

ADVANCING LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY ONE ARTICLE AT A TIME



OSAKA JALT JOURNAL

Volume 4, June 2017

ISSN: 2188-5192



Osaka JALT Journal

Volume 4, June 2017

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From the Editor

Welcome to the 2017 *Osaka JALT Journal*!

We are very pleased to announce an updated and expanded editorial team from this year that we believe will help us ensure that *Osaka JALT Journal* continues to showcase quality articles of importance and relevance to practitioner-researchers, both here in Japan and abroad. For this volume, we are pleased to have Eric Shepherd Martin from Shitennoji University join us as an associate editor. Eric is an experienced editor and brings his tenure as associate editor of *Temple University Japan Studies in Applied Linguistics* to our team. Additionally, we are excited that our new Editorial Board will be working alongside the editors to advise us in their areas of special expertise.

In this volume, we have studies on various aspects related to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in Japan. We lead off this volume with *'Taking Advantage of Being Foreign: Gaijin Smashing for Privacy Management'* by Nathaniel Simmons. Nathaniel's groundbreaking research examines the intercultural communication strategies that non-Japanese English language teachers employ as they try to preserve and/or recreate their ideal workplace identities. In *'Explicit and Implicit Second Language Knowledge Measurement: Effects of an Extended Focus-on-Form Tasked-based Pedagogy'*, James Gray poignantly investigates implicit and explicit knowledge tests to determine the most effective way to correctly assess learners' implicit and explicit knowledge, in addition to seeking to the most effective way to increase implicit second or foreign language knowledge. Akemi Fu's informative article, *'Cultural Understanding through a University Student Textbook Analysis Project'*,

contains valuable information about the merits of having teachers-in-training critically analyze and evaluate the cultural content found in teaching materials to improve sociolinguistic competence. The next article, *'On Unreliability and Inefficiency in Word Lists'* by James Rogers, Ted Bonnah, Frank Daulton, Jean Paul Duquette, and Phillip Montgomery contains excellent advice for teachers looking to improve the quality of teaching resources. Thomas Stringer's paper, *'Operationalizing Educational Scaffolding in a Japanese High School English Classroom: A Theoretical Approach'*, is a must read for teachers who want to know how the Zone of Proximal Development and educational scaffolding can be combined to promote greater communication in the classroom. In Eugene Lee's article, *'A Preliminary Study on Variable Sentence Response in a Non-Traditional L2 Classroom in Japan'*, Eugene discusses how the Variable Sentence Response method motivates students to speak more and is appropriate to a wide variety of contexts. *'The Group Memorization Method: Efficient and Motivating Language Study'*, by James Rogers will be of interest to all teachers who want to make vocabulary memorization a fun and engaging in-class activity. Finally, this volume ends with *'The Management of Oral Presentations to Maximise Student Participation'* by Nicholas Musty, who adroitly outlines three ways to improve student participation during oral presentations.

The editorial team and the Osaka JALT officers would like to thank all of the contributors who chose *Osaka JALT Journal* as the forum to showcase their research. Your efforts not only inspire and encourage us to improve our practices, but you also provide us the how and why to advance our pedagogies, for which we are grateful.

Ryan Smithers

Taking Advantage of Being Foreign: Gaijin Smashing for Privacy Management

Nathaniel Simmons

Western Governors University

Abstract

To better understand ways in which globalization influences intercultural communication, this study examines ways in which foreign English teachers in Japan manage privacy with Japanese co-workers. Using Petronio's (2002) communication privacy management theory, as well as thematic analysis (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), this study analyzed interview transcripts from 39 English language teachers regarding ways in which privacy is managed with Japanese co-workers. As part of a larger project on English language teachers (ELTs) and Japanese co-workers' (JCWs) privacy negotiations, this study focuses specially upon the context-specific management strategy of *gaijin smashing* as a dark-side privacy management strategy. *Gaijin smashing*, in this study, refers to instances in which ELTs used their own "foreignness" to smash through cultural barriers or boundaries to obtain desired privacy goals. One's ability to *gaijin-smash* is tied with western dominance, English hegemony, and whiteness. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: intercultural communication, gaijin smashing, Japan, foreign English language teachers, cultural discourse analysis

Since the end of the 20th century, English not only has become a global language, but maintains a position of dominance as such (Ciprianova & Vanco, 2010). In fact, global English education has become essential for national economies to compete, and even participate, in the global economy (Jeon, 2012). For those on the periphery, English "symbolizes the divisive line between wealth and poverty" (Ciprianova & Vanco, 2010, p. 126). English's prominent position has created a "massive business" for language teaching, which employs many expatriates (Kaplan, 2001, p. 4).

English continues to be promoted as a critical resource and asset for competing and participating in the global economy (Jeon, 2012; Lan, 2011; Seargeant, 2011). This has led to the importation of native speakers of English to serve as temporary migrant workers in the worldwide English teaching market (Jeon, 2012; Lan, 2011). As commodities, English and its native speakers highlight how relationships continue to increase globally, which affects how privacy is negotiated interculturally. Foreign teachers of English have been defined and referred to as “migrant workers” (Jeon, 2012; Lan, 2011), and “expatriates” (Kim, 2005; Kim, 2008; Kim & Kim, 2004, 2005). Regardless of terminology, what matters is the shared identity as temporary or permanent workers and/or employees residing in a foreign country.

Foreign worker research has received minimal attention from communication scholars. In this study, a foreign worker is an individual who is living in a country where he or she was not born and most likely is not a citizen. Related research has primarily focused upon conflict negotiation (Sun & Starosta, 2001), adaptation to the host culture (Kim, 2005; Kim, 2008; Kim & Kim, 2004, 2005), expatriate voting laws (Johnson, et al., 2009), expatriate-local staff oral communication patterns (Du-Babcock & Babcock, 1996), and conceptions of time (Masumoto, 2000, 2004). Only a handful of published studies in the communication discipline have investigated communicative phenomenon amongst English language teachers (ELTs) (Komisarof, 2001, 2006; Root, 2009; Simmons, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017).

English teachers in Japan serve as a prime case study in which to explore intercultural privacy negotiation due to their unique role which encourages and fosters globalization (Komisarof, 2001, 2006; McConnell, 2000; Simmons, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017). Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT,

2002, 2003) provides standardized curricula for primary and secondary education which recognizes the role of English as a global language (Seargeant, 2011). This has led individuals and institutions alike to show interest in English (McVeigh, 2002) and to continually recruit *gaijin* (Japanese for foreigner or foreigners), through various private and government organizations. The existence of numerous global English teaching jobs for native-speakers, testifies to the fact that a global English ideology exists (Root, 2009). Despite the plethora of qualified non-native English teachers and English teaching materials readily available for study and purchase, native speakers are viewed as the “best resource” for learning (Root, 2009, p. 59). As a result, native English-speaking teachers are increasingly commodified by national governments (Jeon, 2012).

The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme is one example of a Japanese government initiative to encourage and expand English education and internationalization throughout primary and secondary public education. Celebrating its 30th year of operation, JET has over 60,000 alumni spread across the world, of which the author is one. In 2016, JET brought over 5,000 ELTs from 40 countries to Japan (JET Programme, 2016). ELTs serve and assist Japanese teachers of English with educational material development, classroom instruction, and provide native examples for language usage and pronunciation (JET Programme, 2014).

ELT recruitment, like that within the JET Programme, has revealed a Western bias, particularly in favor of individuals from the United Kingdom and the United States (Matsuda, 2006), as well as those that “look” European (Kobayashi, 2011). Such a bias brings *gaijin* to Japan from nations that have fundamentally different cultures. ELTs are typically younger individuals who enter Japan’s English teaching workforce soon after completing an undergraduate degree in their home country. Within the context of

globalization, their "...choices and actions are always enabled, shaped, and constrained by history, relations of power, and material conditions that are inextricably linked to intercultural dimensions of culture, race, class, religion, sexual orientation, language, and nationality" (Sorrells, 2010, p. 184). Since ELTs are "imported" into Japan to foster cultural awareness (McConnell, 2000), it is plausible to assume that ELTs might find that they must negotiate differing cultural assumptions and boundaries, particularly those related to privacy management. Research has shown that having knowledge of culture-specific values does not necessarily equate with effective interpersonal interactions (Earley & Peterson, 2004).

One role that ELTs play within Japanese education is in international relations (McConnell, 2000). Native English speakers are seen as an important, tangible symbol in language education program seeking to promote internationalization (Breckenridge & Erling, 2011). Kubota (2002) argued that *gaijin* ELTs exist not for English educational purposes but, rather, to promote internationalization or international understanding. This is accomplished by "providing students with opportunities for intercultural communication and understanding" (Breckenridge & Erling, 2011, p. 81). ELTs are not required to have knowledge of Japan or teaching experience prior to moving to Japan. Importing iconic symbols (ELTs) that are not culturally literate could result in challenging intercultural interactions. ELTs are seemingly open and willing to acclimate sensitively to Japanese culture (Breckenridge & Erling, 2011), but given their seemingly public role and prominent position within Japanese education, it is important to learn how ELTs manage differing cultural ideologies of privacy. To make sense of such negotiations, the author employs communication privacy management theory as a theoretical lens.

Communication Privacy Management Theory

As an applied, western, rule-based theory, Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory gives us a glimpse into the construct of privacy based on western sensibilities which will help us to conceptualize how western ELTs negotiate privacy with Japanese co-workers (JCWs). CPM describes private information management as an unfinished, ongoing process (Bute & Vik, 2010; Petronio, 2007; Petronio & Ostrom-Blonigen, 2008).

CPM contains five suppositions (Petronio, 1991, 2000, 2002). First, CPM states that private information is perceived to be personally owned. Second, a boundary metaphor illustrates ways in which individuals make distinctions between private information and public relationships more or less permeable to protect information. Third, private information is owned or co-owned with others, which influences one's boundaries. Fourth, private information is managed using a rule-based management system. Lastly, privacy and disclosure is dialectic. To make visible, and in order to understand, privacy's dialectical nature, Petronio (1991, 2000, 2002) described three privacy management processes: boundary coordination, boundary turbulence, and rule formation. Due to space constraints, this study focuses upon the latter.

Petronio (1991, 2000, 2002) developed five criteria that individuals utilize to create privacy rules. These rules manage, protect, and allow access to an individual's private information. These rules include and are related to culture, gender, motivations, context, and risk-benefit ratio. Each criterion influences privacy rule revisions and rule development. In particular, this study focuses upon and extends Petronio's (1991, 2000, 2002) cultural criteria. Every culture has privacy values and regulation norms. In fact, "someone from a different culture may invade our privacy because he or she follows different rules" (Petronio, 2002, p. 41). The ELT and their co-workers could be operating

on different rules due to cultural differences. Therefore, it is plausible to assume that at one point or another a Japanese coworker might invade, intentionally or not, an ELT's privacy boundaries due to differing cultural rules and norms of what is considered private (or vice-versa). Therefore, since the privacy world of the individual is bound to conflict with public culture and society (Bensman & Lilienfeld, 1979), it is vital to explore instances in which individuals from differing cultures negotiate public and private intersections. As part of a larger project regarding intercultural privacy negotiation, this study asks:

RQ1: How do ELTs experience and negotiate privacy boundaries?

Methods

Of the 39 ELTs interviewed for this project, the majority self-identified as female (n=21) and the remaining as male (n=15), transgendered person (n=1), queer-female (n=1), and queer-man (n=1). The participants were from the U.S.A. (n=27), the U.K. (n=3), Australia (n=3), Canada (n=2), New Zealand (n=2), New Zealand/Romania (n=1), and Portugal (n=1). Racially and ethnically, the majority of participants identified as white/Caucasian (n=24) or claimed a white identity in intersectional terms, such as white-Greek (n=1), white-Cuban (n=1), Mexican-Caucasian (n=1), or White-Okinawan (n=1). The remaining participants self-identified as Philipino-American (n=2), Japanese-Romanian-American (n=1), Okinawan-American (n=1), Vietnamese-French-American (n=1), Indian-Americans (n=2), African-American (n=1), Asian-American (n=1), or Chinese (n=2). In this study, all but one ELT possessed a Bachelor's degree. Four had Master's degrees and one was a Master's candidate. Their ages ranged from 23-45 years old with an average age of 29.5. The ELTs lived/worked in Japan between 8 months and 25 years at the time

of the interview with an average of 4.3 years. Regarding one's sexual orientation, participants self-identified as heterosexual/straight (n=24), gay (n=6), straight-questioning (n=2), pansexual (n=2), lesbian (n=1), bisexual (n=1), queer (n=1), lesbian-queer (n=1), or transgendered-queer-straight person (n=1). The ELTs lived in rural (n=25), urban (n=13), and/or both urban and rural areas at different times in their ELT careers (n=1). The ELTs worked for public schools (n=31), private schools (n=6), and/or a combination of public and private schools (n=2). The ELTs in this study represented every type of major ELT employment in Japan (pre-school, kindergarten, elementary, junior high, special needs, and high schools, as well as English conversation schools, education centers, and universities). In terms of socio-economic status, the ELTs reported being members of their home country's middle-class (n=31), upper-middle-class (n=5), working-class (n=2), or lower-middle-class (n=1). Finally, in terms of Japanese language ability, participants self-reported fluent and/or second-language (n=9), advanced (n=6), intermediate (n=7), conversational (n=6), or beginning (n=11) levels.

Data Collection

The author solicited ELT and Japanese participants for the study utilizing a snowball technique. The study was advertised as seeking to learn more about intercultural communication between ELTs and JCWs. The author used previous and current connections as an ELT to recruit participants throughout Japan. Emails were sent to current and former ELTs with whom the author had some type of connection to while teaching in Japan between 2007 and 2009. ELTs were asked to mention the study to their co-workers. Additionally, the author spoke with friends (both Japanese and non-Japanese) who knew people teaching in Japan. The author also went to an English teaching

conference in Japan that was primarily composed of Japanese teachers. A contact allowed the author to introduce the study to all in attendance. The author joined various Facebook groups for ELTs and English teaching in Japan to solicit participants, and went to a foreign dance night at an urban club to solicit ELTs. The author also worked at a junior high school in an urban area and at an English conversation café. Lastly, the author approached foreigners on the streets and in subways as well as at schools in Japan and ELT-recruiting organizations.

Upon IRB approval and informed consent, in-depth interviews were conducted to collect data. Interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 3 hours and were conducted via Skype (n=29), face-to-face (n=8), and email (n=2). Past ELT-focused research highlighted the utility of exploring ELT perspectives via retrospective interview techniques (Komisarof, 2001, 2006; Simmons, 2012, 2016, 2017). In-depth interviews allowed the author to “have access to the participants’ interpretations and evaluations of the events and how their views were modified or reinforced in the course of the [perceived] problematic [and non-problematic] events” (Kotani, 2008, p. 355). During these interviews, the participants were asked to describe interpersonal privacy negotiations using a semi-structured interview guide. The interview guide included a series of questions concerning the participants’ past experiences of privacy negotiation in the workplace.

Upon completion of each interview, the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed utilizing Dragon Speak (2017), a voice dictation program. The dictation results were double-checked to ensure accurate representation with the original recording. Due to the diverse locations of the participants, Skype and, as a last resort, e-mail-based conversations were utilized to interview participants when all other options had been exhausted and a face-to-face interview was not possible.

Data Analysis

To make sense of the data, the author employed thematic analysis (Lindloff & Taylor, 2002; Owen, 1984) in order to answer the research question with breadth and depth. Doing so revealed prominent themes throughout the data, as well as ways in which the participants' revealed distinct cultural premises regarding privacy boundary management. Thematic analysis has proven appropriate in past studies of CPM (e.g., Petronio, Flores, & Hecht, 1997; Petronio & Kovach, 1997; Petronio, Reeder, Hecht, & Ros-Mendoza, 1996; Petronio, Sargent, Andea, Reganis, & Cichocki, 2004; Simmons, 2012, 2016, 2017).

An iterative process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was used for analysis as the author followed Owen's (1984) thematic criteria. Within this framework, a theme is considered a salient meaning that is discovered via repetition, recurrence, and forcefulness (Owen, 1984). Recurrence refers to moments when two or more reports indicate the same thread of meaning. Repetition results when key words or phrases are duplicated throughout data. Forcefulness refers to the ways in which participants use paralanguage such as vocal inflections and pause for (de)emphasis. Each transcript was read in order to gain a holistic sense of the data. Next, the author's preliminary impressions were recorded. Guided by the research question, theoretical lens, and preliminary impressions, the author re-read transcripts and journal entries in order to achieve a more systematic reading of all the data and themes within the voices of the participants, employing Strauss and Corbin's (1990) constant comparative method. This resulted in the emergence of categories and subcategories and allowed the author to re-examine his transcripts and field notes in order to solidify themes. This process also created an audit trail (Farley & McLafferty, 2003) of theoretical notes, thus enhancing the trustworthiness of the author's claims.

Reflexivity and Researcher Positionality

Lindlof and Taylor's (2002) approach to reflexive analysis was applied throughout this entire process because the author's role in the social situation was continually discussed. In order to obtain a clear research perspective apart from the author's own experiences as an ELT, the author continually check backed with the participants to ensure that everyone was discussing their situations and experiences, not the author's. The author reflected upon how questions were being worded and asked to ensure that participants were not being led toward any particular responses that expressed similarities with the author's own experiences as an ELT. However, the author's story cannot be separated from the ELT's stories. As the author spoke with the ELTs, their workplace frustrations, joys, and challenges were genuinely felt and understood. The author had been there. Reflecting upon these encounters, the author realized that this project isn't just their story, but also the author's. The stories cannot be separated.

Findings & Discussion

The English language teachers (ELTs) defined "privacy" as a multi-dimensional construct encompassing personal information, space, and actions. The ELTs perceived their privacy boundaries to be breeched when asked about one's: (a) space and place, (b) bodies, (c) sexuality, and (d) dating/romantic relationships (Simmons, in press). The ELTs employed the following management strategies: (a) withdrawal, (b) cognitive restructuring, (c) independent control, (d) lying, (e) omission, (f) avoidance, and (g) *gaijin smashing* (Simmons, 2012; Simmons, in press). Due to space constraints, for this study, the author focused upon the dark-side, or negative, communication privacy management technique of "*gaijin smashing*."

Gaijin Smashing

Gaijin smashing is defined by urbandictionary.com (n.d.) as “A technique used by foreigners, or *gaijin*, in Japan to impose their will on the Japanese.” Intercultural communication scholars have yet to explore *gaijin smashing*. To date, only the Asian language and literature scholars, Kumagai and Sato (2009), have discussed this phenomenon. Kumagai and Sato (2009) found that *gaijin smashing* is a way of using “ignorance” as a rhetorical strategy to gain a powerful social position for one’s own gains. In other words, *gaijin smashing* referred to “cases when they [*gaijin*] used their ascribed positioning in defiance to the societal rules in order to get what they wanted” (p. 318). In this study, *gaijin smashing* refers to instances in which ELTs used their own “foreignness” to “smash” through cultural barriers or boundaries in order to obtain valued goal(s), such as an increased sense of privacy. Richard, a white gay man, defined *gaijin smashing* as, “it’s where you use the fact that you are not Japanese to get out of social interactions of people that are Japanese.” Casey, who self-identified as queer, offered a similar definition. She said, “*gaijin smashing* is basically doing something that is not Japanese to get something that is beneficial to you.” Within this study, *gaijin smashing* refers to intentional, intrusive, actions that violate Japanese cultural norms in order to obtain personal perceived benefit(s). In other words, *gaijin smashing* is when a foreigner uses their cultural outsider positionality to *smash* through cultural boundaries that “restrict” or “dictate” Japanese social interaction norms. Although *gaijin smashing* was found to be largely effective within this study, it is not necessarily appropriate.

The author asked Richard to talk about a moment in which he disclosed personal information to a coworker. He said that he not only expects reciprocity, but that the JCWs respect his answers. He also said that sometimes his truthful answers to questions that he

perceived to be invasive did not always set well with his co-workers. He said:

I hate to stereotype, but I am an American, so I am more extroverted. I have a larger presence a lot of the time, and can kind of throw it around. I really hate to say that (Laughter.), but effectively, I can *gaijin smash* my way out of parts of it. It is really the best way to say it.

Richard's comment revealed that, when he employs *gaijin smashing*, he uses his "dominant" personality to get his way. Speaking hypothetically, Richard described how he responded to privacy expectation violations.

But if someone asks me a question, the answer is on them, you know, like you asked for it and deal with it, is a lot of my mentality. I don't mean it quite so aggressively, but that's how I think about it. I don't want to volunteer information that I can say is private, but if they asked me, I will answer it and they will answer in turn. And it's a little, I don't want to say manipulative, but it creates a situation where I have the upper hand.

Richard revealed that he does not want to volunteer private information, but if asked, he will answer most questions. However, Richard adopted *gaijin smashing* as a way in which to view his co-workers' responses. Richard smashed through Japanese cultural boundaries by valuing the individual (himself) over the group (his co-workers). He also restructured the perceived violation in a way in which he comes out on top. Thus, *gaijin smashing* is a way in which ELTs that might feel powerless within a situation could grasp or actually attain a more powerful position within the conversation. Similarly, Juan explained that he uses the "subtleness" of Japanese culture to his own advantage as he negotiates privacy boundaries within his intercultural workplace. Juan said, "I've had to find ways of, like, navigating the culture and seeing things, you know, like using this subtlety to my own advantage, and it has helped." Juan not only admits to *gaijin smashing* situations at work, but also revealed that he uses *gaijin smashing* to target perceived subtly

within Japanese culture. He also claimed it helped him.

Andrea reported using *gaijin smashing* to inform her co-workers about how her chronic depression and low blood pressure symptoms influenced her work. Andrea was reprimanded by a supervisor for grading too slowly, which resulted in a meeting with her supervisor, team-teachers, and a guest educator, hired by her Board of Education. She said the meeting “turned into things we hate about Andrea.” Andrea explained her meeting frustration:

The meeting was there so I could explain what my symptoms were and how it affected me. And, so, I told my teachers and I managed to kind of *gaijin smash* my way there, and I don't do that [*gaijin smash*] lightly. But, when you [JCWs] sat there talking about me, I'm like 'Okay, I thought the meeting was about this— what depression does to me.' And they're gonna have to listen because, even if you don't like it, I know it's not what you want to talk about, but this is what I'm here to talk about. And, so, I told them; I explained to them. And I'm like, it's not that I'm being lazy, but it is that my body physically will not work. 'Well you have to push through that.' And I'm like, 'You can't push through it, [when] the body does not work!'

Andrea employed *gaijin smashing* when the meeting was not discussing what she wanted to address: her symptoms related to her private health experiences. Andrea mentioned that she does not *gaijin smash* lightly, which indicates that *gaijin smashing* is a tool to be used cautiously and, perhaps, in “risky” situations as a “last resort,” at least for Andrea. In other words, Andrea saw the management strategy as effective, but not necessarily appropriate. Her story revealed that *gaijin smashing* helps some ELTs to reach their agenda when it is otherwise being “ignored.” Although, this conversation did not necessarily pan out the way Andrea intended, she did reach her personal goal within this conversation by explaining her health symptoms to her co-workers.

Even though not every ELT within this study employed *gaijin smashing*, they

were aware of it. When discussing cultural differences, Brent said, “Some ELTs take advantage of that.” Although not everyone agreed with *gaijin smashing* and, several, such as Brent and Casey, discouraged its use, the ELTs still believed in its utility. Casey said, “I feel like *gaijin smashing* is one of those techniques that you should have in your repertoire, but not something you should be constantly breaking out.” Casey’s comments speak to the utility of *gaijin smashing*, but, at the same time, speak to it as being a management strategy that should not be used consistently.

Gaijin smashing does not have positive connotations, even within the ELT community. In other words, *gaijin smashing* is a dark-side, or negative, communication privacy management strategy. Richard said *gaijin smashing* “implies being a belligerent foreigner.” As a foreigner, Richard said, “I’m not expected to know all of those rules, nor is it reasonable to expect me to know all of them, but I can kind of use that to my advantage.” Even though *gaijin smashing* is not necessarily perceived as a positive management strategy, Richard acknowledged the utility of such a strategy. Richard claimed his ability to *gaijin smash* was “possible because of my Caucasian features and American nationality.” Throughout these excerpts, *gaijin smashing* is a rhetorical strategy that some ELTs used in order to alter power dynamics and, therefore, obtain a position of dominance over Japanese. It is plausible to assume that the privacy content might have bearings on management strategies, particularly those in which ELTs perceive that they have less power to alter their situation as they intend or wish. However, it is unclear within this study which “risk-orders” might be the most salient for ELTs and, therefore, lead one to *gaijin smash*. These findings highlight the dominance of whiteness, and associated white privileges, throughout the English education system in Japan.

Whiteness

Whiteness can be understood as: (a) socially constructed location of structural and racial privilege, (b) a standpoint from which whites experience, not only themselves, but their social world and others, and (c) “a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed” (Frankenburg, 1993, p. 1). Whiteness studies offer novel ways of talking about and conceptualizing inequity and privilege (Wray, 2006). However, such studies offer unique challenges. Focusing upon whiteness presents the danger of (re)centering whiteness as the normalized position from which to view all intercultural communication interactions (Nakayama & Martin, 2007). Additionally, ignoring the race/ethnicity of whites leaves a story half-told and “a picture unfinished” (Martin & Davis, 2001, p. 299).

In brief, whiteness scholarship emerged from white trash and critical race studies (Kennedy, Middleton, & Ratcliffe, 2005). Offering a lens to critique (mis)representations of impoverished white culture and bodies, white trash studies gained popularity throughout the 1980s and 1990s, whereas critical race studies emerged in the 1970s to transform race, racism, and power relationships, as well as critique/expose racial hierarchy (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). In this study, several ELTs connected their experience with their race. In other words, for some ELTs, their presence at work, or lack thereof, was brought about by their racial/ethnic identities. Such discussions revealed one’s privileged white identity position, or lack thereof, and influenced their experiences as “otherized” foreigners in Japan. Allen (2011) claimed that communication plays “both oppressive and liberatory roles in the quest for racial equality and harmony” (p. 90). As previously mentioned, 25 of the 38 ELTs in this study self-identified as white or Caucasian, while four ELTs identified as half-white. Therefore, understanding ways in which the ELTs discussed their whiteness offers greater insight into the ways that their race

influenced their privacy management.

Cloud (1996) described that a connection exists, “between tokenism and hegemony: Tokenism is the calculated, negotiated response of a ‘dominant group under pressure to share privilege,’ just as hegemony refers to the attempts of the dominant culture to incorporate challenges without having to change substantially itself” (p. 123). Such positionality puts ELTs in a dialectic of agency and constraint which complicates privacy negotiations. As controlled and controlling agents, this dialectic complicates the ELTs’ abilities to navigate their intercultural workplaces while managing privacy boundaries. As the ELTs encounter inquiries from the JCWs, they become controlled beings that are unable to successfully manage privacy boundaries on their own, i.e., they need assistance from JCWs. However, this study found that in such instances, the ELTs turned to the effective, yet culturally inappropriate management strategy of *gaijin smashing*.

Conclusion

ELTs reported *gaijin smashing* their way through instances in which they felt their privacy expectations to be violated or compromised. *Gaijin smashing* refers to moments where some ELTs used their foreign status to smash through cultural barriers or boundaries in order to obtain personal valued goal(s), such as an increased sense of privacy. Overall, this study reveals “gaijin smashing” as a context specific privacy management strategy employed by the ELTs. As the ELTs pled ignorance or disregarded perceived Japanese culture, norms, and values, they were able to obtain desired levels of privacy by forsaking their dyadic counterpart. This management strategy is an example of the extremes some might go to in intercultural contexts to protect privacy, but it also highlights an additional

area to explore in intercultural research. In particular, *gaijin smashing* revealed an intercultural “tool-kit” that ELTs had in their knapsack that they employed when necessary. This was not always an ideal or first choice strategy, but it was a management strategy, nonetheless. This shows that a “firing order” of ideal ways of managing privacy exists, which indicates a variety of management strategies that may have yet to be uncovered by intercultural scholars. The presence of a “firing order” also suggests ethical implications on more “appropriate” strategies that have yet to be uncovered and determined.

The author suspects that the ELTs employed *gaijin smashing* when they encountered this particular dialectic due to experiencing a minimized or threatened backstage. The backstage, or back region, is a place where performers “can reliably expect that no member of the audience will intrude” (Goffman, 1959, p. 113). However, through constraint, the backstage is intruded upon or minimized. Passage and constraint on one’s backstage violates natural assumptions (Goffman, 1959), which are exacerbated by being the cultural “other.” Therefore, by attempting to manage one’s privacy boundaries, the ELTs sought to resist constraint and, at the same time, express their agency. In other words, *gaijin smashing* involves power struggles and, as an act, demonstrates attempts to regain power perceived as lost as the ELTs experienced constraint. Viewed as a “last resort” by some, *gaijin smashing* proved effective for obtaining their desired privacy levels. *Gaijin smashing* by pleading ignorance of cultural norms and expectations allowed the ELTs to believe they maintained their ideal front stage performance with co-worker relationships. Since privacy management is a tool by which individuals attempt to construct their everyday presentations (Goffman, 1959; Scott, 1995), the author suggests that, when ELTs *gaijin smash*, they attempt to preserve and/or (re)create their

ideal workplace identity. At the same time, the author must ask, at what costs? *Smashing* through politeness and cultural sensitivity by pleading ignorance, disdain, or a downright lack of concern for others not only highlighted the extremes that some ELTs will go to in order to manage their privacy, but also speaks of the desperation to maintain control. It is as if the ELTs experienced a panic or “crisis moment” that not only merits further attention, but questions CPM in “crisis situations.”

Theoretical Implications

Communication Privacy Management (CPM), as an applied, western, rule-based theory, proved to be a useful theoretical lens for examining privacy management as an intercultural phenomenon between ELTs and JCWs. In particular, this study contributes to the cultural criteria within privacy management by highlighting the importance of context-specific management strategies, such as *gaijin smashing*. Petronio (2002) said, “Cultural expectations inform individuals about the appropriate social behavior that ultimately controls boundary accessibility” (p. 40). However, Petronio (2002) does not provide a way in which to uncover, examine, and understand cultural expectations.

Finally, this study extends research regarding ways in which the forces and processes of globalization influence intercultural relationships. In particular, this study builds upon scant literature (Masumoto, 2004) regarding the experience of Westerners in subordinate positions. ELTs, as foreigners, proved a useful case study to explore and understand how globalization influenced this particular intercultural relationship. Although “culture” is viewed as de-territorialized within the context of globalization (Appadurai, 1996; Shome & Hegde, 2002; Sorrells, 2010), this study found a distinct context-specific privacy management strategy for ELTs. This relationship, like other

intercultural relationships, suffers injustices that Sorrells (2010) noted are brought about by Western domination and colonialism. Stohl (2005) claimed globalization requires, “flexibility, responsiveness, speed, and efficient knowledge production, generation, and dissemination” (p. 229). Yet, intercultural privacy management, as a dyadic, dynamic process, is not known, understood, or necessarily considered by the participants in this study, which highlights the need for globalization training, as well as other practical implications.

Practical Implications

This study offers several practical implications for privacy management by ELTs and JCWs. First, intercultural training for both ELTs and JCWs is needed. Along with communication skills, intercultural training helps individuals: (a) enhance cultural sensitivity, (b) gain host country knowledge, (c) improve work performance/productivity, (d) improve interpersonal relations, (e) reduce emotional challenges, and (f) help expatriates acculturate (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994; Cushner, Robertson, Kirca, & Cakmak, 2003; Fowler, 2005; Graf, 2004; Harvey, Fisher, McPhail, & Moeller, 2009; Landis, Bennet, & Bennet, 2003; Lowe, Milliman, & Dowling, 2002; Selmer, 2001). In particular, the author recommends a “reach out first approach” (Qayyum, 2012). The current system makes the jobs of ELTs and JCWs extremely difficult, if not impossible, when it comes to conversations to discuss teaching, let alone privacy management. For example, discussing what is considered private information, as well as expectations on how private information should be treated will help relational partners better understand co-ownership expectations. This pre-emptive strategy will likely lessen boundary turbulence and perceived privacy violations. In addition to intercultural training, intercultural

relationship partners are needed.

ELTs and JCWs do not necessarily need to be allies, but they do need relational partners in whom they can work together. To be true partners, they need to work through issues. For instance, ELTs and JCWs must negotiate who owns the “turf” and who does what, as well as the histories and power differentials that might influence one person’s willingness to engage in relationship-building. Drawing from Collier’s (1998) conception of intercultural alliances, three key issues must be addressed to form partnerships in this context: (a) unearned privilege and power, (b) historical influences, and (c) maintaining an orientation of affirmation where partners affirm the others’ cultural identity. ELTs and JCWs need honest conversations regarding the influence of English/Western hegemony on their relationship currently and throughout history. This will assist in the development/maintenance of an intercultural partnership because all relational partners will better understand the potential relational constraints and diverse/contested identities.

Scholarship shows a vested interest in intercultural alliances (Collier, 1998, 2002, 2003; DeTurk, 2001, 2006; Zhu, 2011), but neglects steps that lead to such “ideal” relationships. Collier (2003) defined an intercultural alliance as “a relationship in which parties are interdependent and responsible for and to each other” (p. 2). Collier (2003) explained that “intercultural allies recognize their cultural differences as well as their interdependence, and often seek similar goals, but they are not necessarily friends” (p. 2). The author defines an intercultural relational partnership as “a working relationship in which one attends to cultural histories and ideological factors that influence their modern-day institutional practices in order to achieve a more productive workplace relationship.” Intercultural partners are not necessarily friends or allies, but they are colleagues with whom one can get along and mutually achieve organizational goals. It is difficult to see

partnership possibilities when access to resources is differential and the differences unrecognized. An intercultural partnership encourages more productive interpersonal relationships. In order to work together and be partners, ELTs and JCWs must learn how to better navigate privacy concerns—without *gaijin smashing*. ELTs and JCWs should use empathy, mindfulness, and dialogue to better navigate their workplace relationships and, ultimately, privacy negotiations.

Future Studies

This research can be extended in the following ways. First, this study demonstrates a need for research and theorizing regarding intercultural privacy management ethics, particularly related to dark-side, or negative communication, management strategies. Some ELTs in this study found themselves in positions where they felt they had no other choice but to employ a privacy management strategy that they did not necessarily approve of, such as *gaijin smashing*. Although such instances aided ELTs with their privacy management, the costs of employing “unethical” privacy management strategies should be researched, particularly within intercultural relationships. Second, future research can also include ELTs’ relationships with students, non-work related Japanese friends, and other ELTs. Such research will provide further insight into the experiences of ELTs in the Japanese workplace.

Finally, further critical examinations of privacy negotiations will enhance understanding, provide strategies for change, and enhance CPM. Griffin (2011) defined CPM as an interpretive theory that does not call for a radical reform of society, thus disqualifying CPM as a critical theory. The author calls for critical scholars to usher CPM into critical studies. For instance, understanding the participants’ positionality, power,

and/or agency might prove fruitful in future areas of privacy management research.

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Explicit and Implicit Second Language Knowledge Measurement: Effects of an Extended Focus-on-Form Tasked-based Pedagogy

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Abstract

Explicit and implicit second/ foreign language (SFL) knowledge are distinct types of knowledge which operate together in language production. Measuring the effects of a specific pedagogy to improve these knowledge types is complicated by the distinctive nature of each knowledge type. To be reliable, a testing battery must be equally sensitive to both language types. This is particularly true for implicit knowledge because it develops through SFL exposure and practice and thus takes longer to acquire. The present study used a targeted battery of six tests, three per knowledge type, to measure changes in the use of eight target grammatical forms. Forty-nine Japanese university graduate learners of English took part in two months of SFL study using a focus-on-form (FonF) task-based pedagogy. The results show that the testing battery did provide separate measures of each language type. Obtaining pure measures of either, however, is unlikely due to the large amount of interaction between them at the level of use. The results further show that the FonF pedagogy was effective at increasing both language types, but was particularly effective at improving implicit knowledge.

Keywords: explicit knowledge, implicit knowledge, language testing, second language acquisition

Explicit and implicit SFL learning creates to two distinct types of SFL knowledge, both of which are necessary to functionally employ a language. N. Ellis (2005) nicely summaries the distinction between these two types of learning by comparing them to a theatre. He sees explicit conscious learning as a spotlight in the middle of the stage of a dark theater. Conscious learning is this narrow on-stage

space that allows for global access to available resources as a means of learning anything. As you get further outside the spotlight of conscious awareness, the explicit learning is gradually replaced by implicit learning. It is at the point of incomprehension that the spot light shifts the focus of consciousness and illuminates an issue more fully by taking further steps to gain understanding, such as adding content or modifying the message.

Explicit and implicit learning create explicit and implicit SFL knowledge. Explicit SFL knowledge is declarative, technical in nature and consciously controlled because it is intentionally learned. It is accessible and verbalized because it is recalled on demand at any age (Dekeyser, 2005; Dubravac, 2013; R. Ellis, 2004, 2005; Gutiérrez, 2013; Hulstijn, 2005). In contrast, implicit SFL knowledge results from the intake and processing of input without conscious awareness or intention (Leung & Williams, 2011). Studies have demonstrated that people can implicitly learn, have memories of past events, and later employ this implicitly acquired understanding without conscious awareness (R. Ellis, 2006). Implicit knowledge is thus procedural and practical in nature, automatically processed below the threshold of conscious control, and cannot be measured directly or reported on by the learner. This type of knowledge is more systematized, more reliable, and age specific (Dekeyser, 2005; Dubravac, 2013; R. Ellis, 2004, 2005; Gutiérrez, 2013; Hulstijn, 2005).

The relationship between explicit and implicit knowledge remains very much in debate within the SLA literature centered on three interface positions. The non-interface position purports that the two knowledge types are completely separate (Krashen, 1981, 1982). The strong interface position, by contrast, sees explicit knowledge with the ability to become implicit knowledge via practice (DeKeyser, 1998). The weak interface position is similar to the strong interface position but differs in the manner of knowledge transfer

across the interface (N. Ellis, 1994a, 2005; R. Ellis, 1993a; Schmidt & Frota, 1986; Smith, 1981). To date there is no conclusive evidence to support any single interface position (Bowles, 2011).

Despite the conflicting interface positions there is little disagreement that explicit and implicit knowledge work in tandem to achieve SFL production. In a study of SFL Spanish in the United States, Toth and Guijarro (2013) found that explicit instruction had a significant effect on implicit SFL knowledge. During production, explicit knowledge was seen to be actively supporting automated implicit activity by interpreting and directing learner attention. SLA research supports the idea that most SFL acquisition is unconscious, implicitly derived from frequent comprehension and production activities (N. Ellis, 2005, 2007). However, research has shown that the more a learner's attention is explicitly drawn to different language features, the greater it benefits implicit knowledge (DeKeyser, 1994, 2005; Robinson, 1996; Hulstijn & De Graff, 1994; Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001) because explicit instruction increases the chance that SFL learners will notice the feature which seems necessary to SFL acquisition (N. Ellis, 2002).

The assertion in SLA theory that implicit knowledge is the main source behind SFL acquisition and language use is not surprising when one considers that fluent language use takes place at two to three words per second. The speech production process must be largely automatic to operate at this pace with both speaker and listener attending to the content and leaving the speech process on autopilot (Hulstijn, 2001). Fluency develops over time through extensive experience, but the role of explicit knowledge cannot be underestimated. Speaking and communicating are grand endeavors and, as with any grand endeavor, support from behind the scenes is paramount to success. N. Ellis' (2005) vision of the theatre is again useful here, except now, as a learner is engaged in

fluent SFL acquisition and use, it is implicit knowledge that is in the spotlight on center stage, while explicit knowledge remains out of sight in the shadows providing essential support

Explicit and Implicit Knowledge and Pedagogy

DeKeyser and Sokalski (1996) tried to identify which pedagogical practice—production or comprehension—was better at improving SFL knowledge. They based their investigation on the belief that SLA is an intentional learning process that is similar to other learning processes in which learners acquire and then transfer explicit knowledge into specific automated practices. Production practice was theorized to be better at achieving automation because it forced more processing of syntactic information. This, in turn, increased noticing and led to the modification of output. Their results showed that both comprehension and production practice improved ability in the area most practiced. Comprehension practice improved the comprehension of input, while production practice improved SFL production ability, although the transfer from one skill to the other was limited. A similar set of circumstances seems to exist with explicit and implicit SFL knowledge, with implicit instruction and practice leading mostly to implicit knowledge and explicit instruction and practice leading to explicit knowledge (DeKeyser, 1995, 2003, 2005; Erlam, 2006).

The above situation is why most SFL teachers integrate some element of grammar work into their content-based classes (Borg & Burns, 2008). The teaching of grammar is a pedagogical practice aimed at drawing the learner's attention to form. It, too, is influenced by the differences between implicit and explicit knowledge (R. Ellis, 2006). Grammar work can be implicit or explicit, but whether learners actually notice the

highlighted form is difficult to predict. After receiving grammar feedback, a learner might find an SFL form striking and process it, whereas another form, even after multiple exposures and corrections, might not get noticed at all (N. Ellis, 2002). Implicit feedback often takes the form of a recast. Recasts are seen to be more communicative because they maintain the focus on content. Doughty and Varela (1998) saw recasts as a natural part of class work because they are such a common practice when learning a language, either the first language (L1) or the SFL. Adults naturally recast children's incorrect sentences, usually correcting a single error. This natural blending into the communicative content can also be negative because the form highlighted in the feedback might go totally unnoticed. For this reason, many recasts add an explicit, emphatic stress or other means to better create noticing of the error (R. Ellis, 2006). Explicit feedback is usually more overt and can take two forms: explicit correction and negative evidence. Both are seen to hinder communication because they redirect attention away from content and towards form. However, explicit grammar instruction and explicit feedback have the simple advantage of being direct and, thus, a faster means of supporting implicit SFL use (R. Ellis, 2006).

Ideal form instruction, whether explicit or implicit, highlights the target form and still maintains a connection to content. This increases the chance of a learner noticing the targeted form by placing it in a supportive context. Forms that arise incidentally from the classroom content material best meet these criteria because they provide a natural opening to discuss form and, at the same time, maintain a connection to content. In a study of classroom interaction structures, Nassaji (2013) found that discussions of incidental form occurred in all learner/teacher structures but were most common when the teacher was engaged with the entire class. Highlighting incidental form is the most useful to the

greatest number of learners because it arises from content that all the learners are engaged in and, thus, many will have a need to employ. By its nature, this type of form instruction nicely balances the needs of both implicit and explicit knowledge. It is accompanied by content and practice and involves explicit corrective feedback and the use of both SFL input and output (R. Ellis, 2006).

Explicit and Implicit Knowledge Testing

Appropriate test design is a major factor in accurate assessment of SFL knowledge. The characteristics of implicit knowledge make assessment difficult within the structural and finite time constraints of many SLA studies. Most SLA studies are based on short exposures to a target grammar and very short learning times; usually one 15- to 60-minute session. These tests, with their dependency on large exposure to a target feature over a very short period, are not equally sensitive to explicit and implicit knowledge (Hulstijn, 1997). For a test to be equally sensitive to measuring changes in both types of knowledge it must be administered before and after a much longer period (DeKeyser, 2005) within a classroom setting. Testing conditions set up for studies in many laboratory studies do not resemble SFL classes (Hulstijn, 1997) and, thus, even with the best designed tests and appropriate time frame, results would not be generalizable to an SFL class.

R. Ellis (2005) developed a battery of tests to separately measure explicit and implicit knowledge. His tests served as the basis for the tests in the present study. He felt that such measurement could provide a means to gauge the effects of a wide range of SLA research and pedagogy. His testing regime consisted of four tests targeted on 17 grammatical forms. A description and discussion of each test is presented below.

Metalinguistic Knowledge Test

Metalinguistic knowledge is a conscious awareness of how underlying grammatical rules operate. This would include knowledge of technical terms used to describe rules (Dubravac, 2013). A metalinguistic knowledge test (MKT) is used to measure a learner's knowledge of SFL grammar rules. There is a positive relationship between this explicit knowledge, the number of years in formal SFL study—which accounts for 40% of metalinguistic knowledge—and proficiency level in SFL writing (Roehr-Brackin, 2014; Roehr & Gánem-Gutiérrez, 2009). SFL proficiency is positively correlated, about 0.4, to learning grammar, with learners usually able to provide examples of the rules they acquire (Roehr, 2007), but less able to explain or provide a term (Green & Hecht, 1992). As metalinguistic knowledge increases, a learner progresses from being able to provide only an example of an error to providing a grammatical term for the error, all the while improving their writing ability.

Grammatical Judgment Test

A Grammatical Judgment Test (GJT) asks learners to distinguish between grammatically correct or incorrect sentences. GJT requires learners to locate errors, and this most likely assesses explicit knowledge (Gutiérrez, 2013). Most learners usually perform better on correct sentences (Hedgcock, 1993). The idea of GJT distinguishing between the SFL knowledge types is based on time pressure, specifically, the time required to complete three processes: semantic processing, followed by noticing the incorrect form, followed by reflecting on why it is incorrect. R. Ellis (2004) believed that the type of knowledge measured, explicit or implicit, depended on the time taken by learners to work through these three processes. Limiting the learners' response time on a GJT was seen to lead to

more implicit knowledge. Bowles (2011) found that time pressure dramatically affected the performance of groups on her GJT. Bowles attributed improved scores on untimed GJT to the learners having time to access their explicit knowledge, as did R. Ellis (2005). Gutiérrez (2013) speculated that the higher demands in terms of analysis made ungrammatical sentences more difficult to judge, but found that the effects of time pressure to be somewhat unclear. The amount of time allowed for a time-pressured GJT is arbitrary, with the most common practice being to add 20% to an average L1 response time (Bowles, 2011). R. Ellis (2004) also warned that time pressure does not guarantee a measure of implicit knowledge. It is entirely possible for learners to automatize their explicit knowledge, thereby negating the effects of time pressure. If native-like familiarity is achieved, then explicit knowledge could be obtained at the same speed as implicit knowledge (DeKeyser, 2003).

In the Japanese SFL environment, the effects of time pressure are very unclear. For many Japanese SFL learners, language education training involves learning to identify grammatically incorrect sentences within the time-sensitive environment of high-stakes entrance exam preparations. Learners prepare themselves to quickly identify incorrect sentences without any significant improvement in implicit knowledge. Due to this explicit training, a time-pressure GJT would at best provide muddled access to implicit knowledge for many Japanese learners.

Elicited Imitation Test

The Elicited Imitation Test (EIT) is a technique for language testing that involves a learner exactly repeating a heard sentence (Vinther, 2002). The EIT is a very useful testing tool for a teacher to quickly and accurately estimate an SFL learner's language proficiency

(Brown & Hanlon, 1970; Radloff & Hallburg, 1991) because it represents a reconstructive process involving the manipulation of grammar in a way that is consistent with a representation of the learner's interlanguage ability (Erlam, 2006; Hamayan, Saegert, & Larudee, 1997; Munnich, Flynn, & Martohardjono, 1994; Vinther, 2002). R. Ellis (2005) viewed an EIT as a valid measure of an SFL learner's implicit knowledge because of the strong relationship between SFL imitation and proficiency (Baddel, Gathercole, & Papagno, 1998; Scott, 1994). In R. Ellis' (2005) EIT, learners were presented with both grammatically correct and incorrect sentences. The learners were asked to agree or disagree with the content of a sentence to focus attention on content rather than form because implicit knowledge is more closely related to content (Erlam, 2006). The learners were then required to repeat the sentence, correcting it if necessary. However, this process might not have facilitated using implicit knowledge because it decreased the automation of output. Because imitation is a reconstructive process, it seems reasonable that both content and form are reconstructed. R. Ellis' (2005) EIT delayed repetition therefore could have increased the time for consideration of both. In the pilot for this study, L1 English speakers and Japanese teachers of English participated in an EIT. When asked to immediately repeat heard sentences, both groups performed almost flawlessly and still reported sufficient time to monitor both form and content. Highly proficient speakers seem able to carry out an EIT's reconstructive process almost instantaneously. Therefore, any decrease in time pressure favors accessing explicit knowledge.

Oral Narrative Test

In R. Ellis's (2005) Oral Narrative Test (ONT), learners were provided with a story and allowed to read it two times. They were then asked to recount the story orally within three

minutes, without referencing the text. All of the narratives were recorded, transcribed, and examined for the use of obligatory occasions of the target form. The percentage of correct responses for each target feature was then calculated. The results showed that, with no time pressure, both the MKT and GJT can measure explicit knowledge. With time pressure, the ONT, EIT, and GJT can measure implicit knowledge.

The Japanese L2 Environment

The Japanese SFL education system has succeeded in developing learners with strong explicit knowledge, but implicit SFL knowledge remains elusive. A solution to this imbalance could be a Focus-on-Form (FonF) task-based pedagogy. This pedagogy could increase Japanese SFL learners' explicit knowledge through explicit form instruction. More importantly, it could increase implicit knowledge through a meaning-centered task-based focus on content problems. Measuring changes in SFL knowledge with respect to this pedagogy requires two components: 1) a battery of tests that is equally sensitive to both knowledge types, and 2) sufficient time for both language types to equally demonstrate improvement. To date, very few empirical studies have documented changes in explicit and implicit SFL knowledge over a long period (DeKeyser, 2005). The present study intends to fill this gap. It employs a battery of six tests—three for each language type—to reveal changes in explicit and implicit SFL knowledge after two months of intensive FonF task-based instruction. The aim of the present study is to answer the following two research questions.

Research Questions

1. Do the measures of implicit and explicit knowledge tap different aspects of SFL

knowledge?

2. Can a FonF task-based pedagogy effectively increase explicit and/or implicit SFL knowledge?

Participants

A total of 62 English as a foreign language (EFL) learners participated in this study. All of the learners were first-year master of engineering students at a Japanese national university and had a minimum of ten years of formal English education. Fifty-nine of the participants were Japanese and three were Chinese. All of the participants were between the ages of 22 and 25 and all but two were males. Forty-nine learners were placed in two groups, each of which participated in 16 ninety-minute FonF task-based classes. Thirteen learners with a similar background volunteered as a control group.

Materials

Data for the study came from six counterbalanced tests that were administered before and after the sixteen sessions to measure the understanding and use of eight common linguistic forms. The selected forms were; articles, third-person singular verb ending, countable nouns, past simple and future simple tenses, possessives, negatives, and infinitives. These forms were chosen because they are common, frequently occurring SFL forms and have been explicitly taught in secondary school. The test battery included three tests targeting explicit knowledge: a metalinguistic knowledge test (KMT), a metalinguistic terms test (MTT), and a grammatical judgment test (GJT). In addition, three tests targeted implicit knowledge: an elicited imitation test (EIT), a question response test (QRT), and an oral narrative test (ONT).

QRT & ONT were conducted on an individual basis, and the test recordings were later transcribed. The QRT used paired pictures and questions to create an obligatory response situation. QRT coding was based on three criteria: one point for providing the obligatory form, one point for a response relating to the picture, and one point for grammatical correctness. The ONT presented one of two one-minute movies to learners. Learners were instructed to provide as detailed a narrative as possible about the content of the movie they watched. No spoken language was used in either movie, but both used sound effects and music to create atmosphere. Eleven plot elements were identified per movie. ONT coding awarded one point for each plot element, one point for any additional detail, and one point for every grammatically correct target form used. The above six tests were piloted on 19 people: six native speakers, six Japanese teachers of English, and seven graduate EFL students. The experience in the pilot was used to modify the tests before the final version was constructed.

In developing the tests, three assumptions were made with respect to the relationship of explicit or implicit knowledge because manipulating these factors was seen as a better means of accessing a specific type of knowledge: 1) time pressure was associated with implicit knowledge (DeKeyser, 2005; R. Ellis, 2006); 2) written input was more closely associated with explicit knowledge (Roehr-Brackin, 2014; Roehr & Gánem-Gutiérrez, 2009); and 3) auditory and visual input was associated with implicit knowledge. Reading is an explicitly developed SFL skill that primes learners to access explicit knowledge. For this reason, all tests of explicit knowledge were paper-pencil tests; the tests of implicit knowledge did not involve any reading or writing. Moreover, discrete answers were associated with explicit knowledge, while open-ended responses were associated with implicit knowledge (R. Ellis, 2006).

Table 1

Test Features Related to Time Pressure, Means Input, and Response Type

Test	Language type	Time Pressure	Means of Input to learner	Means of Output from learner	No. of Questions	Coding
Metalinguistic knowledge Test (KMT)	Explicit	No	Written	Multiple choice	32	Binary
Metalinguistic Terms Test (MTT)	Explicit	No	Written	Multiple choice	32	Binary
Grammatical Judgment Test (GJT)	Explicit	No	Written	Yes or No	32	Binary
Elicited Imitation Test (EIT)	Implicit	Yes	Auditory	Exact imitation	16	Binary
Question Response Test (QRT)	Implicit	Yes	Auditory & Visual	Open ended	16	1 point per criteria
Oral Narrative Test (ONT)	Implicit	Yes	Visual	Open ended	1	By content

Experimental Classroom Sessions

Each of the 16 experimental classroom sessions focused on one grammatical target, with two 90-minute sessions per target. The material for these target classes was as implicit as possible. In general, classes consisted of a short lecture (8 to 15 minutes) presented twice, with an opportunity between the lectures to ask questions. The content materials, but not the tasks, were available to learners in advance. The lectures served as a means for content input and were suitable to the surroundings and expectations of a university level SFL class. The lecture was followed by one or more tasks. All tasks were integrated and centered on a single grammar point and consistently required learners to apply the information presented in the lecture. Tasks involved doing one of the following: categorize information, physically construct something, perform numerical calculations, write an essay, or create examples based on a criterion. To provide a more concrete example, the content for a countable/uncountable nouns session focused on the differences in the nutritional food guidelines for Japan and America. The task was to

create a diet plan that met the parameters set out by the different food guides. This led to discussions of food and how to count it.

In all sessions, corrective feedback of any type was exclusively incidental. A grammatical form had to come naturally from the content and the teacher was not to initiate a discussion of target forms unless they were based within and arose as part of the content or task. Further, when forms arose, they were always to be treated explicitly, and consist of a grammatical explanation, usually in Japanese, and an example. The use of Japanese, English, or Chinese by the teacher or the learners to discuss form and/or content was permitted.

Results: Measures of Explicit and Implicit SFL Knowledge

Cronbach's alpha for all tests showed good to excellent measurement of reliability, with an average of 0.89. Explicit and implicit SFL knowledge levels for each learner revealed an increase in the average for both knowledge types across all learners (Figure 1). The results of the explicit-oriented tests (MKT, MTT, and GJT) were summed to calculate the explicit SFL knowledge score. The same process was applied to calculate the implicit SFL knowledge score from the results of the EIT, QRT and ONT tests. The ONT upper limit was determined by comparing learner test results to those of the native speakers in the pilot test, with 100% on the ONT for SFL learners representing 50% of L1 scores. All other tests had a predetermined maximum score. Explicit language ability increased by an average of 5%, while implicit language ability rose by an average of 12%. Despite this increase, a statistically significant difference in the scores was noted for only one test of explicit ability (MTT) and for two tests of implicit ability (EIT and QRT). Table 1, shows the results of paired t-tests for each test.

What this data does not show is the large differences in the individual results. Figure 2 shows three typical individual test results that highlight these differences. For example, Learner A made a 25% gain in implicit ability, but none in explicit ability, while Learner B made substantial gains in both abilities and Learner C in neither. All of these learners came from the same group, participated in the same 16 sessions and began the sessions with essentially the same SFL explicit and implicit knowledge scores.

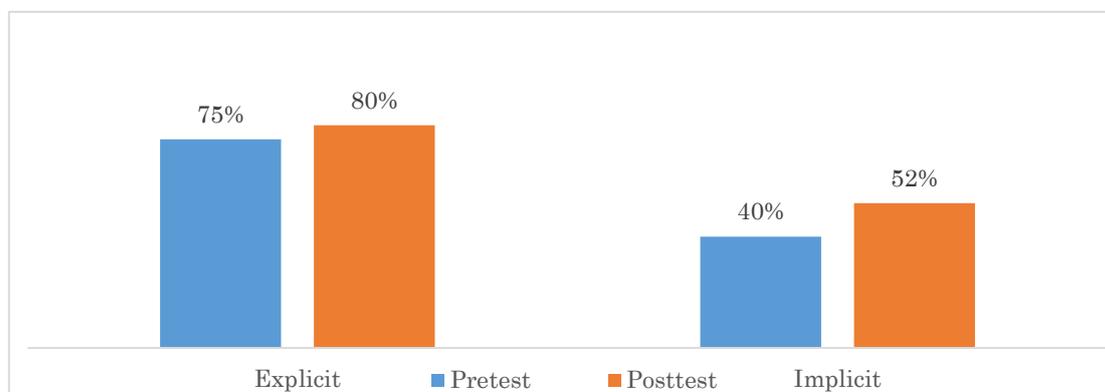


Figure 1. Average measure of explicit vs. implicit L2 knowledge.

Table 2

Paired T-test Results: MKT EIT and QRT are Statistically Significant

Test	MKT	MTT	GJT	EIT	QRT	ONT
t Stat	1.84	4.10	0.20	8.73	2.67	1.85
P (T<=t) two-tail	0.07	0.00	0.84	0.00	0.01	0.07
t critical two-tail	2.01	2.01	2.01	2.01	2.01	2.01
Degrees of freedom	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0

Note. $p < .05$

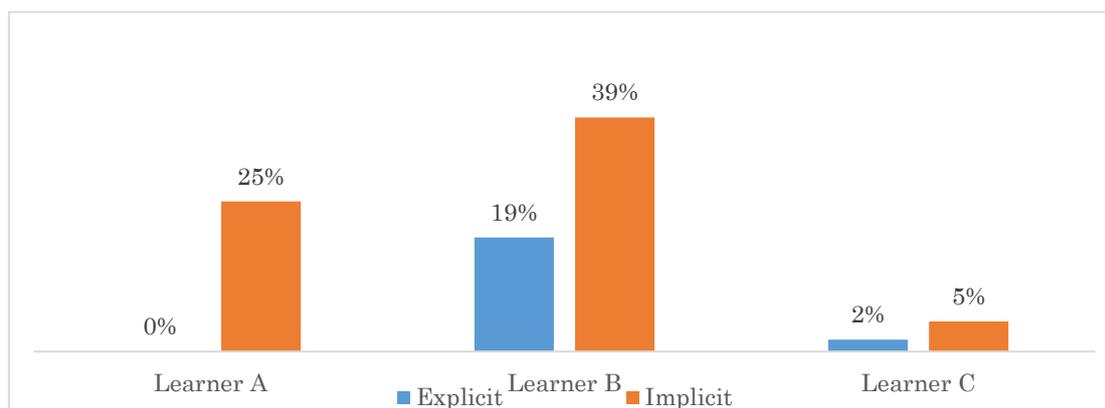


Figure 2. Individual gains in L2 explicit and implicit knowledge.

Correlation Coefficient Test

A correlation coefficient test was conducted to measure the relationship between the six tests. For the Pretests, this showed a strong positive correlation along explicit and implicit knowledge lines. The GJT and MTT had a positive correlation of .043 for explicit tests. For the implicit tests, the QRT had a strong positive correlation to both the EIT and the ONT at 0.42 and 0.49, respectively (Table 2). The results of the Post-test correlation showed a dramatic increase in this trend, with an increasing number of strongly correlated tests associated with the explicit and implicit knowledge division. All the explicit tests were moderately or strongly correlated to each other, with the GJT strongly correlating to the MKT and MTT at 0.58 and 0.51, respectively. This situation is mirrored by the implicit tests, the QRT showed the same level of strong correlation, 0.48, to both the EIT and ONT. The ONT strongly correlated to the EIT at 0.45. A great deal of moderate to strong correlation existed between the explicit and implicit oriented tests. The only uncorrelated tests were the MTT and the ONT at 0.17 (Table 3 and 4).

Table 3
Correlation Coefficient for Pretest

Test	MKT	MTT	GJT	EIT	QRT	ONT
MKT	1.00					
MTT	0.11	1.00				
GJT	(0.03)	0.43	1.00			
EIT	0.13	0.33	0.30	1.00		
QRT	0.13	0.36	0.36	0.42	1.00	
ONT	0.15	0.20	0.22	0.34	0.49	1.00

Note. $p < .05$

Table 4
Correlation Coefficients for Post-test

Tests	MKT	MTT	GJT	EIT	QRT	ONT
MKT	1					
MTT	0.32	1.00				
GJT	0.58	0.51	1.00			
EIT	0.30	0.37	0.63	1.00		
QRT	0.54	0.40	0.50	0.48	1.00	
ONT	0.42	0.17	0.38	0.45	0.48	1

Note. $p < .05$

Discussion

Research Question 1

Do the measures of implicit and explicit knowledge tap different aspects of SFL knowledge?

The results of the study provide evidence for the capability of SFL testing to provide separate, but not pure, measures of explicit and implicit SFL knowledge. As DeKeyser (2005) emphasized, it is important for the tests to be equally sensitive to both explicit and implicit knowledge. These two language knowledge types have distinct features, and by gearing the test to these features, it is possible to accurately gauge the level of knowledge. Written multiple-choice tests with limited responses facilitate explicit knowledge (R. Ellis, 2006). The tests for explicit SLF knowledge aimed to access knowledge gained primarily in the classroom. To better align them to this environment and the language of instruction, in this study, the MKT and MTT presented answers in Japanese, the language of explicit grammar instruction used in the classroom.

Implicit knowledge assessment should also align with how the learner processes real world input. A written test is inappropriate for accessing implicit SFL knowledge because the very act of reading is a highly honed explicit skill. For this reason, the EIT, QRT, and ONT used auditory and visual input to more closely mimic how input becomes implicit knowledge. Learners of both L1 and SFL language obtain implicit knowledge through watching and listening. Therefore, tests for this language type should use the same path.

Explicit knowledge presents few barriers to assessment because it is conscious and can be discussed with learners. Implicit assessment is more complicated because it is not under conscious control, cannot be verbalized, and, thus, must be inferred based on the performance of a task. The three implicit tests measured SFL task performance by treating it as reflecting implicit knowledge. The EIT measures the ability to reprocess and reproduce a sentence. The QRT measures the ability to appropriately and grammatically answer an SFL question. The ONT measures the ability to accurately and grammatically

recount a set of events that the learner has just witnessed. All of these tasks are strongly implicit because the input enters via an implicit gateway and the learner's output must correctly match the provided information. These implicit tasks are tests of everyday language use and so they are highly sensitive to time (DeKeyser, 2005; R. Ellis, 2006) and demand an accurate and correct response. Aligning each test with its appropriate knowledge type increases the likelihood that the test will assess either implicit or explicit knowledge. Pure tests of implicit and explicit knowledge, however, are difficult, if not impossible, to construct. It is unlikely that any test can completely tease apart the complicated and intertwined connections at work between explicit and implicit language knowledge when a learner is employing them to solve language-related problems (Bowles, 2011; Gutiérrez, 2013).

The test battery demonstrated a continuum relationship between the two knowledge types. MTT, the most explicit test, and ONT, the most implicit, are at the respective ends of this continuum. These two tests are the only ones in the entire battery that do not correlate with each other (0.17). In the middle of the continuum sits GJT and QRT, both of which demonstrate moderate or strong correlations to all the other tests (Figure 3). These results suggest that explicit and implicit knowledge might work in tandem whenever possible (Toth & Guijarro-Fuentes, 2013). The continuum nature of this relationship reinforces the theory that a battery of tests which measure both knowledge types does not provide a pure measure of either. A combination of the high speed of the explicit/implicit interface, the inferential basis of measuring implicit knowledge, and the large amount of tandem access used to answer questions makes achieving a pure measure difficult.

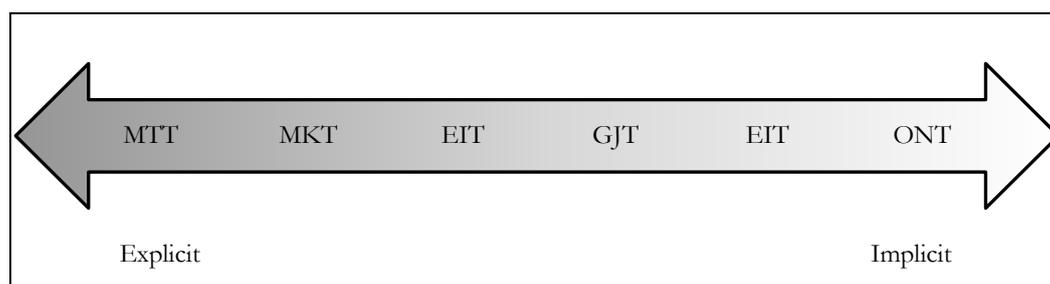


Figure 3. Test continuum of L2 explicit and implicit language knowledge.

Measurements of explicit and implicit SFL knowledge can also be of little use to most present-day SLA research. The reliance on a short but intense exposure to target forms and short-term study intervals makes measuring changes in SFL knowledge types difficult. Implicit knowledge development, whether originating from implicit learning or from crossing the interface from explicit knowledge, is a slow, time-consuming process. Longitudinal SLA studies are the best means of overcoming this difficulty and give a fuller picture of true SFL knowledge development. However, to date, few such longitudinal studies have been undertaken. The present study involved a two-month study interval and only recorded a 12% change in implicit ability. The significant shorter time frame of most SLA studies makes detecting changes in SFL language types, particularly implicit knowledge, extremely difficult.

Research Question 2

Can a FonF task-based pedagogy effectively increase explicit and/or implicit SFL knowledge?

The results of FonF on learner's explicit and implicit SFL knowledge showed that FonF improved both knowledge types, however, gains in implicit knowledge more than doubled those of explicit knowledge. The MTT was the only explicit test that showed

statistically significant improvement. Explicit feedback, used in connection with FonF, appeared to have increased the learners' understanding of metalinguistic terms. The MKT results did not improve significantly, but with a starting level of just under 80%, it was most likely already near maximum.

The tests results for implicit ability mirror how learners performed FonF tasks. The EIT levels rose statistically significantly because of active listening to lectures and note-taking during lectures. Anecdotally, several learners reported improved scores on standardized English tests, i.e., the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). They attributed these improvements to listening to lectures in class. Learners also expressed more confidence in their ability to answer questions in English about content material, the primary focus of the QRT that also improved statistically significantly. For the ONT, the lack of statistically significant improvement can be attributed to the low level of the extended conversations between learners or with the teacher. This reflected how learners chose to participate in tasks, as well as the length of the study sessions. Two months of study is barely sufficient time to demonstrate explicit and implicit SFL knowledge improvement and further underlines the need for more longitudinal SLA studies related to explicit and implicit SFL knowledge development. ONT is the most implicit test and, as such, requires more time to demonstrate sizable improvement than this study allowed.

The results demonstrate that improvement in explicit and implicit knowledge is related to pedagogy and SFL practice. (DeKeyser, 1995, 2003, 2005; Erlam, 2006). Metalinguistic terms were consistently provided to learners as part of explicit feedback during sessions. Repeated exposure to these terms in Japanese, the language of explicit instruction during grade school, might have been responsible for the improved MTT

scores. Equally, implicit task-based practice related primarily to listening and answering questions led to increased implicit knowledge as measured by the EIT and QRT. SFL practice might not make a learner perfect, but it will help them better.

Determining how to practice is very much up to the individual learner, which can help explain the vast differences in individual performances. The learners presented in Figure 2 are typical of the variation within the group and shows that starting levels of SFL knowledge are not a good predictor of end-of-session results. For example, while Learner B had the lowest explicit score of the three presented at the beginning of the classroom sessions, this learner gained the most, 19%, as compared to Learners A and C, who gained 0% and 2%, respectively. Learners B and C had almost identical SFL knowledge scores at the start, but their results were completely the opposite. Learner B gained a great deal in both explicit (19%) and implicit knowledge (39%), whereas the gains made by Learner C were negligible (2% and 5%, respectively). Individual learner SFL motivation and interest in class content and tasks, as well as the social dimensions related to the classroom, all impact any potential gains in SFL knowledge made possible by a FonF task-based approach.

From a general perspective, the best result of the FonF tasks was on learner perception of his/her own SFL ability. Several learners reported and presented more confidence and positive feelings related to their English ability during meetings held to discuss individual test results. These feelings of improvement did not necessarily align with the quantitative test results, but such discoveries did not reduce the learners' senses of capability and motivation to deal with SFL tasks that they developed after participating in the FonF sessions. This is in line with many other studies (Huang, 2011; Guilloteaux & Dornyei, 2008; Tomita & Spada, 2013) that also found a FonF task-based pedagogy

increases learner motivation by treating the L2 learner as an L2 user.

Conclusion

In this study, a battery of six tests was developed and used to measure explicit and implicit SFL knowledge. The tests were designed to align with a specific knowledge type and provided a measure of SFL knowledge before and after 16 FonF task-based classroom sessions. The results provide insight into the distinct characteristics of explicit and implicit SFL knowledge. Explicit knowledge is conscious and easily measurable and best tapped by written tests with limited responses. Implicit knowledge was shown to be only accessible indirectly and better accessed through verbal and visual input. Eight target forms were used to better measure the effect of FonF tasks on SFL knowledge. At the end of the classroom sessions, both explicit and implicit ability increased, but due to FonF's mainly content-based emphasis with only occasional attention to form, implicit knowledge more than doubled as compared to explicit knowledge. The results of this study show that both explicit and implicit L2 knowledge can be measured and, via a FonF task-based approach, can be improved, but the gains are influenced by many factors, foremost of which are individual learner characteristics.

Limitations & Future Areas of Research

The major limitation of this study relates to the period of the study. Eight weeks is not sufficient time to allow for a significant improvement in implicit knowledge. A longitudinal study would much better demonstrate improvements in SFL knowledge types. Future research can also examine the validity of the assumption that the input method primes a learner towards a specific knowledge type. Verification of this

assumption would change the interpretation of many previous studies that used printed materials to measure implicit knowledge.

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Cultural Understanding through a University Student Textbook Analysis Project

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Abstract

This paper describes a class project involving 17 participants in an undergraduate-level English teacher training course. Following Tomalin and Stempleski's (1993) model of the elements of culture, these students analyzed the portrayal of Japanese and English-speaking cultures in English textbooks approved by Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). Their main focus was on the types of culturally-related information (i.e., products, ideas, and behaviors) that were represented. Previous studies have suggested that teaching culture helps students to develop their sociolinguistic competence and social awareness across cultures (Kramsch, 1998) and helps learners become more culturally aware and more tolerant of different world views (DeCapua & Wintergerst, 2004). The author discusses how the analysis of cultural representation in textbooks leads students to consider MEXT's goals for their "education for international understanding" as well as develop their intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006, 2011). The results of class discussions subsequent to the textbook analyses support the educational merits of teaching culture (DeCapua & Wintergerst, 2004). For this reason, students should be trained to critically analyze and evaluate information from teaching materials. Using a theoretical framework to examine culture displayed in textbooks not only provided them this opportunity, but also deepened their understanding of the cultural ideas embodied in cultural products and behaviors (Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993).

Keywords: textbook analysis, culture, MEXT goals, international understanding

The goals of language education often emphasize the importance of culture. Among several definitions of culture (DeCapua & Wintergerst, 2004; Kramsch, 1998; Peterson, 2004; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997), the

present study follows Tomalin and Stempleski's (1993) model of the elements of culture, wherein cultural ideas are embodied in cultural products and behaviors. In this case study, the students in an introductory English education course carried out content analysis (Fujita, 2011) in small groups by focusing on the portrayal of culture in their textbooks, and shared their findings to the class. The author discusses how this series of activities demonstrate consideration for MEXT's (2011) goal of "education for international understanding" and students' application of their knowledge to other educational contexts, especially the benefit of developing students' skills with *kyozai kenkyu* (material analysis) and raising their cultural awareness. These activities were created to achieve two goals:

1. To develop students' material analysis skills.
2. To raise students' awareness of *kokusai/ibunka rikai* (education for international understanding).

Developing students' material analysis skills is important because students need to make their own teaching plan and to obtain approval from their supervising teacher during their teaching practicum and conduct the class based on the approved plan. Although much attention tends to be paid to grammar points in the particular lesson plan, such as the use of verb tenses or pronouns, it is equally important for students to understand the content of the learning material. How they interpret the content and project that perspective in a fair and comprehensive manner has a great influence on the class and their students.

Raising students' awareness of education for international understanding is related to the three main goals of English education in Japan, set by MEXT in its English translation of *Gakushu Shido Yoryo* (course of study; MEXT, 2011). The first goal is concerned with the development of students' understanding about language and culture.

The second is about nurturing their positive attitude to carry out communication. The last goal is about building the students' basic communicative competence by integrating the four language skills. 'Education for international understanding' is a very popular term and it is clearly stated in the MEXT (2011) goal under the category of teaching plan and content (Section 3, Part 2: A, B, and C). The key point of these guidelines is:

(2) [...] Teachers should take up a variety of suitable topics in accordance with the level of students' development, as well as their interest, covering topics that relate to issues like daily lives, *manners and customs*, stories, geography, history, *traditional cultures*, and natural science of the people of the world, *focusing on English-speaking people and the Japanese people*. (MEXT, 2011, emphasis mine)

The guidelines continue in more detail, saying that for English courses the materials should be useful in

[...] *enhancing the understanding of various ways of viewing and thinking*, [...] *deepening the understanding of the ways of life and cultures of foreign countries and Japan, raising interest in language and culture* and developing respectful attitudes toward these, [and ...] *deepening the international understanding from a broad perspective*, heightening students' awareness of being Japanese citizens living in a global community, and cultivating a spirit of international cooperation. (MEXT, 2011, emphasis mine)

The importance of developing students' understanding of international culture as well as Japanese culture is frequently emphasized.

Literature Review

Models of Culture

This section provides a brief overview of how culture has been defined by different researchers. Culture has been defined as a set of eyes to see the world (DeCapua &

Wintergerst, 2004). Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) also suggest that culture refers to people's ways of dealing with time, nature, and other people. Culture is generally divided into two different types: culture with a capital "C," as objective or "high" culture, and culture with a lower case "c" as the psychological factors associated with culture (Bennett, 1998, p. 3). Cultural products such as music, arts, literature, drama, and cuisine have been categorized "Culture" in cultural studies, while psychological factors such values, beliefs, and norms of communications are seen as "culture." The high/low distinction has also been applied to the cultural products of the rich or upper class (high) and those of the general public (low), though this undervalues the products of popular culture (Hoggart, 1957).

Other studies have presented elements of culture in visual models. For example, the terms "iceberg" and "island" have been employed in order to depict surface and hidden levels of culture (e.g. Peterson, 2004; Yashiro, Machi, Koike & Isogai, 1998). What we perceive with our five senses, a culture's language, clothing, food, and gestures are included in the tip of the iceberg or island. Those elements are visible, and, therefore, it is easier to spot differences when we encounter another culture.

On the other hand, 80% of culture is composed of those aspects that are in the bottom, invisible part of the iceberg (Peterson, 2004; see Figure 1). Peterson indicates that as these are invisible because people within a culture are often unconscious of the assumptions they make about other cultures based on their own cultural values. In other words, we are often not aware of the existence of this bottom part of the iceberg. However, Peterson also points out that this is actually the foundation for our verbal and non-verbal actions, attitudes, and general lifestyles. For example, the socialization process and formal education students received in Japan emphasizes the importance of *go fun mae*

kodo (plan to act five-minutes beforehand). This norm, when applied in workplaces, is the reason why Japanese employees often arrive at a business meeting five minutes early. The underlying reasons for this action is that we should not make our business clients wait for us, or we should have sufficient time to get ready for a meeting or to deal with business.

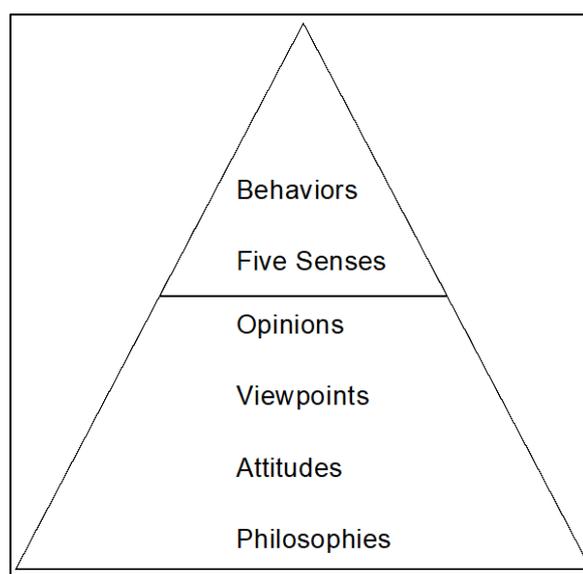


Figure 1. The Iceberg Model of Culture proposed by Peterson (2004) showing the observable and unobservable levels of culture.

Another model of culture (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997), this one onion-shaped, uses several layers of circles to show different levels of cultural factors (see Figure 2). As indicated in the expressions of *explicit* and *implicit*, the outer layer shows factors of culture which are considered easy-to-observe, such as language, food, clothing, and buildings. In contrast, the inner layer includes more abstract and invisible factors that affect our judgment of what we think is good or bad, polite or impolite, logical or illogical. This includes the basic assumptions that people make, which stems from their basic survival instinct. Therefore, these

assumptions are related with how people fundamentally interact with their surroundings and find better ways to use their resources more effectively.

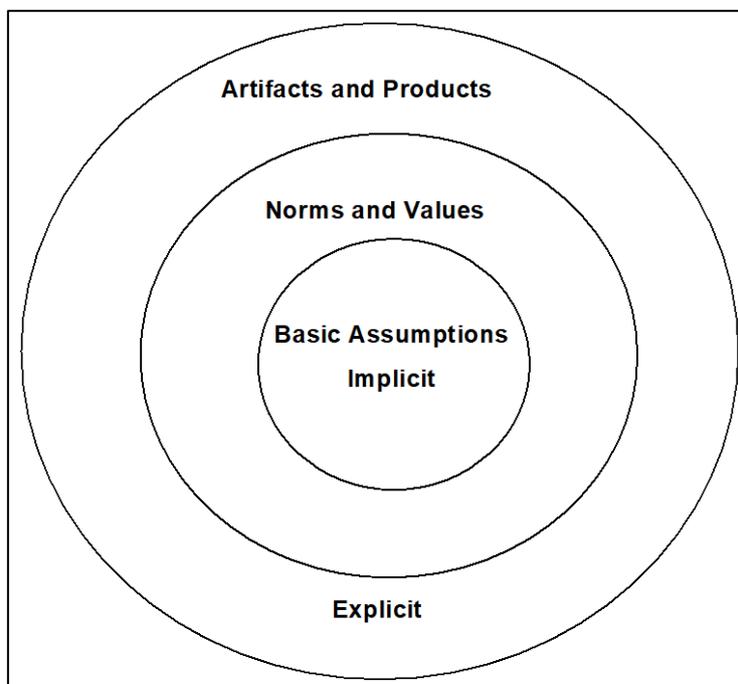


Figure 2. The model of culture proposed by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) showing areas of culture from its observable outer ring to levels of cultural perception in the middle.

Finally, another model suggested by Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) uses three circles, and each circle holds different elements of culture (see Figure 3). The overlapped areas of the model show the connection among the three elements: *products*, *ideas*, and *behaviors*. Although this does not visually show the different depth of cultural elements in the way that the Iceberg Model and the onion-shaped model did, the strength of this three-circle model is that it shows the interactive part of different cultural factors in a simple way. For the present study, Tomalin and Stempleski's three circle model was chosen as the framework for analysis. For students in this course, this model provided a

visual impression of the different factors included in culture and their interactive relationship.

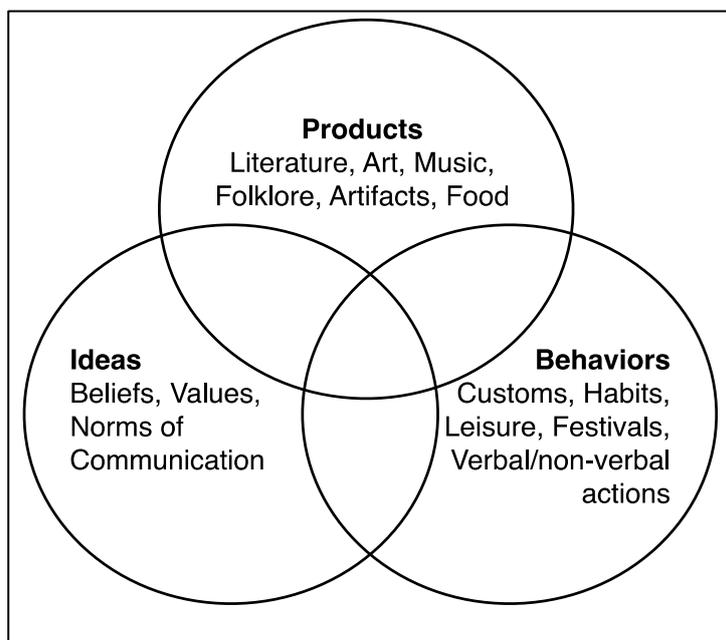


Figure 3. The elements of culture provided to students for this project, adapted from Tomalin & Stempleski (1993).

All three models reviewed above show that culture is complicated, including both concrete and abstract notions and stress the need to have students understand these complex relationships first before undertaking this project. To illustrate how the three elements of culture interact with each other, consider the experiences of job-hunting by Japanese university students. First, the formal black or blue business suits worn by applicants are a good example of a cultural *product*. These *products* are visual displays of the embedded *ideas*, especially the values, shared by the members of the community. An examination of various job hunting manuals shows that wearing proper attire indicates cooperativeness and respect, as well as conformity to the group (Midoro, 2012; Takenaka,

2013; Tsubota, 2013). Understanding the *ideas* and displaying them with the appropriate *products* is crucial to maintaining membership in the community.

To illustrate the third element displayed in Figure 3, behaviors, consider Japanese linguistic styles. The language that job hunters use during their visits to companies and in interviews is within the formal Japanese register, known as *keigo* (honorific language). Job hunters would rarely use the same colloquial style that they use when talking with close friends or family members. This *behavior* also reflects the embedded values found under *ideas*, those of being respectful and acting professionally. Posture during job-interviews would also be classified as a *behavior*. Even while waiting to be called into the interview room, job applicants sit with straight backs, keeping their feet on the floor and their shoes next to each other. Other examples of *behavior* are seen in the way applicants enter a room, bow to interviewers, and how they introduce themselves. This series of choices in clothing and verbal/non-verbal behaviors shows the values expected by the culture: being sincere, honest, and eager. Applicants are expected to verify that they are capable of being a member of society in general, and a member of that company in particular. If they are unable to demonstrate shared values through their clothing or verbal/non-verbal actions, they risk being given a negative evaluation by the interviewers. Not following the expected *behaviors* and displaying the appropriate *products* would be seen as an indication that the job applicant was not aware of the *ideas* of the culture they wanted to enter. As a result, they would probably receive a polite message from the company expressing its regret that they would not receive a job offer.

Teaching Culture

This section discusses the benefits of teaching students about culture. The primary benefit

is that teaching students to become culturally aware enhances the development of appropriate linguistic styles (Kramersch, 1998) and helps learners to become more culturally aware and more tolerant of different cultural perspectives (DeCapua & Wintergerst, 2004). Kramersch (1998) clearly states the goals of teaching culture:

Our purpose in teaching culture through language is not to make our students into little French or little Germans, but in making them understand why the speakers of two different languages act and react the way they do, whether in fictional texts or in social encounters, and what the consequences of these insights may mean for the learners. (p. 27)

Sociolinguistic competence is an important subcategory of communicative competence (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Furthermore, social awareness influences how we display, evaluate, and carry out certain behaviors and actions, including how we use language. Therefore, this also relates to pragmatic competence, which is another subcategory of communicative competence (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) suggest that teaching culture to future teachers has greater pedagogical benefits than “merely displaying a cultural document or artifact in class. Students need to be trained to extract appropriate information from the material” (p. 8). Furthermore, “cultural awareness involves sensitivity to the impact of culturally-induced behavior on language use and communication” (p. 5). In short, cultural awareness leads future teachers to teach English better.

In her process model of intercultural competence, Deardorff (2006) suggest that "knowledge and comprehension" include the areas of "cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, (and) linguistic awareness," as well as the skills of listening, observations and evaluation, analysis, and interpretation and relating (p. 256). According to Deardorff (2006, 2011), development of intercultural competence is an on-going

process with four main aspects: attitude, knowledge and skills, internal outcome, and external outcome. The most relevant factors to this project are found in the knowledge and skills aspect. These factors include developing cultural self-awareness and deepening cultural knowledge and analytical skills.

The present study examines how this in-class project expands the participants' perspectives about culture, enhances their understanding of their own culture and other cultures, and deepens their analytical thinking about teaching materials.

Method

Participants

Participants for the project were 15 undergraduate and two graduate students in an *Eigoka Kyoiku Hou* 1 (English Teaching Methods 1) class. Students' majors included literature, linguistics, and psychology. Although four of the students had participated in or were participating in a teaching practicum, the majority of the students were preparing for their practicum. This was one of the four courses offered by the university for students seeking to obtain a teacher's license which allows them to teach English in high schools or junior high schools. The university offers four *Eigoka Kyoiku Hou* classes and students are required to take two: either Course 1 or 2, and then either Course 3 or 4. At the time of this project, Courses 1 and 3 had been taught. Course 1 covers basic theoretical aspects of English education, and *Eigoka Kyoiku Hou* 3 focuses on planning for the teaching practicum, including making teaching plans and carrying out teaching demonstrations in class. The project discussed below was conducted during two classes, held on consecutive weeks, during one semester of the 15-week course.

Materials

We used the MEXT approved English textbooks *One World 1* (Matsumoto et al., 2015a), *One World 2* (Matsumoto et al., 2015b), and *One World 3* (Matsumoto et al., 2015c). These texts are widely used in junior-high schools. Several chapters from the *One World* series cover cultural aspects. These chapters were selected by the instructor and provided to the students. The chapters included in this project were Lesson 10 from *One World 1*, Lessons 8 and 9 from *One World 2*, and Writing Tips and *Eigo de Hyougen Shiyo* (Try Explaining in English) from *One World 3*.

A modified version of Tomalin and Stempleski's (1993) elements of culture model was used for the evaluation framework. The following research questions framed this study:

RQ1: Which elements of culture can students identify from their lesson(s)?

RQ2: What other elements can students identify in the classroom, and how?

Procedures

The first session for this project was held in a 90-minute class. The students were instructed to read the MEXT approved English textbooks individually while paying careful attention to the cultural aspects of the assigned sections. Ten minutes was spent on this activity. Then, students were divided into three small groups where they engaged in content analysis (e.g., Fujita, 2011) of the assigned chapters from the three textbooks. For this project, the *sender* includes the publisher and writers of the textbooks. The *content* includes the text and visuals in the textbooks. The *receiver* includes the teachers and students who use the textbooks. The present study focuses on the analysis of the content (see Figure 4).

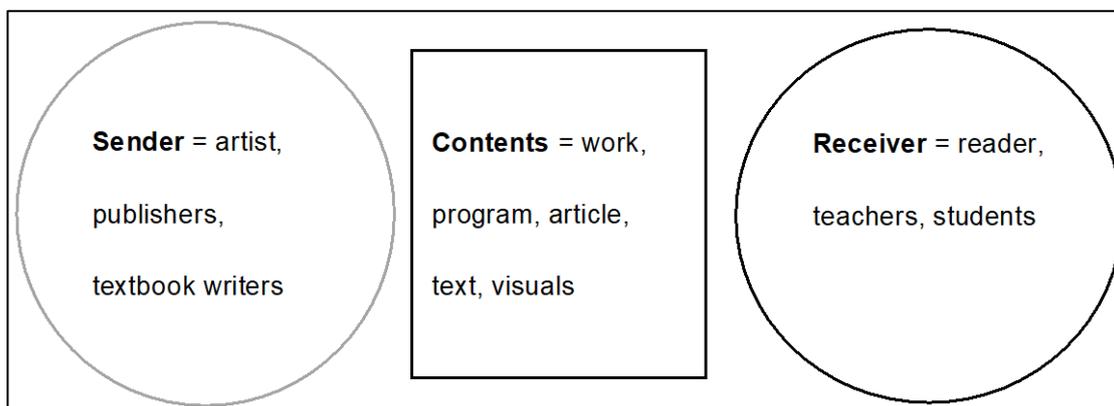


Figure 4. The modified perspectives in content analysis of media texts applied to the MEXT approved series *One World* in this project. Adapted from Fujita (2011).

Each group of participants was given the selected chapters from one of the three books and was asked to complete a chart that focused their attention on the various aspects of culture displayed in the text (see Figure 5). Groups were given 30 minutes to analyze their texts.

	One World 1 (Group 1)	One World 2 (Group 2)	One World 3 (Group 3)
Topic(s)	Osechi dish for New Year's Day	School habits in the U.S.	First things in the new year
Which element?			
Add other element(s)?			
How can we show them?			

Figure 5. Chart used for textbook analysis and discussion.

Students' Analyses

The first group analyzed Lesson 10 from *One World 1* and found that the content was “*osechi* dishes for New Year’s Day.” The second group examined Lesson 8 and 9 from *One World 2* and reported that the topic was “school habits in the U.S.” and “Uluru (Ayers Rock)”. The third group analyzed Writing Tips and *Eigo de Hyogen Shiyo* from *One World 3* and found that the content was “first things in the new year” such as *hatsuyume* (first dream in the new year) and *kakizome* (first practice of calligraphy in the new year).

The instructor monitored the students’ discussions and gave feedback when they needed clarification, and provided useful vocabulary and English expressions. For instance, one group needed clarification of the third category, which linked to RQ2, and asked if they could add other cultural element(s). Therefore, the instructor used an example of a wedding ceremony and gave further explanation, saying, “If one chapter shows how Japanese people traditionally celebrate weddings, what kind of actions are common? What kind of values are embedded in these actions?” This answered their question and the group resumed their discussion. The first session finished here, and for homework, students were encouraged to review what they had shared.

The next week, the instructor confirmed that students completed their group discussion. Each group reported the results of their discussion to the class by sending one or two representatives to the board to complete the chart, shown in Figure 5. When other students seemed to have something to add the chart, the instructor invited them to do so or to let them talk with their representatives before making further modifications. It took about 15 minutes for the representatives to complete the chart. This was followed by a class discussion for 25 minutes.

Results and Discussion

Each of the groups analyses identified several cultural values contained in the texts. Following Tomalin and Stempleski's (1993) framework, each group examined the *One World* series chapters they were assigned for examples of cultural *products*, *ideas*, and *behaviors* (see Figure 3). They also proposed additional examples that could enhance their students' cultural understanding. Due to space limitation, discussions will be limited to Group 1 here.

Group 1's analysis of *One World 1* (Matsumoto et al., 2015a) focused on Lesson 8. The topic of the chapter was introducing *Osechi* dishes to international students and showed photographs of *osechi* and Christmas foods. The group categorized the topic as introducing food, which is a cultural *product*, and added elements from *values* in the *idea* division (see Figure 6). Each dish in *osechi* holds values, and Group 1 identified several aspects of the *osechi* dishes as having cultural significance. These included *kuro mame* (black beans), *ebi* (prawns), *kuri kinton* (chestnuts), *tazukuri* (small dried anchovies), and *renkon* (lotus roots). They then identified the various cultural values that are associated with each of these *osechi* items (see Figure 6). In their analyses, they decided that the black beans are associated with the value of hard work because the word for hard work or diligence has the same sound as *mame* (beans). Furthermore, they connected *ebi* (prawns) with longevity because their curved backs are thought to look similar to those of some senior citizens and when boiled the red and white colors of the prawns are the colors associated with celebrations in Japan. Similarly, they arrived at the conclusion that the other items included in *osechi* have positive meanings associated with Japanese New Year's.

	One World 1	One World 2	One World 3
Topic(s)	<i>Osechi</i> dishes for New Year's Day	School habits in the U.S. Uluru (Ayers Rock)	First things in the new year
Which element?	Food (Product)	Behavior	Customs (Behavior) Hatsu mode (First shrine visit in the New Year) Beliefs (Idea) Hatsu yume (Dream on the first night of the New Year)
Add (an)other element(s)?	Value (Idea) <i>Kuromame</i> (Black beans): hard-working <i>Ebi</i> (prawns): longevity <i>Tazukuri</i> (small dried anchovies): good harvest Renkon (Lotus roots): bright future <i>Kuri kinton</i> (mashed sweet potato): good fortune	Customs (Behavior) Beliefs (Idea)	Arts (Product and Behavior) <i>Kaki zome</i> (First calligraphy of the New Year)
How can we show it (them)?	Comparison of <i>Osechi</i> and Christmas dishes (or Thanksgiving dishes) Comparison of New Year cards and Christmas cards	Show DVD Classroom discussion	

Figure 6. Completed chart used for group discussion on cultural display in the *One World* series (Matsumoto et al., 2015a, 2015b, 2015c)

This was the first time that several students in the class examined the customs of

osechi and the meanings associated with them. Regardless of whether this was their first opportunity to reflect on such customs, the students engaged in *kyozai kenkyu* (educational material analysis), which was one of the goals of study. Viewing their domestic culture from an objective perspective and a theoretically valid framework allowed them to identify the culturally-embedded meanings from the text and to raise their cultural awareness.

For the third category, the groups suggested engaging in comparative analysis of festive dishes in Japan and Western countries where people celebrate Christmas and Thanksgiving. This would require them to further research food and the *ideas* associated with them because very few Japanese people celebrate Christmas as Americans do, or prepare traditional Thanksgiving dishes. Another suggestion was for students to compare New Year cards in Japan and Christmas cards in America. If done in a timely manner (i.e., in December), this would not only help develop their teaching plans, but also enrich their skills in evaluating, analyzing, and interpreting daily life and customs, which would be beneficial to developing their intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006, 2011).

Future Directions

The most obvious limitation of the present study is the generalizability of the findings. This is a small case study that sheds light on the benefits of teaching culture, and it is difficult to generalize the findings to other contexts. However, the author would like to suggest the following two questions for future studies:

1. What do these students or future teachers need to know regarding deeper aspects of culture, especially when they deal with foreign cultures in textbooks, to develop international understanding?

2. How can university instructors help students learn the appropriate language, particularly the specialized vocabulary and expressions, they need to apply what was learnt when they are teaching English?

The first point is concerned with education for international understanding. Most often, MEXT approved English textbooks cover Japanese culture as targeted topics. However, certain chapters deal with other cultures as well. In those cases, students cannot always rely on their own experiences to carry out an analysis. A few participants of this study suggested that L2 English teachers should collaborate with social science teachers to consider textbook design from various viewpoints. This would allow English teachers to develop richer lesson plans.

At the same time, when Japanese teachers of English deal with Japanese culture, they cannot take their common sense for granted, especially when they have a class of students from different cultural, ethnic, regional, or national backgrounds. Needless to say, the purpose of introducing aspects of Japanese culture is not to impose specific beliefs or values, or to acculturate students into Japanese society. Therefore, it is equally important not to focus on the uniqueness of Japanese culture or make statements that place it above other cultures, as this leads to the negative connotation of Japanese cultural superiority. Rather, the activity needs to help students more thoroughly understand aspects of Japanese culture. As suggested by Johnston (2003), there is a risk of creating new stereotypes when we gain new knowledge about cultures. Educators should always maintain a fair attitude when teaching students about cultures.

The next step for students would be to have each student prepare a teaching plan and carry out a short demonstration lesson. Observers would give feedback to help improve the lesson. By doing so, the presenter will gain hands-on experience designing, organizing, and modifying teaching materials, and deepen his/her analytical skills for

examining textbooks and other supplementary materials.

The second step would be to develop a stronger focus on helping future teachers obtain the language they need to use in academic contexts. As is often the case in university education, new terminology was introduced during this activity. Students had no difficulty comprehending these terms and deepening their understanding of the language and the meaning through analysis and discussions. Still, in order to use the words appropriately and to learn new terminology requires practice. Future research could include both classroom observations of students' progress in vocabulary acquisition, as well as submission of their reflective journals and teaching plans to determine if the terms are being employed appropriately.

Conclusion

The participants in this case study, who were mostly future English teachers, engaged in content analysis of English textbooks and shared their findings in group discussions. This activity provided students with the pedagogical benefits proposed by Tomalin and Stempleski (1993). Merely displaying culture or exposing students to culture does not bring major benefits to students. They need to be trained to examine and evaluate information from the material. Analyzing their domestic culture not only brought them this opportunity, but also deepened their understanding about cultural *ideas*, which are implemented in the cultural *products* and *behaviors*. At the same time, further studies are needed to shed light on how future teachers are able to evaluate information and detect stereotypes or misinformation when they deal with global cultures. Because they cannot count on their previous knowledge or experiences, careful preparation and an interdisciplinary approach might be necessary.

Acknowledgement

The author would like to express gratitude to Dr. Johnston and Dr. Swenson for their insightful comments and suggestions for the current paper, and Ms. Yamamori for her technical support, as well as the anonymous JALT Osaka Journal reviewers of this paper. The author also would like to thank the warm audience at the JALT Osaka Back to School Conference 2016 for their comments and input. Of course, the remaining shortcomings are solely mine.

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On Unreliability and Inefficiency in Word Lists

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Abstract

Mastering the vocabulary necessary to become fluent in a foreign language is a daunting task. Previous research has yet to make it clear whether or not the resources certain learners use to accomplish this task are the most efficient and reliable. For instance, are word lists currently used based on up-to-date corpora? Also, are word family headwords always the most useful words to teach? Moreover, do word lists contain a significant number of cognates with a certain learner group's first language (L1)? Answering these questions should lead to improvements in the quality of teaching resources. This study will thus discuss three aspects of word list compilation: the age of the corpus a word list is derived from, whether or not members of a word family are more useful to learn than that word family's headword, and whether or not a target vocabulary exists as a cognate between certain learners' L1 and the target second language (L2). This paper will highlight how the quality of a resource can be substantially improved upon when these three aspects are addressed, thus leading to more efficient language acquisition.

Keywords: vocabulary acquisition, corpora, word family, cognate, loanword

Various aspects of knowledge need to be mastered for a person to be fluent in a foreign language. However, learning vocabulary is by far the most time

consuming. An educated adult native speaker has 17,000 or more words in their lexicon (Zechmeister, Chronis, Cull, D'Anna, & Healy, 1995). Mastering semantic knowledge of so much vocabulary is a daunting task, especially for ESL students who have limited exposure to the language. For unavoidable reasons that this paper discusses, many students and/or teachers resort to a particular method to achieve vocabulary fluency: they utilize word lists.

This paper addresses a number of issues involved with using ESL word lists. First, it discusses the use of certain corpora. Then, it highlights the unreliability of headwords as exemplary representatives of their word families. Last, it shows why it is important to custom-tailor resources for certain learner groups by highlighting the significant amount of cognates shared between certain languages.

Research Background

In Asia, there are a number of barriers that prevent learners from attaining fluency in English. One of these issues is test-taking culture. For example, English proficiency is associated with entrance exams for Japanese and Korean universities regardless of what field a student wants to enter. Ideally, learners should master vocabulary via a variety of different activities, such as extensive reading and listening and interacting with native speakers. However, the reality is that the vast majority of students do not do this and, unfortunately, many teachers end up teaching to the tests (Miller, 2014). With only approximately 0.07 percent of the population of Japan being native English speakers (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Statistics Bureau, n.d.), the prevalence of television shows and movies being dubbed, and the lack of English exposure in general, it is easy to understand why more ideal learning methods are not utilized in Japan. Korea

faces a similar issue in that only 0.06 percent of its population is comprised of native English speakers (Koehler, 2008).

There are other barriers as well. Han (2005) remarks on how adult learners feel the quality of native English language teachers in Korea is poor. However, such teachers are very popular with younger Korean learners, possibility stemming from the general rarity of them in the population. However, Jeon (2009) notes that despite this popularity, Korean teachers of English view such teachers as being in the classroom more for mere “entertainment value” (p. 238). The situation is similar in Japan. Ohtani (2009) also reports that many Japanese native teachers of English feel that the quality of native English teachers is poor.

These issues prevent learners from obtaining English fluency in the most efficient and natural way. Thus, many teachers and students end up utilizing word lists to improve vocabulary knowledge to prepare for university entrance exams and standardized tests (i.e., TOEFL, TOEIC, etc.). A number of researchers agree that mastery of high-frequency vocabulary is essential for obtaining fluency in a second language. Such vocabulary can cover 80 percent or more of the words in most texts, and thus its value to learners is paramount (Nation, 2008). Because of the practical limitations of classroom time, Nation (2001b) believes that only high-frequency vocabulary deserves direct teaching time and recommends a cut-off point at 3,000 word families. He believes that learners will master lower frequency vocabulary via indirect study, such as through extensive reading and listening.

However, not only do university entrance exams and standardized tests in Korea and Japan load on both high- and low-frequency vocabulary, learners rarely engage in the necessary extensive activities needed for mastering the low-frequency vocabulary that

appear on these tests because of the various, persistent issues mentioned above. Thus, they rely upon word lists. While acknowledging the weakness of this approach, this study aims to improve upon a study method that is already used. Better alternatives are not presently possible because major changes to nationwide educational policies and/or major demographic changes are not realistic in the near future in the two countries in question.

Another issue with many of these word lists is the fact that they are based on outdated corpora. For instance, many of these lists derive their data from the British National Corpus (BNC), such as the English vocabulary study book *JACET 8,000 Eigtango* (English words; 2008). While this corpus is still a decent data source, there are newer alternatives available. The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) is not only more modern (it sources its data from 1990 on, and it is still being added to today), it is more balanced in that it has equal sections for spoken, fiction, newspaper, magazine, and academic language. The BNC stopped being developed in 1993 and its data, sourced mainly from the 1980s, does not contain an adequate amount of modern language relating to important technological developments, such as the word *Internet*. Thus, it has been referred to as past its “sell-by date” (Kilgarriff, Atkins, & Rundell, 2007). It is also unbalanced in that 90 percent of the corpus is sourced from written documents. This results in overly formal words having higher frequencies than one would expect.

Often, word lists categorize words as *word families*. A *word family* is “a headword, its inflected forms, and its closely related derived forms” (Nation, 2001a, p. 8). When counting words by word families, the verb and noun forms of *run* are counted together and listed as a singular entry under the headword *run*. This method of presenting vocabulary is not ideal because a word family’s representative headword is not always the most common word within that family. A clear example would be *bacterium*, the

headword that represents *bacteria* and *bacterial*. A teacher does not need to consult with a corpus to know that *bacteria* is the word that should be taught, since it occurs more frequently in spoken and written English than *bacterium*. Corpus data in Table 1 below illustrates this, with *bacteria* (a word family member) being more than ten times more frequent than *bacterium*, the headword that represents it. However, a student studying with such a word list will be unaware of this.

Table 1

Frequency counts in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA; Davies, 2008) for word types in the word family 'bacterium'

Word type	Frequency in the corpus
<i>bacteria</i>	8,505
<i>bacterial</i>	2,384
<i>bacterium</i>	843

An additional issue with word lists is the lack of consideration for certain learner groups. In particular, consideration for *cognates* is one way word lists can be improved. *Cognates* are often defined as word pairs that are shared across languages that are similar or the same in form and semantics regardless of a common ancestor (de Groot, Borgwaldt, Bos, & van den Eijnden, 2010). Removing cognates from a word list has the potential to improve the efficacy of learning because these are words the learners are already familiar with via their L1 knowledge.

For example, both Japanese and Korean share thousands of cognates with English. Nation (2001b) believes that high-frequency vocabulary are those within the first 3,000

word families of English. Take the word *symposium*, a cognate between English and Japanese. This is an advanced level vocabulary in the 7,000 word family range. However, for the Japanese learner it is not. Even a Japanese learner with very little knowledge of English should be familiar with the word's semantics and orthographic form because it is part of their L1. Some may argue that the learner will not be able to recognize the word because of differences between the two languages and the deep orthography of English. However, Rogers, and Daulton (2013) showed that learners do not have a problem with loanword recognition. Removing such words thus saves time and allows learners to concentrate on words they do not know.

Research Questions

1. What percentage of low-frequency word families contain members that are more useful to learn than the word family's headword?
2. What percentage of low-frequency English vocabulary has cognate relationships in Japanese and Korean?

Procedure

This study examined 3,082 word family headwords to determine what percentage of them had a family member that was more valuable to teach than the representative headword. These words were chosen from the 3,000-7,000 word family range of the combined BNC/COCA word family list from the RANGE program (Heatley, Nation, & Coxhead, 2002). The reason why not all 4,000 word families were examined was because this study is part of a larger study (Rogers, 2017) that aims to create a comprehensive resource for learners which covers words from the top 7,000 word families. In that study, example

sentences were written with translations provided for items in the 1,000-3,000 range. In these sentences, a number of words from the 3,000-7,000 range were used and thus these word families were excluded to avoid creating a resource that contains redundancy.

Time constraints prevented frequency data from being collected for every single word in all 3,082 word families because this would have entailed collecting data for tens of thousands of words. However, Rogers (2010) and Rogers, Daulton, MacLean, and Reid (2015) showed that native speaker intuition is reliable for judging a word's frequency. Thus, a team of four native English speaking ESL professors used their intuition to determine whether a family member had more value to be taught than its representative headword and then wrote an appropriate example sentence highlighting the word's typical usage.

Finally, each of these selected words were translated into Japanese and Korean by professional, native Japanese and Korean translators of English, utilizing the example sentence as a guide to the word's most appropriate translation. Any words that were cognates and deemed easily understood by a typical Japanese or Korean adult were removed.

Results

Regarding the percentage of word family headwords that were deemed less useful to teach an ESL learner than one or more of its family members (Research Question 1), native speakers considered 37.6 percent of the items to fall into such a category. Of the 3,082 word families examined, 1,160 were considered to be represented by a headword that had less value to learners than one or more of its family members.

In regard to the percentage of the selected representative words found to be cognates

(Research Question 2), the Japanese translator found that 9.8 percent of the items were cognates. Of the 3,082 words, 301 were deemed to be cognates that a typical Japanese person knows in their L1. The Korean translator also found a similar number of cognates. The translator found 8.4 percent of the items to be cognates between Korean and English. Of the 3,082 words, 258 were deemed to be cognates that a typical Korean person knows because of their own L1.

Discussion

To improve study lists, the easiest step would be to use more modern corpora when creating a list. Of course, corpus data will never perfectly reflect natural language, but in recent years, technological advancements have enabled researchers to compile bigger and better corpora. Therefore, word lists should constantly be updated when such resources become available, such as the COCA in comparison with the BNC.

Another improvement would be further addressing the issues examined in this paper's research questions. If one combines the results of Research Questions 1 and 2, 47.4 percent of the items in a word list could theoretically be improved upon. At nearly half of the items in a list, it is clear that significant improvements can be made by considering such factors as this study did. It is clear that at 37.6 percent, headwords that are not the most common word in the group they represent pose a significant barrier to creating good quality materials. To make learning more efficient, a compiler who is using word families to create a word list must consider this.

In addition, this study highlighted how certain learner groups, such as those whose L1 contains numerous cognates shared with the target L2, would benefit from custom-tailored materials that take their L1 into consideration. Both Japanese and Korean share

a significant number of cognates with the target English vocabulary. That justifies the extra time spent searching for and removing them from teaching lists.

Since completion of this study, the results were used as selection criteria to create new resources for Japanese and Korean learners who want to study advanced English vocabulary called *Jyou Kyuu Eitango* (Advanced English Vocabulary for Japanese Learners; Rogers et al., 2015) which teaches 2,695 words and *Gogeub Yeongdan-eo* (Advanced English Vocabulary for Korean Learners; Rogers, Bonnah, Daulton, Duquette, Montgomery, & Kim, 2015), respectively. Because of the reasons explained in this study, it is believed that the contents of these resources will make learning advanced vocabulary more efficient. As stated above, mastering thousands of vocabulary is a daunting task, and any effort that can make this easier is worthwhile.

Limitations

Although this current research possesses a number of limitations as to how its results can be interpreted, used, and relied upon, it should still serve as a good first step towards helping create materials learners can use to master advanced vocabulary more efficiently. But could these limitations have been avoided? The answer is no. The overarching approach taken to achieve the goals of this research was post-positivist. In other words, steps were taken to answer the questions that approximated reality while acknowledging unavoidable weaknesses.

For instance, setting a frequency cut-off to identify low-frequency vocabulary is unavoidably arbitrary (Nation, 2001b). However, to create a resource that students would study directly, some cut-off must be utilized so the results will never be unequivocal. Researchers must therefore make the best approximation possible.

In addition, judgments as to which word family members were more valuable to study in comparison to the family's headword were also admittedly subjective. However, this study highlighted previous studies which show that such native speaker intuition can be relied upon for judgments in regard to word frequency. For instance, *bacteria* may be considered a more useful word to learn since it occurs more frequently in comparison to its headword *bacterium*. However, at times it might be more difficult to choose between a headword or word family member. Despite this, we believe that the approach taken in this study can be relied upon to produce good results.

Conclusion

This study examined three factors that can affect the quality of a word list for second language learners. It highlighted how the age of a corpus can affect the quality of word lists that are sourced from it. This study also showed that headwords are not ideal for word list compilation in that native speakers judged 37.6 percent of the items examined in this study to have word family members more valuable to teach than that family's headword. In addition, this study found that 9.8 percent of the items examined corresponded to cognates with Japanese and 8.4 percent corresponded to cognates with Korean, and thus word lists may benefit from the removal of such words since they may be already known to learners.

This study thus highlighted clear ways that word lists can be improved on to help students learn more efficiently. The age of a corpus, the benefit of learning non-headword vocabulary, and whether a target vocabulary item is a cognate shared with the learner's L1 were shown to be important factors to consider when creating L2 learning materials.

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Operationalizing Educational Scaffolding in a Japanese High School English Classroom: A Theoretical Approach

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Abstract

This paper presents a notional approach to operationalizing a sociocultural theory of language learning, the Zone of Proximal Development, to support second and foreign language learning by using appropriate educational scaffolding in a practical teaching context. The aim is to provide an example of how to promote greater communicative language use in high school English classrooms in Japan. First, the paper gives a survey of the theoretical underpinnings of relevant sociocultural approaches to language learning. The paper then attempts to link theory and practice. A sample teaching-plan is included, based on a lesson given as part of a team-taught debate course, which is currently offered at a public high school in Japan. The paper offers examples and analysis of how the plan exemplifies the principles of educational scaffolding and the Zone of Proximal Development. Finally, potential issues relating to the practical application of such approaches are raised. Furthermore, particular issues arising in a Japanese educational context are considered. Strategies to pre-empt and overcome such difficulties are then discussed.

Keywords: sociolinguistics, operationalizing scaffolding, ZPD, high school, English communication, debate, lesson planning

A key goal of Sociocultural Theory (SCT) in the field of second and foreign language learning since Vygotsky's (1978) description of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) has been to define the nature of the relationship between language learning and social interaction (Ellis, 2012). That is to say, SCT in second and foreign language learning concerns how our social interactions

mediate our intellectual development towards autonomous language learning (Lehr, 1985). Developmental psychologists, such as Bruner (1978), developed Vygotsky's ideas and asserted that a language learner's progress towards autonomy depends greatly on assistance and support from someone with a greater amount of knowledge or skill. In order to make progress, the learner must negotiate the transition towards being able to use the language unassisted. During this transition, the role of the more skilled or expert person, whether they are an instructor or a fellow learner, can be to provide suitable frameworks at appropriate stages in order to assist the learner. Bruner (1978) called this process of applying instructional frameworks "scaffolding."

This paper examines the concept of scaffolding, and how it could be operationalized in a Japanese high school English classroom. Moreover, it demonstrates how appropriate scaffolding encourages students to participate in communicative English activities. Following this, the paper presents an overview of the links between the theory and practice of scaffolding. A sample activity is described and the paper clarifies how the principles of scaffolding are embodied in the activity. Finally, issues that are likely to arise with such activities in similar educational contexts, as well as solutions for these issues, are discussed.

Scaffolding Theory

Scaffolding is a metaphor for the temporary support initially applied and then faded out by a more skilled expert to help a less skilled language learner move towards autonomy (Lehr, 1985). In this sense, instructional scaffolding is analogous to real scaffolding in that it is to be used or removed as needed. Swain (2006) has expanded the idea of scaffolding to describe how groups of language learners engage in collaborative dialogue,

build knowledge, and negotiate meaning. In other words, peers' mutual interactions scaffold and co-construct each other's learning (Swain & Watanabe, 2012).

Cazden (1983) first described how instructional scaffolding can be vertical or sequential. Vertical scaffolding develops a language learner's ability by providing them with the support to make progressive advances. For instance, in response to a student's answer, an instructor may purposefully ask that student further questions, which prompt the student to provide a more detailed explanation, or to give specific examples. By contrast, sequential scaffolding provides an opportunity for the mechanical repetition of language patterns, which then become familiar to the learner. An example may be drilling of language patterns to be used in a given situation. Once the patterns are established and have become routinized and predictable, the reduced cognitive burden can in turn permit the learner to make further developments. A review of work by authors, such as Applebee and Langer (1983), Hogan and Pressley (1997), and others, suggest a variety of key principles to help us design and implement instructional scaffolding. Applebee and Langer (1983) suggest that scaffolding activities should have a clear purpose, that teachers should consider their students' abilities when choosing an activity, and that scaffolding should be faded out over time. For instance, novice learners require large amounts of support, but once they "achieve independence in task mastery" (Salkind, 2008, p. 863) they need little to no support, as they have become responsible for their own learning and language use.

Hogan and Pressley (1997) note that optimal examples of activities should be modeled and individual assistance should be offered to help students complete activities. Instructional scaffolding has two main phases, development and execution, indicating that sufficient pre-planning is as essential as in-class support.

Scaffolding translates well into a series of foundational pedagogical principles. Furthermore, when put into practice, scaffolding can take many easily usable forms, such as teacher modeling or vocabulary pre-teaching (Larkin, 2001), continually clarifying the goals of a pedagogical activity (Sharma & Hannafin, 2005), and cognitive mapping (Nesbit & Adesope, 2013). Outside of the classroom, scaffolding can also refer to attempts by educators to reduce the extraneous cognitive load (Sweller & Chandler, 1994) of a pedagogic activity through good lesson design and planning (Dickson, Chard, & Simmons, 1993).

Pedagogical Activity

The following section examines the process of relating theory and practice when developing and executing scaffolding in a pedagogical activity.

A sample lesson plan at the end of this paper provides context for the scaffolding activity in Step 2 through Step 4, which are in bold (see Appendix). The lesson is 60 minutes long and is a schema lesson for a debate course currently being taught at a public high school in Japan. The aim of the lesson is to prepare the class to debate a resolution in a later lesson by building students' vocabulary and bridging their pre-existing knowledge to the resolution. The lesson is co-taught, and to optimize the co-teaching model (Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989; Dieker & Murawski, 2003), the two teachers equally share the responsibility for lesson planning and classroom instruction.

The scaffolding activity, parts two through four in the lesson plan, is based on a reading passage of a semi-authentic text at the far end of the ZPD for most of the students, which covers issues related to the debate resolution. The original text has been modified to control the reading level, and to include the target language (TL), introduced in Step 2.

The TL was identified and selected from frequency analyses of appropriate resource texts to help the students debate the resolution. Steps 3 and 4 are conducted in the Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) format, a reading strategy that shows students “how to monitor their comprehension and [...] to use procedures for clarifying understanding” (Vaughn et al., 2011, p.940). Students work in small groups to help each other co-construct their understanding of reading comprehension passages. Although originally designed for L1 users, with appropriate scaffolding, content selection and pre-teaching of comprehension strategies, CSR can be a successful instructional tool (Grabe, 2004) for teaching second language reading. In this activity, students apply these pre-taught strategies in pairs, working together to identify areas they do and do not understand before helping each other to answer the comprehension questions following the teacher’s model.

Relating Theory and Practice in the Activity

This activity attempts to embody the principles of scaffolding in several ways. Firstly, it builds on the learners’ previous knowledge. All the students are familiar with key terms and practices involved in preparing for a debate. This prior experience is a form of procedural scaffolding (Stavredes, 2011), as the students are already familiar with many of the aims and procedures involved in the activity, reducing their cognitive load and lowering barriers to participation. Secondly, the text is modified to include all the target language. Care should be taken during text selection and lesson planning to ensure that, with sufficient support, students can comprehend the lesson (Stahl, 2012). Lastly, there is a gradual transfer of responsibility (Applebee & Langer, 1983). The teacher initially assumes the burden of reading the difficult text. The teacher then gradually allows the students to shoulder more of the exercise, eliciting answers and giving exemplary models.

Finally, the students are given the chance to discuss the text and questions in pairs, and to engage in a more independent collaborative dialogue with their partner in order to co-construct an understanding of the meaning of the text and answer the remaining comprehension questions.

Walqui (2006) has identified this kind of schema building as one of six major types of instructional scaffolding that can promote collaborative dialogue. This activity helps students engage in a highly independent collaborative dialogue by giving them a chance to co-construct their understanding of the text. This in turn prepares them for a debate to be held in a future lesson, where opinions and statements are given, challenged, and defended. As Swain and Watanabe (2012) note, by fostering opportunities for collaborative dialogue, this kind of activity can help learners overcome social barriers and begin to scaffold each other's learning. Each member of the pair can pose questions or suggest answers to the other. As such, this activity is based on the principles of Applebee and Langer (1983), Hogan and Pressley (1997), and others; it has a clear purpose, it involves careful activity selection, it gradually transfers responsibility from experts to novices, it contains modeling, and it encourages peer scaffolding.

Context

While developing similar pedagogic activities, it is important to consider the context in which the activity takes place. In the lesson for which this activity is designed there were 20 Japanese high school students between 16 and 17 years old. Of note, by this age, most students in Japan have completed at least 4 years of compulsory secondary education in English (MEXT, 2013). All students have chosen to take part in an international course of study where they learn two or three foreign languages. In 2017, a majority of graduates

from the international course go on to study at higher education institutions in Japan after graduating high school (Osaka Prefecture Board of Education, 2017). Many of those students go on to major in a subject area where foreign language study is a key component, such as Linguistics or International Studies. As such, the students are generally highly motivated to participate in English learning activities.

Potential Problems

At this stage, despite all of the positive aspects of scaffolding activities, some barriers to the execution of scaffolding in this context exist. Although Japan's Ministry of Education is trying to promote communicative approaches to language learning, there is some evidence that this promotion has not been successful (Butler, 2011). Japanese public school English teachers have traditionally favoured the grammar-translation method as a teaching methodology (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008) because university entrance examinations focus on translation skills (Murphy, 2001). As a result, Japanese high school students are sometimes not familiar with collaborative learning styles. In addition, not all students feel able to participate equally. Kobayashi (2002) has written that women in Japanese society have a somewhat marginalized status. This might affect how they engage with a collaborative dialogue building exercise. For example, female students might be unlikely to challenge a male student's interpretation of a text, as female students are more likely to feel social pressure to defer to the male student's opinion.

The biggest barrier might be that Japanese students tend to be error-adverse, lacking the confidence to independently volunteer or participate (Ikeda, 2008). This could hinder efforts to promote collaborative dialogue. As noted by Swain and Watanabe (2012), fostering collaborative knowledge building is a foundation of language learning. In fact,

it is likely that anxiety over error making (Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004) and the fear of losing face are two of the most demotivating factors which affect students' ability to engage in collaborative dialogues, and this might affect their ability to benefit from the kind of Collaborative Strategic Reading activity described above.

Intervention Strategies

To deal with the above issues, language teachers should adopt appropriate pre-emptive strategies. Sufficient attention in the development and planning of activities can be an effective strategy. Firstly, although this lesson is taught in English, the two teachers should agree on appropriate times for the non-native speaking teacher to use the students' first language (L1). This will "mediate L2 development during ZPD activity in the target language" (Swain & Lampkin, 2013, p. 123). Additionally, this helps the students to overcome any anxiety caused by a lack of understanding of what they are supposed to be doing and why. Secondly, in class, the students should not be discouraged from using their common L1 amongst themselves, as this helps them mediate their co-creation of peer scaffolding (Swain & Lampkin, 2013).

Conclusion

I have discussed how students who have been given scaffolding learning opportunities might adopt more confident and active approaches to interaction and communication. Despite facing practical and social barriers, the strategies mentioned here might help in the ongoing development of a learning environment where Japanese students feel able to participate in a shared learning experience without anxiety. When instructors are able to preemptively address challenges through sufficient awareness of student needs,

operationalizing scaffolding through techniques such as CSR may have beneficial communicative outcomes for learners of second or foreign languages. The degree to which these outcomes are beneficial needs further analysis. This kind of action research is limited in terms of transferability by focus on the individual educational context. Future studies could attempt a much greater scope of data collection in order to permit triangulation, and compare the benefits of scaffolding techniques other than CSR.

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Appendix

Sample Lesson Plan

Schema Lesson			
General Information			
Teachers	1 Native English Teacher 1 Japanese Teacher of English	Class Size	20
Subject	Debate	Ability	
Date			
Year Group: Second Grade		Lesson Time: 60 minutes	
<p>Learning Objective By the end of the class all students should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activated their vocabulary and schema relating to a new debate resolution - Completed the Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) activity 			
Lesson Flow	Timing (minutes)	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
1) Warm-up	3	Introduce learning objective, reveal the new debate resolution, and lead an informal discussion.	Copy down the resolution.
2) Vocabulary	4	Lead a class brainstorming session for the new resolution. Each student must volunteer a related word. Introduce the Target Language (TL).	Join in brainstorming, and copy down target language.
3) Passage Preview	5	Read the reading passage aloud once. Have the students briefly compare notes and check their comprehension in pairs.	Listen and make notes without looking at the text. Check understanding with a partner, and report back to class.
4) Comprehension Questions	5	Display the passage and questions on students' screens. Review questions, check students' understanding.	Read questions aloud. Individually scan the text for TL, highlighting it.
5) Model Answer	10	Walk through the answering process for the first comprehension question using the whiteboard. Review the TL, discuss difficult words, summarize important information for the other teacher, and answer questions. Check student understanding of the process.	Follow the teacher through the answering process.
6) Pair Work	25	Provide explanations in the students' L1 as required while circulating	Work in pairs to apply the same procedures to the passage, and answer the questions.
7) Wrap Up	5	Discuss students' answers using the whiteboard and compare them to model answers.	Check answers.
8) Plenary	3	Assign homework. Each student is to write a summary of the passage in his or her own words.	Students note down homework and repeat goodbyes.

A Preliminary Study on Variable Sentence Response in a Non-Traditional L2 Classroom in Japan

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Abstract

Students' lack of willingness to communicate in foreign language classes in Asia has been the focus of many recent studies (Tsui, 1996; Yashima, 2002; Zhang, 2002). In an effort to overcome these issues, this study implements a communicative teaching methodology called Variable Sentence Response (VSR). VSR addresses some of the major issues regarding student L2 communication in other contexts (French, 2015), including student motivation, communication anxiety, and student confidence. While previous studies took place in university classes, this study attempted to replicate the results in a non-traditional classroom setting in Japan. The students in this setting vary greatly in age, motivation, and skill level. This study found that the use of VSR in this class caused students to enjoy the class more, to feel more comfortable speaking, and to be less afraid of making mistakes than in previous classes, as per a student survey. Although the scope of this study is small, the results point to the possibility that VSR is adaptable to many situations, and the boundaries of VSR are not limited to traditional classroom settings.

Keywords: variable sentence response, willingness to communicate, non-traditional classroom

Recent research has shown that students in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes in Asia lack willingness to communicate (WTC) (Littlewood 2000; Tsui, 1996; Zhang, 2002). Littlewood (2007) found the long-standing traditional approach to teaching English has been teacher-centered and transmission-oriented, which has led to, “the assumption that students receive knowledge from the

teacher” (Littlewood as cited in Humphries & Burns, 2015). This might have led to the current situation where students feel “it is safer to keep silent [...] and adopt a generally passive role in the classroom” (Zhang, 2002, p. 2).

Yashima (2002) found that several factors affected a person’s WTC and suggested that EFL lessons should focus on enhancing students’ interest in different cultures, reduce anxiety, and build their communicative confidence to maximize student’s WTC.

A methodology that attempts to address some of these issues is French’s (2015) VSR method. This method was used in a Japanese university and has been shown to be highly motivating and improves students’ perceptions of their own English-speaking skills. However, it has not been tested with all classroom types and teaching styles.

This method attends to several aspects of Dörnyei’s (2001, as cited in Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008) motivational strategies taxonomy, which call for:

- Creating basic motivational conditions.
- Generating initial motivation.
- Maintaining and protecting motivation.
- Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation.

Based on the above taxonomy, this paper posits that implementing VSR methodology in a Japanese classroom with students of mixed skill levels will lead to: (1) students being more comfortable speaking; (2) increased student enjoyment; and (3) increased student talk time.

Description of Activities

There are several steps involved in the implementation of VSR. These include a listening portion, variable sentence response, pronunciation practice, and an interview.

Listening Activity

Using the VSR method, the students are first read a story describing a situation that the students might find themselves in. Students are then asked comprehension questions to ensure they have understood the story. Materials from French's website, created for junior and senior high school students with a TOEIC level of 300 or lower, were adapted slightly to be more contextual to older students. Contextualizing the topic of interaction is important, because making the materials relevant for the learners is important for generating initial motivation in students (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). For the purpose of this study, one major change made to the methodology of VSR was that instead of using stories, students listened to pre-recorded conversations in which people talked about common situations in Japan. The speaking component included situations such as making plans with friends and talking about a Japanese festival.

Variable Sentence Response

Next, the students are given a list of ten conversational sentences which are set in the context of the listening activity, and the students are asked to write responses to each of the conversational sentences. This activity also provides students with the ability to preplan their responses, which is also important because,

[w]hen learners know what they are going to talk or write about they have more processing space available for formulating the language needed to express their ideas with the result that the quantity of the output will be enhanced and also fluency and complexity. (Ellis, 2002, p. 83)

Preplanning responses also helps increase students' expectancy of success because it reduces the number of processes necessary for successful interaction, which is another important aspect of Dörnyei's (2001) taxonomy of motivation strategies.

After the students are finished writing their responses to the sentences on the list, the students begin practicing the conversation with their partners while focusing on using the sentences in variable order. This is done with multiple partners until the students are comfortable speaking and responding to the sentences. Gradually, the difficulty level is raised. First, the answering student is not allowed to look at their prepared responses. Then the students are given time limits to their interactions and are asked to repeat the exercise with several partners. Once the students approach this level, the teacher pushes them to continue practicing and to focus on speaking and responding to the sentences as fast as they can to improve their fluency.

Pronunciation Activity

At some point in the lesson after the students are comfortable speaking and responding to the sentences, they are asked to participate in a pronunciation activity. Here some aspects of supra-segmental pronunciation such as assimilation, elision, and liaison patterns are explicitly taught and practiced by students, who speak the conversational sentences as fast as they can. This is beneficial because it helps prepare the students to understand faster paced, natural sounding English and further encourages students to focus on fluency.

Interview

After the students have practiced with several partners, they are asked to line up for a final interview test with the teacher. The teacher reads five sentences from the list of conversational sentences in random order, and the students must respond quickly and

intelligibly to pass the test. The students must keep taking the test until they pass the test, but are allowed multiple attempts if they fail.

Research Methodology

Test Subjects

The class was a voluntary, English-speaking course at a public recreation center in Osaka, which was offered once a week. Students ranged from university students to retirees with beginner to intermediate language skills. The weekly class sizes varied from eight to fourteen students. Classes were 60 minutes long and research was conducted over a month.

Data Collection and Analysis

At the end of the period of instruction, the students were asked to respond to ten-question survey (see Appendix). These questions asked the students to compare VSR to activities they had done in previous lessons with respect to (a) the students' level of comfort, (b) the students' perceived amount of talk time, (c) the students' feelings toward the lessons, (d) the students' perceived focus of the lessons, (e) the students' level of motivation in VSR lessons, (f) the students' fear of making mistakes and, (g) the students' opinions of which aspects of the lesson they enjoyed.

The survey was a voluntary, anonymous survey, and of the 11 students there on the day the survey was handed out, eight opted to take the survey. As it was a voluntary survey, some students chose not to answer some of the questions. In the end three surveys were fully completed and five were partially completed. Because of this and the small sample size the average scores of responses on a five-point Likert scale were not used.

Results

The first question asked the students if they felt more comfortable taking this kind of lesson, to which seven of the eight students responded positively while the last student left the question blank. For the second question, regarding students' perceived level of talk time, again seven of the students agreed or strongly agreed that they felt they talked more in the test class, with one abstaining from answering the question and instead writing in the margins that it depended on their partner. For the third question, all eight students answered that the class was enjoyable. The fourth question asked the students about their fear of making mistakes. Six students responded and reported feeling less worried.

When asked what they enjoyed most about the lesson, six students responded. Three students enjoyed the focus on speaking, one student enjoyed the focus on pronunciation, one student enjoyed the method of testing, and one student enjoyed the grammar corrections.

The next question, which asked students what they felt was the focus of the lesson, received seven responses. Four out of seven students felt that the focus of the lessons was on comprehension, one student thought the focus was on fluency, one thought it was on grammar, one thought it was pronunciation, and one student left this question blank.

Question eight asked if the students felt more motivated to speak during the lesson. Seven out of eight students responded positively, with one student having no opinion. As a follow up, students were asked what motivated them in the lesson, and only three students responded. One student responded positively to feeling more motivated to study, but could not answer why. Another student felt motivated because the theme of the lesson was something the student could relate to. The last student felt motivated because they felt like they were able to speak English.

The students were then asked what part of the class they felt was most interesting. Five students responded. Three of the students answered that the conversation section was the most interesting, one person felt the listening section was most interesting, and one person thought the pronunciation section was most interesting. When asked why, two students who answered that the conversation section was most interesting wrote that they were able to speak and listen to others in English. A third student also answered that the conversation section was most interesting but wrote that they wanted to live outside of Japan.

Discussion

Before implementing VSR lessons in class, it seemed as though only the strongest students raised their hands to answer questions. The distribution of talk time was heavily in favor of the teacher, and students rarely the initiated interactions. Also, students tended to focus on target language forms rather than the message being delivered. However, many of these problems were addressed in the VSR lessons. First, the students were allowed much more autonomy, because most of the exercises were student initiated. This meant that the students talked more and the teacher talked less. This also meant that, in the absence of the teacher, the students had to negotiate meaning with one another or risk communicative failure. Target language forms were no longer the focus of the lesson because the target language only served as a means to initiate interaction.

Although the results were positive for French's VSR method, there were difficulties with implementing it. One of the main issues during the first few lessons was that some of the lower-level students became confused when they received instructions in English. This led to either the stronger students explaining the situation to the lower-

level students in their L1 or long periods of class time being spent on giving examples in the L2 so that the students could understand. In future uses with low-level students, it might be beneficial to have more L1 use.

However, one danger of using students' L1 in the classroom is that the students might resort to using it during the VSR exercises to avoid communicative failure. Students that found the lesson difficult tended to rely on their L1 to express their ideas, unless the teacher encouraged the student to attempt the activities in their L2.

One of the most interesting results of this questionnaire was in response to the question of what the students' felt the focus of the lessons were. The lesson plans included many speaking exercises, but half of the respondents thought the lessons were focused on comprehension, while only one respondent felt the lessons were focused on fluency. Perhaps this was due to the changes made to the original VSR method which used a story to establish a context instead of a sample dialogue.

Conclusion

This study sought to find out if the VSR method would increase student talk time, reduce students' fears of making mistakes, increase the students' level of comfort while speaking, and be enjoyable to the students. There were no negative responses to any of the questions and despite the limited scope of this survey, the VSR method was a success. There was increased talk time, students were less afraid of making mistakes, and they became more comfortable when speaking, regardless of their age or language ability.

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Appendix
Class Survey

- 1) I feel more comfortable speaking in this kind of lesson than in traditional lessons.
 - 1) Strongly disagree
 - 2) Disagree
 - 3) No opinion
 - 4) Agree
 - 5) Strongly agree

- 2) I practiced speaking more than in traditional lessons.
 - 1) Strongly disagree
 - 2) Disagree
 - 3) No opinion
 - 4) Agree
 - 5) Strongly agree

- 3) The lessons are interesting and fun.
 - 1) Strongly disagree
 - 2) Disagree
 - 3) No opinion
 - 4) Agree
 - 5) Strongly agree

- 4) What do you like or dislike about the lessons?

- 5) What is the focus of these lessons?
 - 1) Grammar
 - 2) Fluency
 - 3) Comprehension
 - 4) Pronunciation

6) I feel more motivated to learn in this type of lesson than traditional lessons.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) No opinion
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

7) Why do you agree or disagree?

8) I am less afraid of making mistakes in this type of lesson.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) No opinion
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

9) What part of the lesson was most interesting?

- 1) Listening section
- 2) Conversation section
- 3) Pronunciation section

10) Why?

The Group Memorization Method: Efficient and Motivating Language Study

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Abstract

Mastering a second language involves the memorization of a tremendous amount of information. It is inevitable that, at some point, learners will experience a loss of motivation due to the difficulty and monotony of this task. Thus, teachers need to utilize activities in their classes that not only achieve the laborious task of memorization, but activities that learners also enjoy participating in while they develop their fluency. Such activities are ideal because they not only achieve pedagogical goals with high efficacy, but are also enjoyable and motivating for learners. This article will describe a set of connected activities called the Group Memorization Method (GMM), which fulfill these two important factors. The activities feature Leitner-style forced production learning, which has been shown in previous research to be highly efficient and, as will be highlighted in this study, highly motivational when incorporated into competitive in-class activities. The implementation of this method at a Japanese university and student responses to the method will also be discussed.

Keywords: vocabulary acquisition, Leitner algorithm, spaced repetition, motivation

Language learning is a lifelong process which involves mastering tens of thousands of words and phrases. For second language learning, mastering such a large number of items is often a daunting task, especially in the early stages when the learner is not yet at the stage where he/she can use the language to enjoy communicating with native speakers and/or learn about foreign culture. For many, learning about a foreign culture makes the arduous task worthwhile, however, some do lose motivation early on and do not get to the stage where this enjoyment occurs. This is

often the case for English learners in Japan where access to native English speakers is limited. Thus, there is a clear need to provide learners with the support they need to overcome this initial challenge.

To overcome this barrier, in-class activities will ideally not only achieve pedagogical goals in an efficient way, but will also be enjoyable for learners to help maintain motivation. However, efficient activities might not be very enjoyable, and enjoyable activities may not be very efficient. Fortunately, the Group Memorization Method (GMM) is not only efficient, but also highly motivating. It is based on sound scientific theories related to what kind of exposure a learner's brain needs to retain information into his/her long-term memory. Furthermore, it has been shown to be an extremely popular activity, with over 1,000 learners over many years. This article will describe the theoretical background of this method, details of how to implement it, and the type of effectiveness it can achieve.

The Leitner Method

A particular pattern of review is necessary before an item can be committed to long-term memory (Goodwin-Jones, 2010). Many researchers recommend spacing the intervals in which items are studied to achieve long-term memory retention (Nakata, 2008; Nation, 2001; Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995). In this 'expanded rehearsal', "learners should review new material soon after the initial meeting, and then at gradually increasing intervals" (Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995, p. 136). This is known as spaced repetition.

This method can be taken a step further by putting more difficult items aside to be studied sooner and more often than other easier items. In the 1940s, Sebastian Leitner developed such a method, which is now referred to as the Leitner Method. He utilized

five boxes which learners used as they studied with flashcards. When the student got an item correct, the card moved up a box. If not, it was put back into the same box and repeated, and only moved up a box when it was answered correctly. The student would cycle through all five boxes until all the cards reached the fifth box, the time at which the study session was then considered finished.

In recent years, educational materials developers have created a modern version of the Leitner Method, utilizing the power of computers to keep track of which items need to be repeated more often. Smartphone flashcard applications now use complex Leitner-based algorithms to help learners to more efficiently achieve pedagogical goals. Rogers and Reid (2015) showed that a smartphone flashcard application that features such a Leitner algorithm was 39% more efficient for studying formulaic chunks in comparison with a paper list.

Even though the application utilized by Rogers and Reid (2015) is mainly geared toward individual study, such an efficient implementation of the Leitner Method can also be achieved in the classroom. Moreover, by adding the interpersonal dynamic of the classroom setting and friendly competition between students, such a method can be a highly enjoyable, motivating way to learn with other classmates. This is what the GMM achieves.

The GMM

Introduction

The GMM was invented by the author, a university language professor in Japan, in 2009. It has been used with approximately 1,000 Japanese university students studying English. The method also has been used to train hundreds of junior high school and high school

English foreign assistant language teachers for the Osaka Board of Education. Although this study method can be used to learn any kind of information (historical dates and/or events in a history class, etc.), it was originally developed for learning English vocabulary or formulaic chunks. It is a supplementary activity and is ideal for lesson goals such as the pre-teaching of vocabulary before reading a passage. The key to this method's success is the combination of friendly competition and a variety of different activities done in a short time to avoid repetition and boredom. Another important aspect is that, regardless of student proficiency level, the vast majority of students have been shown to always be able to achieve the goals of the activity. Moreover, the method has been shown to be enjoyed by students equally, regardless of their proficiency level.

One study session lasts for approximately 20 minutes (depending on class size). However, this time can be modified to be longer or shorter. The sessions work well as class warm-ups or fillers, or when there is extra time at the end of a class. The ultimate goal of a study session is the productive knowledge of the target items.

Step One

If students are using a smartphone app with content already in it, students simply quiz each other randomly on previously studied content for three minutes. If students are not using a smartphone app, they must write the target vocabulary or formulaic chunks onto flashcards (ideally the pocket-sized type which are commonly sold on a ring throughout Japan). They write the target item (an English word, for instance) on one side and the answer (its Japanese translation, for instance) on the other side. Ten items per session is an ideal work load. The writing of items usually takes approximately three minutes, and is a study session in itself. After the students finish writing the items, they study in pairs

as described above.

Step Two

Next, students form groups of three to five students. Again, if students are studying with a smartphone app, they will simply use their own phones to select an item for quizzing other students. If paper flashcards are used, each group receives a paper cup and one student puts the ten new items in the cup plus 20 old items for review (30 cards in total). Then, one student (student A) takes a card and quizzes the student next to them (student B) L2-L1 (a Japanese student would see the English word and try to produce the Japanese translation). If correct, that student (student B) receives the card, takes the cup, and quizzes the next student (student C). If that student (student C) does not know the answer, the next student (student D) has a chance to ‘steal’ the card. If student D knows the answer, he or she gets the card. After that, student C takes the cup and quizzes student D again. If correct, student D receives two cards. In this way, some students end up with more cards than others, and the student with the most cards at the end of the game is the winner. Note that if none of the students in the group know the answer to a card, the student holding the card shows the answer to everyone, and then puts the card back in the cup to be studied again. Essentially, this is a group-based Leitner Method activity in which more difficult items are studied more often than easier items.

Students study in the L2-L1 direction for four minutes, and then study in the L1-L2 direction for four minutes. A group can typically finish 30 cards within four minutes. Note that if a student does not know the answer, the student holding the card should only give the other student about five seconds to say the answer. If a group finishes all the cards before the four-minute L2-L1 time limit is up, they should count their cards,

remember how many they had gotten correct, put them back in the cup, and continue studying until the teacher tells them to switch the study direction (from L2-L1 to L1-L2). When the time is up, the student with the most cards is the winner. For classes where a smartphone app is utilized instead of paper flashcards, students can keep track of how many correct answers they had on a sheet of paper. An easy way to implement this is to provide students with a printout that has a box for each day the activity is used in class. Of note, each box should have room for students to jot down tally marks as they proceed, a place to write the total score, and a place for a teacher to affix a reward stamp. Winners of the competition receive a reward stamp, and these stamps can be considered during grading. Teachers can also keep a record of which students won in the class rosters as well, but a stamp that is visible to the other students (such as on a student's name card) is ideal because this motivates other students to catch up and try to gain as many stamps as the others (see Figure 1 below).

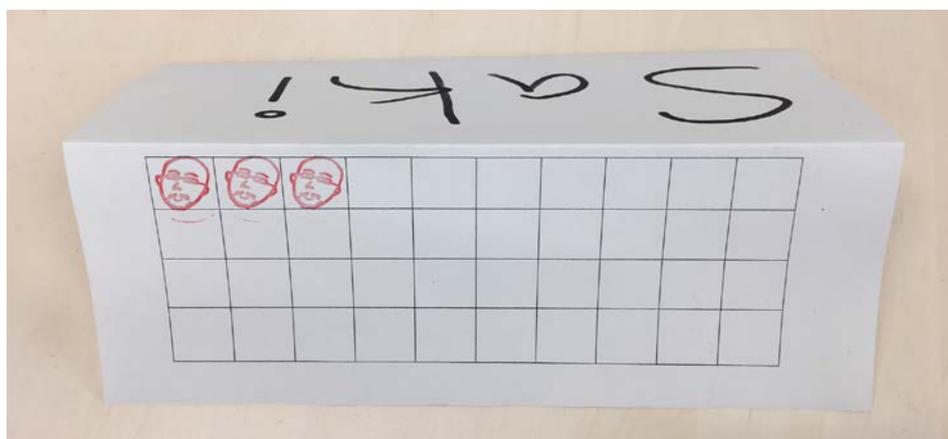


Figure 1. Example of a student's name card with a stamp grid on the back for recording winners of group battles.

Step Three

The final activity is a head-to-head battle. The teacher instructs the entire class to stand

in two long lines while the teacher stands at the front of the class between them. The teacher will then choose a random item (L1) with which to quiz the students at the front of the line. Whichever student says the answer (L2) first then sits while the loser goes to the back of the line. Students can either try to simply say the answer the quickest or they can also raise their hands and say something such as 'I know' to indicate they are ready to say an answer. A teacher can also use physical game show buzzers or tablet game show buzzer applications to let students buzz-in first and then say the answer. However, some students do try to buzz-in first and then take a little time trying to think of the answer while the other student may know it. To protect against this kind of cheating, the teacher can employ a 'yellow card' punishment system. If a student does not say the answer within one second of buzzing in, they receive a physical yellow card and are sent to the back of the line while the other student will then have a chance to answer. Five such cards is usually more than enough for a class of 30 students. When a student with a yellow card plays again, he or she returns his or her yellow card and regardless of whether or not if the holder of the yellow card gets the next question correct, they must come back a second time. The head-to-head battle can also be modified for small classes. For instance, to fill more time, students can be required to get three questions correct instead of one before they can sit.

Another alternative would be to have entire classes battle each other. At the author's current university, all classes are coordinated in that all teachers teach the same content. Part of the official curriculum is also for first and second year students to study a fixed number of English collocational phrases from this author's English learning smartphone app *Eigo Masutaa 3,000* (English Master 3,000; Rogers et al., 2016). Because all classes were studying the same content at the same time, these inter-class battles were

regularly conducted by teachers of the course.

These battles have the potential to improve motivation in that they encourage a class of students to operate as a team. It also is potentially enjoyable in that it breaks the monotony of staying in one classroom since the students will have to visit another class. Moreover, it can be fun for students because it gives them the opportunity to interact with students they otherwise would not interact with.

Review Sessions

Occasional special review games are also a part of the method. Usually these are used after completing one month of study sessions. In general, a teacher should never expect students to master information that they cannot master themselves, and one of these review games ensures that this does not happen. The game is the same as the battle discussed above, but with the teacher on one side and the entire class on the other. In the usual battle, the teacher quizzes the two battling students but in this game the teacher will select one student to choose the item to quiz with. This switching of roles is very enjoyable for students, especially when they can “beat” their own teacher.

Another type of review game that can be used has the entire class stand while the teacher quizzes a random student on a random item that has been studied. If the student’s answer is correct, he or she can sit down. However, if the student cannot answer, he or she must remain standing and any other students that are sitting must also stand. This creates excitement because the greater the number of students sitting, the more pressure there is on the standing students, with the ultimate excitement occurring when the last student is quizzed.

Yet another review type game that can be utilized is a *Family Feud* style game in

which an announcer (the teacher) asks questions and two groups (two to four students per group) compete to answer. The two groups stand in two lines with the teacher between them. Again, teachers can use game show buzzers, or simply require students to raise their hand and say, “I know”, etc. If a student in one group pushes their buzzer or says, ‘I know’ first, that student has a chance to answer, but cannot receive any help from the others on his or her team. Talking within the group before buzzing in also is not allowed. When a correct answer is given, that group gets a point. When one group collects three points, the whole group wins and can sit down. If the answer is wrong, however, the other group has a chance to answer, but they can discuss it with each other before saying the answer. However, if their answer is also wrong, the question goes back to the first group that answered incorrectly. This time, though, the group can discuss the answer before giving it. If wrong again, both groups must go to the back of the line, and two other groups are given a chance to battle. Of note, this method seems to work best with questions that require some thinking time. Therefore, straight L1-L2 translations (such as the teacher saying a Japanese word and the students producing the English equivalent) do not work well. Rather, cloze sentences to which the students have not been exposed, but contain a studied target word or phrase work well in this game. The best way to quiz students with a cloze sentence is to show it on a projector screen. Such sentences take time to comprehend, and it is typical for the two groups to spend 30 seconds just trying to comprehend the sentence before buzzing in.

Effectiveness

The GMM is very effective for long-term retention of information. A paper-based version of this method, implemented for 20 minutes twice a week over a 15-week semester,

resulted in a subsample of freshmen taking an English course at a private Japanese foreign language university (n=58) being able to retain 170 previously unknown formulaic chunks over one semester with an average of 83% on a final test which judged L2 productive knowledge. This method was also successful for retention of L2 productive knowledge of 170 singular vocabulary items as well, with an average of 86% on a final test of L2 productive knowledge.

Smartphone-based implementation of this method with a subsample of Japanese freshmen at a second private Japanese university (n=131) was also trialed by Rogers et al. (2016) utilizing the application *Eigo Masutaa Sanzen* (English Master 3000). This study resulted in a bi-weekly cloze quiz average of 90% correct for 350 formulaic chunks (25 chunks a week over a 15-week semester).

Students Work Instead of Teachers

One other key aspect to the GMM is that the activities make the students work, not the teacher. In the eight years that the author has utilized this method, students have never lost interest in the activities. Despite using the same method in every class throughout an entire semester, students simply never seem to get bored of it. In fact, they seem to enjoy it more as time goes on. Typical reactions throughout a semester include students laughing, yelling with their fist in the air when they get a tough item correct, and so on.

While students are studying and enjoying themselves in groups, the teacher can walk around the class and monitor the activity, or join various groups to take cards out of the cup and quiz students with them. However, the method also allows autonomous learning because the students can study in their small groups while the teacher sets up the next activity. Thus, the teacher's class ends up teaching itself while the teacher simply

observes and encourages. However, during the small group study activity, it is recommended that the teacher quiz a few students on a few items in order to become involved in the excitement and learning process.

Motivational Response

This method was utilized in courses taught by the author for seven years at a private Japanese language university. At the end of each semester, when students complete course evaluations, one question focuses on overall student satisfaction for the course: ‘What is your overall evaluation of this course?’ Students can choose from Low, Slightly Low, Neutral, High, and Very High. Over a seven-year period, the author averaged 93.2% positive evaluations (High or Very High) on all courses in comparison with an average of 76.7% positive evaluations for other teachers (see Figure 2 below). Students can also write comments about their teacher on the questionnaire. Students regularly wrote very positive comments about the GMM and commented directly to their teacher that they enjoyed the GMM. Thus, there is a possibility that these high evaluations are connected to the implementation of the GMM.

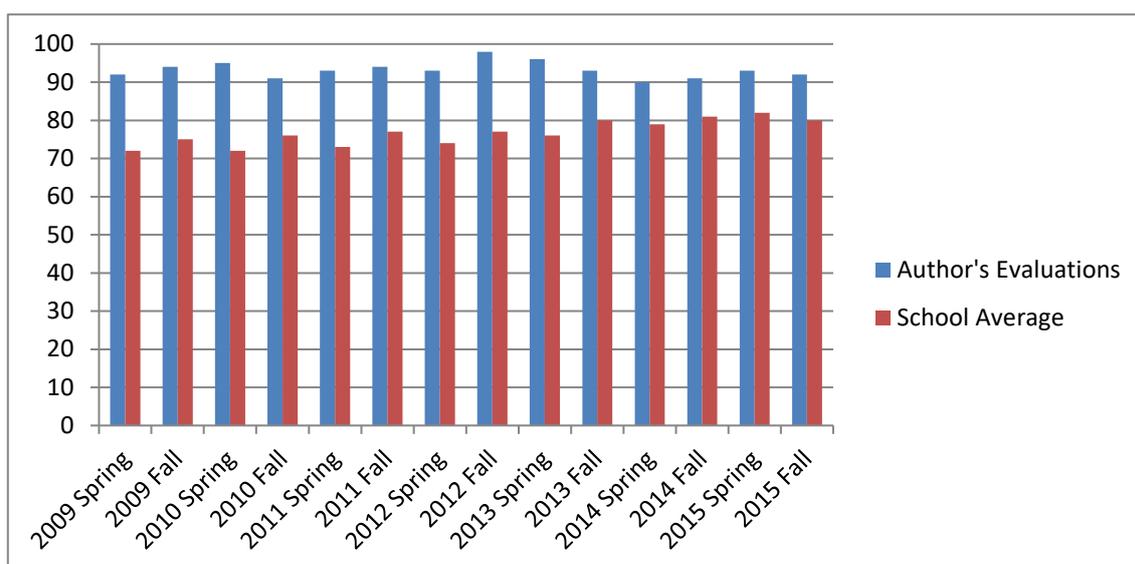


Figure 2. Overall student evaluations for all courses at the university.

Conclusion

Because of the enormity of the task of mastering a second language in an EFL context, language practitioners must make every effort to help learners achieve their goals in the most efficient way. However, just as important is that in-class activities are enjoyable to help learners maintain the motivation to continue studying.

The GMM is a tried-and-true in-class study method based on sound scientific theories of memory that is highly efficient in both achieving pedagogical goals and maintaining and increasing motivation amongst language learners. Additionally, the method is highly recommended to teachers to make language learning an efficient and enjoyable experience for their learners.

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The Management of Oral Presentations to Maximise Student Participation

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Abstract

Incorporating presentations into an English as a foreign language (EFL) course can be an effective way of having a group of learners bring together a variety of skills in a communicative way. On the other hand, a great deal of organisation is required and there are risks involved, such as a lack of attention being paid by those learners in the role of audience members. This paper argues in favour of carrying out presentations nonetheless, and suggests three ways to increase audience input in order to lessen the dangers of boredom. The first involves carrying out a peer assessment in which learners rate the success of their classmates' presentations, thereby strengthening the validity of the presentation score. The second method involves a peer reflection, in which audience members are asked to report on what they have seen, perhaps adding their own opinion or related experience. This method can help to develop critical thinking. The third and final method is a question and answer session, described as being both authentic and holding the potential to force the speaker to have a deeper understanding of the presentation topic. These three methods are discussed with reference to their practicalities and application in class.

Keywords: presentations, classroom management, peer assessment

The oral presentation is well recognised as a component of the English as a foreign language (EFL) syllabus which is authentic and encourages the development of learners by providing them with an opportunity to practise a range of behaviours (Girard, Pinar & Trapp, 2011; King, 2002). There are also plenty of drawbacks with such an activity, such as the task of managing classes in which successive

individual members or small groups of relatively inexperienced presenters are trying to deliver their projects to an audience which may have little interest in the presentation topic (Ross, 2007). In large, mandatory classes, the hurdles can prove to be too high, causing instructors to avoid this useful learning tool. Done properly, it is generally acknowledged that a well implemented presentation activity is of great value to those students presenting. A less certain factor is the benefits to those learners not presenting, the subject of previous research (Girard et al., 2011), which suggested that it could be an advantageous learning activity even for a listening student, although in the field of EFL, where learners face an additional challenge of working in a foreign language, little is known of the benefits.

Review of Background Literature

The concept of a presentation, along with its advantages to learners, has been well captured by Sundrarajin and Kiely (2010):

[A presentation is a] prepared talk according to a specification which combines language skills (pronunciation, grammar, lexical range and word choice) with related aspects such as register and discourse skills, critical perspectives and multi-media information management (e.g. use of PowerPoint or other visual displays). (p. 102)

Other learning gains include class interaction and participation (Girard et al., 2011), real-world communication and leadership skills (King, 2002), autonomy (Živković, 2014), and the opportunity to improve listening skills for non-presenters, with greater possibilities of interaction when compared to listening to pre-recorded audio or video (Brooks & Wilson, 2014). As experienced teachers know, there are also many drawbacks which can deter some instructors from using presentation activities. These

drawbacks include a tendency for learners to feel overwhelmed by the task at hand (King, 2002) or to be ill-prepared (Chiu, 2004), bored when forced to sit through others' presentations (Chiu, 2004), or even poorly behaved (Ross, 2007). Despite the numerous learning advantages to carrying out presentations in class, the overwhelming nature of them can lead learners to employ strategies to get through them as quickly as possible, causing the presentations to be a somewhat fruitless exercise (King, 2002). In fact, perhaps due to these various difficulties, many Japanese university students of non-English majors have never been required to take part in a presentation (Tsou & Huang, 2012), commensurate with them never even having done one in their first language (L1; Brooks & Wilson, 2014). However, given the benefits set out above, the disadvantages of carrying out presentations are generally problems of class management as opposed to inherent problems with the notion of carrying out a presentation itself. Therefore, as with any such activity, it would be pertinent to address the procedural elements of presentations before any class attempt at undertaking a round of presentations.

The drawbacks of carrying out class presentations listed so far can be divided into two categories. The first concerns the manner in which the learning group is coached in putting together their presentations. The second concerns the problem of requiring learners to sit through their peers' presentations, particularly in large classes where all learners are required to present. Regarding the former type, it is inevitable that longer preparation time, coupled with suitable methods of instruction and examples, leads students to be able to polish off reasonably proficient talks. There is already a wealth of material out there which guides both teachers (e.g., Hall & Hirata, 2016) and students (e.g., Gershon, 2008) in the construction of a successful presentation activity. It is perhaps not surprising that the bulk of publications deal with the various micro and macro skills

required to assemble a successful presentation. On the contrary, there is very little material which deals with how to occupy listening students while their peers are presenting (Girard et al., 2011). This is the main aim of this paper.

Three Methods of Engaging Audience Members

Since learners are being compelled to take on the role of listeners in the second language (L2), maintaining concentration through numerous presentations is inevitably harder than it would be in an L1 situation (Chiu, 2004), although it is reasonable to assume that factors affecting concentration are not limited to problems of comprehension and might also include delivery and interest in the topic. The ability of both the individual learner and the class as a whole to focus on what is being said is something that the instructor is best placed to judge. However, providing all learners with an opportunity to actively participate throughout the class, as opposed to only for the duration of their own presentation, would appear to offer pedagogical incentives, in line with the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1996), which states that the involvement of learners in a negotiation of meaning through interaction leads to acquisition. What follows are suggestions for three methods of involving an audience in a presentation and a discussion of the merits of each.

Method 1: Peer Review

The first suggestion is a peer review in which listening students take on the role of peer assessors (Girard, et al., 2011). The advantages of peer assessment have been widely acknowledged, with suggestions that the comparatively traditional method of teacher assessment can be inconsistent (Zamel, 1985), confusing or vague (Cohen, 1987) or should be abandoned altogether (Truscott, 1996). With appropriate guidance, students can

learn to use a rubric to assess the performances of their classmates. The principles of learner autonomy suggest that learners can benefit from determining their own method of assessment.

This method was adopted in a class taught by the author. In the appendix (adapted from Otoshi & Heffernen, 2008) is a list of twenty-four points which are relevant to a presentation. This list was given to students shortly before beginning a presentation activity. Class members were first asked to read each point in turn, before deciding on whether they agreed or disagreed with them. Next, they were asked to choose the ten points which they felt to be the most important. (In Otoshi and Heffernen's 2008 study, the most important criteria as perceived by learners were clarity of speech and voice quality; correctness of language; and interaction with the audience.) A 'master' copy of this paper was then passed around the classroom for students to record their choices on it. At this point, they were not told how this information would be used (the reason for this is to avoid students choosing the points which they think are the easiest to achieve). The ten items which had received the highest number of marks on the master copy were then used to make a ten-point presentation check sheet for these students. When presentations were carried out, check sheets were handed out at random and class members were asked to note the name written at the top. This would show them the name of the student whose presentation they were responsible for marking, which was to be done anonymously.

The method described above allows learners to use autonomy in two different ways. First, it gives them some control over how their presentations were to be marked. Second, the method enables learners to rate their own classmates, with the knowledge that their own presentations will be assessed in the same way. Letting learners set their own goals

leads to better presentations (Morisano, Hirsh, Peterson, Pihl, & Shore, 2010). Moreover, peer assessments of presentations are consistent, with no bias for either personality type or friendship (Vaughan, Saito, & Saito, 2016). In addition, offering learners the chance to preview and consider the criteria for assessment gives them a greater opportunity to understand the task which is being asked of them (Otoshi & Heffernan, 2008). Alternative ways of carrying out peer assessment might include having presentations marked by all learners in the class as opposed to just one (scores can be easily collated using an online service such as Google Forms). Incorporating a self-assessment or teacher assessment element is also an option, that can add further validity to the score. Research which has involved all three types of assessment in the past has shown instructor assessment to be consistently only slightly higher than that of self- or peer-assessment, while underlining the cognitive benefits of self- and peer-assessment (Rian, Hinkelman, & Cotter, 2015). In carrying out assessments, it has been found that teachers will often focus on form and accuracy whereas learners tend to focus on content and organisation (Hedgcock & Leftkowitz, 1992; Otoshi & Heffernan, 2008). However, there remains a possibility that a so-called assessor simply checks boxes and writes scores without giving a great deal of thought to it.

Method 2: Peer Reflection

One potential problem with a peer-assessment is that a passive assessor can check boxes and write down numbers without giving a great deal of thought to them. However, there are ways around this, such as having the scores themselves assessed through comparisons with those of a second peer assessor, but the problem can be avoided altogether through a system of peer reflection. Audience members can be required to produce a response to

the presentations which they are watching. They can either be assigned one (or more) presentation by a peer on which they should focus, or they can be asked to choose one (or more) which is of most interest to them. They are then required to take notes during the chosen presentation and prepare to produce a written response to it. A written response might be in the form of an essay in which they summarise what they have heard before, and then adding some additional research or thoughts of their own. As well as ensuring that the members of the presentation audiences are listening to their peers, this also incorporates elements of critical thinking (Maiorana, 1992), thereby enhancing the learning experience. Furthermore, principles of second language acquisition suggest that the opportunities for interaction benefit learners (Ellis, 2005; Long, 1996). Peer reflection in this manner does not lead to immediate two-way interaction, but it can allow the learner a deeper consideration of the topic at hand. Interaction with peers is believed to be able to lead to a higher level of learning (Rust, Price, & O'Donovan, 2003). Peer reflection offers learners many opportunities to reflect on their peer's presentation in the most appropriate way; the instructor can set some guidelines as to what kind of reflection is most appropriate.

Method 3: Q & A

A more rapid method of carrying out the above is to have a question-and-answer session (Q&A) after each presentation. The advantages are clear: Q&A is authentic (as any instructor who has given a presentation will know), it requires little organisation, and it is instant. Furthermore, value can be added by encouraging presenters to seek questions regarding their presentation and audience members to ask them (Živković, 2014). Given the tendency for tertiary level classrooms in Japan to consist of comparatively high levels

of silence with relatively low levels of active student participation (Kimura, Nakata, & Nakamura, 2001), some classes might need assistance with this. In a university class that the author is teaching, all students who were not presenting were given three cards with the letter “Q” (question) written on them. After each presentation, each student was required to ask a relevant question. They had practiced this and were able to do so with relative ease. On asking a question, one “Q” card is returned, allowing both the teacher and the questioner to keep track of how many questions had been asked. These questions (as well as the answers) formed a part of the class assessment, and so all students were aware of the importance of asking questions. There can be a tendency to ask quite formulaic questions or to ask questions which require the least effort by the presenter to answer (“do you like X?”). While there might be a place for such questions, this tendency can be partly overcome by having students ask two-part questions (“You said that you liked X. Could you tell me why?”). Another potential difficulty is that it is not uncommon for students to feel compelled to apologise for asking a question which appears to create difficulties for the presenter. One way around this is to reward extra points to students who provide the most interesting questions or questions that generate the most detailed answers.

The incorporation of Q&A offers learners the chance to practice for presentations in their future working life. A recent survey suggested that 93.4% of 520 business workers in Japan perceived an increasing need for English in the workplace (British Council, 2011). Therefore, this method of audience involvement is most likely to prove useful in the learners’ futures. Not only does it require audience members to carefully think of suitable questions, but it also adds an extra, un-prepared section to the presentation itself. It does not matter how carefully the presenter has practiced and rehearsed what they need

to say, they will not know what questions will be posed to them. Therefore, to be able to answer effectively, they must have a good general knowledge of the topic. While offering opportunities for class management during presentation activities, this option also strengthens the presentations themselves by requiring more than just a superficial knowledge.

Any instructor who has used a presentation activity in class will have developed some techniques for effectively managing it. What works for some instructors and some classes may not work as well for others. As well as the methods detailed above, alternative methods include a discussion whereby students can talk about the content of the presentations which they have just seen (Cheung, 2008), which could be a faster way of carrying out peer reflections. Additionally, a “round robin” approach, in which learners give their presentation to a small number of classmates at a time, allows several presentations to run concurrently. In this paper, the focus has been on methods with which the author is most familiar and therefore able to consider their respective merits.

Conclusion

Instructors looking for the best methods for implementing effective activities tend to be prepared to experiment with many ideas before settling on one method which they feel works the best. As examples, the three methods presented in this paper offer quite different levels of audience involvement. A whole-group peer-assessment requires maintaining concentration throughout the class period, but learners can do this without a great deal of cognition. Furthermore, it does not lend itself easily to communicative learning. A peer reflection can be similarly uncommunicative, but it does offer critical benefits for learners in that they are encouraged to expand on what they have seen and

add their own opinion about the topic. A Q&A session is more authentic, but forces the presenter to have greater knowledge of the presentation topic. On the other hand, it can easily be carried out in a quite simplistic manner and requires little audience cognition during the presentation itself.

As technology advances into the classroom, with mobile technology now being commonplace, the methods of participation in a class are increasing rapidly. This paper has not addressed how a social networking service or forum can be used to expand on a class presentation topic. This might give some hints as to how audiences can be encouraged to participate even more actively in the future, leading to presentation activities becoming even more engaging.

Acknowledgment

I wish to express my gratitude to Craig Mertens for providing me with ideas related specifically to peer reflection activities.

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Appendix
Presentation Key Points

Presentation Key Points	Agree (A), Disagree (D)	Important? ✓ 10
1. Presentation topics should be interesting to the audience.		
2. Smiling is not good while giving a presentation		
3. A presentation should be well organized.		
4. Looking at a script is not good while giving a presentation.		
5. Using signal words such as “First” and “Second” are important when giving a presentation.		
6. Speakers should avoid using difficult words when giving a presentation.		
7. Speakers should just speak about whatever they want even if the audience does not understand it.		
8. Good presentations include detailed examples and reasons.		
9. I don’t mind if I find grammatical errors in a PowerPoint presentation.		
10. Speakers should understand the audience’s response when they speak.		
11. Speakers should argue their own ideas or possible solutions in their talk.		
12. A good PowerPoint presentation includes pictures and photographs.		
13. Speakers don’t have to speak perfect English.		
14. Speakers should stick to the goal of the presentation without confusing the audience.		
15. Speakers should make eye-contact with the audience.		
16. Speakers don’t have to explain the presentation goals at the beginning of the talk.		
17. The size of the text in a PowerPoint presentation should be easy to read.		
18. A presentation should be given in a clear voice.		
19. The speaker should use some body language while speaking.		
20. Speakers should be careful with the speed of the speech.		
21. Speakers should speak with confidence.		
22. I don’t mind grammatical mistakes in a presentation as long as the message is clearly delivered to the audience.		
23. A presentation should be delivered with correct pronunciation.		
24. Speakers don’t have to speak loudly.		