragmalinguistic transfer. Also, Matsuura (1998) claims that in second language acquisition, "politeness usually means pragmalinguistically appropriate language usage" (p. 34). While sociopragmatic aspects may be difficult to teach, as previously discussed, learners could benefit considerably from receiving instruction for at least pragmalinguistic matters, and it would be certainly the teachers' responsibility to teach at least what is learnable in the classroom. Towards that end, it is urgently required to explore the possibilities to raise pragmatic awareness among teachers so that they can start addressing pragmatic features in the classroom instead of misleading learners into teaching-induced errors.

However, for the EFL context in Japan, the fact that JTEs, who account for the majority of teachers, are advanced learners themselves would add another level of complexity. Teachers are more likely to follow their own learning practice when they teach, because teachers' beliefs and their conceptualization of L2 teaching tend to be based on their own learning experiences (Borg, 2003; Pajeres, 1992). Unfortunately, many JTEs have hardly had learning experience in pragmatics, and having no model to follow can discourage them from undertaking this new endeavor.

Also, in their daily practice teachers are faced with demanding workloads and pressure both inside and outside the classroom. What are the realities they are confronted with that could be a hindrance to promoting pragmatic pedagogy? Finding an answer to that question would be a great challenge because, as mentioned earlier, there have been very few studies on pragmatic awareness focusing on teachers and their perceptions. However, as pragmatic competence is categorized as one of the main elements of communicative language ability (Bachman, 1990), investigating how teachers perceive and implement communicative language teaching (CLT) in the Japanese EFL context should provide some valuable insight, and that is where the research on CLT comes into play.

REALITIES IN IMPLEMENTING CLT

Since the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) started to promote CLT in the late 1980's, there has been a considerable amount of literature on teachers' perceptions and practices regarding CLT (Browne & Wada, 1998; Gorsuch, 2000; Law, 1995; Matsuura, Chiba & Hilderbrandt, 2001; Nishino, 2008; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Sakui, 2004; Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004; Sato, 2002; Taguchi, 2005).

Most of those studies point out teachers' pedagogical preference of a communicative paradigm, indicating that many JTEs realize the importance of CLT. At the same time, many of the research findings suggest that CLT has not been effectively implemented despite the enormous efforts to do so by MEXT. For possible reasons for this, Sakui (2004) points out the dilemma that many JTEs face in integrating CLT and form-based instruction, and Taguchi (2005) states that teachers are "in an awkward position, caught between the objectives of the national curriculum and the constraints that discourage active practice in the communicative approach" (p. 10).

One of those constraints on implementing CLT is high-stakes entrance examinations, which often influence teachers' classroom practices. Even when teachers seek to incorporate CLT into their classroom, they often feel pressed to place priority on preparing students for entrance examinations, and their teaching practices are more likely to follow the traditional grammar-based approach. Does this mean changing the examination system would bring improvement in promoting CLT?

While Nishino (2008) reports that teachers regard changing classroom conditions as a prerequisite to implement CLT, and that observation is generally shared in the research field, changing sociopolitical or contextual factors would usually require tremendous time and effort. Also, Gorsuch (2000), while suggesting the need to change the examination system to include questions to test students' communicative ability, cautions that such changes may not be enough because her findings suggest that "teachers might be more resistant to CLT activities at the classroom level than at the institutional level" (p. 700). This resistance to change could be witnessed even among learners preparing for the exams, as they are likely to indicate a strong preference for conservative teaching styles (Kobayashi, 2001; Matsuura, Chiba & Hilderbrandt, 2001) which focus on reading comprehension and grammar learning.

These findings have led me to realize that, instead of seeking to change the current system, it may be more feasible to fully utilize what is already available in the classroom and try to sufficiently meet the learners' needs, that is, the integration of CLT and grammar pedagogy. This combination of grammar teaching and CLT, pragmatic pedagogy in particular, seems to have potential in two aspects. First is the prospect that it would promote pragmatic pedagogy because many JTEs seem already to feel comfortable teaching grammar and therefore the effort to raise pragmatic awareness within the scope of grammar teaching could be the most effective and sound approach. Second is the prospect that it could provide a clearer focus to JTEs, who may be still confused about what to teach in CLT, and encourage them to implement CLT in their practices. Although this combination of grammar teaching and CLT, pragmatic pedagogy in particular, may initially seem to be somewhat contradictory, it is nonetheless appropriate as it appears to be supported by the widely held view that grammatical competence works as a part of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980).

HOW TO INTEGRATE GRAMMAR AND PRAGMATICS

The proposed approach of integrating grammar and pragmatics may bring about the greatest effect for JTEs, who often perceive grammatical competence as their teaching strength. In addition, while JTEs are more likely to perceive their being non-native speakers as a drawback in teaching communicative aspects and this lack of confidence may become a great hindrance in implementing CLT (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008), they do possess strengths even in CLT, sharing linguistic and cultural knowledge with their students and making the learning relevant to them based on their understanding of the students' lives (Samimy &

Kobayashi, 2004). I believe this approach could allow them to leverage not only those existing strengths but even seemingly-constraining factors such as high-stakes entrance exams, which are often identified as one of the obstacles to implementing CLT.

In fact, contrary to the impression held by many educators that entrance exams are regressive factors based on the grammar-translation method, the content of college entrance exams have actually been less likely to demand discrete grammatical knowledge, and instead, for many years questions have involved a variety of linguistic and cultural elements, including lexico-grammatical knowledge, collocation, rhetorical functions and even some pragmatic features (Guest, 2000; Law, 1994; Torikai, 2013). Therefore, when grammatical features are taught during the class, teachers should be able to, as required, include explanation of pragmalinguistic aspects as part of lexical learning.

This approach can be carried out quite straightforward in the classroom. For example, in order to prevent those teaching-induced errors which are mentioned earlier in this article, when the phrase *had better* is introduced during the lesson about modal auxiliary verbs, in addition to the translation of *shita ho ga yoi* teachers should mention the pragmalinguistic feature that the phrase can be a warning which suggests that there will be negative results if the advice is not followed. Also, to make a polite request, teachers should emphasize the danger of overgeneralizing certain rules, making it clear that adding *please* would not necessarily make the request polite. At the same time, in teaching the grammar of embedded questions or the subjunctive mood, the explanation can be extended to a polite request using a bi-clausal phrase such as *I was wondering if you could*. Or, when teaching the phrase *see to it that*, which appears quite often in entrance examinations, teachers can add the explanation that it is not equivalent to *torihakarau*, the Japanese translation that many dictionaries provide for the phrase, but rather suggests a strong command in the sentence such as "Please see to it that everything is ready." For all the above examples, the instruction should stress the importance of considering contexts where each phrase is to be used, which is the very nature of pragmatics that seems to be missing in many grammar lessons.

In a pilot study, I have tried this approach and obtained very promising results (Oda-Sheehan, 2015). In the study, I carried out a 100-minute grammar lesson on the general usage of modals and auxiliary verbs using a typical college-entrance-test-prep method, stressing lexico-grammatical aspects as often featured in examinations and using textbooks specifically designed for test preparation. During the class, I briefly explained pragmalinguistic features about the usage of *had better* and *please*, as described above. A week later, in order to see the effect of such instruction, I conducted a questionnaire survey in discourse completion tasks (DCTs) to the participants of the grammar class as well as to learners of a linguistically similar level who did not attend the class. When the participants were asked to judge whether the responses in the DCTs were appropriate or not, those who had attended the class indicated much higher pragmatic awareness than those who did not receive the instruction. The fact that the learners showed significant improvement in their pragmatic awareness after attending the class, which they had perceived as a grammar lesson for test preparation, may well suggest that they had absorbed the pragmalinguistic knowledge efficiently through the grammar lesson. Although the sample was rather small and there were some limitations in the study, the results are perfectly in line with the view by Thomas (1983) that pragmalinguistic features of the target language can be taught quite easily as part of grammar, and the findings of this study seem to have brought the theory and the practice together.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Grammar-oriented approaches are often cited as being one of the causes for ineffective EFL learning, and in fact, Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) suggests that the focus on grammatical competence could hinder the development of pragmatic competence through certain priorities implicitly indicated to learners. Nevertheless, learners' ability in grammar, which refers broadly to formal linguistic knowledge including not only syntax but also lexis and phonology, may well have an impact on their development of pragmatic competence (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010), and thus there is a great significance in learning grammar not only for entrance exams but also for pragmatic learning.

In order to bring success to this amalgamation, teachers would need to raise their own pragmatic awareness and competence. It will be a challenge for JTEs whose L1 is not English, but once they have initial awareness, they will surely be surprised to see how many pragmatic features are already included in textbooks, entrance exams, and teaching materials. Also, JTEs can seek the help of native English speaking teachers (NESTs), whose linguistic skills and expertise as native speakers of the language would bring out valuable insights and authenticity to the classroom pedagogy. In fact, this collaboration between NESTs and JTEs in pragmatic pedagogy might even bring a new phase to the team-teaching arrangement already common in the EFL classroom in Japan, and the possibility of that development is one of my research topics for the future. Optimizing the effects of team teaching would make a great contribution to raising pragmatic awareness of JTEs, and eventually of learners, so that learners will be equipped to cope with practical communication outside the classroom.

Mizuta (2009) points out that although Japan is an EFL country, the business world is becoming more and more of an ESL environment. During the "lost two decades" when Japan faced serious economic problems, the business sector pushed the government to reform the curriculum and raise people's English proficiency (Hashimoto, 2011), and MEXT's current drive to promote CLT is apparently a response to those demands and pressure from many global corporations (Erikawa, 2013). As teachers are expected to help students be better prepared to meet the societal needs, they cannot afford to be insensitive to the gap between what is required in the society (i.e., communication/pragmatics) and what is being offered in the classroom (grammar/test preparation). There needs to be a solid bridge between those two factors, and it is certainly the teachers' role to form such a bridge. Language teachers who would overlook their students' pragmatic failure should realize that such pragmatic failure could cause misunderstanding by gatekeepers in the students' lives, possibly leading to lost opportunities in their future. It would not be fair to the learners if they unintentionally fell into such communication failure due to the lack of pedagogical innovation in the classroom.

At the same time, many teachers are obliged to address another need of their students – preparation for college entrance exams. It is this complicated mixture of learning needs that this proposed approach is aiming to address. The implication that pragmatic pedagogy could be successfully integrated with grammar pedagogy should be very encouraging to teachers, especially JTEs who may have struggled between the MEXT's drive to promote CLT and the pressure to prepare their students for entrance examinations. Taking this integrative approach, JTEs could be led to change their long-held perception of "communication or grammar" to "communication AND grammar", opening up doors to more pedagogical opportunities and holistic approaches in that direction, which will surely make for an inspiring topic to explore in the future.

Teachers are vital agents in the classroom, and are confronted with many challenges and conflicting needs of various parties including learners, institutions, and society. It might be easier for them to treat these challenges as excuses to give up, but teachers who care about

their learners and their learning consequences would continue to explore, making the best of what is available in the given situation, to bring about the best results for the learners. The approach proposed in this article would be worth considering in this continued endeavor.

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Matsui, E. (2016). Issues in the effectiveness of early exposure to learning English in an EFL environment. *Accents Asia, 8*, (2), 9-24.

Issues in the Effectiveness of Early Exposure to Learning English in an EFL Environment

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ABSTRACT

Since the Olympic Games will be held in Tokyo in 2020, there has been a growing interest not only in incorporating English in schools' curricula but also in exposure to learning English from a younger age. In this paper, the author will discuss issues regarding early exposure to learning English from a Second Language Acquisition (SLA) point of view. This paper attempts to show the necessary ideas that need to be understood when making good decisions about English education in an EFL environment.

INTRODUCTION

In second language acquisition (SLA) research, studies have focused on different areas such as language aptitude, age, and motivation. Within SLA research, a significant concern has been ultimate attainment or rate of acquisition. Birdsong (2006) states ultimate attainment is "the final product of second language acquisition (L2A), whether this be nativelike attainment or any other outcome" (p. 11). Consideration of the outcomes and what makes people learn language faster seems to be important in language learning. The study of Krashen, Long, and Scarcella (1979) suggested that although older language learners have an initial advantage over younger language learners, in the long run, younger learners have a

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tendency of achieving higher levels of success than older language learners. In 1992, research conducted by Hyltenstam showed that around the age of six or seven seemed to be a cut-off point for bilinguals to achieve native-like proficiency. Later, Hyltenstam and Abrahamsson (2003) argued that in general, after childhood, it becomes more difficult to acquire native-like-ness, but that there is no cut-off-point in particular. Their study also shows successful cases of L2 acquisition in adulthood.

In Japan there is a growing pressure to learn English to be a member of a globalized country. Companies are trying to use English inside and outside of the office in order to become globalized companies. At the same time great interest towards early English education is playing a big role in Japanese education. A questionnaire was conducted by MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology) to 31,914 students in 123 public elementary schools in Japan in 2010. The subjects were grade 1 (6 years old) to grade 6 (12 years old). According to this questionnaire in 2009 to 2010, 83% of the students answered that they want to have competent knowledge of English. Also 90% of the students answered that English is important. The problem is whether English education should be implemented in early grades or not.

In fact, many parents are putting their children in English speaking environments, such as English conversation schools for small children (*Eikaiwakyoushitsu*) at an early age. This is because parents want their child to be able to speak English or to become bilinguals. Parents and society seem to believe that children will acquire English better if they start learning Englishat an earlier age. Early exposure to learning English seems to be a social trend. At the same time there is global and social pressure for Japanese to learn English so that children can live as a member of a global society in the future.

Recently, a TV commercial of an English conversation school for children showed the necessity of early English education. In this commercial, a girl says,“I can do it!” again and again with perfect pronunciation. This commercial is an example of the manifestation of the beliefs that exist about the needs and benefits of early exposure to learning English in an EFL environment. It gives the image that if your child starts learning English at a young age, he or she will be able to use English and say words such as “I can do it!”. Thus this commercial is very effective for those people who want their child to be a competent speaker of English and who are feeling pressure to learn English as well.

Nowadays the number of children with early exposure to English seems to be increasing. Due to the bankruptcy of one of the big English conversation schools in 2007, the market of English conversation schools for adults has shrunk, but the market for schools teaching younger children is increasing. Sato (2012), a school consultant, mentions that there are still more than 10,000 English conversation schools across the country. However, in fact, when looking at the results of TOEFL score, according to ETS (Educational Testing Service),

the average score of Japanese students is 103rd out of 113 countries in 2010. If compared with Asian countries, Japan is 27th out of 30 countries.

In 2011, MEXT started to try to increase the numbers of English classes in public elementary schools. According to MEXT national curriculum for English 2011, English has become an obligatory class for grade 5 (10 to 11 years old) and 6 (11 to 12 years old). Though English class has been an obligatory class, it is only a one hour per week lesson.

However, at the same time there are children who have successfully attained English with late exposure to English. Otsu (2007) argues, "It is said that early exposure and English education in elementary school is necessary based on the theory of CPH (Critical Period Hypothesis) but there is no evidence for this in foreign language acquisition yet"(p. 77). Otsu also adds that, "even if students start English from junior high schools there are many examples that the students have acquired English at a high level if they were taught effectively and in the correct method" (2007, p.77).

Through these studies, the idea that early exposure is not always the most effective stage for learning English in an EFL environment comes up. When focusing from an age perspective, some results show that after puberty is preferable in acquisition of L2. On the other hand, when focusing on native-like-ness, pronunciation or performance, the results show that younger starters do better. Since the research of Oller, Jr. and Nagato (1974) was done in just one school, the determination that early exposure has no evidence in EFL still raises questions about whether treatments done in two or three 40-minute classes per week are effective or not. For example, if the classes were not 120 minutes per week or were 180 minutes, then they may have shown a different result. Or, if the classroom settings were different, such as the number of students in each class, it may have shown another result. Moreover the research has largely been done in an ESL environment. Since the effectiveness is often influenced by the first language of the learners, consideration of the connection between first language and second language is necessary in such research.

This paper seeks to explore whether early exposure to learning English in an EFL environment will produce desired outcomes and whether it is cost effective. The main focus of the discussion will be based on issues from these two perspectives. First the paper examines the learning issues that exist in relation to ultimate attainment and the rate of acquisition. Next, the paper discusses policy issues that surround young learners. Finally, this paper will conclude with the necessary suggestions and ideas that need to be understood when making good decisions about English education in an EFL environment.

ISSUES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Now when focusing on issues from learning perspectives, issues can be considered from two main points. These points are ultimate attainment and rate of acquisition. As Birdsong (2006) mentions, the issues have been discussed for more than 30 years and still have not reached an accurate answer. However teachers and learners need to know these issues to guide students to effective learning stages.

Ultimate Attainment

When thinking about whether earlier exposure is better or not, it seems that it is important to think about the ultimate level of success. A great deal of research has focused on ultimate attainment. It has been commonly said that "younger is better". In fact many people believe in this idea. However later research shows that there are exceptions that younger is not always better. Krashen, Long, and Scarcella (1979) state that, "One popular belief about second language acquisition is that younger-is-better, that younger acquirers are better at second language acquisition than older acquirers"(p. 573). However, there is controversy within the research, such as, "certain research reports claim to counter this early sensitivity hypothesis; several of these papers imply that the literature on age and language acquisition is inconsistent, some showing older, others showing younger performers to be superior"(Krashen, Long,&Scarcella, 1979, p.573). Through the research Krashen, Long, and Scarcella (1979) found consistency among three generalizations; in short, older is faster and younger is better. They add that adults proceed through early stages of syntactic and morphological development faster than children, older children acquire faster than younger children, and that acquirers who begin natural exposure to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency than those beginning as adults. Brown and Larson-Hall (2012) also discuss ultimate attainment. Here they say that, "But are children better learners in the long run than adults? The answer here is a clear yes, given some certain circumstances"(p. 12). Also, King and Mackey (2007) point out the dominance of younger children that they can catch up and reach higher levels when considered in ultimate level. However, it is necessary to consider that there are so many circumstances in learning English. Starting at a younger age is effective, however every student has different circumstances. For instance, besides their English classes at schools, the amount of time using English outside the classroom also plays an important role. It makes for a great difference between students with non-native English speaking parents and students with native English speaking parents. If parents are non-natives, the student will have few

hours of exposure to English in a week. On the other hand, if one of the parents is a native speaker of English, the student will have the chance of exposure to English and at the same time their chances to use English will expand.

Even though the amount of exposure will play an important role in language acquisition another research shows that this cannot be applied to all learners. By looking at the research of age constraints on second-language acquisition done by Flege, Yeni-Komshian, and Liu (1999), Brown and Larson-Hall comment that, "in a context with massive amounts of exposure to a language, children will generally end up with more native-like abilities in a language than adults" (Brown & Larson-Hall, 2012, p.19). However Brown and Larson-Hall add, "this result does not mean that in all types of situations children will be better language learners than adults"(p.19).

Singleton (2003) also discusses the critical period and the general age factor. Singleton reports that younger is better cannot be applied to all learners. He says the "younger=better in the long run view is valid only in terms of a general tendency" (Singleton, 2003, p.15). Also he answers about the issue of the existence or non-existence of a cut-off point such that would normally be associated with a critical period. He states "any decline in L2-learning capacity with age is not in the nature of a sharp cut-off but something rather more continuous and linear, which, again, is not in keeping with the usual understanding of the notion of critical period" (Singleton, 2003, p. 16).

Brown and Larson-Hall (2012) introduce research which also supports the idea that younger is not always better. This research is about the brains of London taxi drivers done by Macquire et al. (2000). The study found out that the size of hippocampus, where spatial information is stored, was substantially larger in London taxi drivers than in the normal population. Since the drivers presumably learned this information about the roadways of London as adults, it showed that adults' brains are plastic enough to grow. The findings from this study suggests that it is not necessary to be strictly sensitive about early exposure because our brain still has the potential for learning new things even as we get older. Also as Singleton (2003) stated, one must realize that there are circumstances that do not follow general tendencies. It is important to not misunderstand a "general tendency" as referring to "all" cases. The limitations of the studies and the findings make it difficult to generalize these ideas.

Focusing on the situation in Japan, since MEXT is trying to add English classes to public elementary schools as an obligatory class, there are many people trying to start learning English at an early age. There also seems to be a belief that the younger is better in Japanese environment. It is understandable from the course of study of MEXT (2008) that MEXT is trying to promote English education in Japan to catch up with a globalized society. This change seems to offer equal opportunity for learners to acquire English. However, Otsu

(2007) argues that we need not start learning English in elementary schools.

From the ultimate attainment point of view, as we can understand from Krashen, Long and Scarcella (1979), older is faster and younger is better. However, it seems that even if younger starters are better, it is not applicable if they are not given the right conditions. In other words, even after puberty, if given the right conditions and right amount of time with guided instruction, older starters can acquire language effectively. Therefore it seems that it is important not to state decisively that if learners start late, older learners cannot acquire language to a similar level of proficiency as younger learners.

Rate of Acquisition

Another consideration necessary in learning issues is rate of acquisition. Some studies show that if adults have controlled amount of exposure, adults outperform children. On the other hand, some studies show that the advantage of older learners is in the short term. Oliver (2009) conducted a study on the negotiation of meaning and feedback in children. The results of this research found out that the way younger learners approach language tasks needs to be considered in instruction. Oliver (2009) states the danger of assuming younger second language learners will interact in the same way as older children. Especially in terms of their psychological, social, emotional, and physical development, children under the age of eight are vastly different from those who have already entered their middle childhood years. Moreover, even in the level of first language acquisition, it is clear that children aged five to seven are different beings from an older cohort of children.

Indeed, when looking at children from L1 acquisition or other subjects' point of view, there are so many individual variations. Their cognitive maturity levels differ so much. Some understand why they are studying and know the goals for studying as well. Also those children understand why the questions are asked when answering the questions. However, other children just do what they are told. Those children are not at the level of understanding the aim of the question. If a child is in such stage of acquiring L1, it seems that we might consider of appropriate timing of exposure to L2 for each individual because the readiness towards L2 depends on the child's cognitive maturity. Lightbown and Spada (1999) mention that,"All second language learners, regardless of age, have definitely already acquired at least one language.This prior knowledge may be an advantage in the sense that the learner has an idea of how languages work" (p. 32). Also Lightbown and Spada (1999) add that a "first language learner does not have the same cognitive maturity, metalinguistic awareness, or world knowledge as older second language learners" (p. 33).

In another study, Munoz (2006) investigated age and L2 acquisition, in Barcelona, Spain. In the project called Barcelona Age Factor (BAF) Project, students from state schools

in Catalonia (Spain) whose first foreign language is English were examined. The subjects were divided into four groups based on the age of onset: 8 years old, 11 years old, 14years old, and 18 years old and up. Several tests such as cloze test and dictation were used in BAF. The result showed that in most tests the group with the age of onset 14 years old and also 18 years old and up to be improving much faster than the early starters. Munoz (2006) adds that "this study has suggested that age differences in a foreign language context favour older learners in the short term due to their superior cognitive development and probably to the advantages provided by explicit learning mechanisms, which also develop with age"(Munoz, 2006, p.33). Although it is not applicable to all learners, given individual variations the resultsfrom this study found that older learners outperformed younger learners.

Another result was found in Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle (1978). This research was made to English speakers who were trying to acquire Dutch. The result showed that the fastest second language acquisition occurred in subjects aged 12-15 years, and the slowest occurred in subjects 3-5 years. The researchers found that"the result represented positive transfer from the first language, English, to the second language Dutch. Older second language learners would, of course benefit from more positive transfer than younger ones because their knowledge of English is better" (Snow & Hoefnagel-Hohle, 1978, p.1124). From the studies of Munoz (2006) and Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle (1978) it seems to show that the best timing for learning second language isfrom puberty or older rather than from childhood.

Now when looking from Japanese students' L2 perspective, there is research by Oller, Jr. and Nagato (1974). The research focused on the long-term effect of FLES (Foreign Language in Elementary School) instruction in Japanese schools. From grades one (6 to 7 years old) to grade four (9 to 10 year old) the students had 120 minutes of English class per week in three 40-minute sessions. In grade five (10 to 11 years old) and six (11 to 12 years old) they had two 40-minute classes per week. For this experiment, a cloze test was used and seventh grade (12 to 13 years old), ninth grade (14 to 15 years old), and eleventh grade (16 to 17 years old) students were tested. The acquisition level of English of the students who started learning English from grade one in elementary school and the students from grade one in junior high school were compared in the research. As a result,"in spite of the fact that FLES students had an advantage of six years of EFL study before they entered junior high school, the non-FLES students were able to overtake them by the eleventh grade" (Oller, Jr. &Nagato, 1974, p.18). They conclude the discussion with: "even though FLES programs do impart some proficiency in the FL, there is no evidence that students with FLES background will progress more rapidly than non-FLES students in FL study at the secondary and college levels" (Oller, Jr. & Nagato, 1974, p.18). In future research, the consideration of other intervening perspectives is necessary. As mentioned before, the above research needs to

consider whether two to three 40-minute classes was an effective hour of classes or not. Also in future research, the consideration of parents' language, whether students had family members of native English speakers or not, and the amount of hours of exposure to English outside of the classroom is necessary because it plays a significant role in language acquisition.

POLICY ISSUES

In this section policy issues will be considered. Starting with a brief history of English education in Japan, policy issues such as time, teachers, and cost will be discussed.

Brief History of English Education in Japan

There is a different history between private elementary schools and public elementary schools in Japan. When looking at private elementary schools, the research of the English Japan Private Elementary Federation in 1992 shows the number of private elementary schools that had English classes from the 1870's. The figures show that in the 1870's there were only two private schools with English education. After World War II, in the 1940's to 1950's, these numbers had drastically increased to 45 private elementary schools. Koike (1995) mentions that the numbers increased from 45 to 130 private elementary schools in the 1990's. This was because of the expansion of export and import businesses, and the exports of automobiles and televisions drastically increased. Thus, there was a need for English education in Japanese society.

For public elementary schools, in 1986, MEXT started seriously to think about starting English classes in public elementary schools. MEXT started to choose several public elementary schools for researching and as a trial. Based on that research, in 1998, MEXT decided to start English in a period for Integrated Studies for the students to learn English for international understanding. In 2008, MEXT decided to start English once a week in Grade 5 and 6 as an obligatory class from 2011 April. According to the survey conducted by MEXT in 2012, there were more than 140 schools out of 216 private elementary schools that had English classes in 2011. The objective for this obligatory class is:

> "To form the foundation of pupils' communication abilities through foreign languages while developing the understanding of languages and cultures through various experiences, fostering a positive attitude toward communication, and familiarizing pupils with the sounds and basic expressions of foreign languages" (MEXT, 2010).

It is necessary to keep in mind this objective when determining the issues of English education in Japan because there seems to be a great gap between the objective of MEXT and the actual English classes.

Policy Issue

Even though English has become an obligatory class in elementary school, one of the issues we need to consider is that it is only from grade 5 (10 to 11 years old) and 6 (11 to 12 years old). Moreover it is only one hour per week class. It seems that parents need to realize that there is a great gap between the actual lessons and the parents' goals. There seem to be many parents who think that their children will become bilinguals with this one hour a week class at school or one hour a week lessons at English conversation class outside the school. As King and Mackey (2007) state, "findings about bilingual advantages generally apply to children who have advanced proficiency in the two languages" (p.7). This idea is important because the idea is frequently misunderstood by parents. Some parents misunderstand that their children will be bilinguals though children are just grasping simple skills such as greetings and counting numbers in a very occasional exposure to second language, such as in the once a week English conversation classes. Also Brown and Larson-Hall (2012) state that "schools that teach second languages should provide high number of contact hours" (Brown & Larson-Hall, 2012p.19).

Moreover, when considering from a language point of view, a study conducted by Omaggio-Hadley (2000) shows the difference of impact to L2 acquisition depending on the first language. Omaggio-Hadley (2000) examined the speed of second language acquisition by adults in the U.S. foreign service. Brown and Larson-Hall (2012) discuss this research, "With languages that are typically easiest for native English speakers to learn, such as Spanish, Dutch, or French, after 24 weeks (or 720 hours in a six-hours-a-day, five-day-a-week program) motivated adults with normal levels of language aptitude reached a level of 2+ (Advanced High)" (p.8).

Brown and Larson-Hall also informs of the interaction between languages: "for the more difficult languages for native English speakers to learn (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese or Korean) about 80-92 weeks would be required (that's 2,400-2,760 hours of classroom study)" (p.8).This seems to show that the interaction between English and Japanese is difficult compared with other languages. Thus, even if learners start learning English from grade one (6 to 7 years old) of elementary school, if schools continue to have only one class a week, this will not facilitate sufficient improvement in English. If so, it is important to consider that due to being in an EFL environment, the real issue is the insufficient number of contact hours in English, and to consider that learners need many more hours for English classes at school

than MEXT is expecting.

Intensive or Slow Drip

The first part of policy issue we discussed was the backgrounds of English education in Japanese public and private elementary schools. The literature revealed that it is unrealistic to expect students to become fluent bilinguals given the insufficient number of hours of English study. While some studies have found that intensive programs are much more effective than regular courses, others indicate that the extent to which they are effective depends upon the student's proficiency.The issues here will consider the adaption of hours in a practical classroom situation. Serrano (2011) discusses the time factor in EFL classroom practice. He analyzes whether the distribution of hours of classroom practice has any effect of students' foreign language gains by comparing two types of EFL programs. One is long sessions over a short period which is an intensive course. The other is short sessions over a long period of time which is a regular course. There were 152 participants who were examined with a variety of tasks. The intensive course was done in 4.5 weeks during the summer, over 5 hour sessions for 5 days a week, for a total of 110 hours. The regular course was done throughout the academic year with a 2-hour session twice a week for 7 months. The aim of the program was to develop the four language skills and the students at two proficiency levels were analyzed. The levels were intermediate and advanced. The results of the analysis indicated that intermediate-level students tend to make more language gains in intensive programs than in regular classes. For advanced EFL students, they did not seem to benefit from intensive classroom practice as much as intermediate students did. From the results, Serrano (2011) mentions that "time increase is generally beneficial (which is in line with the claim that"practice makes perfect"), whether time concentration alone usually leads to more modest gains"(p.136).The results suggest that generally intensive study is beneficial but the results differ depending on the learner's proficiency. Serrano (2011) states:

> "When the interval between sessions is too wide, learners may have problems retrieving previously learned concepts/structures, making proceduralization and automatization harder for them. On the other hand, when there is not much spacing between practice sessions, the knowledge acquired is more readily available for retrieval and thus also for proceduralization. According to this claim, intensive courses should lead to greater gains. However, the type of knowledge that advanced learners need to acquire is different from learning that takes place at lower proficiency levels. Advanced students need to acquire infrequent collocations or complex, grammatical structures whose presence is intensive courses is also scarce (as compared to the most frequently used patterns that the intermediate students still need to learn)" (pp. 137).

From the above result it can be understood that if applied to beginners or intermediate level students, intensive courses can be effective. On the other hand, for advanced learners the approach should be different. Though a great deal of research has been done on intensive and slow drip, some results show intensive is effective and others do not. Since the research was done with a variety of ages and levels, it is difficult to adapt one research result to one curriculum. Regardless if it is intensive or slow drip, the result varies if we do not adapt to the right level. This issue also involves the administrative level. The school needs to consider how to fit in to school curriculum, or how to choose intensive or slow drip. Moreover, for the Japanese education system, the school's criteria must follow MEXT requirements.

OTHER ISSUES

In this section some other issues that need to be considered in early exposure in learning in EFL environment will be briefly discussed. The issues are social issues, cultural issues, matter of money, and teacher issues. It is commonly said that children acquire language faster because their brains are like a sponge. One of the reasons is that children acquire language faster is that most of a child's learning environment is through playing with friends. King and Mackey (2007) explain that children and adults also have very different language learning opportunities: "For instance, children often have many more chances to use English outside the home-in school, in the neighborhood, and playing with peers-than their parents. The language children need to use socially is much less complicated" (p.21).

King and Mackey (2007) also add that, since children are less anxious about making mistakes, children are able to jump into the second language environment and can often make rapid progress. Though there seems to be a great difference between an adult's learning environment and a child's learning environment, it seems that at some point, especially parents misunderstand or have an illusion about the speed of children's language acquisition that young learners can acquire language faster.

Besides the above-mentioned social issue, there seems to be cultural issues regarding children's second language acquisition. One of the cultural issues can be understood by the research done by Spada (2009). Spada (2009) examined the interaction in second language classrooms. In her study she mentions about comparison of Japanese immersion classrooms and French immersion classrooms. It was found that "when the teacher used recasts more than any other type of corrective feedback, the Japanese learners almost always repaired their utterances after recasts, while French immersion learners rarely did" (Spada, 2009. P.167).The result seems to show that Japanese learners tend to put priority on forms rather than the meaning of the language, it is necessary to know such tendency when teaching English. It is necessary to think about EFL from the learners' cultural background because

each learner has cultural differences.

Another important issue in acquiring foreign language in EFL environment is the cost. Although it depends on English conversation schools, some schools cost $85 a month for weekly English lesson. Brown and Larson-Hall (2012) warns that "if parents find they are paying large amounts of money for one or two hours of language instruction per week in the misguided belief that this is the best time to learn a language, they are wasting their money" (p.19). When spending money, consideration of cost performance is necessary. If parents pay a lot and children spend plenty of time to have exposure in English, some children will acquire English. However it will need expensive fees and time. If not, it seems that learners and their parents are wasting money and precious time as well.

Lastly it is important that issues of teachers should not be forgotten. In most elementary schools in Japan, ALTs (Assistant Language Teachers) teach with homeroom teachers. ALTs are mostly hired by a company running an organization of ALTs. In some suburban areas, homeroom teachers use CDs because they cannot employ foreign ALTs. According to the survey conducted by MEXT in 2005, English classes were pursued in more than 90% of 21,000 public elementary schools. However, only 60% to 70% of schools had ALTs in English classes. It means that still about 30% of the schools do not have the opportunity to have native speakers in English classes. Also though ALTs are native English speakers, they are assistant language teachers. In other words, most ALTs teach English without worrying about classroom control. In general, teachers plan lessons thinking of classroom control as well, but most ALTs do not. Therefore in some cases the class is for having fun. This issue needs to be considered immediately. Since in Japan, English is not included in elementary teachers' certificates, it seems that including it in the certificate is one idea to improve this situation. If English is included in elementary teachers' licenses, homeroom teachers can teach English and at the same time, they can have control over the students. This will take a shorter time than having ALTs trained to meet the requirement of an elementary school teacher's certificate in Japan.

DISCUSSION

This paper began by discussing learning issues and moved on to policy issues. As mentioned before, parents tend to think if they put their child in English classes, children will learn English easily. However having children acquire a foreign language in an EFL environment is not simple, it is very complicated. As Brown and Larson-Hall state,"the idea that children are faster learners than adults is not accurate"(p.18). In addition, it is not always "the earlier the better."

The literature reveals that parents and educators need to understand that there are many issues in early exposure to learning a language in EFL environment. In fact, from the language acquisition point of view, it seems that the satisfaction of parents having their children going to English lessons or having one hour a week of English class at school is larger than the quality of the actual language acquisition. As seen from the several studies, when students get to the age of going to junior high school, their cognitive level becomes ready to acquire another language besides their first language. If their cognitive levels reach a certain level, the students can start learning syntactic matters.

In Japan, companies are expected to compete globally and as a result many firms are now using more English in the offices and expect workers to have a minimum English ability. Due to this social pressure, there is a tendency for parents to want their children to be exposed to English at a very young age, and the younger the better. Early exposure is not the only way to become proficient. There are other important things to do before learning foreign languages, such as learning their first language. The literature suggests that other choices can be considered, such as age, time, speed, or environment, including social and policy issues. Parents also have the choice to wait until the stage when cognitive levels are ready to acquire foreign languages. Or, learners can start later and learn intensively. Parents need to watch their child and think of the best time to start learning English for their own child. There is no need to compare to other children and society. Also it is important that parents not be swayed by the sales talk of English conversation schools who do not know their child. Parents can spend a lot of money if parents want to and are able to afford it. However, parents always need to think about whether it is worth paying for the cost in order to have their children acquire a second language. In this way, there are other choices if the issues are considered when making the decision of when to introduce English.

Above all, these issues are certainly necessary to be considered by teachers and schools. Besides everyday lesson plans, consideration from an administrative level is necessary. Future research should consider the effective hours of English classes in a week. A total framework planning in schools seems to be important. Just good lesson plans cannot change this situation. Unless the school offers a sufficient number of hours for English classes and well-trained ALTs, English education in Japan will not change.

Now in Japan, not only the globalization of the companies but also society itself is trying to be global for 2020 Olympic game. There is a trend of acquiring English and many still believe that earlier is better. However, it is important not to be swayed by things around us and to get the correct information and knowledge to make decisions in early exposure in learning foreign language in EFL environment. It is necessary to consider from both sides, parents and schools.

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The Effect of Popular American Films on Taiwanese University EFL Students' Perceptions of L2 Culture

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ABSTRACT

Film has been used for many university-level courses in Taiwan. Extant research, though, is limited regarding how this specific form of visual media may affect EFL students' understanding of foreign or L2 culture. Hence, the purpose of this research is to discover if using this authentic material has significant impact on students' L2 cultural learning. The 52 student participants were enrolled in a junior-level course at a northern Taiwan university. They first completed a quantitative attitudinal pre-test with Likert-type questions at the very beginning of the semester. After two months of instruction, the posttest identical to the pre-test was administered. Next, SPSS software was used to obtain the bivariate statistical data with *t*-tests for comparative analysis. Final results proved overall that popular American films affect participants' L2 culture learning. These results provide EFL educators with an effective option for teaching this subject. In addition to providing the effective aspects of this approach, there are suggestions regarding how to manage some ineffective ones.

Key words: EFL, L2 culture, feature film, Taiwan, university students

INTRODUCTION

English as a foreign language (EFL) learners work hard these days to achieve fluency in order to expand their employment prospects, mostly being taught that their achievement can

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simply be measured by testing their proficiency in the four skills. This is apparently true in places like Taiwan (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Lin, 2013). Often times, learners' success on these English language examinations is measured more by their adherence and understanding of the language's structure rather than its actual social contexts. Therefore, a contradiction could possibly exist in declaring high achievement in a language based on test scores rather than test takers' actual abilities to use the language successfully in real situations. These situations in actuality, such as in pursuit of advanced study or professional employment, necessitate English learners acquire informed cultural understandings, along with the more structural areas of English grammar, syntax, and semantics. The English language may be new to the learner; however, the language itself is not. What is said in a statement, announcement, or dialogue, though immediate and either as a native or foreign language, already has a long history of meanings attached to it that has been accumulating throughout a history of the language's usages by various groups in a variety of situations (Hall, 2013). According to Zhao (2010), there is a close relationship between foreign language teaching and cultural instruction. Therefore, the learner of any foreign language must ultimately have cultural understanding to be able to use it successfully.

One of the primary goals of language instruction is to help students acquire proficiency for communication. Many language experts agree that communicative proficiency should embrace two elements: linguistic competence and socio-cultural competence (Abrate, 1993; Cohen & Olshtain, 1981). Linguistic competence for cross-cultural communication can be achieved only if the instruction of language is carried out in the context of the foreign culture.

However, inclusion of L2 culture in Taiwan's EFL university environment is uncertain according to research by (Sung & Chen, 2009). Although instructors view it positively and its presence necessary to facilitate learners' communicative competence, they encounter issues regarding its implementation, such as a lack suitable learning materials and a lack of time available to instruct L2 culture related material due to EFL university curricula. Moreover, there is even low prioritization of L2 cultural instruction among instructors and curricula in Taiwan's EFL instruction (Cheng et al., 2007). These oppositions between intentions and actions may lead to an uncertainty that hinders the achievement of ultimate goals in EFL learners' language proficiency.

Actually, one major goal for Taiwan's government is to promote communicative English across the island (Savignon, 2002), including the compulsory instruction of English beginning in elementary schools (Su, 2006). As aforementioned, without the presence of L2 culture in Taiwan's EFL university classrooms, it could be more difficult for learners to acquire communicative competence. Therefore, along with the great strides Taiwan's educational system has made in the promotion and incorporation of reforms facilitating instructors to help English learners achieve communicative proficiency, more must be done according to Wang (2002).

Hence, it is necessary to continue the dialogue regarding the importance of implementation of L2 culture, along with innovative and effective ways of teaching it in Taiwan's university foreign language classrooms. One innovative approach is implementing comprehensible input (CI) or authentic input (Krashen, 1982) into the English foreign language curriculum. Some research on the utilization of authentic input has already been conducted on EFL students in Taiwan's universities, specifically focusing on improving skills (Hsieh, 2001; Jeng, Wang, & Huang, 2009; Kuo, 2003; Lo, 2010; Tsai & Shang, 2010; Wang, 2010). Also, some have focused on improving L2 culture awareness or understanding or knowledge (Hsu, 2014; Liaw & Johnson, 2001; Su, 2008, 2011; Wu, Marek, & Chen, 2013). Others have also utilized the audiovisual media in the form of either film clips or short films or feature films for improving skills (Chen, 2012; Hsu & Lo, 2009; Katchen, 2003). However, there is a lack of EFL research in universities in Taiwan that utilize feature film as the primary material for teaching L2 culture to further students' language acquisition with communicative competence.

This lack of research provides the rationale for conducting this research. First, the purpose is to investigate the viability of using feature films as CI or authentic input for teaching L2 culture to university EFL students in Taiwan. The goal then is to provide an alternative material that could be realistically implemented into Taiwan's EFL university curricula and actively practiced by instructors. Finally, the plan is to achieve this by conducting research on university students in Taiwan in an actual EFL learning environment with the proposed materials, addressing the initial bases of this research. The research was designed to examine the effectiveness of utilizing films as authentic input for instructing L2 culture. It hopes to determine if popular American films affect Taiwanese university ESL students' perceptions of L2 culture.

This paper begins with discussions serving as a context for the research: (a) language and culture, (b) culture's implementation in EFL instruction, (c) authentic input for language acquisition, and (d) popular film's cultural content. Then, the research methodology is revealed. Finally, the results of the study are discussed, showing how the data answers the initial question. It concludes with implications of the study and proposes prospects for future related research in the field of EFL instruction. Through this content, this research aims to contribute to the research conducted on utilizing authentic input in L2 culture instruction in Taiwan's EFL university classroom.

The findings of this research would hopefully facilitate EFL instructors in helping their students achieve English language proficiency. With the increasing demand in Taiwan for graduates with communicative competence, there is a justifiable need for more effective, practicable ways of teaching. As a result, EFL instructors that apply the recommended approach obtained from these research findings could be better able to instruct their students. EFL instructors should be better informed on how to apply and utilize popular feature films

as CI or authentic input for L2 culture learning to improve students' English language learning. The research may then help in discovering critical areas in the EFL educational process of instructing L2 culture with feature films that have not been revealed. For these reasons, it is hoped that a new way of learning L2 culture with feature films in the EFL classroom may be gained.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cultural Instruction

As Brown (1991) stated "[s]econd language learning is often second culture learning" (p. 33). There are significant grounds that support the argument for teaching culture in the language classroom. The particular language or target language must be combined with knowledge of its culture (Jacobs, 1989); when students use newly acquired language in the foreign culture, they come to realize that some miscommunications occur which are not caused by incorrect grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary, but their being unknowledgeable of the target-language culture, something beyond those linguistic errors, according to Brooks (1997). Learning a foreign language, he emphasized, stays incomplete and incorrect unless proper cultural instruction is studied.

Importantly, Damen (1987) conceived one of the major characteristics of culture: "Culture is learned. If it can be learned, it can also be instructed or acquired" (p. 2). Moreover, Seelye (1984) asserted that the study of language cannot be separated from the study of culture and students' awareness of the importance of obtaining knowledge of a culture can motivate them to learn a language and reinforce their ability for cross-cultural communication.

An essential first step is to incorporate goals of cultural instruction. Tomalin and Stempleski (2013) recently modified Seelye's (1984) well-established goals of cultural instruction as follows:

1. To help students to develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviours.
2. To help students to develop an understanding that social variables such as age, sex, social class, and place of residence influence the ways in which people speak and behave.
3. To help students to become more aware of conventional behaviour in common situations in the target culture.
4. To help students to increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language.

5. To help students to develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalizations about the target culture, in terms of supporting evidence.
6. To help students to develop the necessary skills to locate and organize information about the target culture.
7. To stimulate students' intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and to encourage empathy towards its people. (pp. 7-8)

This initial step aids in solidifying a language institution's establishment of cultural instruction. Then, promotion and implementation of these goals could be an important means to equipping language instructors with the necessary tools, such as a checklist, for educating their students.

Also requiring consideration are preexisting issues of cultural instruction at the university level, such as those regarding actual implementation. One example comes from Stapleton (2000) who distributed questionnaires to 28 native English speakers who taught at universities or junior colleges in Japan. Participating language teachers' answers reflected that, though considering cultural information important, what they provided in classes was included randomly without advanced planning and more overt culture than covert.

In Taiwan, results from research conducted by Sung et al. (2009) also reflected a difference between EFL instructors' intentions and actual conduct in implementing L2 culture instruction. A large portion of university instructors of English in Taiwan perceive the incorporation of L2 culture into EFL learning positively according to the study. Data were collected from survey questionnaires completed by a total of 146 participants from thirteen different Taiwanese universities during the Fall 2007 semester. According to results, most participants agreed that it is important to implement L2 cultures in EFL learning in order to improve students' English abilities, broaden their perspectives, and facilitate their communicative competence. However, it is difficult for instructors to provide them with appropriate and suitable L2 culture information and materials due to students' varied levels of proficiency. Participants also expressed that there is insufficient time available for incorporating L2 culture learning into the lessons due to time needed for teaching required linguistically-oriented materials. Hence, disaccord exits between EFL instructors' intentions and actual practice.

Moreover, research conducted in Taiwan's universities has shown students favorably perceive L2 cultural instruction as useful. For instance, Sung's (2007) research revealed that Taiwanese university students find providing cultural information in EFL lessons highly appealing. After first identifying six quality attributes of English language instruction, they gave overall top ranking to instructors offering applicable L2 cultural information in class. Sung's research further added that by offering more cultural information in English lessons, students would be more motivated to learn, enabling them to build their communicative competence and expand their worldview.

Research also in universities in Taiwan has indicated that students respond overall favorably to learning L2 culture with authentic input. One example is a quantitative study conducted by Yeh (2015), utilizing a Likert-scale questionnaire to collect data regarding the applicability of authentic materials in an e-learning environment. Based on SPSS data analysis, the 77 advanced level freshmen responded that they felt positively about using authentic material, with TV sitcoms ranking highest of the four types introduced. Furthermore, participants' results showed that they perceived this type of authentic material helped most in their understanding of American culture. However, the majority of participants expressed having various forms of difficulty in understanding the context of the content. The researcher concluded that the unmodified form of the authentic materials portraying real life may have also created obstacles for students' understanding, signaling a need for further study. Yeh continued stating that students found the authentic materials overall richer in cultural content than traditional textbooks, and those formats with visual images motivated them more than those with only aural content.

In addition, studies in Taiwan's universities have utilized authentic input in portfolio-based activities with the more specific goal of improving EFL students' cultural awareness. One example is a study conducted by Wu et al. (2013). Utilizing video lectures and interactions with a native English speaker who focused on cultural topics, students were able to improve their cultural awareness as indicated in their pre- and posttest results and reflective essays. Wu et al. concluded that the presentation of the authentic input allowed students to exercise their critical thinking in processing the differences and similarities between their culture and the foreign one. Another example is Hsu's (2014) study that also included students' interaction with native English speakers through interviews and writing in reflective diaries. Students were also asked to complete writing activities, comparing and contrasting foreign festivals and critical commentaries. Hsu's research results concluded that the authentic input improved their L2 culture learning as well.

Utilizing Film as Comprehensible Input for Teaching L2 Culture

Krashen (1982) has long made it clear that learners must have comprehensible input (CI) or authentic input in order to make progress in their language acquisition. He has further clarified that the input must also be interesting and/or relevant, and natural input that is not sequenced. Additionally, its amount has to be sufficient. For implementation, language instructors' must gauge how they speak, which words they use, and the syntax of those words, according to learners' levels. During the instruction, they should verify students' understanding of the content, making adjustments needed. This type of input then results in students' higher recall and processing of information. Anderson (2009) reported, in reference to cognitive psychology, that students have more complex linkages and better recall to

information learned when the content is logically connected and purposeful and conditions are favorable for expansion of that content. Film as authentic input has long been used in the language classroom for good reasons. With it, according to Knee (2001) and Pincas (1996), foreign language learners have the opportunity to reinforce their connections between previously learned information, including plot structure, and new information with film's visual imagery that provides both relevant schema background and authentic "high-context" spoken language.

From students' perspectives, film could be easily implemented as CI or authentic input in the foreign language classroom. According to Chapple and Curtis (2000), "[g]iven students' experience as film viewers, it becomes possible to develop highly student-centered programs and classroom activities" (p. 421). Additionally, there is little doubt that students enjoy watching films, leading to their value as a motivating learning medium (Magasic, 2015). One example is a study conducted by Xiaoqiong and Xianxing (2008) concluding that university students in China found utilization of films in EFL contexts as motivation to make improvements in their listening comprehension and pronunciation skills. Therefore, regarding university EFL students, including those in Taiwan, the process of incorporating films should be relatively easy, enabling them to reap benefits of film as a medium for language instruction.

With films, viewers have front row seats to the ongoing dialogues between numerous characters. These scripted, spoken words have purpose and function in the film's overall plot. As Sung (2010) stated "[b]y providing an additional source of comprehensible, relevant, and interesting input, DVDs, video sequences and TV programs in a foreign language can prepare the language learner for real native-speaker contact and help to facilitate communication" (p. 148). Muller (2006) added that the medium itself can serve as a catalyst to students' learning stating that "[film] has the potential to bridge students' inherent interest in multimedia with the essential, active, critical-thinking skills that are at the heart of the English classroom" (p. 38).

Eken's (2003) study was in agreement with Muller that feature film improves student's critical and analytical thinking. His research on a 14-week undergraduate course at a Turkish university first focused on teaching students how to analyze popular film through a variety of media sources. Next, a film workshop was completed with students working in four different groups and applying what they had learned in the previous phase to prepare learning activities for examining a specific popular American feature film. After that, each group presented its workshop to the class. Then, Eken interviewed each of the four groups separately. Overall, students responded that the course had improved their critical thinking skills, their language skills, their confidence in speaking publically, their appreciation for the arts, and, interestingly, their critical thinking regarding their own lives.

Also utilizing feature films were Chapple et al. (2000) who conducted a study at a

bilingual (English and Chinese/Cantonese) university in Hong Kong. The study's focus was a one-semester elective course called *Thinking Through the Culture of Film* with junior and senior EFL students over one-semester. A communicative approach was used with eight feature films that were discussed in detail. At the end of the semester, student participants anonymously completed a questionnaire, rating their improvements through the duration of the class regarding English language skills required but not specifically instructed. Stage one results showed students felt most improvement in their English listening and speaking skills. Next, qualitative data from student interviews showed that students felt that they had acquired the highest improvement in analytical and critical thinking skills and English language skills. Chapple et al. opined that, therefore, there could be a link between students being intellectually challenged and advancing in their language development.

Nevertheless, the feature film is not utilized often and to its full potential in the EFL classroom. Some reasons provided by Chapple et al. are as follows:

1. Time and syllabus constraints.
2. Lack of detailed knowledge about film on the part of teachers.
3. A mistaken perception about the lack of pedagogical value of films.
4. Lack of technical equipment and expertise.
5. Availability of suitable films.
6. Cultural appropriateness.
7. Relative difficulty of film texts for language learners. (p. 422)

Voller and Widdows (1993) also provided several elements to avoid in choosing suitable films: (a) a lot of dialects, (b) a long slow pace, (c) a multitude of monologues, and (d) detailed background knowledge unfamiliar to students. Regarding what to actually look for, they added that the film should possess a strong story line with clearly defined main characters.

Cultural Content in Popular Films

The time period a film is created and released provides the opportunity to contextualize it, enabling understanding of what filmmakers felt compelled to choose as their narratives and stories and acknowledgement of how the film was received by audiences or the overall public. In retrospection, this contextualization allows viewers to mine films for all the information they possess. As Hastrup (1992) stated "In order to make the best, the wisest use of any film document which comes our way, we can ask, as a historian would do, for the fullest contextualization of the information the document purports to present" (p. 56). Ultimately, films not only contain information representative of their cultural origin but also become a type of "cultural artefact" through assigned meaning, as expressed by Du Gay, Hall, Janes,

Madsen, Mackay, and Negus (2013):

> [An object] belongs to our culture because we have constructed for it a little world of meaning; and this bringing of the object *into* meaning is what constitutes it as a *cultural artefact*. Meaning is thus intrinsic to our definition of culture. (p. 4)

Mainstream popular films, therefore, could be utilized as comprehensive input to teach L2 culture based on their capacity for contextual significance and classification as "cultural artefact." They also possess audience appeal for university students, making them beneficial to EFL learners' cultural instruction. Especially with a central theme such as the high school environment and the growing pains of adolescence, which are common experiences of practically all university students regardless of their native language. Taken a step further, these films could introduce L2 students to the concept of how a culture is dynamic, utilizing a collection of films that have common central narratives, yet different release dates spanning over a period of time. As a result, the L2 culture becomes more relatable to learners as they begin to view it as something that, like their own, is continually changing. For example, American culture could be taught from the common perspective of the sixteen-year-old teenage female character with several popular feature films from different decades. Meeting these criteria is the film *Gidget* (Rachmil & Wendkos, 1959) based on Frederick Kohner's novel *Gidget: The Little Girl with Big Ideas* (1957). The Malibu, California coming-of-age story centers around the author's daughter Kathy Kohner, who is nicknamed Gidget by Terry Tracy, the quintessential beach bum and inspiration for the film's character the Big Kahuna (Kaufman, 2012). Though the book was a bestseller, it was the film that ignited all of the enthusiasm, especially the teen surfing subculture in America (Gillogly, 2011). *Gidget* also illustrated how the cultural miscegenation of Hawaiian culture had infiltrated mainstream American life with activities, in addition to surfing, such as luaus and hula dancing (Borgerson & Schroeder, 1997).

Next, in the 1980s, producer, director, and writer John Hughes captured what it was really like to be in high school in those days, along with some exaggerated comedic moments (De Vaney, 2002). According to Leitch (1992), Hughes' films are "an important departure in the history of relations between commercial American cinema and its audience; they reflect and foster a specifically teen-age sensibility quite without precedent in earlier American films" (pp. 43, 44). *Sixteen Candles* (Green, Manning, Tanen, & Hughes, 1984), one of Hughes's most successful films, was largely embraced by American teenage audiences. "[F]or teens in search of tips on language, behavior and all the right moves, *Sixteen Candles* functions as a therapeutic documentary, a sort of survival kit of '80s cool" (Corliss, 1986, p. 69). It was the first of "the Molly trilogy," starring Molly Ringwald as teen Samantha (Sam) Baker.

Then, notably, the 2000s, especially 2007, had several prominent films, including *Juno*

(Halfon, Malkovich, Novic, & Reitman, 2007), that focused on young women's unplanned pregnancies. They prompted researchers to, therefore, take notice and analyze how these films' narratives depoliticized women's reproduction in America's post-feminist culture (Thoma, 2009; Hoerl & Kelly, 2010). Interestingly, though, it was actually used in political campaigning, due to its inadvertent connection with Roe v. Wade (1973). With the main character, Juno, choosing to keep her baby after seriously considering abortion, the film's narrative was specifically mined to support the Republican Party in the 2008 U. S. Presidential elections (Thoma, 2009). It also led to the accusation labeled by *Time* magazine as "The Juno Effect" (Kingsbury, June 18, 2008). At the conclusion of one school year, 17 pregnant girls at Gloucester High School were expecting babies. In addition to its unique subject matter, *Juno* had both huge critical and commercial success (Goff, 2008; Marcks, 2008).

Each of the three films fulfills the basic criteria for L2 cultural significance and suitability and appropriateness for the language classroom. Each film also marks and/or incites a distinct change in American culture upon its release, becoming a phenomenon that surpassed its original purpose as just another teen movie. Hence, these combined L2 cultural aspects possess rich content for CI.

METHOD

Participants

The 52 students were both male (10) and female (42), with Chinese as their native language and a minimum high intermediate level of English proficiency. They were all English majors at a university in Northern Taiwan, enrolled in the course Film Literature, the one-semester three-hour course for this research. The first half of the semester was utilized for the research treatment.

Instrumentation

The three aforementioned popular feature films were carefully chosen as CI or authentic input: *Gidget*, *Sixteen Candles*, and *Juno*. They were each shown only with English or L2 subtitles using a DVD player and an overhead projector already provided in the E-classroom.

Regarding supplemental learning materials, handouts for each film were prepared by the researcher, following Krashen's (1982) theory to improve effectiveness of CI by making it more understandable to students. Each contained selected warm-up and discussion questions, with general language for pre-teaching. They also contained vocabulary and dialogue

sections preselected by the researcher after he studied each film with L2 subtitles. Content was later edited down, based on what was deemed significant for students' L2 culture learning and overall understanding of the film's narrative, plot, and story. Content for both sections also provided class activity opportunities for students (Chapple et al., 2000). Moreover, Power Point Presentations (PPT) were utilized by the researcher to introduce, review, and discuss the three films.

Next, actual testing included one purely attitudinal pre-test and an identical attitudinal posttest, each containing a total of 25 attitudinal Likert-type questions. The 7-point Likert-type scales were used along with the questions due to research indicating that Asian students have a tendency to use the midpoints on the scales (Chen, Lee, & Stevenson,1995). All questions were written specifically for this study and firmly based on the content of the three films, with the aim of measuring students' perceptions of American culture. Questions were not categorically arranged on the tests with the intent of adding reliability and validity to the results (see Appendix A for identical pre- and posttest questionnaire). Most questions were regarding the film *Juno* due to it having a large variety of L2 cultural content. Furthermore, the least amount of questions was regarding the film *Gidget* due to it having a limited variety of L2 cultural content.

Procedure

Prior to the treatment, the researcher distributed the pre-test questionnaire for student participants' completion, assuring them that it would not be graded. This allowed them to answer each question without trepidation. Students were further instructed to complete the questionnaire without any external input. After one class hour, the Pre-tests were collected. Next, the treatment began with the most recently released film *Juno*, utilizing the Lesson Plan (see Appendix B for lesson plan). Then, the same lesson plan was used to continue the treatment with *Sixteen Candles*, and *Gidget*, respectively.

One week prior to the posttest questionnaire, there was a three class-hour review session. Students received a full comprehensive review handout that corresponded with a PPT. Each film was thoroughly reviewed in the same aspects, with further comparison and contrast elements between the three films added, allowing students to see the intended "big picture" of the treatment for teaching them L2 culture.

Next, participants took the posttest questionnaire. SPSS software was then used to obtain the bivariate statistical data with t-tests for comparative analysis between the pre- and the posttest questionnaires.

RESULT

This research hopes to ascertain if popular American films affect Taiwanese university ESL students' perceptions of L2 culture. To help answer this question, data are divided into five separate tables of related questions, beginning with Table 1 that compares one specific film time period to another. Then, Tables 2, 3, and 4 are each specific to one of the three films. Finally, Table 5 is nonspecific to any of the three films or time periods. Notably, all student participant posttest questionnaire responses had movement in the desired direction on the Likert point system. However, they did not all reach a level of significance.

Combining films from different time periods for comparison in Table 1 was the research purpose for questions 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25. More than half received significant results, giving this table the highest success, starting with 20 and 21. Both related to change in Americans' acceptance of sexually active teenage girls, each for a different time period. Between the 1950s and 1980s for Question 20, the mean (M = 4.48, SD = .90) was significantly influenced by the treatment (M = 4.77, SD = 1.59), t = -1.31, $p < .04$. Then, for Question 21, between the 1980s and the 2000s, the mean (M = 5.21, SD = .87) again received significant influence from the treatment (M = 5.75, SD = 0.88), t = -3.96, $p < .01$.

These time ranges were repeated for Questions 22 and 23, both regarding change in Americans' acceptance of teen pregnancy. First, results for Question 22 indicated that the mean perception for change between the 1950s and the 1980s (M = 4.23, SD = .81) was significantly influenced by the treatment (M = 3.65, SD = 1.69), t = 2.51, $p < .05$ (0.048). Interestingly, though, there were insignificant results for Question 23, with p = .67. Again, the time ranges were used for Questions 24 and 25. This time, though, it was to measure a change in student perception regarding Americans' acceptance of equality between father and mother. Results were opposite to the previous set, with the time period between the 1950s and 1980s for Question 24 being insignificantly influenced, with p = .20. Conversely, Question 25, measuring students' mean perception regarding the same concept (M = 5.27, SD = .93) from the films between the 1980s and the 2000s, had significant results when compared (M = 5.71, SD = 1.02), resulting in t = -2.87, $p < .01$.

TABLE 1

Results from American Culture: Specific to *Juno*-2000s and/or *Sixteen Candles*-1980s and/or *Gidget*-1950s

Question	Test	Mean	N	SD	P
20. Americans' acceptance of sexually active teenage girls changed between the 1950s and the 1980s.	Pre	4.48	52	0.90	*0.04
	Post	4.77	52	1.59	
21. Americans' acceptance of sexually active teenage	Pre	5.21	52	0.87	*0.01

girls changed between the 1980s and the 2000s.	Post	5.75	52	0.88	
22. Americans' acceptance of teen pregnancy changed between the 1950s and the 1980s.	Pre	4.23	52	0.81	*0.048
	Post	3.65	52	1.69	
23. Americans' acceptance of teen pregnancy changed between the 1980s and the 2000s.	Pre	5.02	52	1.02	0.67
	Post	5.12	52	1.57	
24. Americans' acceptance of equality between father and mother changed between the 1950s and the 1980s.	Pre	4.38	52	1.01	0.20
	Post	4.44	52	1.53	
25. Americans' acceptance of equality between father and mother changed between the 1980s and the 2000s.	Pre	5.27	52	0.93	*0.01
	Post	5.71	52	1.02	

Note: *p < 0.05

Of the seven questions in Table 2 regarding *Juno*, two had highly significant results while one had significant results. First, results for Question 7 indicated that the mean perception for American parents wanting to know about their baby's daily life after they have given it up for adoption (M = 4.40, SD = 1.36) was significantly influenced by the treatment (M = 3.94, SD = 1.51), t = 2.03, p < .01. This followed Juno's decision for a closed adoption. Then, Question 17's results highly significantly illustrated a shift from somewhat disagreeing (M = 3.75, SD = 1.01) toward mostly disagreeing (M = 2.71, SD = 1.19), t = 6.31, p < .00, in accordance with pregnant Juno remaining single with no opposition from family. Next, the highly significant results for Question 19 pointed out the treatment's influence (M = 3.75, SD = 1.12), moving their overall response toward more agreement (M = 3.92, SD = 1.34), t = -.92, p < .00. This complied with the film's narrative, with Juno's parents supporting her to give up her baby for adoption.

TABLE 2

Results from American Culture: *Juno*-2000s

Question	Test	Mean	N	SD	P
1. American life is based on religious beliefs.	Pre	4.79	52	1.04	0.10
	Post	5.27	52	1.24	
7. American parents want to know about their baby's daily life after they have given it up for adoption.	Pre	4.40	52	1.36	*0.01
	Post	3.94	52	1.51	
8. Americans believe women should be able to get an abortion if they want one.	Pre	4.19	52	1.10	0.13
	Post	4.00	52	1.51	
9. American politicians have opinions about women getting abortions.	Pre	4.75	52	1.03	0.83
	Post	5.77	52	1.28	
17. American parents tell their pregnant teenage daughters to get married.	Pre	3.75	52	1.01	**0.00
	Post	2.71	52	1.19	

18. American parents tell their pregnant teenage daughters to get an abortion.	Pre	3.83	52	0.92	0.87
	Post	3.06	52	1.33	
19. American parents tell their pregnant teenage daughters to give up their babies for adoption.	Pre	3.75	52	1.12	**0.00
	Post	3.92	52	1.34	

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01

Regarding *Sixteen Candles* released in 1984 or the 1980s in Table 3, Questions 4 and 11 provided significant results. Question 4 pre treatment participant responses (M = 4.94, SD = 1.06) compared with post treatment responses (M = 5.44, SD = 1.14), t = -2.83, p < .02 reflected more agreement that the L2 culture believed stereotypes of those foreign to their culture. However, foreign culture related Question 5 had insignificant results, with p = .07. There was significance, though, for Question 11's final results, with the mean perception for the high school popularity of American teenagers who are known for their talent with computer technology (M = 3.71, SD = 1.24) significantly influenced by the treatment (M = 2.35, SD = 1.14), t = 7.17, p < .02. It is worth mentioning that Question 12 regarding the character Jake's popularity due to his parents' wealth also nearly reached significance, with p = .05 (0.052).

TABLE 3

Results from American Culture: *Sixteen Candles*-1980s

Question	Test	Mean	N	SD	P
4. Americans believe the stereotypes regarding people from foreign cultures.	Pre	4.94	52	1.06	*0.02
	Post	5.44	52	1.14	
5. American high schools want their students to learn about foreign cultures.	Pre	4.48	52	1.11	0.07
	Post	5.15	52	1.46	
10. American teenagers who are good at sports are popular in high school.	Pre	6.08	52	0.84	0.33
	Post	6.04	52	1.05	
11. American teenagers who are good at computer technology are popular in high school.	Pre	3.71	52	1.24	*0.02
	Post	2.35	52	1.14	
12. American teenagers who have rich parents are popular in high school.	Pre	5.10	52	1.01	0.05
	Post	6.19	52	0.72	

Note: *p < 0.05

Table 4 had questions pertaining to the film *Gidget* released in 1959 or the 1950s: 2 and 3. The mean perception for Question 2 was not significantly influenced by the treatment, with p = .14. Likewise, Question 3 had insignificant results, with p = .27.

TABLE 4
Results from American Culture: *Gidget*-1950s

Question	Test	Mean	N	SD	P
2. American military men chose to fight in the wars to support their country.	Pre	5.10	52	0.93	0.14
	Post	4.69	52	1.78	
3. American life changed as each new state was added to the country.	Pre	4.58	52	1.02	0.27
	Post	4.83	52	1.25	

Table 5 is also comparative in nature, containing five Likert-type questions related to general statements regarding American culture for all three films: 6, 13, 14, 15, and 16. None received significant results, making it the least successful table. Also, Question 15 showed that the mean perception for parents giving their children freedom (M= 5.67, SD = 1.12) had the least amount of change post treatment (M = 5.65, SD = 0.86), with t = .10, p value = .55.

TABLE 5
Results from American Culture: General for *Juno*-2000s and/or the *Sixteen Candles*-1980s and/or *Gidget*-1950s

Question	Test	Mean	N	SD	P
6. American fathers and mothers have equality in their home lives.	Pre	5.10	52	1.16	0.83
	Post	4.35	52	1.48	
13. American teenagers care about their physical appearance.	Pre	5.67	52	1.04	0.56
	Post	5.96	52	0.77	
14. American teenagers talk about sex with their parents.	Pre	4.83	52	0.98	0.31
	Post	3.27	52	1.44	
15. American parents give their children freedom.	Pre	5.67	52	1.12	0.55
	Post	5.65	52	0.86	
16. American parents allow their teenage children to have pre-marital sex.	Pre	4.60	52	1.19	0.22
	Post	3.29	52	1.42	

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to support the necessity of integrating the study of L2 language culture with EFL learning as posited by scholars Abrate (1993), Brooks (1997), Cohen et al. (1981), Jacobs (1989), and Zhao (2010). Therefore, the effectiveness of utilizing films as authentic input for instructing L2 culture was examined in hopes of determining if popular

American films affect Taiwanese university ESL students' perceptions of L2 culture. Based on the outcome of the study, some aspects of L2 culture were possibly learned, cohering with Damen's (1987) theory. This current research also unearthed possibilities in assisting EFL instructors in achieving goals of L2 cultural instructions as set by Tomalin et al. (2013) with the treatment.

Results for Table 1 most illustrates that popular American films affect Taiwanese university EFL students' perceptions of foreign language or L2 culture. The first reason it has a majority of four out of six questions with significant results is possibly due to the direct relationship the questions have to the narrative, plot, and story surrounding each film's main character. Then, the specific comparative nature of the questions is also an attributive factor. Each film in the treatment has a central coming-of-age character. Therefore, participants were given ample time to first process the authentic material and then engage more specifically in the comparative format of the cultural instruction. They were then able to apply their critical and analytical thinking (Chapple et al., 2000; Eken, 2003; and Muller, 2006). This is first illustrated with the significant results for both Questions 20 and 21 regarding teenage sexual activity. This topic was primarily positioned in the content of all three films, allowing students to navigate it with ease throughout the complete treatment.

Next is the significant results received for Question 22 and the insignificant results for the related Question 23. This noticeable difference occurred even though both were regarding obvious change in Americans' acceptance of teen pregnancy based on audience appeal (Corliss, 1986; Marcks, 2008). This could be attributed to the more distinctly contrasting main characters for Question 22 and the variety of interpretations of the plots and stories regarding Question 23. Students considered the initially conservative tomboyish character Gidget from the 1950s to the more feminine than Sam from the 1980s who has a boy crush from the onset. Then, for Question 23, Sam and Juno are both interested in boys throughout the plots and stories. This, along with the latter becoming pregnant and receiving judgment from some peers and adults, possibly led to a variety of interpretations, possibly some that were inaccurate.

Question 25 also had significant results. However, its time period and the one for Question 24 had opposite results to the previous set, with parental equality between the 1950s and the 1980s resulting insignificantly and between the 1980s to the 2000s having significant results. The same as above, this could be due to the more distinctly contrasting main characters for Question 25 and the variety of interpretations or even misinterpretations of the plots and stories regarding Question 24. This possibly was due to the characterization of both Gidget's mother and Sam's mother as homemakers for Question 24, whereas Juno's stepmother owns her own small business for Question 25. Some students may have collectively perceived the two housewives as more subservient, even though the one from the 1980s more freely expresses herself and positions herself as more of a partner than a

subservient. No other table reached the same number of significant results as Table 1, though Tables 2 and 3 received a moderate number of significant results, with Table 2 having two with highly significant results.

Specifically regarding the film *Juno*, significant results were reached for Question 7 and highly significant results for 17, and 19 in Table 2. Both 7 and 19 were related to single pregnant teens favoring adoption and 17 to resisting marriage. These elements appear throughout the film's story and are consistent throughout the film's plot. Questions 1, 8, 9, and 18, though, did not have significant results. This was probably due to the questions all relating to Americans' views on abortion, which is highly unfamiliar to the participants and, therefore, more difficult to comprehend (Voller et al., 1993). Perhaps, too, this topic's brevity in the beginning of *Juno* did not leave the impression on students necessary to trigger further cognitive processing (Chapple et al., 2000; Eken, 2003; and Muller, 2006).

In Table 3, Question 11 was regarding the main character Geek who had continuous film presence and was instrumental in the development of *Sixteen Candles'* narrative, plot, and storyline. This inevitably allowed ample time for student analysis (Chapple et al., 2000; Eken, 2003; and Muller, 2006), leading to significant results. There were also significant results for Question 4 regarding stereotypes of those foreign to American culture. This was due to the film's exaggerated portrayal of the Asian Foreign Exchange Student Long Duk Dong, allowing participants to develop more distinct perceptions. However, this exaggerated portrayal of Asian character Dong (De Vaney, 2002) could have negatively influenced students' perceptions regarding Question 5, somewhat hindering it from reaching significant results. Participants could have made assumptions that a country wanting to learn more about foreign cultures would be less likely to promote stereotypes, even though here it was an element of screenwriter's comedic expression.

Neither Table 4 nor Table 5 had questions with significant results. For Table 4, it could have been due to Question 2 being based on a highly unfamiliar topic (Voller et al., 1993), along with the topic's brevity in the plot and story of the film *Gidget*. Next, Question 3 possibly had a variety of interpretations or even misinterpretations as aforementioned. In Table 5, the questions were probably all too broad in nature, lacking the specificity of questions receiving significant results. As with the other questions in Table 5, this possibly resulted in students becoming confused. Question 15 was the most disappointing, with student participants conceivably confused as to which time frame to consider and for which kind of freedom. Therefore, student participants were unable to apply the comparative processing that proved beneficial in some of the questions with significant results in this study.

In conclusion, a pattern is revealed in the discussion of this current study's results. Table 1, the one with the most significant results, apparently has the most specific questions, allowing participants to utilize their abilities for comparative processing. Conversely, Table 5,

with no significant results, appears to have questions that lack specificity. Therefore, it could be suggested that students better develop their perceptions of L2 culture in a more specifically comparative context. This is in agreement with results from previous studies such as those conducted by Hsu (2014) and Wu et al. (2013) in the EFL learning environments in Taiwan's universities, demonstrating the effectiveness of authentic input as a means activating students' analytical thinking and comparative analysis in order to improve L2 cultural awareness.

However, the results of this current study further indicate that the basis of students' comparisons should be kept in check with more directive instruction, helping to alleviate possible misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Hence, participants would be better prepared to make more accurate comparisons.

Furthermore, due to the unmodified nature of authentic films, peripheral storylines or subplots require further instruction by the EFL instructor. This coheres with results from Yeh's (2015) study, showing this type of content could create obstacles for students' understanding. Therefore, this more detailed explanation and description would serve as a way of merely enhancing EFL learners' understanding of the films' main plots and stories, not as an instruction to be later tested.

CONCLUSION

The overall results of this study indicate that popular films as authentic input provide another possibility for instructing L2 culture to EFL university students in Taiwan. The authentic input provides learners with opportunities to both utilize and develop their critical thinking and analytical skills, affecting their perceptions of L2 culture. The films are most effective when instructors focus on topics clearly illustrated throughout their content. Otherwise, students do not have sufficient opportunity to process the information analytically and critically in a manner that instills the information into their long term memory for recall at a later time. Therefore, EFL instructors should base their L2 culture lessons on teaching the primary topics covered in a film. They additionally need to be vigilant in detecting topics that are highly unfamiliar to students. Explanation and further illustrations could be provided for these peripheral or highly unfamiliar topics to ease students' viewing experiences. However, learners should not be tested over these topics. Instructors who follow these basic concepts when utilizing this authentic audiovisual media will help improve their EFL students' experiences in learning L2 culture.

Furthermore, this study could help university EFL instructors begin to deal with issues such as a lack of materials for instructing L2 culture, teaching students with varied levels simultaneously. Then, the instruments for evaluation could be gauged at the average level of

English proficiency.

However, it is only the first step in their acquisition of L2 cultural information and knowledge. Students' further study of L2 cultures is necessary, incorporating a variety of methods, applications and activities. Additional research in these areas could provide a more complete and comprehensive base of data regarding how university EFL students' effectively learn L2 culture. Furthermore, it may help to address the issues arising from lack of time EFL instructors have for instructing L2 culture and how they could implement it into their university's curriculum.

Future studies on the utilization of popular films for instructing L2 culture could place emphasis on EFL students' actual comprehension of the material, learning the depth of their understanding. This could be followed up with qualitative interviews to learn their actual abilities to recall cultural information learned and to glean their opinions regarding usage of popular American films as CI or authentic input for L2 cultural instruction. Additionally, a study comparing this method with another, such as one that is purely textbook-based, could reveal the advantages or limitations of either method in L2 culture instruction for students in the EFL classroom.

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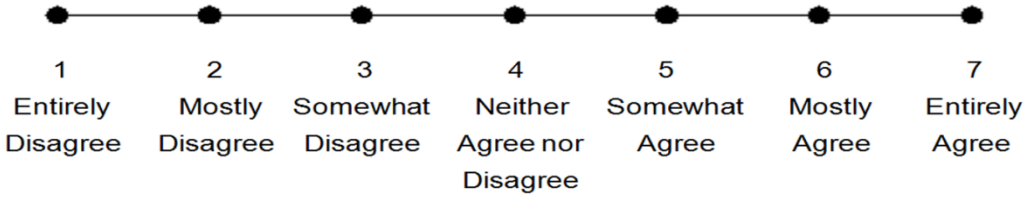
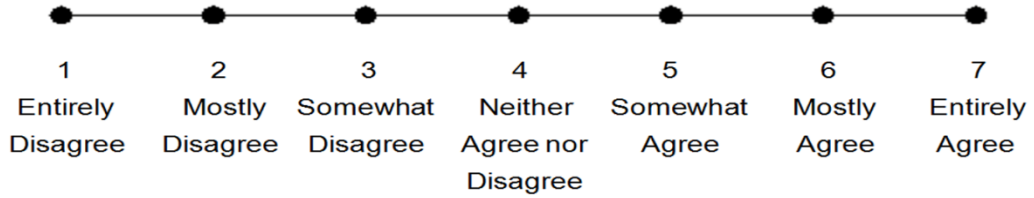
APPENDIX 1: IDENTICAL PRE- AND POST TEST QUESTIONNAIRE

Film Literature Class Questionnaire. Please read each statement carefully and circle only one of the numbers from 1-7 that best represents your agreement with the statement.

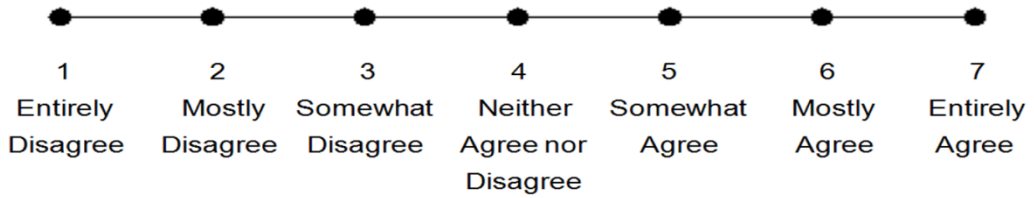
1. American life is based on religious beliefs.



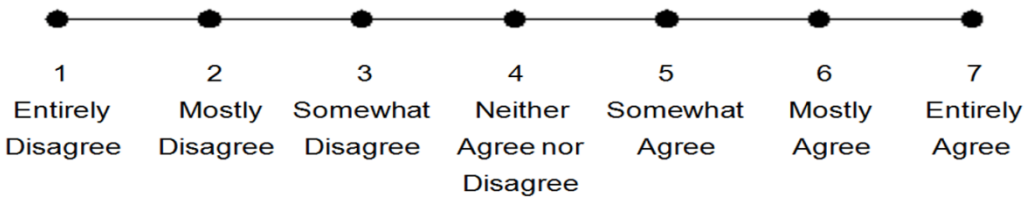
2. American military men chose to fight in the wars to support their country.



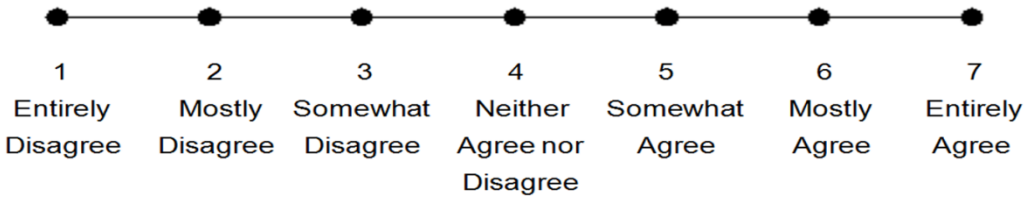
3. American life changed as each new state was added to the country.



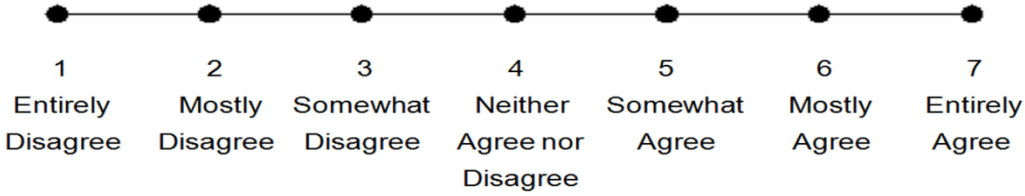
4. Americans believe the stereotypes regarding people from foreign cultures.



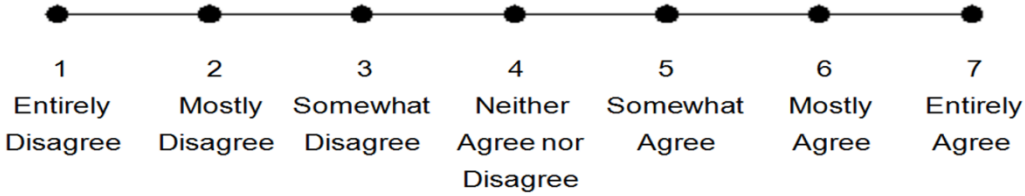
5. American high schools want their students to learn about foreign cultures.



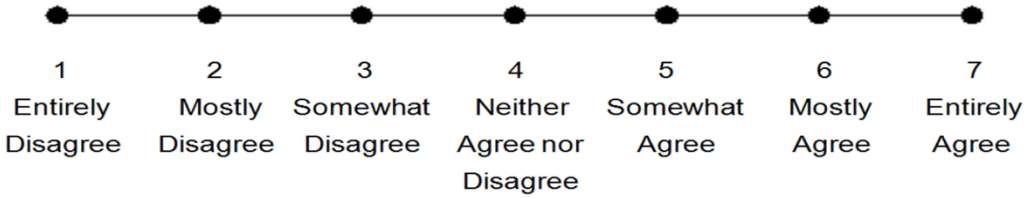
6. American fathers and mothers have equality in their home lives.



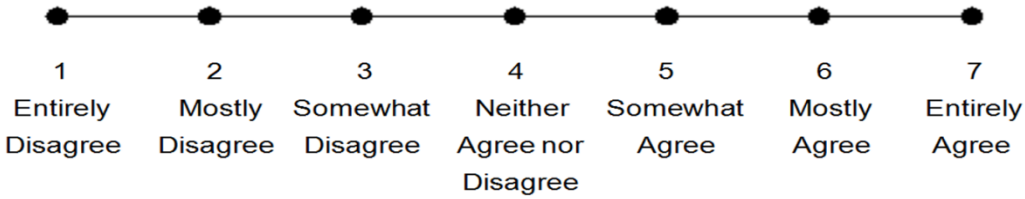
7. American parents want to know about their baby's daily life after they have given it up for adoption.



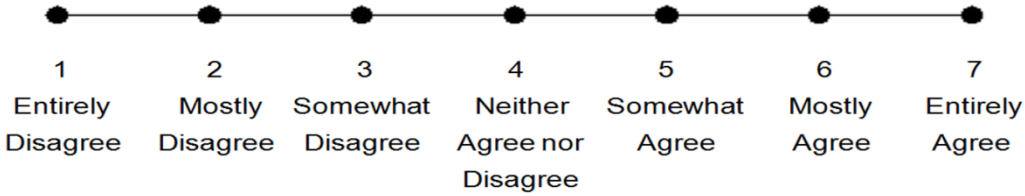
8. Americans believe women should be able to get an abortion if they want one.



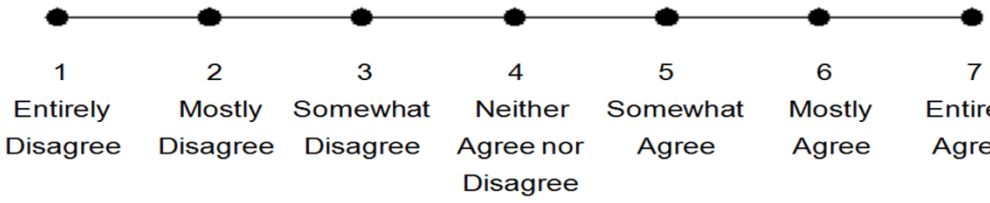
9. American politicians have opinions about women getting abortions.



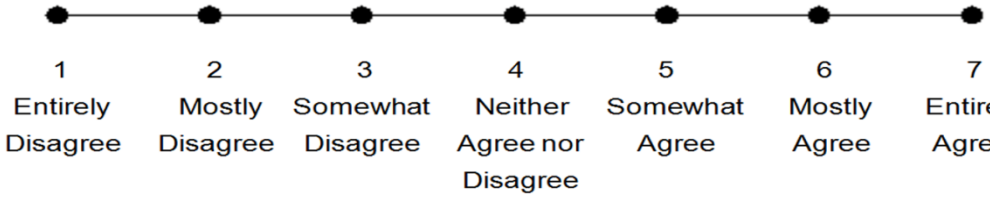
10. American teenagers who are good at sports are popular in high school.



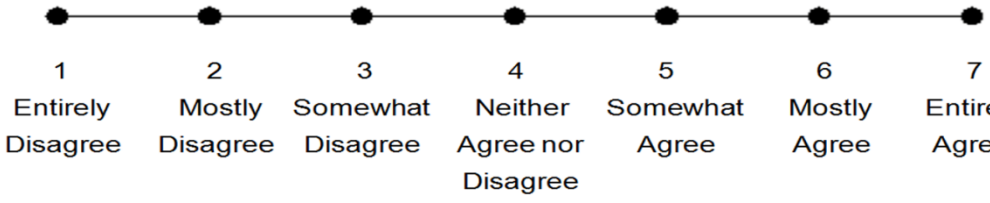
11. American teenagers who are good at computer technology are popular in high school.



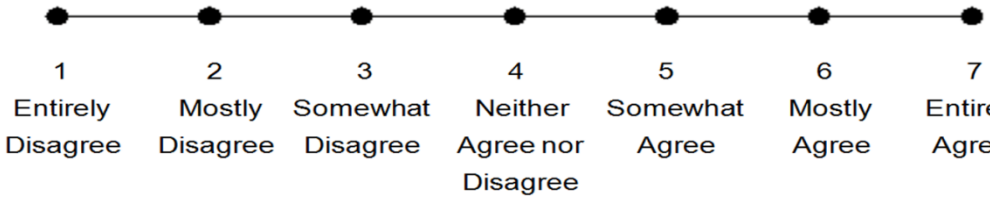
12. American teenagers who have rich parents are popular in high school.



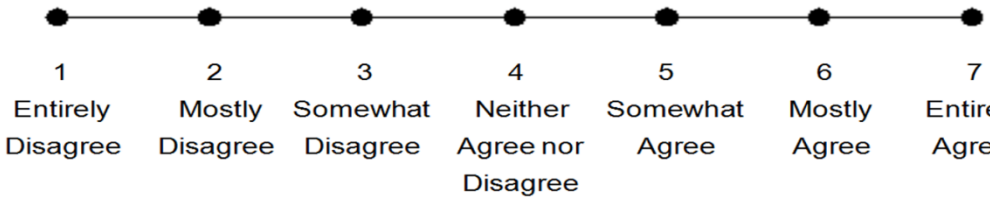
13. American teenagers care about their physical appearance.



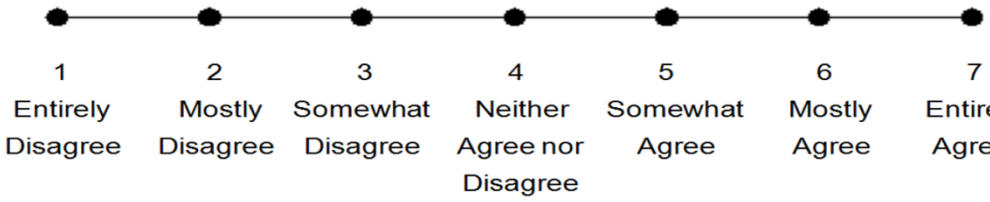
14. American teenagers talk about sex with their parents.



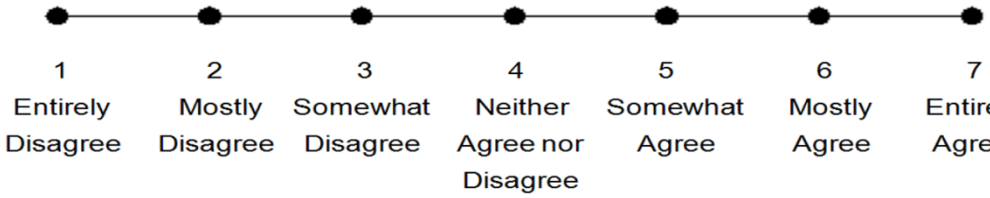
15. American parents give their children freedom.



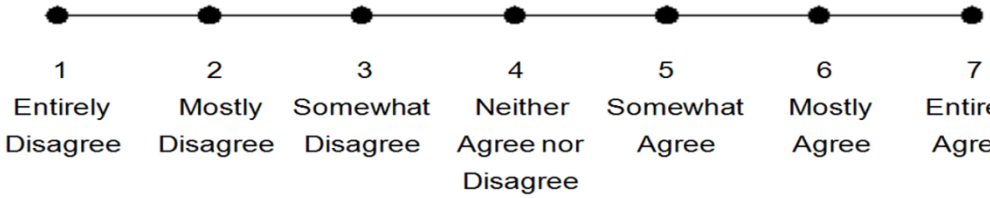
16. American parents allow their teenage children to have pre-marital sex.



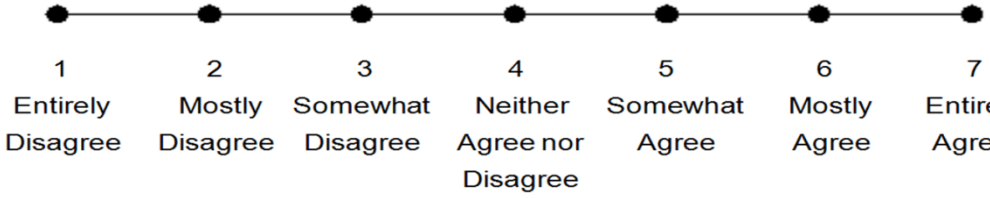
17. American parents tell their pregnant teenage daughters to get married.



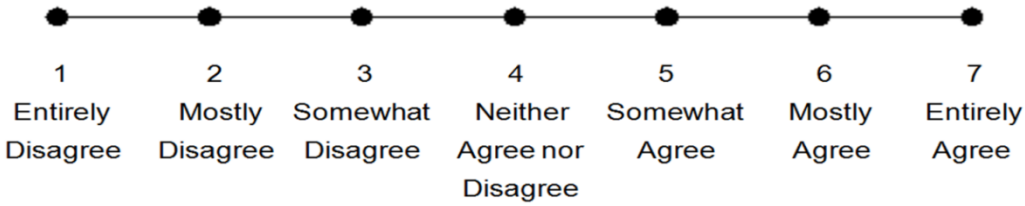
18. American parents tell their pregnant teenage daughters to get an abortion.



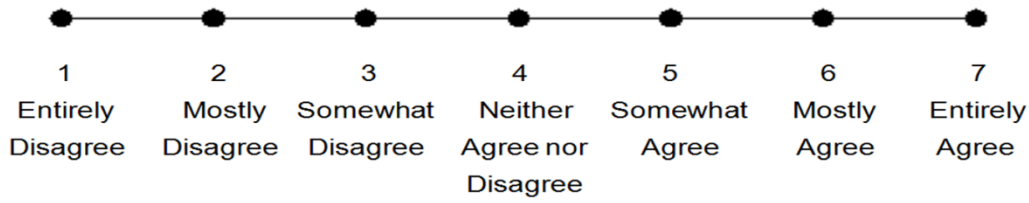
19. American parents tell their pregnant teenage daughters to give up their babies for adoption.



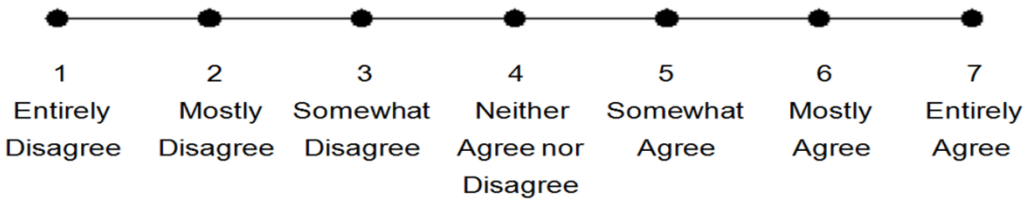
20. Americans' acceptance of sexually active teenage girls changed between the 1950s and the 1980s.



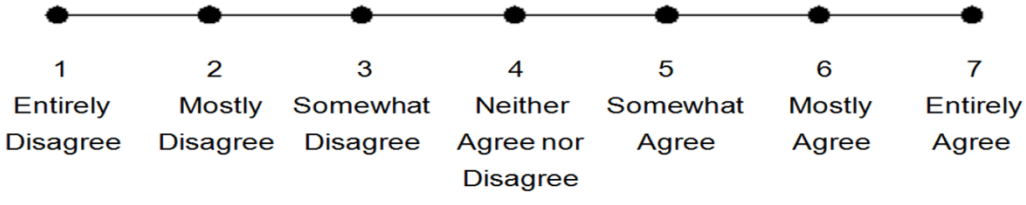
21. Americans' acceptance of sexually active teenage girls changed between the 1980s and the 2000s.



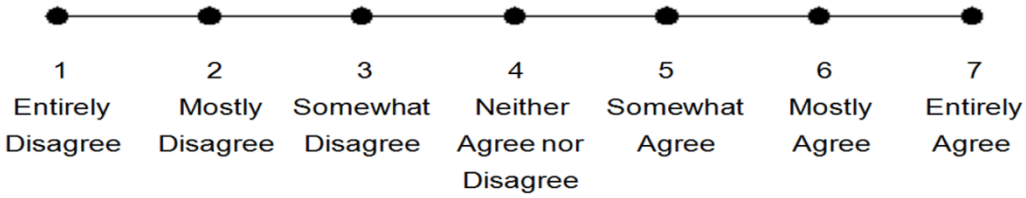
22. Americans' acceptance of teen pregnancy changed between the 1950s and the 1980s.



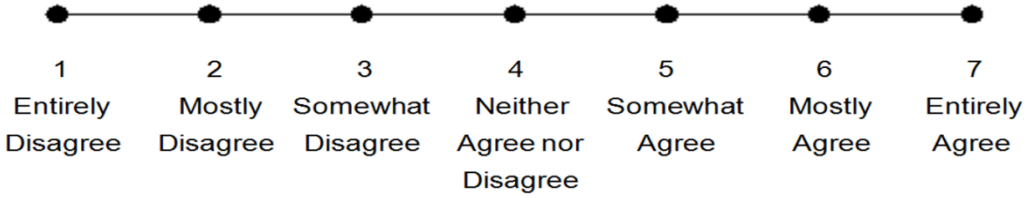
23. Americans' acceptance of teen pregnancy changed between the 1980s and the 2000s.



24. Americans' acceptance of equality between father and mother changed between the 1950s and the 1980s.



25. Americans' acceptance of equality between father and mother changed between the 1980s and the 2000s.



APPENDIX 2: LESSON PLAN

Steps	Instruction Content	Teaching Aids	Time in minutes
Warm up	-Use PPT presentation as introduction. -Distribute film handout, using warm-up questions.	-PPT slides, film handout	Approx. 50
First	-Cover film vocabulary section of handout with	-Film	Approx.

instruction	overhead projector. -Drill students on pronunciation, orally and randomly quizzing them over meanings, verifying understanding. -Practice pronouncing film character names in handout, identifying possible relationships. -Assign perusing handout's dialogue section before next class.	handout, overhead projector	75
Film presentation	-Begin film screening. -Check students' comprehension of material in 10-minute segments, either at the end or beginning of classes, initiating summarizing technique. -Slowly assign summarizing tasks to students, verifying their comprehension, making corrections when necessary.	Film DVD, DVD player, and overhead projector	Approx. 150
Second instruction	-Cover dialogue in handout with overhead projector. -Randomly ask students to read script aloud in class, asking others the meanings and significance in film's overall plot, reinforcing correct answers while discovering misunderstandings.	Film handout, overhead projector	Approx. 75
Closing	-Present more detailed PPT for review, addressing students' questions asked during the treatment and emphasizing L2 culture.	PPT slides	Approx. 50

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Behind Japanese Students' Silence in English Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

This ethnographic study investigated what challenges Japanese university students faced in communicating in English with their teacher. The study focused on the functions of student-teacher interaction in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts in Japan. Participant observations were conducted during two English classes and further data was collected from four students through semi-structured interviews. The study revealed three factors that could have interrupted student-teacher interaction: A collective communication system created by students, respect for their teacher and peers, and students' higher expectations of what they should say. Academic support for teaching cultural differences in educational settings and encouraging students to speak up individually should contribute to communicative strengths in the classroom and wider intercultural situations.

INTRODUCTION

East Asian students are often perceived as silent from the perspective of Western teachers. The debate has centered on cultural differences such as classroom silence in the East and the privileging of speech in Western education (Cheng, 2000; Ellwood & Nakane, 2009; Littlewood, 1999; Liu & Littlewood, 1997). Critical thinking and self-expression are at the core of mainstream pedagogy in the West, while memorization and choral recitation are the main learning strategies in Japanese and Chinese schools (Atkinson, 1997; Gorsuch, 1998). Giving opinions is fairly common in U.S. education and is often considered socially inappropriate in an Asian context, because the "role of the subordinate/student is to listen, observe, and learn" (Atkinson, 1997, p. 83).

In addition to bridging a gap between academic cultures, Asian students in the West often struggle with social prejudice (Rich & Troudi, 2006), acculturative stress (Kuo & Roysircar, 2006), an unequal power balance between non-native minorities and mainstream native speakers (Shi, 2011) and identity negotiation in the classroom (Morita, 2004). In a study by Ohata (2005), Japanese students at a U.S. college were afraid of negative evaluations, lacked confidence in their

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English, felt intimidated by competition with other Japanese students and struggled to change their learning style from reserved to assertive.

While many studies examined Asian students in Western academic environments, scant research has investigated insights into Japanese students' silence in an EFL context in Japan. The aim of this study was to understand what happens when a homogeneous small group of Japanese university students are in the class of a native English speaker. Even when they are in their home country and their peers have a similar English level, they still find it challenging to actively communicate with the teacher. As past studies have pointed out, Japanese students remain silent because they feel afraid of losing face by making mistakes in front of others (Anderson, 1993; Brown, 2004; Kawamura, Kudo & Hail, 2006). Further investigation is necessary to reveal how students' roles and relationships with their teacher and peers are situated in class context and how those influence student participation. Insight into students' interaction with a native English teacher can prepare them with adequate skills to participate in an intercultural context in the classroom and the global society.

FRAMEWORK OF EAST VS WEST

Communication Style Differences

Differences in communication styles between the East and West have been well documented in the field of intercultural communication (Scollon, Scollon & Jones, 2000; Stewart & Bennett, 1991; Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005). Hall (1976) described that in a "High context-culture" such as Japan, people tend to employ indirect communication styles and implicit understanding, which contradicts the American "Low-context culture" where people clarify their intentions by using direct messages. In Low-context cultures where ideas are explicitly expressed by words, silence is generally considered as an absence of communication (Varner & Beamer, 2011). In High-context cultures, people believe that "it is through silence that one can discover the truth inside oneself" under the influence of Buddhism (Varner & Beamer, 2011, p.248).

The distinction between High and Low context cultures and images of people have been criticized for overgeneralization (Kubota, 2015). Hall's concept was enormously influential because it established a framework of comparing cultures, which was followed by a number of researchers (Shaules, 2007). Understanding cultural difference was considered as a way to solve intercultural conflict and develop human potential (Shaules, 2007). When people from High and Low context cultures conduct business, misunderstandings might occur due to the different

expectations of explicitness (Matsumoto, 2000) and focus on harmonious relationships or independent action (Nisbett & Masuda, 2007).

Communication styles are also influenced by collectivism and individualism within a culture. Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) examined six dimensions of national culture: Power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation and indulgence. East Asians value group orientation, face-saving and fulfilling others' needs, while people in Europe and North America focus on an independent self and freedom (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). Their theory is not applicable to individual values (Bond, Žegarac & Spencer-Oatey, 2000), but it demonstrates clear differences between Japan and the U.S., where individualism is much more highly placed. In collectivist cultures, people do not feel obligated to talk unless they need to transfer information, while people in individualist cultures often find it necessary to start social conversations as they feel uncomfortable with silence (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). Many East Asians in collective cultures perceive themselves in relation to others and expected social roles (Kanagawa, Cross & Marks, 2001). The desire to meet one's role in a given situation makes people sensitive to falling short of others' expectations. Japanese people tend to talk about themselves with negative information, although such self-criticism is considered as a sign of low self-esteem among Americans (Kanagawa, Cross & Marks, 2001).

Behavioral differences are significant factors of communication. Europeans and Americans may perceive Asian gestures as "lacking ambition and self-esteem," while Asians interpret European and American expression as "intrusive and aggressive" (Bennett, 2013, p.67). Members of High-contact cultures, such as French and Italian, often make direct eye contact, look at face and have body contacts. East Asians in Low-contact cultures prefer indirect eye gazes, keeping personal space and speaking in a lower tone (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005). When these cultural differences in communication styles and values are applied to the classroom, it shapes how teacher and students interact with each other and constructs classroom cultures.

Cultural Differences in Classrooms

Personal matters and individual opinions were discouraged under the significance of others in collective cultures (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005; Triandis, 1989). As Shimahara (1998, p.221) suggested, "(t)he way in which the Japanese see themselves in relation to others is distinct and central to Japanese culture." In a classroom context, students are not only afraid of losing face in front of their classmates, but also unwilling to stand out from others through speaking up and showing off their abilities (Brown, 2004). Anderson (1993, p.104) summarized Japanese students' key communicative styles as: "Group-mindedness, consensual decision-making, formalized

speechmaking and listener responsibility," which often contradicts the classroom that Western English teachers hope to establish. Different perceptions deliver different learning styles. Asians tend to employ an "intuitive way of learning" which encourages modeling, repeating, practicing until learners master the form, although this strategy appears uncreative to Westerners (Bennett, 2013, p.76).

According to Cameron (2000), speaking is the core of Western education. Talking is considered as a process of empowering students and constructing deeper understanding (Cameron, 2000). The dynamic change, originated in Britain and spread in Australia, transformed teacher-centered classroom into speech-dominant in the late 1960s and 1970s (Ellwood & Nakane, 2009). Miller (1995, p.32) elaborated that "passivity implies a negligent attitude toward learning" from Western perspectives. Silence is not problematic from an Asian perspective, although it is in Western education.

Attitudes toward communication in early childhood education also differ between Japan and the U.S., according to Minami (2002). Caudil and Weinstein (1969) found that middle-class Japanese mothers communicated far less frequently with their toddlers than American mothers did. A characteristic of collective culture, which restrains utterances, is critical in shaping one's language use from a very early stage (Minami, 2002). Usui (2001), who cross-examined Japanese and American school systems found that the topics of empathy with others, kindness and warm personal relationships frequently appeared in Japanese textbooks. American school textbooks contained more topics about expressing a strong self, independence, strong will and self-assertion (Usui, 2001). Through observing science classrooms at primary schools in Tokyo, Linn, Lewis, Tsuchida, and Songer (2000) discovered that many science activity structures overlapped with those of model programs in the U.S. classroom culture. They differed according to the Japanese long-term educational emphasis on collaboration and social ethics, which enabled students to have "respectful, lively discussion in family-like small groups" (Linn et al., 2000, p. 13).

Criticisms of the East / West Dichotomy

It is important to be aware of criticisms on these simplified structures, in which Japan or Asia always contradicts the U.S. within a framework of East versus West. Kumaravadivelu (2003, p.710) criticized three common stereotypes about Asian students held by professionals: "They (a) are obedient to authority, (b) lack critical thinking skills, and (c) do not participate in classroom interaction. It was argued that these stereotypes were not always sustained by research and could be also observed among mainstream North American students (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

The ethnographic research conducted by Ellwood and Nakane (2009) revealed more complex

views of Japanese students on silence at universities in Australia. Although teachers recognized the Japanese students as preferring to be silent and lacking critical thinking and confidence, they did desire to talk, participate and be a part of teacher-student interaction. A number of factors, such as managing turn taking, made them struggle to participate. Some students maintained critical views on participation, wondering why they needed to ask questions when they knew the answers (Ellwood & Nakane, 2009). Nakane (2007) also found that lack of linguistic proficiency as well as "context-specific mismatch" between students' preferred learning styles and those expected in class-interaction made Japanese students hesitant to participate. The findings suggested that Japanese students were not simply being silent to obey the authority or lacked critical thinking, as discussed in the East versus West framework.

Kubota (1999) criticized the East-West dichotomy by arguing that the image of Japanese culture was constructed by the discourse of Western views on otherness and the emphasis on the uniqueness of Japanese culture, which was built to scaffold Japanese identity. It was argued that the images of U.S. and East Asian classrooms were constructed by the perceptions of self and other that emerged from colonialism (Kubota, 2001). As she noted, "(c)olonialism indeed produced the sense of Self, the European culture, which had to be made radically different from the Other" (Kubota, 2001, p.26). When U.S. public education is the center of concern, American classrooms and students' achievements are often perceived problematic. In comparison to Asian classrooms, "they suddenly become close to ideal – the norm with positive values" (Kubota, 2001, p.26).

Function of participation may vary not only across cultures, but also among levels and sizes of classes as well as perspectives of teachers and students. Fritschner (2000) who examined U.S. undergraduate science courses found that very few students orally participated in introductory classes, while students participated much more frequently in upper-division classes. It was also reported that class size significantly influenced how much students participated (Fassinger, 1996). Interestingly, professors believed "preparation, confidence, interests in peers' comments and questions, and comprehension of class content" correlated with student participation, while students perceived that only "confidence" was the factor that determines participation (Fassinger, 1996).

Aforementioned arguments indicate that student participation is shaped not only by cultural traits and educational backgrounds, but also by images constructed by historical discourse and uniquely situated classroom-specific factors. Teachers and students may have different views on participation. Further context-based investigation will contribute to the current understanding of Japanese students' silence in an EFL classroom.

METHODS

The purpose of this study is to break down further insights into Japanese students' silence, which is specifically featured in the EFL context with a native English teacher. An ethnographic approach that investigates insider's perspectives in a specific cultural context (Hammersley, 2006) should be effective for a deeper understanding of Japanese students' silence.

Two English classes at an academic organization in Japan were investigated. Traditionally, ethnography for anthropologists meant living with a group of people to interpret their cultural practices, beliefs, values and world perspectives (Hammersley, 2006). Today, ethnographic studies tend to be much shorter and focus on particular events of daily lives experienced by a group of people (Hammersley, 2006). The current study employed "ethnographic tools" including participant observation and interviews, rather than conducting traditional ethnography, such as collecting data over many years (Green & Bloome, 1997, p.183). Both classes were 90 minutes and video-recorded under the agreement of the teacher and students. Ten students, four males and six females, participated in the classes. Fieldnotes and interview transcripts were triangulated to analyse participants' perspectives on social events (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner & McCormack Steinmetz, 1991)

There were two reasons for conducting the study in this class environment. First, all the students were in my seminar for six months and I was familiar with their personalities and English competency. Maintaining both an insider and outsider perspective is key for ethnographic study (Fetterman, 1998; Gregory, 2005). Second, the aim of this study was to closely examine student interaction with their teacher. A narrower focus on a small group of students was ideal for such an investigation, rather than regular English classrooms where more than twenty students study. The study also examined functions of silence among the students, instead of focusing on students' foreign language anxiety, which has been the subject of past studies (Andrade & Williams, 2009; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Ohata, 2005). Even though the hours of participant observations were limited, rich data was obtained from the interviews with four students. The interviews were conducted in Japanese and the translations were made by the researcher. The summary of the data sources is presented as Table 1. All the names are pseudonyms.

Table 1 The summary of the data sources

Date of investigation	September, 2014
Place of investigation	Two EFL classes: Candle making and playing cricket (90 minute each) Both were conducted by a South African male teacher

Types of data collection	Participant observation in two classes (180 minutes, video-recorded) Semi-structured interviews with four participants (30-50 minutes) (Kenji, Yoko, Saki and Nanako)
The participants	Members of intercultural communication seminar Male (Kenji, Daisuke, Tomohiro and Koichi) Female (Mina, Asuka, Yoko, Saki, Nanako and Chie)

THE CONTEXT AND THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE STUDY

Ten Japanese undergraduates participated in two EFL classes. The subjects of the lessons were candle making and playing cricket. The classes were activity-based and designed to teach British culture, while also encouraging students to use English for communicative practice. Students were required to speak English to teachers and staff members inside and outside classrooms at this facility. In the candle-making class, students sat around one big table and the teacher stood aside it. The cricket class was held in the gym. Everyone, including the teacher and myself, participated in the activities during class hours. Both classes followed a similar flow to regular English classes. They started with a short instruction about the class, introductory activities to more advanced activities and a summary of the class. The students' English levels were given to the teacher in advance and the teacher spoke accordingly.

The students were between 20 and 21 years old. They were in their third-year, studying media and communications. They belonged to the same seminar for one semester (15 weeks) prior to attending the English classes. Some of them had been friends since they entered university. Their English levels varied. They were enrolled in the seminar because of their interest in learning about intercultural communication. Two participants, Kenji and Mina, traveled abroad several times to study English and seemed to have a higher proficiency than other students. All the participants were not taking English classes at their university at the time the study was conducted, because they had finished their mandatory English courses. Only Kenji was taking English lessons outside the university. The students participated in the classes at this academic facility for the first time and it was also their first time to meet the teacher.

RESULTS

Overall, the students were relaxed and enjoyed the classes with the help of activity-focused class designs and the experience of a teacher who has taught English in Japan for several years. Careful examination of fieldnotes and video identified patterns of interaction among the teacher and the

students. The key findings suggested that the students unintentionally formed a team in order to communicate with the teacher. They put "gatekeepers" who transmitted messages between the teacher and the students. While the gatekeepers were communicating with the teacher, the rest often remained silent. Below are: (a) the patterns of interaction (b) the situations when the patterns of interaction did not function and (c) the thought process of Japanese students (interview results), with some examples of their dialogues.

Patterns of Interaction

All the students faced language barriers with their teacher. When they struggled to express something, they sought the help of others and cooperated with each other. The interaction was often between more than two students who helped each other talk to the teacher. One of the examples was as follows:

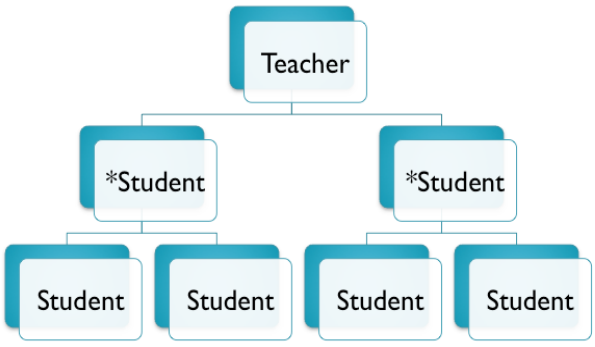
Excerpt 1
Asuka: Nioi, nioi… nanda? [*Nioi*… what is *nioi* in English?]
Yoko: Smell.
Teacher: Oh, you are getting the smell of the downstairs?
Asuka: Yes, cake.
Yoko: Cake smell?
Saki: Yes [Laugh].
Teacher: [Laugh] I think under this room is a kitchen.
Asuka: Oh. Sugu dinner tabetai. [I want to eat dinner soon]
Teacher: Where are you going to eat dinner? The dinner hall or a pub?
Asuka: [Silent]
Teacher: Are you going to eat at the dinner hall or a pub?
Asuka: Dinner hall or pub?
Saki: Dinner hall.
Asuka: Dinner hall.
Teacher: Oh I see.
[15/09/2014]

In this conversation, Asuka could not remember a word. Then Yoko and Saki supplemented the English that Asuka needed to communicate with the teacher. It was not direct question and response between the teacher and Asuka. It was a layered process of communication that contained

pauses and silence from each student.

When the students needed to ask questions and make requests to the teacher, they tried to communicate through the gatekeeper whom they implicitly chose. Figure 1 illustrates the interactional flow of teacher and students.

Figure 1 Interactional flow of teacher and students (* are the gatekeepers)



When the students needed to choose the color of the candle, Tomohiro realized that black was missing. He expressed himself as follows:

Excerpt 2
Tomohiro: Eh! Kuro naino? [What? Don't we have black?]
Kenji: Hai yarioaoshi! [Yeah, you have to design again!]
Tomohiro: Eh, Majide? [Oh, really?]
Sachie (researcher): Demo, ushironi aru kamoyo? Sensei ni kiitemitara?
[But he may have black somewhere behind. Why don't you ask your teacher?]
Tomohiro: Eh… nee sensei ni kiite. [Hmmm. Hey, can you ask the teacher?]
Kenji: Nande orega? [Why me?]
Tomohiro: Nee sensei ni kiite. [Hey, can you ask the teacher?]
Daisuke: Nante kikeba ii? [How can I ask this in English?]
Kenji: "I want black" de iinjyane? [I think it's okay to say "I want black."]
Daisuke: Okay. Jyaa, kiitekuru. [Okay, I will ask and come back.]
[15/09/2014]

Here again, the students tried to cooperate with each other to be ready to talk to the teacher. Daisuke, who was playing a role of gatekeeper, was not necessarily the strongest in English. He was outgoing and might have had less communication apprehension, which was a characteristic of the

gatekeepers. Tomohiro tried to deliver his question to the teacher through Daisuke, who needed the help of Kenji. This layered process required some time until he went and talked to the teacher. It was apparent that they tried to bridge language barriers with the teacher for the communicative tasks they were trying to accomplish in class.

Situations When the Patterns of Interaction did not Function

While students cooperated to talk to the teacher, the flow of interaction was interrupted particularly when gatekeepers could not function in their roles. This happened when they struggled to understand the teacher's humor, when they thought that their attitudes could be disrespectful to the teacher, and when they needed to make decisions. Overall, when they thought they had negative response to the teacher, such as lacking adequate understanding of instructions or requesting too much, they stopped interacting with the teacher and silence emerged. Excerpt 3 shows how students stopped communicating in the middle of the friendly ice-breaking time:

Excerpt 3
Teacher: So, where are you guys from?
Yoko: Kanagawa.
Teacher: Kanagawa! How long did you guys take to get here?
Nanako: Two days. [Misunderstood his question as "How long are you going to stay here?"]
Teacher: Wow, two days? Did you guys walk?
Everyone: [Silent] Walk…? [Looked at each other]
[15/09/2014]

Although the teacher was trying to make students aware of the mistake in a humorous way, nobody understood his intention. Later Nanako and Kenji confirmed in the interviews that they thought he changed a topic of conversation. When I explained what was happening, the students said they did not expect such a reaction from the teacher because Japanese speakers would usually say, "Did you mean two hours?" when talking to non-native speakers. There were many small situations like this, in which the teacher's humorous intention did not meet student expectations. Rather than asking him to clarify, they remained silent.

When students figured that their attitudes or questions would be disrespectful to the teacher, they did not bring their issues to the teacher, even though he would have welcomed their questions. In the cricket-themed class, the teacher explained how to play the mini game. It was more complicated than the instruction in the candle-making class and everyone seemed uncertain,

looking at each other. The instructor asked if they had any questions, but nobody asked any. Just before the game started, Kenji came and asked me to explain how to play the game. Shortly after, Yoko came to ask me the same question, too. I told them that they needed to ask the teacher questions if they were not sure. They finally went to ask the teacher to explain the rules one more time. When the students felt bad asking something to the teacher, they often said, "Iiya iiya [that's okay, that's okay]." When the students could not understand the teacher, they often froze instead of saying, "I don't understand."

Decision-making was another type of utterance that they struggled to make. In the candle-making class, the teacher asked what the students wanted to do several times. Nobody said a word and there was always a little silence before I stepped in and encouraged them to speak up. Excerpt 4 illustrates how it occurred:

Excerpt 4
Teacher: Okay. Do you wanna take a walk or want to work on this handout?
Students: [Silent, looking at each other]
Teacher: We can take a walk if you want? Or we can do this handout. [Explained with gestures]
Students: [Silent, looking at each other]
Teacher: What do you want to do?
Students: [Silent, nobody looked at the teacher]
Sachie (researcher): Do you want to do the handout? Yes or no?
Students: Yes. Yes, handout.
[15/09/2014]

After two classes were over, I asked the teacher if he had any comments about the classes and students. He positively evaluated students who worked hard and acted in a friendly manner to everyone. He thought that the students did not speak very much in class, perhaps because they were shy.

What Students Thought About While Being Silent (Interview results)

Shortly after their classes, I interviewed Kenji, Yoko, Saki and Nanako. They were randomly chosen according to their schedules and availability to speak with me. Interviews were conducted on September 15th and 29th, 2014. They were asked what they thought about the classes, what made them struggle to speak to the teacher (or other staff members at the facility), what was happening while they were silent and what they wanted to do to improve their communication

skills. All of them enjoyed the classes and liked the teacher. Regarding their struggles to speak English, the participants pointed out three issues. The biggest matter was respect for the teacher. All of them did not want to trouble the teacher by showing a lack of understanding or requesting too much. They had a similar respect for other classmates, which made them silent when decision-making was needed. Another factor was the misunderstanding of the context and lack of skills to connect vocabulary.

Respect to the Teacher

What appeared common among the interviewees was that they did not want to trouble the teacher, even though they could not solve their own issues in class. Yoko said:

> You know, he explained to me and I did not understand. Then, he explained it to me again in a different way, and I still did not get it. Then, I felt so bad and could not ask anymore. Maybe once or twice is okay, but not any more. I just feel bad.

Similarly, Kenji explained why he did not ask the teacher when he did not understand how to play cricket. He said "Basically, none of us wants to trouble the teacher. That's not only in English classes, but also in any other subjects." He continued:

> I just thought that "Oh, god! I made a mistake! I did not listen well!" when the teacher explained how to play cricket. Then I asked other students if they understood, because if it was an issue that we could solve by ourselves, we do not want to trouble the teacher. But nobody understood. So, I went to talk to you because I felt it was easier as you were with us [from the same university].

Kenji thought that it would be easier to ask questions if he had a long-term relationship with the teacher, like he had at his language school. "But, I still find it difficult to trouble teachers in Japan, because there is always a certain distance between us. We are not used to communicating with teachers," he insisted. Saki and Nanako also discussed their concerns about troubling the teacher or ignoring other students' feelings. Regarding the silence during decision-making, Saki revealed:

> First, we had to make sure our understanding of what the teacher said was right. Then, we thought about what everyone wanted to do. I could not decide what we should do, just

based on my opinion. Then, we voted and took a majority decision.

Surprisingly, they did all of that without verbally communicating. They felt bad to openly discuss something in Japanese in front of the teacher. So, they used their eyes and facial expressions, or whispered to another student sitting next to them. While they appeared silent, they were actually quite busy, confirming, asking and expressing opinions implicitly. Kenji pointed out that:

> It is our consideration towards others. When I was in the U.S., everyone quickly responded to the teacher and said whatever they wanted to say, so did I. But, when I am in a group of Japanese students, I am unintentionally concerned about how I should respond to the teacher and what other students are thinking about.

Their respect to the teacher made Saki ashamed of herself, too. She said, "I studied English a lot, but all I could say was 'like' or 'use' or something like that. I could not make a proper sentence to respond to the teacher. That's really shameful. I felt miserable." They hesitated to approach the teacher for help because they thought that not understanding the instruction or being unable to use English were disrespectful and shameful. They tried hard to play a role of good students in the classroom context and could not break the communication barriers.

Misunderstanding of the Context

In some situations, even though students heard and understood the teacher's comment, they struggled to understand its meaning, which often led to silence. Nanako said:

> I knew the teacher said, "walk" [referring to Excerpt 3], but I did not know why all of the sudden he started talking about walking. […] I might have heard "fire," too [in the cricket class]. I knew the teacher was laughing. But I would have never guessed that he was talking about how he would be fired if we hit the ball too hard.

Yoko also picked up some of the words that the teacher said. She thought that she was able to have mutual understanding with the teacher most of the time. However, "I sometimes could not see the whole picture," she noted. Regarding the humor that the teacher tried to bring to class, Kenji continued:

> Maybe it was a joke? But I did not know how to respond to the joke. If I lived overseas, I

> would have been able to pick it up more quickly. But for me, growing up in Japan, there is almost no chance to guess the meaning, because it's not how we talk.

What seemed apparent was that they knew they missed something. But, they were not able to clarify their questions by asking, "What do you mean?" or "What is fire?" which could have expanded further conversation, rather than resulting in silence. Perhaps, their concern about not troubling the teacher made them hesitate to pursue their questions.

Nanako further commented that she was not sure what was appropriate in a specific context, such as meals. In Japanese, she would say "*Itadakimasu* [I appreciate receiving this meal]" before eating, but she did not know if saying something like that in English would be appropriate. She had many small questions like this, but did not know how to ask them in English.

Lack of Skills to Connect Vocabulary to Make Sentences

Another factor that made them hesitate to speak was the difficulty in making words into sentences. Nanako said:

> I wanted to ask more questions and I could come up with some words. But to make a sentence and change it to a question was really hard. I did not know where to use prepositions and what the subject of the sentence was, because we often omit subjects in Japanese. I can say, "I have a pen" or "Tom is taller than Sam" quickly, because that's how I studied English so far.

Yoko and Saki also said that they could come up with some words, but could not make sentences. Yoko elaborated, saying:

> I need to think about how to respond, by connecting one word to another. So, it takes quite a bit of time, but all I could say was a few words. That was really a shame. […] In Japan where I only meet Japanese people, I find it weird to speak English to each other. I need to come to this kind of place and get used to it more.

Kenji felt this "shame" even stronger, because he studied and practiced English in the U.S. When he was still not able to make proper questions or sentences, he felt disappointed with himself. The students were aware that their English was limited, but did not know how to overcome their proficiency issues. They were somewhat "ashamed" that they studied English for eight years from

junior high school to university (Kenji went abroad, too), however, they could only say a couple of words. They were surprised by their lack of proficiency and opted not to speak much in order to mask this. They thought that "being able to say only a few words" was shameful as a university student. Their silence was caused by a gap between what they thought they should be able to do and what they could actually do.

DISCUSSION

What was most striking was that although the students appeared quiet and shy on the surface, they were actually cooperating, creating their own interaction system, implicitly exchanging thoughts, and undergoing struggles within themselves. There were three reasons why they appeared silent in these EFL contexts.

First, they implicitly created the interactional patterns to communicate with the teacher, in which they formed a team with gatekeepers in the center. They cooperated each other to construct meaning and let gatekeepers deliver messages. In this way, each student's utterance was somewhat restricted. When one was jumping in to supplement English, the one who originally started the conversation remained silent. More obvious examples were when students asked gatekeepers to communicate with the teacher [e.g. Excerpt 2]. Most students reminded silent after asking gatekeepers to deliver their messages, although they were not necessarily the weakest ones in English. They were willing to communicate and tried to contribute to the class discussions. Due to the strategy they used, however, their communication was not always apparent in class, except for those gatekeepers.

Second, the students found it very difficult to make negative responses to the teacher, because they considered it disrespectful. When the responses were positive, such as "Do you like playing sports?" "Yes," the interaction was rather smooth. They did not want to say anything negative in front of the teacher, such as "I did not understand the rules," or "I took off the wick and need to fix it." They often avoided eye contact with the teacher, compromised what they really wanted to do and did not fix the problem (e.g. kept the candle without a wick). They continued class, as if no breakdowns were occurring because they felt bad for the teacher. That was their way to show respect to the teacher who, as such, stood in a distant position from them.

Perhaps the teacher would have appreciated helping the students with their issues. He was always being friendly, which the students really liked. If they talked about their comprehension issues, there would have been more communication opportunities. It was still difficult for the students to confront their teacher with their own difficulties as they wanted to solve them by

themselves as much as they could. This hesitation to talk about their problems was also observed when they could not comprehend the context of the teacher's humor. They were not able to ask the teacher to clarify the meaning because they felt bad for not understanding. They decided to remain silent and tried to let it go.

Their respect to their peers also made it challenging for them to make decisions out loud. They did not want to express their thoughts because it might have been different from others, which could end up with someone compromising his/her ideas. They were not afraid of confronting each other, yet they did not want to interrupt anyone's way of thinking. The decisions that the teacher asked the students to make were not quite serious, such as if they wanted to take a walk. The students still found it challenging to answer individually without confirming the questions and everyone's opinions.

Finally, the students' images of how much English an average university student should be able to speak made them hesitate to make incorrect sentences or single word utterances. They had to think about where to use prepositions or how to connect words to make sentences before uttering something. This process seemed quite common among learners with lower proficiency. Yet, when this occurred several times in the classroom context, it created several moments of prolonged silence, even though it was supposed to be a time and place to practice communication. After studying English for eight years or more, they had their own high expectations for the forms of English that they thought they should use. They were ashamed of falling short of their expectations and did not make an utterance to hide their limited skills.

Unlike what was reported in past studies (e.g. Anderson, 1993; Brown, 2004; Kawamura, Kudo & Hail, 2006), the students did not mention their fear of making mistakes in front of class or standing out from others. Particularly the gatekeepers took leading roles in interaction [Excerpt 2]. Like the example of Nanako [Excerpt 3], students were not afraid of responding to the teacher, even if their response contained some misunderstanding or errors. The students did not just passively follow the teacher and obey the authority, as discussed in Atkinson (1997). Furthermore, what was happening in the classrooms could not be explained by the simple East versus West framework, in which passive East Asians struggle to fit into communicative Western teaching. The students created interactional patterns and tried to communicate with their teacher [Excerpt 1]. They exchanged thoughts without openly speaking up [Excerpt 4]. Although they appeared to be silent at several situations, they were actively engaging with class activities in their own way. Such effort would probably not have been perceived as communication in the eyes of a teacher who thought that they were being shy.

On the other hand, a collective mindset (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010; Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005; Triandis, 1989) seemed to have influenced how Japanese students situated

themselves in EFL lessons. The students hesitated to speak up for the sake of other peers, particularly when decision making was required. As Kanagawa, Cross and Markus (2001) discussed, they demonstrated concerns about their limited English skills, which could not meet their own expectations of "good students" in a social context. They did not speak up to be respectful to the teacher while hiding their lack of understanding, which seemed appropriate to the students.

Conceptual difference between the teacher and the students emerged in the students' attitudes of trying not to cause troubles to the teacher. What the students considered troubles might not have been troubles from the perspective of the teacher. What they did in order to be respectful to the teacher might not have been perceived in the same way by the teacher. Although the teacher confirmed that the students had very good attitudes in classes and evaluated them positively, their hidden effort for being good students might not have been recognizable. Similarly, the teacher's effort to make a friendly, communicative classroom, such as following up students' mistakes with a humor [Excerpt 3], was not apparent in the eyes of the students.

Even though they were ashamed of their English competence, if they could say a word, the teacher would try to understand their intention [e.g. Excerpt 1]. It could lead to further communication, which can be beneficial for more speaking and listening practice. It did not happen because the students thought that saying only a few words would not be appropriate for a university level EFL class.

In summary, there seemed to be a mismatch between the classroom culture that the teacher and the students tried to construct. The teacher tried to communicate with each student in a way that the students could understand and respond, in order to construct a communicative classroom. While the students responded actively when positive comments were called for, they withdrew themselves when they did not want to trouble the teacher by responding negatively.

Pedagogical Implication

In order to create more communicative EFL classrooms, it seemed significant that both the teacher and the students recognize each other's intentions and perspectives. Participation in general is not always an effective indicator of students' academic achievements. As was shown by Programme for International Student Assessment (2012), so-called "quiet" East Asians scored higher than "communicative and critical" Western students in science, reading and math tests. In EFL classrooms, where the focus of learning is communication, however, students should practice speaking and listening without any hesitation.

The students should become aware that even one word or a short sentence is the start of

communication. Asking a question about the instructions, clarifying meaning and seeking help are not troubles in an EFL context, but potential triggers of communication. Without realizing this, the students would remain silent, compromise what they need, and keep wondering why they cannot speak well. While cooperation is important, they should be aware that individuals should be responsible for their own comments, without relying on someone else to speak for them. Asking teachers to clarify themselves can be very difficult for non-native speakers, because they think native speakers speak "perfect" English and teachers give "proper" explanations. If they could not understand something, they would blame themselves for their lack of understanding, rather than questioning the teacher.

However, being silent and avoiding trouble does not solve any issues. If nobody explicitly draws attention to source of breakdown, the students would not be able to understand context-based meanings, like the humor in Excerpt 3. Picking up some vocabulary while listening is sometimes not enough for mutual understanding, because cultural or situational factors are attached to the language. It is important to teach students how to ask questions for their growth and own goals. Such skills are important not only to improve English fluency, but also to participate in intercultural, global society with many different people from various backgrounds. It is an everyday matter that we do not understand what someone said. These breakdowns in communication can occur because of our differing expectations, how to face issues or convey our feelings. Simply trying to put a positive face on communicative trouble spots, acting as if no problems have occurred, would not improve our mutual understanding.

On the other hand, teachers should also become aware of what is happening behind the students' silence. Students may be trying to deliver communication in their own way, even though sometimes it is not obvious. Simply judging East Asian students as silent and passive may lead teachers to a misinterpretation of the classroom context and make it challenging to bridge any gap.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE PRACTICE

Teacher-student interactions in two EFL sessions were examined with ethnographic techniques, revealing what made it challenging for Japanese students to speak English with their teacher who is a native speaker of the language. Three possible factors for the challenge emerged from participant observation and interviews: The interactional patterns that students created, their respect to the teacher and their hesitation to show their limited language skills. The purpose of the analysis was to gain insights, through structured follow-up interviews, into the Japanese students' silence, rather than making generalizations. Findings from this study can be still useful for many language

teachers in various contexts to interpret student-teacher interactions and functions in classrooms. Nevertheless, extending contextual analysis into various class styles, population, locations and time are necessary for further understanding. It would be enlightening to examine teachers' perspectives and compare them with students' points of view. Future research may demonstrate that the often-researched "dichotomies" of East/West and teachers/students are not always sufficient to explain the diversity in the language classrooms.

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Integrating Research Approaches Toward Fluent EFL Literacy

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ABSTRACT

Evidence has been accumulating regarding the specific challenges for reaching fluency in reading L2 English, particularly in EFL settings. Some interventions are showing potential value, according to recent cognitive and classroom research. Among these are incorporating multimedia, especially audio to make use of evidence of phonology's facilitative role in building L2 reading, and also incorporating collaborative reading work in the classroom. This paper briefly reviews relevant research and develops an integrated skills approach to a proposed pedagogical intervention for university learners. Designed to collect qualitative and empirical data, this proposed action research is intended to explore and help clarify if integrating support for phonological awareness in collaborative classroom settings can improve EFL literacy experiences and acquisition for learners.

INTRODUCTION

Issues of EFL Literacy in the Japanese University Context

Many Japanese universities state that their goals include fostering globally-minded students prepared for participation in international business and other cross-border activities. Curricula set for first and second year students often include required English courses. Depending on the university and the department, the English courses may follow two general patterns. One typical instructional context will be general-purpose English courses for non-English majors, intended to offer practice in English for potential travel or future international work-related needs. In this case, usually instructors choose a textbook with some balance of the four traditional skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Syllabi will be prepared with class plans to reduce or minimize students' anxiety or aversion to foreign language practice, and to engage them in English-medium activities which they find meaningful. Semester courses usually run for fifteen weeks in Japan, with these often-large

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classes meeting once weekly. Given this limited time and contact with students, the instructor may also focus on introducing resources which the students might access and make use of after the courses are over, hoping to encourage the students to continue their language learning and practice at their own pace, if and when they wish or need to do so.

In the second instructional context, there are Japanese university departments with a more specific international communications focus, which offer majors in languages, usually starting with English and sometimes offering other languages as well. Often these university departments have a set of required classes in English for undergraduates with courses divided to concentrate on specific skills, such as listening class, reading class, pronunciation class, and beginning academic writing. Naturally this latter university context will allow more time for instructors to help students work on English skills, and students who have chosen these university majors usually do not have as much anxiety to overcome in order to make progress in their learning. In-class time still seems insufficient at best, however, when English is a foreign language. Again in this context, an array of resources introduced in class for EFL learners to make use of later can potentially offer a step toward sustained and sustainable language learning.

Among such resources are multimedia sites online to facilitate language learning outside the classroom which are increasingly affordable or, with an Internet connection, free. Some have multilingual homepages and multi-language interfaces to select for navigating within them (see for example *EnglishCentral.com, Extensive Reading Central.com*, and *Memrise.com*). These are certainly user-friendly for learners, but some comfort with reading in English is still necessary for accessing, choosing, navigating, and using most English resources independently. Even in a multimedia and self-managed learning environment, reading is a foundation skill for building further foreign language skills, and therefore exploring literacy and possibilities for developing more comfortable EFL reading are the focus of this paper.

The teaching context to be discussed, and the target for pedagogical interventions, is both the general English classes, and the English reading classes in the university situations described above. In general courses, students almost unanimously report in initial class writings for this instructor that their experiences with English have thus far been as a subject to study for tests, especially entrance exams. Most single out grammar as a particular source of vexation and dislike, and few indeed mention having used English in travel or other actual communication experiences. Meanwhile, at universities with students majoring in international communications and studying English, only the tiniest percentage will report having read a book in English before beginning university studies. Self-introductions in these university reading classes often conclude baldly with: “I don’t like reading.” When the point is not made verbally, in person, the present generation of students will frequently make it by email:

> I watched "How Books Can Open Your Mind." As you know, Lisa Bu compared the two novels. I was surprised this way of thinking! I agree with her idea, but I don't like reading books.... (personal communication, university first year, second semester reading course student, October 7, 2015)

Another student:

> I watched Ted talk of Lisa Bu. Actually, I don't like reading book, but I changed my mind a little. She read a lot of things from many books and learned a lot of things. That is wonderful and smart. Also, I really liked her words that "Books have given me a magical portal to connect with people of the past and the present." That changed my mind, and if I have a time I want to read books to learn a lot of things. (personal communication, university second year, second semester reading course student, October 26, 2015)

Proceeding from these introductions to classwork with preliminary diagnostic reading aloud promptly clarifies that printed English words are being decoded without accuracy or understanding. Masuhara (2007) reports being struck by the prevalence of "hesitant and tortuous" (p. 15) L2 reading and Tomlinson writes that for many language students, "reading is an unsuccessful and unpleasant experience" (Tomlinson, 2000, p. 524). Given the sincere aversion to reading built up over years of study and expressed as above, students enrolled in required English classes in their universities or who have intentionally chosen to major in international communications deserve respect for continuing to attend classes. As demonstrated in the emails above, in fact, many express earnest, positive attitudes. The critical missing elements in English education and literacy are not from something lacking in these tenacious and hopeful students.

Finding the missing elements for these students, and incorporating them into teaching approaches is essential: "If L1 readers possess attributes in reading which L2 readers do not, then it is the task of the language teacher to develop ways of encouraging the development of these attributes" (Paran, 1996, p. 30). A "hesitant and tortuous" (Masuhara, 2007, p. 15) L2 reading process can only function as an impediment to progress in English coursework, and a disincentive to future, post-course accessing and making use of learning resources. Recent university graduates report to this instructor that written L2 English communications are a constant feature of their daily working lives. Globalized industry and the necessity of using English as a shared second language with which to conduct their work is not a theory but a reality for them. Email dominates these stories rather than other communication options – although it has become a meme to characterize younger generations

as visually-oriented digital natives, empowered literacy is an inescapable need for these young workers. A lack of fluent L2 literacy presents a serious risk to their building successful working lives.

What exactly has gone wrong with the process of gaining L2 literacy in English? Considering the hours and years students spend in English classes, and the ramifications, it is a question of urgency. More closely examined, the question is dual in the case of reading: what is happening in the brain of a learner gaining a second literacy, and, what can and should teachers of second or foreign language English reading do in practice to facilitate this acquisition for their students? These questions need to be addressed if effective, practical approaches to improve the experience of reading in English for learners are to be developed. Fortunately, research has been making inroads toward understanding the mental processes of literacy, particularly since the early 2000s. Pedagogical research also, often in teaching English as a foreign language settings, is beginning to deliver insights into some ways these new understandings of the reader's mind can inform and be incorporated into teaching approaches.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:

The process of reading and interventions promoting literacy

Nuances in descriptions of the neurolinguistic processes vary by researcher, but in broad terms, in the typically developing brain, children gain their L1 languages through what they hear over the course of their first years. When later learning to read, many skills come into play but fundamentally, the young person needs to decode the text their eyes rest upon and transfer it, in audio form, into short term memory (sometimes referred to specifically as the phonological loop) from which they seek a match in their long term memory, also stored in audio form. The match-up or connection needs to be made before the short term memory breaks down – a matter of moments. (Koda, 2005, pp. 254-257; Masuhara, 2007, pp. 27-28; Tomlinson, 2000, p. 526; Walter, 2008, pp. 458-459)

A successful match-up provides the reader with comprehension, while a breakdown requires stopping to reread, skipping over the unknown word or words, questioning a nearby peer or teacher, resorting to a dictionary, or abandonment of the text. Causes and points of this potential breakdown are many. But in the smooth, subconscious, successful process, the reader decodes the printed text into the appropriate smallest segments (phonemes, in English), and inputs that phonological information correctly to the short term memory. If the initial decoding and inputting has been done correctly and the lexical item is already in their long-term memory, the connection can take place and comprehension can be achieved

(Tomlinson, 2000; Walter, 2008). This appears to be a similar process in every researched language:

> All the different strands of studies in L1 and L2 language and reading acquisition seem to point to the same direction.… in solving the challenge of building a neural circuitry for reading, the brain takes a remarkably similar solution regardless of the idiosyncrasies of one or the other written language system.… from the universal demand of rapid access to phonology. (Masuhara, 2007, p. 25)

For L1 readers, the process of learning to read, in circumstances in which they have ample language in their environment, is a matter of learning to match their language's orthography with their phonological awareness, and then matching up what they have seen and decoded with what is already in their long-term memory. For L2 learners beginning to read in their L2, especially in a foreign language context, the situation is far more challenging and complex (Koda, 2005; Masuhara, 2007; Tomlinson, 2000). A number of researchers studying this have become critical of asking students to learn L2 reading at the first stage of their L2 studies (Masuhara, 2007; Paran & Williams, 2007; Tomlinson, 2000) and are concerned about the sometimes incoherent resulting pedagogy:

> Unlike L1, L2 language acquisition and reading acquisition start at the same time. There is no time for the L2 learners to establish the necessary phonological core ability. This is the reason why the reading behaviours of L2 learners are so similar to L1 unsuccessful readers. (Masuhara, 2007, p. 27)

Unsuccessful decoding, and difficulty with comprehension by EFL learners of English in Japan provides ample evidence for these concerns. Along with the above researchers, Paran (1996) suggests for teaching practice, building a middle ground:

> Readers must clearly have decoding skills in order to read at all, but at first, by way of compensation, they will also need a large amount of contextual support, since many of the words they are decoding are either unknown to them or accessed slowly. (p. 29)

Decoding ease in itself varies widely by language and orthography. When the target reading language is English, the inconsistency of the written form of the language presents a high level of challenge and many researchers note that the low grapheme-phoneme correspondence poses difficulties to children learning to read English as an L1, even though there is English in their daily environment (Masuhara, 2007, pp. 21-22; Nation, 2013, pp.

70-71). When English is the target as a foreign language, and great distance between the L1 and L2 languages is involved, it is even more difficult to develop reading-supportive phonological and lexical awareness (Koda, 2005, pp. 25, 271; Masuhara, 2007, pp. 23-25; Nation, 2013, pp. 70-71).

Koda (2005) examines wide research on the factors involved in learning L2 reading, finding that first language reading skills already present, level of L2 proficiency, and the reader's "orthographic processing, phonological decoding, and listening comprehension – contribute significantly, albeit differently …" (p. 202). Meanwhile, working memory available to the individual reader affects every skill being developed and their resulting comprehension ability (pp.202-203). Furthermore, the issues of difference between a reader's first language writing system and their target L2 language's writing system can be pervasive and persistent – for instance, whether both share an alphabet, or if one is logographic: "… L1 – L2 orthographic distance is largely responsible for differences in L2 decoding success … at any given point in … L2 development" (p. 271).

Tantalizing research by Takeuchi (2003) discusses how some of these challenges have been overcome. Takeuchi conducted an analysis of 160 foreign language learners in Japan, analyzing self-reported, published accounts by learners who had reached exceptional competencies in a variety of L2 languages from Arabic to Thai (and including English), written with a corresponding diversity of scripts. In selecting a sample group, Takeuchi focused on foreign language learners who began their language study after elementary school, who had not lived abroad, and who had no particular support for the target language at home. Some shared strategies from this sample group, relevant to their building of fluent reading skills, stand out. Reading aloud, reading a lot, concentrated listening and listening for gist, listening while shadowing, listening for prosody and suprasegmental prosody in pronunciation, and, in focused vocabulary study: "extra attention…paid to pronunciation in their vocabulary build up" (p. 388) by reading the target words aloud as well as writing them, shows that activities building reading fluency were far from silent (pp. 388-389). In contrast, Takeuchi reports that unsuccessful language learners do not do concentrated listening, are less likely to check pronunciation of words or to vocalize while writing them, do not read aloud or a lot, and are less likely to shadow or "pay special attention to sounds/prosody" (p. 390 online) clarifying that sound, so to speak, is a differentiating factor. The poor language learners did, however, and unlike the successful language learners, make word lists and try to memorize them (p. 390, online).

The intriguing patterns noted by Takeuchi, above, are from a large but anecdotal sample. While not detailing pedagogical interventions, Takeuchi's analysis of what high-achieving language learners have done to acquire a foreign language lends weight to the suggestion that integrated skills practice can be helpful; particularly, that proactively connecting oral and listening practice with literacy building can be effective for optimal

acquisition.

The sections below will focus on contemporary strands of theory and practice intended to address the obstacles preventing second language students from reaching comfort and ease with L2 reading, particularly with reading English as a foreign language. One strand relates to Extensive Reading, also known as ER, which is often carried out as sustained silent reading. Another strand follows developments including integration of oral elements or listening with reading, carried out with both graded readers and original literature. These sometimes incorporate collaborative learning and other supportive practice, balancing skills work and deepening the language learning and literacy experience.

Extensive Reading

ER has an active and prolific international interest community among language teachers, with ER-dedicated organizations such as the Extensive Reading Foundation, others based in Japan and Korea, and webpages to be found in English, Japanese, and Korean. Teacher interest groups focused on ER within larger language teaching organizations, such as the Extensive Reading special interest group within the Japan Association for Language Teaching, increase the constituency. Regional events, international conferences, ER-related publications and books, and ER-related studies in general language education journals continue to increase ER's visibility. (Please see Appendix A for example resources and links.)

The goal of extensive reading programs is to build reading fluency, as discussed by Waring in a recent book chapter titled, "Building fluency with extensive reading" (Waring, 2014). Waring notes "extensive reading is often taken to be synonymous with graded reading," but states that this is not the case; rather, whenever students are "reading…fluently and with high levels of comprehension" (p. 218) it can fit into the guidelines and descriptions of ER. Extensive reading programs for fluency have remained somewhat controversial (Huffman, 2014, pp. 17-18) and recently researchers have been carrying out empirical studies with larger numbers of learners and comparison groups, strengthening the case for fluency-focused reading at high levels of comprehension in English reading class work in EFL environments (Beglar & Hunt, 2014; Burrows, 2012; Huffman, 2014). Some studies have examined whether ER experience stimulates gains in motivation, self-efficacy, or positive attitudes toward reading, finding that it does (Burrows, 2012; LeBlanc 2015; Yamashita, 2013). Burrows (2012) additionally found that reading strategies instruction along with reading activities led to the best results, rather than assigning ER work as homework only (Burrows, 2012, p. 334). His findings lend evidence to other researchers' assertions that EFL readers benefit from in-class instructional support, guidance and encouragement, especially with initial experiences in extensive reading (Green, 2005; LeBlanc, 2015; Yamashita, 2013;

Yoshida, 2014). Yoshida (2014) in particular suggests carrying a box of books to each course meeting to enable browsing by the students, and "in-class book hopping" (p. 21) with advising by the instructor based on the instructor's own previous reading and evaluation of those books.

Another form of in-class support, termed variously as book clubs, literature circles or reading circles, has been gaining researchers' attention. LeBlanc (2015) conducted a large study (316 participants) over the course of an academic year with high school students, all of whom were assigned the same graded short story collections. Students were also assigned roles to fulfill in discussions of the stories and coached on doing this effectively. They met in small groups to discuss their stories eight times during the year. According to Likert scale questions and students' feedback, the results were positive: "task repetition and cooperative performance in the circles helped improve students' perceived reading efficacy over the course of an academic year while reading anxiety decreased" (p. 19). Analyzing the results, LeBlanc notes the increased interaction with and time spent with the stories through participants preparing to discuss them, and the "social persuasion" (p. 18) of enjoyable teamwork (LeBlanc, 2015).

Most studies examining ER to date have been with silent reading, and though some have included comparison groups (Beglar & Hunt, 2014; Burrows, 2012; Huffman, 2014), most have not had control groups (excepting Burrows, 2012, which in addition to comparison groups also had a control group.) The length of the reading treatment being researched, the amount of reading, data collection methods, and number of participants have had little in common thus far across the published results (Chang & Millett, 2015). For teachers, it has remained somewhat unclear, therefore, as to amounts of reading to assign and for how long a period of time, to help bring about a positive and lasting difference for their language learners (Chang & Millett, 2015). The research above discussing the value of proactive support, scaffolding, and discussions in class, however, does address the concerns expressed by Green (2005), over students in Hong Kong settled at desks to do ER-style reading in silence, with no support or interaction with peers or teachers: "a particularly monastic detention session" (p. 308). Green calls for improvements in methodology for ER in Hong Kong and elsewhere, making use of the "opportunity for sharing the challenges and joys of reading in a foreign language – in small groups or through oral presentations … To be successful extensive reading needs to integrate as seamlessly as possible with other components of the language curriculum" (p. 308).

Integrated reading projects

The suggestions for incorporating extensive reading more holistically into L2 language and especially EFL programs with interaction, peer support, and practice in a

balance of skills lead to another strand of recent inquiry. Focusing on graded and authentic literature reading integrated with other skills in the classroom, they are termed, sometimes, as combined skills research, multimedia, or multimodal literacy research. As pointed out by Waring (2014) above, reading material that has not been graded or simplified for language learners does not exclude that reading activity from being considered ER if the material is sufficiently comprehensible to the students. However, some researchers reporting on course reading projects do note that selected readings were challenging, and discuss their integration of proactively chosen scaffolding to make their students' experience that of successful L2 literacy.

First, from an ESL setting with younger learners, Zugel (2012) wrote twenty-four short, simple one-page stories for struggling elementary readers in a supplemental curriculum, meeting for short periods after school. A notable aspect of his project was the focused and intensive oral component; each story was listened to and read aloud cumulatively over a dozen times. The stories were initially challenging for the students – though written by the instructor to be manageable for elementary learners, ("Ted could make a toy plane that actually flew") (p. 209), the students could not at first read them unassisted. With scaffolding by the instructor and opportunities for learners to repeat reading and listening in various conditions, such as being read to, and by reading to each other while focusing on different relevant strategies, the students' prosody, reading rates and accuracy improved. The instructor found that the struggling readers were "not simply improving reading skills for specific stories, but are increasing their overall reading rate and accuracy by practicing the word and phonetic combinations …" (p. 204-205) and found also that the "skills learned for each story carry over to other reading" (Zugel, 2012, p. 204).

In a foreign language context with young adults, a similar approach was reported by McNabb (2013), who wrote original short stories for learners, but also incorporated contemporary computer support technology. The short stories were made available to read online, along with a number of uploaded recordings of each story read aloud by the instructor at different target reading speeds. The free software program *Spreeder* was added to help students practice fluent reading speeds. McNabb found that in facilitating student autonomy, "offering students enjoyable, manageable short stories to read and simultaneously hear via new technologies that they can control according to their own schedules, we are moving forward …" (p. 44) and indeed discovered that students even continued to access the short stories well after their semester courses and related assignments were completed (McNabb, 2013).

Also in a foreign language context, Chang and Millett (2015) conducted a year-long research project in Taiwan, dividing student participants into two different conditions to examine the question of silent extensive reading compared to listening-supported reading in building EFL reading fluency. Sixty-four high school students (two classes) participated

through their tenth-grade academic year. After a pre-test measuring both reading speeds and comprehension, the students' reading levels were found and twenty graded readers at the appropriate level were chosen and assigned from popular titles. The audiobooks accompanying the graded readers were approximately an hour long. During the study's research intervention, the time spent on the stories in class was matched carefully between the two groups, in which one class listened while reading and the other class read silently. There was teacher support during reading, and reading-while-listening, as well as time for questions, peer and class discussion, and help with cultural points. After both groups completed twenty books, a post-test measured, as before, words per minute and reading comprehension. Both groups showed improvement, but the class which had listened improved significantly more in both reading speed and comprehension. Of particular interest was that this study included investigation of retention; the students were given a delayed post-test three months later, after a summer vacation with no further extensive reading. Comprehension levels, which had risen significantly by post-test, showed no significant loss three months later, with the group that had listened-and-read again more successful than the group that had read silently. Reading speed, meanwhile, had declined slightly in the silently reading group during the inactive three months, but the reading speed of the listening-while-reading group showed still further improvements on the delayed post-test. The final results of the intervention in students' reading speed were a gain of thirteen words per minute for the silently reading group, and forty-seven for the reading-and-listening group (Chang & Millett, 2015, p. 99). Reasons posited for the strong results of the audio-supported group include the attention called upon from the students by the oral telling of the story, and, as found in other research, the combined input may have added interest, helped speed up slow reading and build stronger links for the learners between the aural stream of speech and the words on the pages (pp. 93, 99-100), suggestions congruent with those in Masuhara (2007) and Prowse (2002) as well.

Two further studies look into using integrated methods to make reading literature that may have been above students' initial reading levels accessible for EFL learners. Shelton-Strong (2012) reports on using literature circles in Vietnam to scaffold classics such as Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *1984*, observing that from activities such as role-preparation, discussion and peer-listening between students in small reading discussion groups, "fluency in both reading and speaking had improved substantially" (p. 218). He points out that repeated interactions with each story in preparation for discussions, and in concentrated listening taking place between students during meetings of literature circles (LCs), likely stimulate "noticing" (p. 220), and concludes that the "powerful degree of scaffolding inherent in LCs allows L2 learners, at higher levels, to read and enjoy authentic, unabridged literature" (Shelton-Strong, 2012, p. 218).

Chen (2012), in Taiwan, also reports on integrated interaction with a story to

promote accessibility of an ungraded novel. Using film, book and discussions about the novel *Charlotte's Web* in successive activity cycles, a course with forty-nine university non-English majors worked through the story by several chapters or movie scenes per week for approximately eight weeks. As found in Prowse's (2002) advice to choose books readers will "engage with and react to" (p. 142) and which the teacher also enjoys (Prowse, 2002), Chen's selection was based on both relative ease of reading and expected pleasure to be found in the project by the students, stating: "*Charlotte's Web* ... was chosen for this study because it is a wonderful mixture of imagination and realism beloved by generations" (Chen, 2012, p. 92). Noting that film is a "source of authentic listening input" (p. 89) and that research shows legitimate reasons students prefer to first watch a film to get a grasp of the plot before reading the corresponding story, Chen opted to "supply background information necessary for comprehension, and pique student interest" (p. 89) by beginning the activity cycles with portions of the film. Reading was done aloud, ensuring comprehension and to create a shared base for targeted group discussions. The students in the course using *Charlotte's Web* were matched with a control-group, and both courses took standardized reading comprehension exams at the beginning and end of the project. The treatment group also responded to Likert-scale opinion questions; the majority of the *Charlotte's Web* participants felt the integrated literature activities were useful for improving English skills. Compared to the control group the *Charlotte's Web* participants' gains on the reading comprehension test were significantly higher as well.

These studies above, finding benefits for EFL literacy in learners by integrating input, particularly combinations of reading, listening and discussion of engaging stories, support the research findings and suggestions from other researchers for fluency-focused and integrated skills work with stories (for congruent research see Onoda, 2012; and Paran, 2008 for reports and discussion of further studies). A point touched upon by some, but still lacking focused studies in the literature, regards carrying out extensive listening and reading separately as well as simultaneously. Parallel fluency-focused research has included suggestions that students "listen … at home or while using public transportation" (Onoda, 2012, p. 177) and some extensive reading literature includes suggestions to try both simultaneous listening and reading, and listening separately (see Prowse, 2002, p. 143-144; Stephens, 2014, p. 2), perhaps in a repeated listening cycle, making use of blocks of time during a typical day when hands may be occupied, but one's ears and mind are available to process what we hear: "e.g. in the car, or out running" (Prowse, 2002, p. 144). In Chen's (2012) use of film for listening input preceding the reading phase of *Charlotte's Web*, the gains found by the students at the end of the project may also help justify research looking into the potential of taking advantage of multimedia listening options in manners such as those suggested above (Chen, 2012; Onoda, 2012; Prowse, 2002; Stephens, 2014).

PEDAGOGICAL ACTIONS, CONSTRAINTS, AND PROPOSED INTERVENTION AND EVALUATION

Some Japanese universities have begun Extensive Reading programs for their English curriculums in which students are required to read a certain number of books or reach a target word count in English reading before graduation, and their libraries have built collections of graded readers. In this instructor's context, at both university settings described in section one, the graded reading collections fill some library shelves. The English curriculum for non-English majors requires one Extensive Reading course, and the English curriculum for international communications majors requires a one-million word count before graduation. The collections of graded readers at both universities do not include the matching audiobooks many of the publishers offer in a variety of forms, such as CDs, MP3s, or downloads, due to budgetary concerns.

At both the university settings described in section one, students can be observed applying earnest efforts to reading graded books they have chosen. When given the opportunity to question the instructor on words or passages they do not understand, however, a chronic disconnect between the printed words and their oral versions becomes apparent. Often when a word is questioned, the instructor simply providing the oral version of the word elicits immediate comprehension, as, for example, with the word, "adventure." The final "ture" in the last syllable of the word, from its appearance, is expected by the students to sound like /túə/, though in fact usually it is rendered with a /ʧúə/ pronunciation – impossible to guess without substantial familiarity, which Waring (2014) suggests would involve repetitions in the range of twenty to thirty times, just for recognition (p. 219). Waring's findings on the number of times learners need to meet a word to recognize it may explain part of the gap between the expected ease of reading of graded readers, even at beginner levels, and students' actual experience. The lack of a supportive, robust connection built between the viewed and the heard versions of English words may be another explanation, in that the students have not heard the words often enough to facilitate an effective process of decoding and retrieval from long-term memory (Chang & Millett, 2015; Nation, 2013; Prowse, 2002; Stephens, 2014; Walter, 2008).

According to Takeuchi (2003), reading aloud to oneself from printed text is a learning strategy systematically used by highly effective language learners (p. 388). The question of how to read aloud without knowing how to pronounce what one is reading is immediately presented, however, and Takeuchi reports that successful learners also pay close attention to learning pronunciation (pp. 388-389). The process could be laborious. Though students in this instructor's context select graded readers at very low levels for expected ease

of understanding, students report that they need to look up many words. The problem demonstrated by the questions students share with the teacher, however, suggests that the lack of recognition of words they have likely seen before is due more to missing the prosody of what they are reading rather than not having seen the words enough. Clearly this phenomenon undermines the guidelines for ease of reading in extensive reading from the outset, especially if done alone by the students.

Zugel's approach of intensive attention and repeated opportunities to learn and remember the spoken versions of printed words in oral, choral, and other voiced readings of very short texts had strongly positive results, even though the short stories were reported by the author as being above the students' current reading skills level (Zugel, 2012). Shared class readers for all members of a class with audiobooks to listen to together, also, were shown by Chang and Millett (2015) to be effective for both increasing comprehension and speed of reading, compared to sustained silent reading, as discussed in section two.

Free or low cost technology as an aid for outside classwork on individually chosen stories as in McNabb (2013) could be an effective solution for outside class reading and listening. The benefits of this option include reader choice and autonomy in choosing the order of reading, listening, or both together, and the number of repeats. A limited number of stories and recordings available in this arrangement could also facilitate activating peer support between students. Readers of each story could gather for small group discussion if time was set aside in class, to share and compare understandings and views, and take the opportunity to sort out any confusing points with the instructor. This would seem to fit well with young adults in university, with the increasing expectations of autonomy and independence for this age group. The technology-aided and autonomous options used by McNabb, though nearly ideal, run into some personal resource constraints: most but not all students have computers and smartphones, and approaches might need to be explored to ensure the inclusion of all class members. Also with traditional (printed volume) materials in this instructor's context, the extensive reading materials in the libraries are purchased without multiple copies, under the assumption that students will borrow titles individually. Methods using shared stories would therefore be difficult with the library extensive reader collections.

Proposed semester-length interventions and methods

Given the evidence of benefits for reading by integrating aural and print stories in classwork, and the evident sincere enjoyment of this approach, demonstrated for example by post-semester students continuing to access the website in McNabb (2013), two complementary, comparative action research projects would be designed. These parallel literacy support interventions would be carried out to determine if shared class literature, following a design approach based on the above literature, would show potential benefits

across university EFL settings and conditions in Japan, and if further modifications and more formal research would be justified as being of potential value in EFL reading pedagogy.

First, at the university where the instructor supplies the course syllabi for required general English courses, a graded reader with a CD (and downloading option) could be incorporated into the syllabus. Second, at the international communications department of a university with a set syllabus, supplementing the syllabus with a manageable book and audiobook as partly classwork, partly homework can be done with careful planning. In this latter case, showing a film, asking students to purchase copies of the book, and arranging opportunities to listen to the matching audiobook outside of class would be possible. In both university settings, collaborative discussion work in small groups (book clubs) would be an integral part of the reading projects, as peer-led discussions of reading have been recommended or cited positively as helpful and motivating by many researchers (Green, 2005; Prowse, 2002; Shelton-Strong, 2012; Waring, 2014). Koda (2005) notes further value in peer meetings: "Discussions of both the reading processes and content promote metacognitive dialogues among students" (p. 269). Recent reports of useful scaffolding effects in developing discussion skills by setting up assigned roles for reading discussions (LeBlanc, 2015; Shelton-Strong, 2012) also merit exploration (please see Appendix B).

Because students at both target universities have some familiarity with ER theory and guidelines for practice, brief review explanations of the concept of extensive reading would be sufficient. Before starting the proposed integrated project with this instructor, then, a brief two-question survey focusing on the new element would be conducted: "Have you ever listened to an audiobook before?" and, "What do you think of the idea?" After collecting the survey replies, the instructor would explain bilingually the current understandings in reading research and the pressing gaps as well, particularly that:

- research shows language learners need to encounter words between twenty and thirty times to recognize them (Waring, 2014)
- repeating listening and reading is helpful (Zugel, 2012)
- experiments show combining listening and reading helps students similar to themselves improve their reading fluency (Chang & Millett, 2015)
- the above research findings are new, and timing of activities may still be an open question
- the instructor hopes the students will experiment with listening simultaneously, and listening and reading separately
- feedback from the students on their experiences and preferences at the project's end will be valuable and appreciated.

Following up on this verbal introduction, the instructor would run a task to help make some of the concepts more concrete and accessible. Students would first try opening their books and reading aloud from a page they had not seen before, and then rate their feeling of comfort or difficulty. Next, with books closed, listening only would be tried with

the following paragraphs, again with a rating of comfort or difficulty. Third, students would listen and read simultaneously to the subsequent paragraphs. The instructor would then collect their anonymous replies to the question, "which was best for you?" and share the tallies of the class results with the students. Reasons for these explanations and demonstrations would be first, to activate metacognition: for reading, it has been found that "metacognitive training propagated long-term benefits in continuous progress" (Koda, 2005, p. 221) and "that metacognition – the explicit understanding of one's own cognitive capabilities – plays a central role in … spontaneous use of strategies to regulate … reading behaviors during comprehension" (p. 221). Second, carrying out a semester-length project requires commitment and extended effort from students, and would depend on the students' sense that it could be worthwhile.

With both the non-English majors and the international communications majors, a semester to engage together in cycles of listening, reading and small group discussion (book clubs) would be planned by dividing the classes' shared reading books into sections to listen to and read as target assignments in preparation for book club meetings. Book discussions during the semester would be set for approximately every two weeks; allowing for start-up time and finals, this would allow scheduling for five or six book club meetings as portions of class time.

In the non-English majors' shared graded reader project, the students generally have had little experience with discussions in English. Assignments of roles to prepare for and carry out (roles would be exchanged between students from session to session) may help with scaffolding their developing discussion skills in English, and bilingual guidelines would be given to the members of these classes (see Appendix B). Also with these non-English majors, the instructor would ask students to make use of the ample margin space in their books for memos, points they wish to highlight, drawings related to the story, and vocabulary notes.

In the international communications department context, students are accustomed to participating in student-led group discussions, so guiding discussions with set roles should not be necessary. In this setting, a complementary, parallel research design would be carried out. The instructor would arrange a film viewing of the story, then assign listening to and reading the shared book. Keeping notebooks for memos and drawings would also be assigned; in lieu of set discussion roles to prepare, notebooks could facilitate students' scaffolding each other's grasp of the story with these written/visual aids during their independent discussions. In both universities, however, the instructor would circulate between the small groups during the book club meetings, to be available to answer questions arising about vocabulary or to act as a resource in discussion on culture points.

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment approaches for reading projects in contemporary EFL literature range widely in form and content, from requiring students to write and submit book reports or plot summaries in L2 English for their extensive reading (Burrows, 2012; Huffman, 2014) to asking for brief comments or short reports in L1 Japanese (Yamashita, 2013; Yoshida, 2014). Debate is brewing about what is effective and meaningful; Green refers to book reports as "policing" (Green, 2005, p. 308). Stephens (2014) protests "inane" (p. 3) quiz-type comprehension questions and searches for a middle ground by developing more thought-provoking questions to elicit short written responses, and Yoshida (2014) suggests streamlined reading logs to help the teacher give students necessary "guidance … advice … [and] feedback" (p. 20) while not burdening or discouraging the learners. Prowse (2002) goes further and advocates discussions, or dispensing with assessment activities entirely in favor of starting a new book.

In this instructor's context, with integrated projects as described above, the goals are to increase students' reading ease and pleasure with English stories. To be consistent and to support these goals, assessment of students' reading work both during and at completion of a project should be based on effort, participation, and evidence of engagement with the story; in other words, assessment to facilitate students' continued efforts and motivation.

There are many methods that could provide meaningful assessment of student work congruent with the above goals, and a combination of such activities could provide firm and fair grounding for accountability and feedback. With a graded readers project for non-English majors, points could be awarded cumulatively for book club participation and active carrying out of assigned roles, short group work assignments related to parts of the story, brief student-created pair work dictation quizzes, and short written responses at the completion of a book to share thoughts and reactions with each other and the instructor. With international communications majors, book club participation and the content of students' individual notebooks could be supplemented with slightly longer writing assignments. Eliciting responses in writing at completion of a book may help these readers consolidate their thoughts and provide a base for deeper discussions to share with each other and the instructor, while still being manageable for these more confident writers.

An essential aspect of action research projects such as the two proposed here would be evaluating the pedagogical effectiveness of the activities in both settings. A first step toward learning directly from the students' experiences could be asking for volunteers in each project for small group interviews, to discuss what they found facilitated their integrated project work and what did not. Discussions of the challenges, surprises they may have encountered during the semester, and their advice to the instructor in developing future projects would inform the instructor's understanding and reflections.

Also to collect qualitative and quantitative data, follow-up surveys in English and L1 Japanese would be distributed to all class members in both settings (please see Appendix C

and Appendix D). To elicit students' frank assessments of their efforts, changes in their skills, motivation and other aspects of their experience, and their advice on how to improve future projects, these surveys would be anonymous. The instructor would explain bilingually to the students that while their identity information would not be known or shared, their opinions would be of considerable value to the instructor for assessing the activities and to fuel reflection, modifications, and improvements.

These action research projects should also be examined for empirical evidence of changes in students' reading abilities. Reading speed tests could be given to participants before and after the reading projects. Standardized test scores, also, generally rest upon general speeds of reading, listening and comprehension, and many universities in Japan require students to sit these exams at the beginning and end of each semester, corresponding with the duration of these proposed pedagogical interventions. The reliability of these scores is variable as the tests are norm-referenced rather than criterion-referenced, but they still may be a source of supplementary data relevant to evaluating the effectiveness of integrated literacy projects such as proposed here.

As with the assessment of the students' work in these action research projects, it is hoped that the cumulative data from the feedback of the students in each setting and the evidence of changes, if found, in students' felt experience with and skills in EFL literacy, will clarify if integrated literacy projects have potential benefits for supporting EFL reading fluency development. If so, further modifications based on this data and more formal research might be justified as being of potential value in EFL reading pedagogy.

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APPENDIX A:
Extensive reading related sites and resources

The Extensive Reading Foundation http://erfoundation.org/wordpress/

日本多読学会 / Japan Extensive Reading Association http://jera-tadoku.jp/

“Starting with Simple Stories” developed by Sakai, has an SSS study group, with an introduction at this link: http://www.seg.co.jp/sss/information/SSSER-2006.htm

“Yomiyasusa” by Furukawa, discussed in Burrows (2012, pp. 121-122), can be found here: http://www.seg.co.jp/sss/word_count/YL-20070621.html

The Korean English Extensive Reading Association http://keera.or.kr/

The Extensive Reading Special Interest Group within the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT ER-SIG) http://jalt.org/er/

Video of Dr. W. Renandya at the Extensive Reading World Congress 3, Dubai, from the ER Foundation Channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGcj5x6aAlQ
Published on Oct 7, 2015. Plenary Title: "Willy Renandya: The Power of Extensive Listening." Description from the Internet page: "Dr. Renandya begins his plenary presentation by presenting research on the benefits of extensive listening and how it helps students with second language acquisition (SLA). Then he gives suggestions for classroom activities." Audience members also shared useful resources during the discussion.

Extensive Reading Central is a free practice site for extensive reading, reading-and-listening, and vocabulary building: http://www.er-central.com/

A commercial online source of extensive reading and listening has collected together individual publishers' offerings: http://xreading.com/

APPENDIX B:

Discussion roles (English and Japanese)

Adapted from: Shelton-Strong, S.J. (2012). Literature circles in ELT. *ELT Journal, 66*(2), 214–223
The seven roles Shelton-Strong suggests are: "Discussion leader, Summarizer, Word master, Passage Person, Connector, Cultural collector, [and] Artistic adventurer." (See Shelton-Strong, 2012, p. 216 for his complete descriptions and rationale). Roles change for each meeting in which students hold their book or chapter discussions. Below, roles are adapted and consolidated from Shelton-Strong's model to allow for group discussions with three to five student members:

Discussion leader-summarizer: this member is prepared to help the others of the group confirm the outline of the plot chapter(s) covered in the meeting and to have considered some meaningful, open-ended questions to raise and share with the group.
司会およびまとめ役：この役割の人は、ほかのメンバーが会議のために指定された章の内容を理解できるようにすることとディスカッションを始めるような質問をします。

Word master: this member prepares to help other members with vocabulary and phrases they may have found unfamiliar in the assigned chapter(s).

単語マスター：この役割の人は、会議のために指定された章でほかの人たちがわからないような言葉や表現を説明します。

Points person: this member picks up interesting content, whether a striking passage in the reading to discuss, a culture or lifestyle point, or a point in the story that connects with real events.
ポイント係：この役割の人は、指定された範囲で面白い部分を見つけます。例えば、ディスカッションを招きそうな文章、文化や生活様式に関係するポイント、または、実際の出来事と結び付けられるような本の中のポイントなどです。

These three roles can be further divided if the group has more members. All members are encouraged to also keep small notebooks, making manga-pictures, timelines and memos to keep track of the basic story and content they wish to remember, including their memos of points for confirmation, sharing and discussion. The roles assignments are for primary preparation and responsibility, but all members of the groups should participate and help to the best of their abilities with all aspects of the discussion.

With thanks to Chutatip Yumitani for the manga-pictures idea, Sakae Onoda for translation advice and Kevin Stein for the suggestion to use timelines, found at: http://liltsig.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/LiLT-3_1-Stein.pdf

APPENDIX C:

Book and audio book listening survey

本とオーディオブックに関するアンケート

*Please answer **every question carefully.** This survey has no relation to your grades. Please do not write your name: this is an anonymous survey. I will not be using your names or identities in any way. Please also feel free to write on the back!*
すべての質問に真剣に答えてください。このアンケートは成績とは関係ありません。あなたの名前を書かないでください：これは無記名のアンケートです。名前など人物を特定できる情報は一切使いません。もしもっと書きたいことがあれば裏にも書いてください。

1. How did you listen to the audiobook – by computer, CD player, or music player?
   オーディオブックを聞くときには何で聞きましたか？ ＰＣ，ＣＤプレーヤー、音楽プレーヤーを使いましたか？

2. Where did you listen, for example in the train, while walking…?
   いつもどこで聞きましたか？例えば、電車の中などですか？歩いている時などですか？

How did you do listening, and reading? どのような方法で聞いたり読んだりしましたか？

3. Did you try listening and reading at the same time? 同時に聞いたり読んだりしていましたか？

4. Did you try listening, then reading later? 最初に聞き、その後に読んだりしていましたか？

5. Did you try reading, then listening later? 最初に読み、その後に聞いたりしていましたか？

6. Of the above, which way was best for you? 上の中でどの方法が一番自分に合っていましたか？

7. **Every week**, how many hours did you listen to the story? **毎週**何時間物語を聞いたりしましたか？

8. In the project, how many times in total did you **read** your entire book through?
   このプロジェクトで、合計で、何回この本を**読み**ましたか？

9. In the project, how many times in total did you **listen** to your entire book through?
   このプロジェクトで、合計で、何回この本を**聞き**ましたか？

10. At the end of this project do you feel you can catch the story better, when just listening?
    このプロジェクトに参加した後に聞いているだけでこのオーディオブックストーリーをより聞き取れるようになれましたか？

11. At the end of this project do you feel you understand more vocabulary? Why?
    このプロジェクトに参加した後に前より多くの単語をわかるようになった気がしますか？ なぜだと思いますか？

12. Has the project helped with any of your other English **listening**?
    このプロジェクトを通して一般的に英語がより**聞き**やすくなりましたか？

13. Has the project helped with any of your other English **reading**?
    このプロジェクトを通して一般的に英語がより**読み**やすくなりましたか？

14. Were the book club meetings useful? 本に関するミーティング、“ブッククラブ”、は役に立ちましたか？

15. Were the discussion roles useful?

ブッククラブのディスカッションの役割は役に立ちましたか？

16. Did you **like** the story we read and listened to?
私たちが聞いたり読んだりしていました本の話が**好き**でしたか？

17. From this project, what kind of changes have you noticed in your **feelings** about ***listening*** in English?
このプロジェクトを通して、英語を**聞く気持ち**はどのように変わりましたか？

18. From this project, what kind of changes have you noticed in your **feelings** about ***reading*** in English?
このプロジェクトを通して、英語を**読む気持ち**はどのように変わりましたか？

19. Do you think you will want to **listen** to another English book in the future?
いつかまた英語の本を**聞いて**みたいと思いますか？

20. What was the best order for you with book reading and audiobook combining?
本を読む (A)、オーディオブックを聞く(B) の組み合わせの順番で自分に一番良かったのはどれですか？

1. Simultaneously A and B * (A)-(B) を同時に
2. Listening, then reading * (B), (A) 聞く, そして本を読む
3. Reading, then listening * (A), (B) 本を読む, そして聞く

Why? それはなぜですか？

Do you have any comments or advice about this project? It will be useful for future students, so please memo here.
このプロジェクトについてコメントまたはアドバイスはありますか？これからこのようなプロジェクトに参加する生徒の役に立つので、できれば記入してください。

Thanks so much for your time, comments and advice!!!
お時間、ご意見とアドバイスをありがとうございました！！

APPENDIX D:

Book, Movie and Audiobook listening survey

本、映画、とオーディオブックに関するアンケート

*Please answer **every question carefully.** This survey has no relation to your grades. Please do not*

write your name: this is an anonymous survey. I will not be using your names or identities in any way. Please also feel free to write on the back!

すべての質問に真剣に答えてください。このアンケートは成績とは関係ありません。あなたの名前を書かないでください：これは無記名のアンケートです。名前など人物を特定できる情報は一切使いません。もしもっと書きたいことがあれば裏にも書いてください。

1. How did you listen to the audiobook – by computer, CD player, or music player?
   オーディオブックを聞くときには何で聞きましたか？ ＰＣ，ＣＤプレーヤー、音楽プレーヤーを使いましたか？

2. Where did you listen, for example in the train, while walking…?
   いつもどこで聞きましたか？例えば、電車の中などですか？歩いている時などですか？

How did you do listening, and reading? どのような方法で聞いたり読んだりしましたか？

3. Did you try listening and reading at the same time? 同時に聞いたり読んだりしていましたか？

4. Did you try listening, then reading later? 最初に聞き、その後に読んだりしていましたか？

5. Did you try reading, then listening later? 最初に読み、その後に聞いたりしていましたか？

6. Of the above, which way was best for you? 上の中でどの方法が一番自分に合っていましたか？

7. **Every week**, how many hours did you listen to the story? **毎週**何時間物語を聞いたりしましたか？

8. In the project, how many times in total did you **read** your entire book through?
   このプロジェクトで、合計で、何回この本を**読み**ましたか？

9. In the project, how many times in total did you **listen** to your entire book through?
   このプロジェクトで、合計で、何回この本を**聞き**ましたか？

10. At the end of this project do you feel you can catch the story better, when just listening?
    このプロジェクトに参加した後に聞いているだけでこのオーディオブックストーリーをより聞き取れる
    ようになれましたか？

11. At the end of this project do you feel you understand more vocabulary? Why?
    このプロジェクトを参加した後に前より多くの単語をわかるようになった気がしますか？なぜだ

と思いますか？

12. Has the project helped with any of your other English **listening**?
このプロジェクトを通して一般的に英語がより**聞き**やすくなりましたか？

13. Has the project helped with any of your other English **reading**?
このプロジェクトを通して一般的に英語がより**読み**やすくなりましたか？

14. Were the book club meetings useful? 本に関するミーティング、“ブッククラブ”、は役に立ちましたか？

15. Did you **like** the story we read and listened to?
私たちが聞いたり読んだりしていました本の話が**好き**でしたか？

16. From this project, what kind of changes have you noticed in your **feelings** about ***listening*** in English?
このプロジェクトを通して、英語を**聞く気持ち**はどのように変わりましたか？

17. From this project, what kind of changes have you noticed in your **feelings** about ***reading*** in English?
このプロジェクトを通して、英語を**読む気持ち**はどのように変わりましたか？

18. Do you think you will want to **listen** to another English book in the future?
いつかまた英語の本を**聞いて**みたいと思いますか？

19. What was the best order for you with book reading and audiobook combining?
本を読む (A)、オーディオブックを聞く(B) の組み合わせの順番で自分に一番良かったのはどれですか？

1. Simultaneously A and B　(A)-(B) を同時に
2. Listening, then reading　(B), (A) 聞く, そして本を読む
3. Reading, then listening　(A), (B) 本を読む, そして聞く

Why? それはなぜですか？

20. Do you prefer to see the movie before listening and reading to the book, or after, or in alternating order?
映画を見て(A)、オーディオブックを聞くと本を読む (B) の順番で自分に一番良いのはどれですか？

1. Movie first (A), then listening and reading after (B)　*　(A)、そして (B)
2. Book listening and reading first (B), and movie at the end (A)　*　(B), そして (A)
3. Alternating　*　(A)(B)(A)(B)(A)

Why? それはなぜですか？

Do you have any comments or advice about this project? It will be useful for future students, so please memo here.
このプロジェクトについてコメントまたはアドバイスはありますか？これからこのようなプロジェクトに参加する生徒の役に立つので、できれば記入してください。

Thanks so much for your time, comments and advice!!!
お時間、ご意見とアドバイスをありがとうございました！！

Brown, J. (2016). Team teaching in the English classroom in Japan: A call for intercultural communicative competence development. *Accents Asia, 8*, (2), 102-112.

Team Teaching in the English Classroom in Japan: A Call for Intercultural Communicative Competence Development

Jonathan David Brown[1]
Yamanashi Gakuin University

ABSTRACT

This study looks at the problems of team teaching in Japan through a review of earlier studies and a brief survey of elementary school Japanese and native-English teachers that was conducted by the author. The results of the survey corroborate earlier studies and suggest team teachers need Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) development to make team teaching more effective. Accordingly, this paper encourages those who are in a position to incorporate ICC development into teacher training programs to do so.

INTRODUCTION

Team teaching has become a common practice in English classrooms across Japan, but since its inception, a number of problems have been observed. Cultural clashes between native and non-native speakers involved in team teaching are quite common (Kwon, 2000). The teachers' cross-cultural team-teaching relations and the native-English teachers (NETs) learning how to manage the social and cultural expectations of them in Japan cause serious problems, and are the root of most, if not all, other issues found in the team teaching classroom in Japan. Thus, for the purposes of this paper, attention is directed toward the "false expectations, unrealistic goals, and uncommunicated ideas" (Voci-Reed, 1994, p. 66) that often lead to discordance between NETs and Japanese English teachers (JTEs).

Consider, for example, the following statement (Tajino & Tajino, 2000, p. 5) made by a JTE concerning an NET's qualifications:

> [T]he [NET] is not properly trained to lead the class, has no experience as an educator, has little in-depth knowledge of the English language, and is not responsible for the class.

Like their Japanese counterparts, NETs also have complaints (Tajino, 2002, p. 31):

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> Many [JTEs] don't know what to expect of [NETs] and this is a major problem. Japanese people tend not to express what they feel openly. This has to change . . .

With such remarks like those made above, it is therefore clear that for team teaching in Japan to be successful NETs and JTEs must learn to effectively communicate across cultures (Romanko & Nakatsugawa, 2009; Tajino, 2002; Tajino & Tajino, 2000). However, despite the research that has been conducted on team teaching demonstrating the problems that arise due to cross-cultural communication (or lack thereof), very few have argued a need for ICC development among NETs and JTEs. Therefore, those who in fact could initiate ICC development programs to help NETs and JTEs (local boards of education, the Ministry of Education, or even the teachers themselves) have yet to be given a reason why ICC is beneficial. Thus, the purpose of this study is to do exactly that: give the powers that be not only theoretical but practical reason to incorporate ICC development into NETs' and JTEs' training.

Unlike earlier studies on team teaching in Japan, however, this study will not be examining the junior high school and high school settings, because such a study would be redundant (see Galloway, 2009; Gorsuch, 2002; Igawa, 2009; Sick, 1996). Furthermore, it is the belief of the author that junior high school and high school teachers are too accustomed to the two-plus decades of the team-teaching approach that is commonly found in these contexts. Thus, presuppositions and bias regarding English and team teaching are prevalent and influence teachers' perspectives. For these reasons, this study surveys NETs and JTEs currently involved in team-teaching practices in Japanese public elementary schools. This is particularly relevant for this paper as team teaching at this level, i.e., in elementary schools, is a relatively new practice. Consequently, very little research has been conducted concerning team teaching in elementary schools in Japan at this time, but more importantly these teachers do not hold preconceived notions of the way things are or should be, nor are they accustomed to any one particular way of teaching. Everything is new, which means their perspectives on team teaching have not been influenced by past experiences and knowledge. They are, in essence, a blank slate and, accordingly, excellent subjects for this study, because they can better represent the current issues NETs and JTEs are facing in team teaching in Japan and demonstrate the importance of ICC development. Before proceeding with the study, however, it is first necessary to understand how ICC development is applicable to the team teaching context in Japan.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ICC DEVELOPMENT

In this ever-globalizing world, being bilingual is growing increasingly necessary. It is evident, however, that in order to communicate with people of other cultures it is not enough to be able to piece together a list of vocabulary words, utter grammatically correct sentences or even use colloquial phrases, but rather, additional competences, which comprise attitudes, knowledge, skills, and critical awareness (Byram, 1997) are needed. This is because language is a vehicle for the transmission of culture (Kramsch, 1997), and in order for an exchange of information to occur it must be understood that such an exchange is not deemed successful solely in terms of its efficiency (i.e., were the utterances received and understood?). On the contrary, to be regarded as a competent intercultural communicator, the ability to establish and maintain relationships is held in high regard. Therefore, in this sense, as Byram (1997) argues, "the efficacy of communication depends upon using language to demonstrate one's

willingness to relate [to others]" (p. 3). Fundamentally, then, the foundation of ICC is, unsurprisingly, relationships.

Consider, for a moment, from where the push for ICC development emerged: as a training program for American Foreign Service officers (see Hall, 1959). From there ICC has expanded into a wide variety of academic disciplines, e.g., business science, cultural anthropology, behavioral psychology, communication studies, and, of course, foreign-language education, and each discipline has always stressed the role of relationships. In business science, for example, ICC is concerned with international business arrangements, which involve relationships between companies, and these relationships always start at the individual level (an employee or small group of employees from two or more companies meet and establish a relationship, albeit a professional one) (Goby, 2007; Huang, Rayner & Zhuang, 2003). Additionally, according to Matsumoto and Hwang (2013), a number of studies in behavioral psychology have sought how to assess ICC, with relationships being a criterion in numerous studies' assessments. And, most relevant to this study, in foreign-language education the role relationships play in ICC is rather obvious. In Europe, for example, this concept is being incorporated into the work of the Council of Europe, a transnational body that provides education policy guidelines for member states.

TEAM TEACHING IN JAPAN

In Japan, however, the importance of relationships, and consequently ICC, in effective language learning has not been as widely embraced, as can be seen in MEXT's (2008) overall objectives of a mandatory foreign language course for fifth- and sixth-grade elementary school students called *Gaigokugokatsudo* (Foreign Language Activities):

> To form the foundation of pupils' communication abilities through foreign languages while developing the understanding of languages and cultures through various experiences, fostering a positive attitude toward communication, and familiarizing pupils with the sounds and basic expressions of foreign languages (p. 1).

What is concerning here is not so much the objectives themselves but how these objectives are supposedly accomplished. MEXT (2002) advises JTEs to teach in collaboration with a native speaker of the foreign language. It is common knowledge that English is generally the foreign language being taught in "Foreign Language Activities, and so the most typical arrangement is for a JTE and a native-English speaker (Romanko & Nakatsugawa, 2009) to work together as a team. However, it is not the team-teaching arrangement that is worrisome. In fact, team teaching can be very beneficial to both teachers and students, because teachers can better model dialogues, demonstrate question and answer routines, as well as provide students with more one-on-one time—a result of the lower teacher-student ratio—when part of a teaching team (Carless, 2006). The concern here, therefore, is the fact that neither the JTE nor the NET are given any training in communicating with one another, that is, ICC development, and there are a number of reasons why a lack of ICC development among team teachers is a problem.

In Japan, team teachers differ from each other in numerous ways—in professional status (lead teacher versus assistant), linguistic proficiency (non-native versus native speaker), and, of course, cultural background (native Japanese versus non-native Japanese, i.e, foreigner) (Miyazato, 2009). These differences can pose challenges for the teaching team since team teaching, according to Carless (2006, p. 345), demands several enabling features in order to

be successful: "pedagogic," "logistical" and "interpersonal." These factors are perhaps even more vital in an intercultural teaching team.

ENABLING FEATURES OF TEAM TEACHING

Pedagogic

According to Shimaoka and Yashiro (1990) a lack of established methods and guidelines that the NET and JTE may follow has resulted in many of the problems seen in team teaching. One of the major concerns of team teaching addressed in numerous studies has been that of the teachers' roles (Carless, 2006; Fujimoto-Adamson, 2010; Gorusch, 2002; Mahoney, 2004; Tajino, 2002; Voci-Reed, 1994). Though both NETs and JTEs have shown concern about what roles they should play in the classroom, generally this is more of a concern among NETs, as they are usually defined as the "assistants."

While NETs are generally regarded as language and cultural informants (Tajino, 2002), the majority of NETs feel they are being used more as "tape-recorders" and "game machines" (as cited in Kachi & Lee, 2001). Consequently, the ineffective utilization of NETs has resulted in many of the problems seen in team teaching in Japan (Tajino, 2002). For example, the uncertainty of their roles and conflicting role expectations have frustrated NETs and made many seem uncooperative, something JTEs often raise concern about (Voci-Reed, 1994; Kachi & Lee, 2001).

Wada (1994), one of the primary designers of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, has provided suggestions for teacher roles—the NET communicates (in English) and interacts with students as much as possible while the JTE explains facts about the English language and assists in answering students' questions. Additionally, familiarity with their students' needs and abilities, as well as knowing what it is like to learn English as a second language, sets JTEs in an opportune position to act as a mediator between the NET and students (Carless, 2006). Unfortunately, however, such ideal team-teaching situations do not always come to be (Tajino, 2002).

Logistical

While confusion over roles seems to be the primary concern of NETs, JTEs are more concerned with the lack of time for preparing team-teaching lessons, and, according to Nunan (1992), preparation is very important for the success of collaborative language teaching; however, even those who have the time to prepare often express their desire for methods and ideas that can be utilized in the classroom. Additional training and team-teaching workshops have been suggested and even implemented; however, evidence shows such training rarely results in profound improvements (Duff & Uchida, 1997).

Interpersonal

There is certainly no doubt that both role designation and careful lesson preparation are essential to effective implementation of team teaching (Carless, 2006); however, when considering Carless' definition of interpersonal factors—"the ability to cooperate with partners, allied to sensitivity towards their viewpoints and practices, particularly when differences emerge" (p. 345)—it can be deduced that of the three features Carless identifies—pedagogic, logistical and interpersonal—"interpersonal" is the most significant as it could have the greatest impact on the other two. In fact, Carless' study of good practices in team teaching found the most successful classes were where the teachers, i.e., non-native and

native speaker, were sensitive and displayed goodwill towards one another, were willing to let "points of tension subside," and were willing to compromise (p. 350)—all exhibiting evidence that having a good relationship with their teaching partner is key to overcoming such issues. Roles, preparation, and methods, i.e., pedagogic and logistical features, did not emerge as an issue because, assumedly, these rectify themselves if teachers are able to cooperate (again, by putting their relationship before such issues); however, because of NETs' and JTEs' different cultural backgrounds (as discussed earlier), this is not always easy to accomplish—thus the need for ICC development among NETs and JTEs, which will be further corroborated in the following study.

CONTEXT

The Participants & Method

A survey with twelve open-ended questions [see Appendix A] was distributed among four JTEs and four NETs. The participants were all volunteers and remained anonymous throughout the study. NETs received the survey in English, while the JTEs' survey was in Japanese. The participants were encouraged to answer in their native language so that the answers would be as accurate as possible and would not be hindered by language barriers. As a result, all NET respondents provided their feedback in English, while JTEs responded in Japanese. The author translated the Japanese responses to English and then categorized the data according to predetermined categories based on Carless's (2006) three features of successful team teaching: (a) pedagogic, (b) logistical, and (c) interpersonal. The data were transcribed and coded according to these three features associated with the teachers' perceptions of team teaching through methods from discourse and metaphor analysis. The author located lexical and thematic similarities in the data and then arranged them accordingly.

FINDINGS

The findings from the survey suggest that most if not all of the concerns raised in past research in regards to team teaching remain constant among JTEs and NETs at the elementary level. Thus, the following study will be used to further support what has already been discussed in the sections above rather than present new findings. What follows is a brief investigation of the data in consideration with the pedagogic, logistical and interpersonal features identified by Carless (2006). This is done so that we may observe how the data from this study serves to corroborate the findings from earlier studies discussed.

Pedagogic

Most of the respondents expressed uncertainty about their roles in team teaching. Though JTEs accepted the fact that they are the "class leader," many felt uncomfortable in that role, generally due to a lack of confidence in their English-language ability. As a result, the JTE respondents admitted to supervising the class or even assisting the NET rather than actually leading lessons. Thus, their role became more of what they felt capable or comfortable fulfilling. This, however, resulted in confusion over the role NETs should play.

Most NETs agreed that the JTE should lead the class, however, they also admitted JTEs did not always do this. Nevertheless, both JTEs and NETs recognized the need for one teacher to act as leader in team-teaching lessons, and, consequently, NETs found themselves filling this role. This, not surprisingly, led to more confusion about the NETs' roles in particular in team teaching. Though the NETs acknowledged their role as a "language" and "cultural" informant, many were unsure of how exactly to go about accomplishing this role. Moreover, some NETs expressed annoyance at JTEs who were unable to lead classes.

Despite having trouble defining their own roles, NETs seemed more capable of offering descriptions of the roles they felt their JTE-teaching partners should play. The NETs commented on the JTEs' low English skills; however, they did not suggest that the JTEs' language abilities prevented them from fulfilling their role in team teaching. In fact, the NET respondents did not identify teaching English as a role they expected of JTEs at all. Rather NETs felt JTEs were more suited as classroom manager, since JTEs know their students' needs better and can relate to learning English as a second language. JTEs also seemed to agree with this as their role as demonstrated by the following quotes:

- JTE should be controller commander [sic] of the classroom.
- JTE helps students remain in classroom mode and keeps control of the class.
- JTE are familiar with the class and know the individual needs of each student, so we can discipline students appropriately.

As for NETs' roles, JTEs commented on the benefits of having an NET present because of the authentic pronunciation they provide, and the opportunity students have to hear "natural" English spoken in the classroom. Considering this then to be a common perspective JTEs have of NETs' roles, it is unsurprising that many utilize their NET teaching partner for pronunciation. Though NETs acknowledged that their native pronunciation was a benefit to the class, they also felt they had more to contribute and did not appreciate being limited to the role of "pronunciation machines."

Logistical

As with earlier studies, the survey conducted by the author found JTEs in particular to be concerned with lesson preparation. More specifically, JTEs found it particularly beneficial for the lesson when planning was a collaborative effort. NETs also seemed to appreciate opportunities to work with the JTE in planning lessons; however, as some of the JTEs and NETs explained this is not always possible due to a lack of time: "There is no time to meet together to prepare for classes." "There is no time to meet so we always do whatever the FET decides."

Interpersonal

Considering the findings of other similar studies in team teaching, specifically team teaching in Japan, it was not very surprising to find that though roles and preparation were a cause of concern for team teachers, what was of greatest concern to both JTEs and NETs was communication. In fact, the majority of the respondents admitted that the underlying issue of misconstrued roles and lack of lesson planning time was more times not the result of miscommunication or misunderstanding, and many felt this could be attributed to cultural differences. When discussing successful lessons, both JTEs and NETs remarked on the importance of communicating with one another, of mutual understanding and of positive

attitudes. The following excerpt taken from one of the NET's surveys sums up what must occur to bring about the success of a team-teaching lesson:

> Communicate. Discuss the lesson purpose and delegate roles . . . Discuss expectations of each other and the students and find a reasonable balance. Sacrifice your own sense of entitlement in order to work together and find balance.

LIMITATIONS

When conducting surveys in Japan, such as the one in this study, one of the greatest challenges is getting respondents to express their true feelings or *honne*. In Japan, to learn a person's *honne* requires a good relationship with that person (Japan External Trade Organisation, 1999). In other words, Japanese usually are not willing to express their *honne*, even in a survey, to someone they do not know. Because of the author's previous professional relationship with many of the participants, however, a rapport had been formed and thus trust established. This permitted the JTEs to be more open in their responses to the author regarding team teaching, greatly improving the chance that the answers received were honest and the teachers' true feelings. Admittedly, however, the author's personal experience in team teaching may have had some influence on the coding. Nevertheless, every effort was made to keep the data as authentic as possible by assuring all respondents remained anonymous.

A final concern that must be considered is the effects the size of the survey may have had on reliability, as it was a rather small study (only eight respondents in total). Accordingly, the author acknowledges the difficulty of gathering general conclusions from such a limited data set.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

It is clear that communication is vital for creating a successful teaching team and seems like a fairly obvious answer to a rather complicated situation; however, it is not as simple as it may first appear. As mentioned earlier, JTEs and NETs differ from one another in a number of ways—the most significant being cultural. Thus, when the two come together, simply telling them to "communicate" is ineffective. In an intercultural relationship such as the one between the JTE and NET basic communication will not suffice, even if they are linguistically proficient in the other's native tongue. Thus, what is needed is the skill to communicate across cultures, i.e., ICC, which brings us back to the purpose of this study: To clearly present, in both a theoretical and practical way, why ICC development is necessary among JTEs and NETs and why educational institutions (university departments of education) and employers (schools, boards of education, and even MEXT), must incorporate ICC development within their curriculum and/or training programs.

When considering that ICC development is predominately concerned with relationships and that interpersonal factors play a huge role in assuring the success of team teaching, it is clear then that NETs and JTEs could benefit greatly from an ICC development program. If educators, schools, and boards of education want the English classrooms that are team-taught to be effective, there must be a call for implementing ICC development into teacher training programs. It is the hope of this author that this study has made this quite evident. Further research is now needed, however, that will guide such programs and provide NETs and JTEs

with the best skills and knowledge to develop the intercultural communicative skills needed to overcome the current issues in team teaching in English classrooms in Japan.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

1) In your opinion, the role of the Japanese homeroom teacher should be to:
英語の授業におけるティームティーチング（以下 TT）において、日本人の教員がすべき役割とは何だと思いますか？

2) In your opinion, the role of the Foreign English Teacher (FET) should be to:
TT において、外国人の教員(以下 FET)がすべき役割とは何だと思いますか？

3) In your opinion, some strengths of Japanese homeroom teachers in the English classroom are:
英語の授業における日本人教員の長所・強みは何ですか？

4) In your opinion, some strengths of the FETs in the English classroom are:
英語の授業における FET の長所・強みは何ですか？

5) In your opinion, some weaknesses of Japanese homeroom teachers in the English classroom are:
英語の授業における日本人教員の欠点・弱みは何ですか？

6) In your opinion, some weaknesses of the FETs in the English classroom are:
英語の授業における FET の欠点・弱みは何ですか？

7) In what ways do you believe team teaching assists in teaching English?
英語を教えるにあたり、TT の補助役とはどうあるべきだと考えますか？

8) In your opinion, what are certain things that both the FET and Japanese homeroom teacher should do in order to create and teach a successful lesson as a teaching team?
より良い成功した TT の授業を作り上げ教えていくために、FET と日本人教員の両方がすべき事の秘訣などは何ですか？

9) What difficulties and problems can team teaching cause? Is there anything that can be done to decrease or prevent these problems from occurring?
TT ではどのような難しさや問題が起きますか？そのような問題を減らしたり、防ぐ方法は何かありますか？

10) If you were given the opportunity to train other teachers in team teaching, what are some key elements you would focus on? Why?
もしあなたが TT のトレーニングを受ける機会があるならば、関心を向けて学びたいと思う事柄は何ですか？それはなぜですか？

11) In what ways do you believe team teaching is effective in teaching English? In what ways do you feel it is ineffective?
英語を教える上で、T.T は効果があると思いますか？

12) What about team teaching do you personally find to be most beneficial and rewarding? What do you find to be most problematic and challenging?
TT において、最もやってよかった効果があったと、個人的に思われたのはどのような事ですか？また、最も問題があった大変だったと思われたのはどのような事ですか？

Wadden, P., Ferreira, D., & Rush, E. (2016). The Global Academic Vocabulary Lexicon: A new ELT resource. *Accents Asia (8)*, 2, 135-142.

The Global Academic Vocabulary Lexicon: A New ELT Resource

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Abstract

This article describes the Global Academic Vocabulary (GAV) lexicon, lessons, and platform that was initially implemented at International Christian University in Tokyo and is now under significant further development at the University of Melbourne and NYU-Tokyo. Research by Na and Nation has shown that understanding of about 95% of the words in an academic text is required for learners to confidently comprehend its meaning. But exactly what words do university learners need to know to achieve such a level of coverage? The GAV provides one important answer to this question by combining the headwords from the three most significant long-standing corpus-based vocabulary studies to date: the University Word List (UWL), the Academic Word List (AWL), and the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) word lists, with a fourth, the New Academic Word List (NAWL), now being added. This article provides the rationale behind the creation of the GAV.

Issue

> *With a vocabulary size of 2,000 words, a learner knows 80% of the words in a text which means that one word in every five (approximately two words in every line) are unknown. Research by Na and Nation (1985) has shown that this ratio of unknown to known words is not sufficient to allow reasonably successful guessing of the meaning of the unknown words. At least 95% coverage is needed for that.* (Nation & Waring, 1997)

This key observation by Nation and Waring (1997) sets forth what should be the axiomatic principle for EAP vocabulary study: attaining a level of word knowledge that permits the learner to proficiently (if not effortlessly) read typical university texts and to generally comprehend (if not completely absorb) academic lectures in English. Words are indeed "polysemous"—as any linguist or lexicographer knows—yet by acquiring the

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primary meanings of core academic vocabulary learners can reach a level of proficiency in which they are more likely to succeed in their university study in English, whether in English-medium classes in Japanese universities or in college courses in overseas universities. This is why Coxhead contends in her seminal article introducing the AWL in *TESOL Quarterly* in 2000 that "An academic word list should play a crucial role in setting vocabulary goals for language courses, guiding learners in their independent study, and informing course and material designers in selecting texts and developing learning activities" (Coxhead, 2000, p. 214). In addition, Cummings (1994), among many others, has further observed that academic vocabulary contributes across the board to the development of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) that enables language learners to apply language in their university courses.

But the question remains: exactly what words should ELT students learn to reach the "95% coverage" level?

Initial Answers

Corpus linguistics has yielded definitive—yet imperfect—answers to this question. Empirical analyses of word frequency (millions of pages from academic texts on several continents) have already identified the core academic vocabulary that learners need to know to comprehend, with a reasonable level of confidence, typical university-level academic texts and lectures. Here, in brief, are the figures and findings.

- 836 headwords, University Word List (UWL) (Xue & Nation, 1984) (a word list created by combining four pre-existing lists, two based on corpora and two based upon frequently annotated words by students in textbooks)
- 874 headwords, EAP core word list (EAP) (Masuko, Mizoguchi, Sano, Shiima, Thrasher, & Yoshioka, 1997) (based upon English texts in use at a Japanese liberal arts college)
- 570 headwords, Academic Word list (AWL) (Coxhead, 2000) (based upon a large corpus of texts written for an international audience but mainly sourced in New Zealand)
- 963 headwords, New Academic Word List (NAWL) (Browne, Culligan, & Phillips, 2013) (based upon the Cambridge English Corpus) [NAWL headwords are now being added to the GAV]

These word lists—from different geographic regions and academic contexts—have inspired teachers, textbook writers, and more recently, software makers, to create programs to empower EFL/ESL learners to reach the *Holy Grail* of 95% coverage. Yet none of the lists, in itself, will get students to that ultimate goal. The reason is that with fewer than 1,000 words in each list, none provides sufficient coverage of frequently appearing academic vocabulary.

A New Solution

The Global Academic Vocabulary (GAV) lexicon and Learner's Dictionary were created to meet this challenge as well as to embrace the global diversity of academic English. Initially constructed at International Christian University, Tokyo (Wadden, 2013), the GAV is now being further developed and refined by EAP teachers at the University of Melbourne and at New York University's American Language Institute in Tokyo. To help

students reach the crucial 95 percent threshold, the GAV combines the headwords from the three most important traditional corpus-based vocabulary studies mentioned previously, and introduces them to students in 17 lessons that progress from the most common to the least common words (by relative frequency count). A weekly quiz for each lesson (or half lesson) motivates students to study the words, provides a basis for classroom assessment, and gives students feedback on their progress.

The pedagogical premise of the GAV is efficacy: to lower as much as possible the "learning burden" (Nation, 2006, p. 70), and the labor it takes for a learner to learn the words. To achieve this, the GAV Lessons and Learner's Dictionary (1) identify the essential core academic vocabulary (e.g. the verb "access"), (2) pinpoint the important related words to learn at the same time (i.e., the noun "access" and the adjective "accessible"), (3) provide the primary meaning of the words in simple English as well as (for Japanese learners of English) in their bilingual Japanese form, (4) draw attention to the common phrases the words appear in (such as "access the internet"), and (5) demonstrate their "use in context" in sample sentences.

The GAV Dictionary is posted online and can also be downloaded in a searchable PDF file; two GAV-related websites created on Quizlet further offer—for each GAV lesson—flashcards, sample sentences, auto-recordings, bilingual exercises, and quizzes for students' self-study. At the University of Melbourne, the GAV is currently being administered through the Schoology platform; at ICU, Edmodo and paper-only versions have been used.

To promote the generative use of the vocabulary from the lists, teachers encourage students to consolidate and extend their use of the words in classwork and written assignments, such as by including GAV words in essays and highlighting them in different font color for quick identification and salience. Vocabulary Profilers such as AntWordProfiler (a free downloadable app) can also identify for students the headwords that appear in any specific online or e-reading material to reinforce their appearance and underscore how valuable it is to learn them.

Student Response and Evaluation

Since 2009 when the GAV was first introduced to one of the three tracks of students in International Christian University's English Program, the response of students has been overwhelmingly favorable. For instance, in the highest track, one sample of 80 students (ITP TOEFL scores of 530-650) gave these assessments:

> 96% evaluated the Academic Reading and Writing (ARW) GAV vocabulary program as being from "somewhat" to "very useful" (78% "useful" or "very useful"; 18% "somewhat useful"; while only 3% regarded the GAV program as "not useful"; with 1 percent no answer)

A sample of 80 students from the mid-level track (ITP from 480-530) appraised the GAV program as follows: *86% of students rated the vocabulary program as "good" or "very good" (13% as "poor" or "very poor")*

In 2015, Trinity College of the University of Melbourne prepared more than 800 international students for entry to the university's degree programs. The GAV was applied on a limited basis to observe whether it would assist in increasing students' vocabulary knowledge. Results were promising, with students in two cohorts showing in just ten weeks an average 20% increase in vocabulary recognition and recall after undertaking the program.

Students entered the program by taking the first version of Paul Nation's 100-item Vocabulary Size Test. They then undertook independent study in preparation for GAV progress tests using preparatory exercises hosted in the Quizlet flashcard application. At the end of the program, students were retested using the second version of Nation's Vocabulary Size Test. Students in the lower-level cohort (IELTS 6-7) achieved an average score improvement of 20.0% (entry average: 11816.7 words; exit 13816.7 words), while students in the upper-level cohort (IELTS 6.5-9) achieved an average score improvement of 19.6% (entry average: 13116.7 words; exit 15600 words). About 400 Trinity College students are now using the GAV.

To date, the GAV lessons and lexicon as used in classrooms and independent study online comprise only the EAP, UWL, and AWL word lists; at present, six more lessons covering 469 additional words and 13 prefixes from the NAWL are being added to the lessons, lexicon and dictionary.

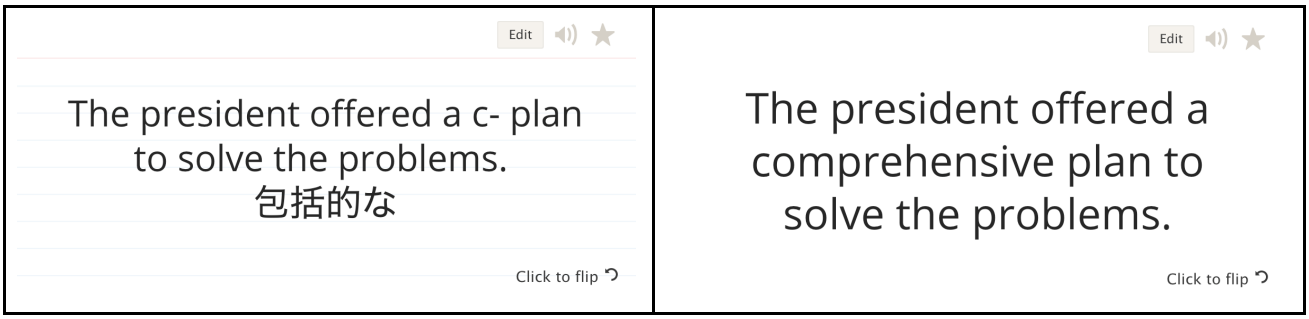
Quizlet

Given the prevalence of smartphones in the classrooms, the vocabulary app called Quizlet ("Quizlet," n.d.) was used to create electronic word decks of each of the lessons of the GAV. (Search for "GAV" from the Quizlet website to obtain the decks.) Although there are vocabulary learning apps (such as "Anki") that are more customizable and have superior scheduling algorithms based on the difficulty of the word, the prices for the apps are prohibitively expensive for students. Quizlet, on the other hand, is free and is available on the two most popular mobile operating systems: Android and iOS. Despite its limitations, Quizlet has many attractive features on both the online platform and the mobile apps. For example, once the decks are downloaded onto a smartphone, the user can edit each card or deck, adding or removing information as needed.

The Decks' Design

For each of the Quizlet decks, one sample sentence per vocabulary item in each of the lessons was extracted from the GAV Dictionary (Wadden, 2013). Figure 1 is an example of the design of a card. The front facing card contains a sentence in the target language; the target word is identified as the initial letter and a hyphen. The sentence is followed by a gloss in L1. In most cases, a single L1 gloss is provided as a prompt; however, there are times when more than one L1 gloss is needed to provide additional context.

Figure 1
A screenshot from Quizlet (online) of a vocabulary card from GAV deck 11.
Note: the left image is the "front" and the right image is the "back"



The decision to present the vocabulary items in the form of sentences is based on research that suggests learning new words in context can help learners to develop deeper, more elaborate semantic connections in their mental lexicon (cf., Laufer & Shmueli, 1997; Nation, 2001; Nation & Webb, 2011; Oxford & Crookall, 1990). Connecting target words to a context of other familiar words provides a "cognitive foothold" that increases memory performance and a reliable trace to meaning and understanding on a receptive level (Laufer & Shmueli, 1997, p. 91). In the process of guessing from context, especially with verbs, there is the added challenge of guessing grammatically correct patterns (such as the past tense of regular vs. irregular verbs). Learners may begin to notice natural chunks of language that collocate with the target word. Sternberg & Powell's research (as found in Nation & Webb, 2011, p. 78) has found that guessing from context contributes to other skills such as reading and speaking; thus, going beyond the mere acquisition of target words. To reinforce pronunciation and listening practice, the user has the option of switching on the "voice" feature on Quizlet. Some students have reported using this feature with their headphones while studying the vocabulary of the week on their commute to and from school.

Another noteworthy feature of the card is the use of priming by providing the initial letter of the target word. This serves two purposes: (1) to reduce the recall burden on the learner and (2) to foster an orthographic relationship as the learner tries to decode from the clues provided. Research suggests that the technique of providing an initial-letter cloze slows the attrition rate. Successful guessing of the cloze can also provide a satisfactory accomplishment and ensure a semantic knowledge critical to recall (Burton, Niles, & Wildman, 1981, p. 162). Similar to Nation's idea of using stems as primers for learning target words (Nation, 2008, p. 110), adding a suffix primer for verbs in the third person or past tense can encourage grammatical accuracy in guessing. Students can be further advised to edit the card and remove the primer should they find guessing the correct target word too easy.

Although the long-held practice of L2 to L1 vocabulary learning remains popular among Japanese students today, Rivers and Temperley argue that the direct translation method could result in being a "crutch" that inhibits a deeper processing (as found in Laufer & Shmueli, 1997, p. 93). In a study that examined the effectiveness of several primers—L1 translation; L2 definitions; L2 synonyms; and pictures—Laufer and Shmueli found L1 translation to be the most effective overall, especially for beginning learners (Laufer & Shmueli, 1997). It should be noted that the Rivers and Temperley study did not include contextualized sentences, rather the results focused on the attrition of words learned out of context. Moreover, given the range of the words in the GAV, students may

encounter words that they have never seen before. As suggested earlier, the students could be directed to delete the L1 gloss or replace it with a synonym if they need the added challenge. Note that the back-facing card, in Figure 1, does not include the L1 gloss, thus reducing the dependence on the "crutch." Admittedly, providing an initial-letter cloze as a primer and an L1 translation straddles the line between receptive and productive retrieval. Overall, it is hoped that learning the target words in this way will encourage the generative approach to learning vocabulary. Supplementing the GAV Quizlet decks with exploratory writing practices (e.g. using dictionaries or an online corpus) could foster a process that encourages better retention of the target words.

Classroom Practice

Two of the researchers in this study have the privilege of conducting classes with their students three times a week, which is rare in the Japanese university context. Meeting the students on such a regular basis is an opportunity to reinforce the practice of structured review and spaced learning. At the start of the term, students are briefly introduced to Pimsleur's scale as a guide for reviewing vocabulary (See Nation, 2001, p. 77). Essentially, the newer the target word is, the quicker the attrition rate. To foster the practice of ongoing review, be it the vocabulary from the week before or the deck for the current week, an overhead projector can display a deck from an app on a mobile device, as the students are getting ready for the start of class. To discourage "serial learning" (Nation, 2008; Thornbury, 2006), Quizlet can be set to display the cards in random order. Furthermore, to model and encourage participation among those students who are already settled in their seats, the teacher can participate in the guessing of target words; praising students who may have guessed quicker or by expressing satisfaction in one's correct guesses. Pausing the display to "star" a card that is difficult to learn or by turning on the "voice" feature to model pronunciation are a couple of ways to encourage students to be active learners of the vocabulary using the app. Using the last five minutes of class to display Quizlet visual illustrations is also a routine to not only signal the close of the class but also to reinforce the need to include spaced learning.

Quizzes

Edmodo is a free learning management system that can be used to create vocabulary quizzes ("Edmodo," n.d.). In addition, should one decide to create multiple-choice options, the questions from the quizzes can be randomized, a useful feature that can reduce the level of anxiety for students working in proximity to one another (e.g., working side-by-side on a quiz in a computer room). Moreover, Edmodo Quizzes can be scheduled ahead of time. One of the most useful features of Edmodo is how it keeps track of all the answers for each test. Students can be encouraged, for example, to take note of the question items they answered incorrectly and "star" cards in their Quizlet app for further, more intense review. From the teacher's perspective, one interface can be used to see how an individual student performed, and another interface offers the ability to see the whole class performance on the test. More specifically, the application provides pie charts for each question indicating what percentage of the class answered correctly or incorrectly. For a review quiz, the instructor can easily "cherry-pick" the most common incorrect

answers and use the same questions for a final quiz; thus providing some incentive, in this case grade-based, for students to review their vocabulary.

GAV Development, Further Implementation, Vocabulary in Japan

Quizzes and flashcards, including English-only and bilingual English-Japanese versions, are now available to teachers and learners on Quizlet websites and the Schoology and Edmodo platforms, and the GAV materials have been converted into Blackboard format and into GIFT format so they can be loaded directly into Moodle.

Teachers who wish to use the GAV can also request access to tests for each lesson (these are not available on websites so as to preserve their assessment value); these tests, one for each half-lesson, can motivate students to study the words, give them feedback on their progress, and provide a basis for assessment.

At present, words from the watershed New Academic Word List (NAWL) by Browne, Culligan and Phillips (2013), an extensive new list showcased at the 2014 JALT Vocabulary Sig Symposium (2014) and one of the most important and exciting new English vocabulary resources in the world, are being added to GAV to expand its coverage. Yet many questions remain.

How can Japanese EFL students in particular, and English-language learning students around the world in general, best be provided with the core vocabulary that will power and empower their language learning? Can national textbook publishers—and Ministries of Education—be inspired to systematically present foundational vocabulary to a nation's students during primary and secondary school education (such as the core vocabulary of the GSL or NGSL) which can then be followed by focus on the GAV or NAWL during higher education? What platforms and pedagogies can best promote students' optimal vocabulary learning, both in the classroom and independently? These are but a few of the pressing questions—and promising solutions—to be explored.

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Metalanguage as a Component of the Communicative Classroom

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the author reviews research on the use of metalanguage in language education to suggest that metalanguage has productive uses in communicative language teaching (CLT). First, there is an exploration of definitions which begins by borrowing Berry's (2005) notion of metalanguage as an imprecise concept, indistinct from the target language. Then, the relevant aspects of SLA theory including metalinguistic knowledge, meaning-focus and focus on form, implicit and explicit knowledge, and languaging are explored to frame the potential utility of metalanguage. Finally, a summary of research on metalanguage is provided, followed by a discussion of conclusions. The findings indicate that metalanguage can be used productively in CLT if proper consideration is taken for students' varied metalinguistic backgrounds and target language proficiency. Furthermore, written tasks with a goal of passive metalinguistic knowledge seemed to be better suited for metalinguistic instruction. In addition to its use during class time, metalanguage may be considered a learning strategy which leads to increased learner autonomy.

INTRODUCTION

It is your first day on the job as a plumber. You know very little about the skills required for the profession, but you are enthusiastic to begin learning. After suiting up for your first job, your trainer calls you over to explain what they are doing. They tell you that the long round hollow cylinders with the liquid running through them need to be tightened. Then, they point to the red box full of strangely shaped metal objects and asks you to hand them one that looks like an opened crab's claw with a long handle. No, the smaller one. Not the smallest one, the second smallest. Yes that is it. They place the claw-like part around an octagonally-shaped disk which is penetrated by another, much smaller cylinder which coils at one end, as if wrapped by a thin metal thread. Using the claw tool, they twists the disk around this thread several times, as you begin your long and arduous journey towards plumbing fluency.

It is difficult to imagine teaching a trade such as plumbing without using the corresponding jargon. In most disciplines, language which describes the target of instruction is tacitly understood to be necessary. There are no chemistry classes which do not name the elements of the periodic table, or archery classes which avoid explicit mention of the bow or arrow. Language instruction, however, is unique in that the use of metalanguage to describe target language features is quite controversial. Opponents of metalanguage use in language instruction argue that it is an unnecessary burden on language learners that inhibits communication, making it incompatible with meaning-focused and communicative language

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teaching (CLT) approaches (Garret, 1986; Mohammed, 1996). Others counter that the human brain naturally tries to understand patterns, and that metalanguage is not only a useful tool to achieve this in language learning, but "axiomatic to our function" as language teachers (Benjamin et al., 2010 p. 20). These teachers encourage the use of metalanguage in language classrooms for raising metalinguistic awareness and labeling topics more precisely (Hu, 2011).

One unique feature of CLT is the overlap between the means and object of instruction. Unlike other disciplines in which learners are expected to have high levels of proficiency in the language of instruction, language learners' target language proficiencies are, by definition, limited and incomplete. This is both disadvantageous and advantageous to the goals of language instruction and second language acquisition (SLA) in general. One clear disadvantage is that language teachers must take great care to appropriately scaffold language and tasks in class so as to meet their students' needs. By doing so, it is possible for language learners to meaningfully practice the target language simply by participating in class. In other words, the overlap of the medium and object of instruction allows language learners to develop fluency in previously acquired language forms while learning completely new topics. When the new topic is a feature of the target language itself, language learners have the opportunity to discuss the target language *in* the target language.

Taking the perspective that metalanguage can be used effectively as a tool to promote second language acquisition, this paper aims to determine the specific place for metalanguage in a communicative classroom by first defining the term metalanguage, and then reviewing recent research in SLA related to metalanguage and the use of metalanguage in language instruction. The paper concludes with a summary of the findings and suggestions for application to practice.

DEFINING METALANGUAGE

Before addressing the disagreements regarding its usefulness in language learning, it is important to remember that metalanguage is an imprecise term. Simply put, metalanguage is any language used to talk about language. Broadly speaking, it may refer to basic grammar expressions such as *word, sentence, subject/predicate, noun* or *verb*, specialized linguistic terminology such as *phonotactics, x-bar structure* or *Gricean maxims*, and also non-technical words that describe general language use such as *mean, say* or *correct*. Widdowson (2003) argues that even dictionary definitions which explain the denotation of words are one category of metalanguage. Researchers disagree on whether to adopt a broad or narrow definition, making the boundaries of what exactly constitutes metalanguage vague.

Fortune (2005) identifies three distinct types of metalanguage in order to describe the kinds of metalinguistic interactions between students in a collaborative, form-focused task. In his study, *Metalanguage A* refers to technical terms such as *past*, *word*, *present* and *plural*, *Metalanguage B* to non-technical terms used for generalizations about language rules such as *mean*, *general*, *sense* and *specific*, and *Metalanguage C* to non-technical terms used in interactions about language such as *say*, *write*, *right* and *change*. Fortune's distinctions are useful in both narrowing the scope of metalanguage and classifying its different functions. Fortune's distinctions of metalanguage are adopted for use in this paper, though the differences between the categories are largely ignored as they have not been consistently regarded by the larger SLA research community.

In addition to the scope of its meaning, the form and use of the term *metalanguage* is varied across SLA research. Berry (2005) provides a summary of this variation in an effort to promote more consistency. He makes a distinction between the count noun *a metalanguage*

and the non-count noun *metalanguage.* The count noun, he says, is precise and distinct from the object, or target language. The non-count noun, however, is neither precise nor distinct from the target language. He argues the latter definition is most useful for applied linguistics because it recognizes the reality of the vague and redundant nature of metalanguage, while helping to explain the reflexive relationship between metalanguage and the object language. This reflexivity is what makes it possible for students and teachers to discuss the target language in the target language. In order to explore this communicative function of metalanguage, this paper will follow Berry's definition of metalanguage as a non-count noun.

To consider the value of metalanguage for language learning and instruction, it is necessary to examine some topics related closely to metalanguage to see where metalanguage fits in greater SLA research and theory. In particular, this paper describes the relationship of metalanguage and metalinguistic knowledge, the distinction between meaning and form-focus instructional approaches, the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge and the concept of languaging.

METALANGUAGE AND SLA THEORY

Metalinguistic Knowledge

It will be useful for the purposes of this paper to distinguish between metalanguage and metalinguistic knowledge or awareness. While metalanguage refers to concrete terms used to describe language, metalinguistic knowledge denotes the general understanding of language itself, including its metalanguage. More broadly, metalinguistic knowledge may refer to an individual language learner's ability to reflect on language. This knowledge is a unique characteristic of human language (Berry, 2005). No other species is capable of reflecting on the way they communicate, yet all humans develop metalinguistic knowledge during mid-childhood (Ellis, 2004). Simard (2004) found that French speaking students of English as young as ten years old are capable of metalinguistic reflection.

Though metalinguistic knowledge often co-occurs with other factors that tend to predict language learning success such as high language aptitude or high motivation, the exact benefits of metalinguistic knowledge for language learners are disputed. While Alderson, Clapham and Steel (1997) found a weak correlation between metalinguistic knowledge and language proficiency, more recently others (Elder & Manwaring, 2004; Golonka, 2006; Roehr, 2008) have found it to be one of the strongest predictors of learners who reach advanced L2 levels. Given these conflicting findings, it seems that knowledge about language alone is not sufficient to guarantee language learning success. Any effective use of metalanguage in class to increase learners' metalinguistic awareness must also utilize other techniques. Here, it is useful to consider the relationship of meaning-focused instruction and focus on form to metalanguage and metalinguistic knowledge.

Meaning-Focus and Focus on Form

Meaning-focus and focus on form represent two different approaches to language instruction. The former emphasizes content and meaning while the latter emphasizes morphosyntactic forms. These different approaches represent one of the more divisive topics among language teachers today.

Meaning-focused classrooms found popularity with instructional approaches such as the direct, or natural method and communicative language teaching. These teaching methods

emphasize meaningful interaction and natural communication in the target language over explicit grammatical instruction (Krashen, 1985). Focus on form, in contrast, prefers explicit attention to language form through, for example, instruction of grammar rules (whether inductive or deductive), error feedback and the use of metalanguage.

Though students have been found to consider such focus on form helpful, many teachers are reluctant to use it in class (Schulz, 1996). This may be due teachers' lack of explicit understanding of the target language's structure, or alternatively to the popularity of communicative language teaching which favors a meaning focused approach. Because of this trend in language instruction, focusing on form, especially with metalanguage, has become stigmatized in many teaching contexts. This is unfortunate as research has shown that some complex forms cannot be acquired with comprehensible input and opportunities for communication alone (White, 1987). In their extensive review of 49 studies on this topic, Norris and Ortega (2000) found that instruction containing some focus on L2 forms, whether the approach is deductive or inductive, is *more* effective than simple, meaning driven communication.

One useful guideline for how to balance focus on form and meaning-focused goals is Nation's (2007) four strands of language learning. He suggests that focus on form, or the language focus strand, should take up 25 percent of instruction, while meaning-focus should take up 50 percent, 25 percent input and 25 percent output. According to this model, the final 25 percent should be dedicated to the development of fluency. Nation advises teachers to be flexible in their given teaching context. For example, in an EFL context, greater attention should be dedicated to fluency as students have fewer opportunities to practice the target language outside of class.

Whatever model is adopted, it is crucial to re-evalute the dichotomy of focus on form and meaning-focused instruction and accept that the two pedagogical approaches can complement each other. As early as 1991, Fotos and Ellis demonstrated that grammar tasks can be used for communication in an experiment with learners of English at Japanese universities. They concluded that, "it is possible to integrate the teaching of grammar with the provision of opportunities for communication involving an exchange of information" (p. 606). Other research indicates that meaning-focused activities help improve fluency, while focus on form improves accuracy (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2002). By combining these pursuits, teachers can help their students become more well-rounded language learners. Moreover, there is reason to believe that metalanguage as a component of focus on form instruction can help to further improve language learners' accuracy. Evidence for this comes from the frameworks of implicit and explicit knowledge, which are explored in the following section.

Implicit and Explicit Knowledge

The distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge is essential to evaluating metalanguage's place in language learning. Implicit, or tacit knowledge, is knowledge that is automatic and not easily verbalized. This describes for example, the knowledge young speakers have about their native language. Though they can speak it fluently, they have difficulty putting their knowledge of grammar into words. Likewise, such speakers make confident judgments on grammaticality, but are less likely to be able to provide reasons for these judgments. Such a conscious and declarative type of understanding defines explicit knowledge.

Ellis (2004) summarizes the research on L2 explicit knowledge in order to make the term clearer and offer guidelines for how to measure it. He argues that L2 implicit and explicit knowledge are dichotomous, and interact only at the level of performance. Implicit

knowledge is immediately accessible and relied on for simpler tasks, while explicit knowledge is accessible only through controlled processes and is generally used for more challenging tasks. The exact relationship between explicit and implicit knowledge is not yet known. Rather, it is unclear if at some point, explicit knowledge *becomes* implicit knowledge. It may be that explicit knowledge never becomes implicit, but rather it becomes so quickly accessible so that it resembles implicit knowledge. This is supported by Ellis' finding that, unlike implicit knowledge, explicit knowledge is learnable at any age, and grows on two planes, both in breadth (i.e. the accumulation of more facts about L2), and depth (i.e. the refinement of existing knowledge).

Embedded in this notion of broadening and deepening is that explicit knowledge can be imprecise or inaccurate. Consequently, metalanguage may be a tool to both expand and refine explicit knowledge. Indeed, tests of metalanguage have been used to measure L2 explicit knowledge in the past. Ellis finds that:

> Although metalanguage is not an essential component of explicit knowledge, it would seem to be closely related. It is possible that an increase in the depth of explicit knowledge will occur hand in hand with the acquisition of more metalanguage, if only because access to linguistic labels may help sharpen understanding of linguistic constructs (240).

Thus, there is reason to believe that metalanguage encourages the growth of L2 explicit knowledge, while simultaneously improving precision and accuracy. This is relevant to SLA research since L2 explicit knowledge is believed to support overall language acquisition. Hulstijn and Hulstijn (1984) found that adult learners of Dutch with explicit knowledge of Dutch word-order rules made fewer errors in a speaking task than learners who lacked this explicit knowledge. In summary, these studies suggest that metalanguage facilitates L2 explicit knowledge which in turn facilitates language acquisition

Languaging

Of 20th century psychologist Lev Vygotsky's major contributions to psychology and the relationship between language and thought is the notion of language as a mediator of the mind (1987). He argued that language, both mental (inner speech) and spoken (social interaction), is a powerful tool that humans use to internalize and add sophistication or clarity to otherwise fuzzy concepts. He believed that this function of language to organize thought supports human learning and development.

More recently, applied linguist Merrill Swain has investigated the relationship of language and thought specifically in SLA contexts. She coined the term *languaging* as the "process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language" (Swain, 2006, p. 89). In other words, language learners produce language, usually spoken, to verbalize concepts of the target language and internalize them through this process. There are two main categories of languaging, including concept-bound languaging such as paraphrasing or making inferences, and non-concept bound languaging such as self assessing or rereading (Swain, Lapkin, Knouzi, Suzuki, & Brooks, 2009). Languaging is relevant to the use of metalanguage in instruction as most languaging units can be expected to contain metalanguage. Indeed, without the necessary metalanguage it would be very difficult if not impossible to verbalize knowledge of the target language at all.

In a study of university French learners in Canada, Swain, Lapkin, Knouzi, Suzuki and Brooks found that learners exhibited a large variability of frequency and quality of language, and that more frequent and engaged languaging led to higher scores on post-tests and a deeper understanding of the target language concept, in this case grammatical voice (2009). They suggest that in order to maximize these positive effects, teachers should first

provide students with coherent knowledge about the use of the target language and appropriate tools to mediate these concepts such as explanatory texts and diagrams. Then, students need opportunities to engage in languaging and put their internalized knowledge to actual use, ideally through social interaction.

There are two more important features of languaging pertinent to the discussion of metalanguage. The first is how languaging allows learners to shape knowledge through private or internal speech to themselves. Knouzi, Swain, Lapkin and Brooks (2010) call this self-scaffolding, as distinct from expert scaffolding which describes scaffolding provided by the expert, or teacher. As self-scaffolding does not require a teacher, it helps learners sort out challenging input on their own. In other words, self-scaffolding makes learners more autonomous.

The second feature is written languaging. In addition to spoken and internal languaging, written languaging may be beneficial for language learners because it allows learners the benefits of languaging without constraints of oral communication, such as lack of fluency or willingness to communicate. Negueruela (2003) gave students a written verbalization task for homework which he found aided their internalization of the target language features. Though these written tasks lack the social aspect of spoken languaging, they allowed students to produce output at their own pace in a comfortable environment. Furthermore, teachers can expand on such written homework tasks through interactive pair or group work in class. These two features of autonomy promotion and written languaging will be revisited in the subsequent discussion of the utility of metalanguage in language instruction.

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH ON THE UTILITY OF METALANGUAGE AND THE PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

With an understanding of some topics related to metalanguage, it is now possible to assess how best to use metalanguage in language instruction. It should first be noted, however, that there will likely be no single straightforward answer regarding the best time, place and method to use metalanguage in a communicative classroom. Teachers need to consider the research and following discussion in a manner which determines the best application to their given teaching context. This discussion will focus on the variable utility of metalanguage from three different perspectives, that of the learner, the task-type and design, and the language learning purpose or goal.

Metalanguage and the Language Learner

In addition to teaching context, research suggests that teachers should consider the use of metalanguage not only for a class as a whole, but within classes separately for each individual learner. Berry (2009) found great variation in the types and extent of metalinguistic knowledge among learners with different backgrounds. Polish students of English on average received more metalanguage than students from Hong Kong, who in turn learned more than students from Austria. However, there was also very high variation of knowledge of metalanguage within each of these groups. These findings suggest that when introducing metalanguage in class, it is necessary for teachers to use concrete measures in order to prepare learners who have less knowledge.

This complication may discourage some teachers from using metalanguage in class at all, but Fotos and Ellis (1991) found that metalanguage was one productive way to help structure and scaffold difficult tasks. For this study, they devised a task in which learners

used cards with examples of dative verbs to exchange information, negotiate rules and then report their findings to the class. Students were more successful at this communicative grammar task when it was scaffolded appropriately through task training such as the provision of the relevant metalanguage. This study suggests that when tasks are designed carefully, metalanguage is a helpful support that encourages communication among learners with variable metalinguistic knowledge.

In addition to a learner's background and level of task training, their overall target language proficiency must be another consideration for the teacher. Similar to Fotos and Ellis' communicative grammar task, Fortune (2005) designed a dictogloss task for English language learners of various L1 backgrounds and L2 proficiencies to complete in groups. He recorded the groups as they negotiated the meaning and rewrote scripts for listening passages, and then analyzed their language-related episodes for frequency and category of metalanguage use. He found that advanced learners were 50 percent more likely to use metalanguage than intermediate learners. The most common purpose of metalanguage use was to explain the meaning or provide a synonym or antonym for an item. He concluded that metalanguage was helpful to the students in sustaining their attention to form and in consolidating existing knowledge, or co-constructing knowledge of language.

Fortune's observation that advanced learners use metalanguage more frequently than intermediate learners might suggest that teachers should only introduce metalanguage to more proficient students or classes. However, there are two potential counterarguments to this notion. The first, based on Storch and Wigglesworth's (2003) study, suggests that the structured use of L1 can be helpful for grammar explanations. They found that by putting students with common L1 backgrounds into pairs, they often used L1 metalanguage effectively to discuss L2 grammar. Storch and Wigglesworth argue that this suggests that there is a place for structured use of L1 in class. Perhaps it can be one tool to scaffold communicative tasks involving metalanguage for beginning learners. By modeling these metalinguistic exchanges, teachers may be able to encourage more productive use of L2 metalanguage by intermediate learners as well.

The second finding against waiting until the advanced level to introduce metalanguage comes from Elder and Manwaring's (2004) study of Australian university beginner and intermediate students of Chinese. By administering a test of Chinese metalinguistic awareness, they discovered not only a positive correlation between metalinguistic knowledge and Chinese proficiency, but also that active command of metalanguage as based on the test takers' ability to actively produce grammar rules was not the best predictor of general Chinese performance. Error correction, involving passive metalinguistic knowledge, was found to be a better predictor of Chinese proficiency, suggesting that though it may be unreasonable to expect beginner language learners to actively produce metalanguage, they can make receptive use of it much earlier. This echoes Ellis' (2004) sentiments that receptive understanding of L2 metalanguage is a better measure of explicit knowledge than productive use. Perhaps the only people who can be realistically expected to provide grammar rules are the language teachers themselves. Instead of demanding concise and comprehensive descriptions of target language grammatical features, it might be more practical to ask students to internalize these rules.

To summarize, language teachers need to be aware of learners' variable metalinguistic awarenesses and use metalanguage as a tool to highlight the important grammatical concepts for those students with less metalinguistic knowledge. Furthermore, teachers should not avoid introducing metalanguage to less proficient learners, but rather find ways to scaffold it appropriately, which do not demand active production of grammar rules.

Metalanguage and Task-Type and Design

In addition to the individual learners' needs, teachers must consider what types of task are best suited to the use of metalanguage by teachers and students. Fortune's (2005) finding that metalanguage helped students attend to form in the communicative dictogloss task is consistent with Erlam (2003), which concludes that the use of metalanguage in class is more effective in deductive than inductive approaches. Erlam organized a study in three different French classes in New Zealand in which each class received a different type of instruction. The deductive instruction class received an explicit explanation of French direct object pronouns, the inductive instruction class learned from examples, and the control group class studied something completely different. Erlam found that students in the deductive instruction class performed best on the two post-tests. This group also had the highest variability of performance, echoing the findings in the previous section that utility of metalanguage is largely learner dependent.

Also of interest from Elder and Manwaring's (2004) study was a stronger correlation between knowledge of metalanguage and performance for reading and writing than for speaking and listening. This seems to suggest that the use of metalanguage is more useful in tasks dealing with written language. Furthermore, by asking students in an ESL course at an Australian university to reconstruct the grammatical features of a text containing only content words, Storch (2008) found that elaborate and sustained metalinguistic discussion in such written tasks better facilitates language learning. Perhaps written language might be a platform to encourage more engaging metalinguistic discussion.

In another study, Simard (2004) used diaries as a way to promote metalinguistic reflection and higher L2 proficiency among elementary school students of English in Quebec. She concluded that keeping a diary made students more sensitive to new input, and found a high correlation between high test scores and metalinguistic reflection as evident from the diaries. These findings are reminiscent of Negueruela's (2003) findings on the positive effects of written verbalization tasks discussed in the previous section on languaging. Additionally, Camhi and Ebsworth (2008) successfully employed metalanguage in academic process writing for ESL students at an American university. Over multiple drafts, students discussed their writing in English while using metalanguage, adding a conversational component to the task. Camhi found that these students who learned writing with this approach performed significantly better than students in a control group, and that they came out of the class feeling more autonomous since they could work at their own pace, specifically on issues they needed to address. In these ways, current research suggest that the use of metalanguage in instruction is better suited for deductive tasks than inductive, and written tasks rather than spoken.

Metalanguage and Language Learning Purpose

Many of the studies discussed above indicate that metalanguage can be used to positive effect in language instruction, but the specific target language domain it facilitates is not always clear. Camhi and Ebsworth's (2008) finding that metalanguage can make students more autonomous suggests that metalanguage's utility may not be limited to the domain of the classroom. Rather, it might be considered a metacognitive learning strategy which learners can employ on their own. This finding is consistent with the earlier discussion on languaging and self-scaffolding as a tool to help learners become more autonomous, and is further supported by the important role language awareness is given in many models of learner autonomy (Cotterall 2000; Kumaravadivelu 1994; Thanasoulas 2000). Kumaravadivelu (1994) in particular argues that increased language awareness can "speed up the rate of language learning, while [its] absence can contribute to fossilization" (p. 37).

Widdowson (2003) proposes further that metalanguage can be considered a tool to help students communicate in situations beyond the classroom. He borrows the term *valency* from chemistry, defining it in a language teaching context as "a measure of investment value ... [that] has to do with language which is useful for learning more language" (p. 139). Thus, metalanguage has high valency as it can support future language acquisition when learners seek and receive explanations about language features. If metalanguage can be accepted in this way as a tool to expand and add precision or accuracy to a learner's metalinguistic awareness, then perhaps language teachers will benefit from thinking of metalanguage as an investment in their students' long-term success.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

To summarize the discussions in the previous section on the pedagogical implications of research on metalanguage, it was suggested that:

1) Students have different metalinguistic backgrounds, so when using metalanguage, teachers should be conscious of this and try to standardize its use for a given class.

2) Metalanguage is most readily useful for advanced learners, but its use can be scaffolded appropriately for intermediate and beginner learners.

3) Passive knowledge of metalanguage should be an important intermediate goal, before expecting learners to be able to use metalinguistic terminology actively.

4) The use of metalanguage in instruction may be best suited for reading and writing tasks. These tasks may of course include expansions which include oral communication.

5) In addition to its value in the classroom, metalanguage may be considered an effective learning strategy that contributes to a learner’s autonomy.

Much research remains to be conducted on the pedagogical applications of metalanguage. In particular, it may be fruitful to examine the use of metalanguage pertaining to other linguistic domains besides grammar, such as the sound system, lexicon or pragmatics. Additionally, though research wholly supports the use of metalanguage for grammar-based writing tasks, the communicative exchanges containing metalanguage must be examined in much greater detail in order to make the most of their language learning benefits. Therefore, the field could benefit from more qualitative studies like Fortune's (2005) and Storch's (2008) which analyze the actual nature of metalanguage use between students. Though much regarding the use of metalanguage in language instruction is still uncertain, based on the current research summarized in this paper, it can at least be said that metalanguage is *not* incompatible with meaning-focused syllabi, and that there *is* a place for it in communicative language teaching.

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