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## Japan Association for Language Teaching

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# Contents

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# Japan Association for Language Teaching

## A Nonprofit Organization

The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) is a nonprofit professional organization dedicated to the improvement of language teaching and learning in Japan. It provides a forum for the exchange of new ideas and techniques and a means of keeping informed about developments in the rapidly changing field of second and foreign language education. Established in 1976, JALT serves an international membership of approximately 3,000 language teachers. There are 34 JALT chapters, all in Japan, along with 17 special interest groups (SIGs), one forming chapter, and two forming SIGs. JALT is one of the founders of PAC (Pan-Asian Consortium), which is an association of language teacher organizations in Pacific Asia. PAC holds regional conferences and exchanges information among its member organizations. JALT is the Japan affiliate of International TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) and is a branch of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language).

JALT publishes *JALT Journal*, a research journal; *The Language Teacher*, a monthly periodical containing articles, teaching activities, reviews, and announcements about professional concerns; and *JALT International Conference Proceedings*.

The JALT International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning and Educational Materials Exposition attracts some 2,000 participants annually and offers over 400 papers, workshops, colloquia, and poster sessions. Each JALT chapter holds local meetings and JALT's SIGs provide information on specific areas of interest. JALT also sponsors special events such as workshops and conferences on specific themes, and awards annual grants for research projects related to language teaching and learning. Membership is open to those interested in language education and includes automatic assignment to the nearest chapter or the chapter you prefer to join, copies of JALT publications, and reduced admission to JALT-sponsored events. JALT members can join as many SIGs as they wish for an annual fee of ¥1,500 per SIG. For information, contact the JALT Central Office or visit the JALT website at <http://www.jalt.org>.

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# In this Issue

## Articles

Interlanguage variation has been a staple of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research for many years, and in this issue we revisit the concern with our first paper, from **Yuh-Fang Chang**. The study examines the impact of discourse topic on speech production. In our second article, **Harumi Kimura** considers the dimensionality of listening anxiety, and the relationship of these dimensions to group variables of gender and major area of study. Using a Japanese-language version of the Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS), Kimura identified three dimensions, *Emotionality*, *Worry*, and *Anticipatory Fear*, and links *Emotionality* to major area of study. In our third article, **Mark Rebuck** examines the impact of the difficulty of authentic materials on student motivation. He found that excessively difficult materials can be motivating, contrary to common intuition, and that "selling" the authenticity of materials impacted the perception of the lesson. In our final feature article, **Rintaro Sato** examines the difficulties of eliciting successful self-initiated modified output in the communicative classroom.

## Perspectives

This issue includes a perspectives article from Hideo Horibe in which the place of culture in the teaching of English as an International Language (EIL) is brought into focus. The paper proposes and elaborates three notions of culture: culture as social custom, culture in the pragmatic sense, and culture in the semantic sense. These notions are used in examining the role of culture in the classroom.

## From the Editor

This issue of *JALT Journal* comes with considerable change. **Steve Cornwell**, who I have had the pleasure of working with for over a year now, has retired as Editor. In my capacity as the new Editor, I want to extend the thanks of all involved in *JALT Journal* for his stewardship of the journal over the past years. In my personal capacity, I want to thank

him for his counsel as I found my feet in dealing with papers and the challenges of editorial responsibility. The work often involves difficult decisions, and Steve's judgment was invaluable. Steve may have retired as Editor, but he joins the Editorial Advisory Board, and I am sure that I will continue to draw on his experience.

There are other important changes for the journal. Yuriko Kite, the Reviews Editor, will also be retiring after this issue. We are sad to see her leave and thank her for all the valuable time given to the journal. William Perry will be taking over from Yuriko in the next issue, and I welcome William to *JALT Publications* and the *JALT Journal* team. I would also like to welcome Darren Lingley as the new Associate Editor of *JALT Journal*, a position which was vacated as I took over from Steve. Darren has considerable publishing experience, and I look forward to working with him in developing the journal. Jack Yohay also joins the Editorial Advisory Board in this issue. Jack has worked with *JALT Journal* for many years, and his considerable knowledge of the production phase of the journal has been valuable to me and to this issue, as it has been to past issues. Finally, I would like to welcome Joseph Sheehan to the proofreading team and thank him for his contribution to this issue.

Although this is my first issue as Editor, I have been handling submissions for a year now, and I want to extend my thanks to all the members of the Editorial Advisory Board and the additional readers. Many people have contributed to *JALT Journal* over the years, and continue to do so, and I hope to do justice to this past investment in my own tenure as Editor of the journal.

*Ian Isemonger*

## Errata

In the last issue of *JALT Journal*, a review of *Motivation and Experience in Foreign Language Learning* authored by **Yoshiyuki Nakata** was erroneously listed in the table of contents as *Motivation and Experience in Language Learning*. We apologize for this error.

# Articles

## The Influence of Content Knowledge on NNS-NNS Conversations

**Yuh-Fang Chang**
*National Chung Hsing University*

In the field of second and foreign language acquisition, a second-language learner's language (i.e. interlanguage), like the language of native speakers, varies. What is not clear, however, are the underlying causes of this variation. Causes of interlanguage variation such as linguistic contexts, tasks, and interlocutors have been researched. However, there are other important factors in interlanguage variation that are under-researched. Topic of discourse is one such under-researched factor. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between discourse topics and second language learners' oral performance. Twenty-six Taiwanese students participated in this study. Data were collected from NNS-NNS conversations. It was found that discourse topics have a great impact on the grammatical complexity and fluency of L2 learners' speech production.

第二言語習得および外国語の習得の研究において、学習者の言語（いわゆる中間言語）に母語話者の習得言語と同様に変異が認められるということはよく知られている。しかしだ解明されていないのは何が変異を起こしているのかというその要因である。言語、文脈、タスク、対話者などの要因についてはこれまで比較的多く研究されている。しかしながら談話上のトピックについてはほとんど調査が行われていない。本研究の目的は談話上のトピックと学習者の発話行動の関係を探ることである。本調査には26名の台湾人の学生が参加した。非母語話者どうしの対話からデータを収集し分析した結果、談話のトピックは文法構造の複雑度および流暢さに大きく影響することがわかった。

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In the field of second and foreign language acquisition, it is now widely recognized that a second-language learner's language (i.e. interlanguage), like the language of native speakers, varies. Several causes of interlanguage variation such as linguistic contexts, tasks, and interlocutors have been identified and researched. However, there are other factors in interlanguage variation that remain unexplored or under-researched. Topic of discourse is one such factor. As Tarone (1988) states, "the topic of communication... is one of the most under-researched areas in the study of interlanguage variation" and "the precise effects of topic upon variation have yet to be established" (p. 119). In the same vein, and more recently, Ellis (2003) pointed out that topic effect has received little attention from researchers. While in the past 15 years, the effect of discourse topic on L2 oral performance has increasingly received a great deal of scrutiny, the research designs and contexts have varied, and the findings have been inconclusive. In order to arrive at a better understanding of topic-related interlanguage variation, the present study aimed to: (1) describe the relationships between discourse topics and second-language learners' participation in NNS-NNS conversations; and (2) describe the relationships between discourse topics and the fluency and grammatical development of these learners' oral production.

## Literature Review

To investigate the relationship between topic familiarity and L2 learners' oral performance, Selinker and Douglas (1985, 1986, 1987, 1989) conducted a series of case studies involving interviews of non-native graduate students on work and life domain topics. Selinker and Douglas (1985) collected data from two informant sessions. One was an interview conducted by one of the researchers with a technical text as the focus. The second informant session was an interview conducted by the research assistant, who was a friend of the subject. It was found that the subjects employed different communicative strategies and rhetorical organization in talking about their major fields from those they used in talking about their own lives or culture. For instance, one subject appeared to be competent and confident in talking about his major field, able to circumvent vocabulary gaps and to correct his native interlocutor, but seemed less motivated to find vocabulary items and more deferential in life-domain talk.

In their subsequent studies, Selinker and Douglas (1986) employed a research design similar to that of the previous study except that the data

on subjects' oral production were elicited from various contexts: a class presentation on a mathematics problem, Chinese music, a group conversation, and an interview. It was found that the rhetorical organization differed across topics. The Selinker and Douglas studies have certainly provided insight into topic-related interlanguage variation. However, the results of their studies must be interpreted cautiously because of the data collection process employed. In their studies, they either used different interviewers to interview the subject (1985), or they elicited the oral production from various contexts (1986).

In Selinker and Douglas (1985), the data were collected in two interviews: one by a professor interviewing the subject on the topic of his major field and the other by a research assistant, who was a friend of the subject, on the topic of the student's everyday life. Hence, the different communicative strategies that researchers found from the subjects' talk in the two domains may result from interlocutor factors. In Selinker and Douglas (1986), the data were collected from both class presentations and group conversations. The differences that researchers observed in the subjects' rhetorical organization across discourse domains may have been caused by the difference between planned and unplanned discourse.

Selinker and Douglas (1985) proposed a discourse domain hypothesis which is based on the notion of specialized contexts for language development emerging from these research findings. Selinker and Douglas (1986) defined the discourse domains as a "personally and internally constructed 'slice' of one's life that has importance and over which the learner exercises content-control" (p. 4). Examples of "slices of life" include job, research and personal life. The discourse domain hypothesis generated the following predictions:

1. In creating interlanguages (ILs), a learner creates discourse domains and uses them to develop his/her IL structure(s)... The important processes in IL learning (e.g., fossilization, backsliding, language transfer, communicative strategies) rarely occur across ILs, but occur primarily within discourse domains.

2. Discourse domains influence the syntactic units of IL learning.

3. No IL learner is monostylistic.

This hypothesis, although intuitively appealing, has not attracted much attention from researchers. In addition to the studies done by Selinker and Douglas (1985, 1986, 1987, 1989), only five reported studies

(Cornu & Delahaye, 1987; Whyte, 1992, 1993, 1994a, 1994b, 1995) have investigated the discourse domain hypothesis. Among these studies, the research findings are not consistent.

Cornu and Delahaye (1987) collected two sets of data from the Dutch-French interlanguage of two university economics students to investigate the discourse domain hypothesis. The data consisted of a conversation on subjects' hobbies, then a five-minute break, followed by a second conversation on the target topic area. The analysis of data revealed significant differences in the syntactic, rhetorical, strategic and lexical areas between the subjects' conversations on the two topics. The number of embedded sentences was far greater in the conversation for the subject's major field (referred to as C2 hereinafter) than for the subject's hobbies (C1). The errors were corrected much more readily in C2 than in C1. In addition, verbs were used more appropriately in C2 than in C1.

Whyte (1992, 1993, 1994a, 1994b, 1995) designed a series of studies to test the discourse domain hypothesis. The first (1992) was a case study of a French mathematics graduate student who was interviewed by two nonspecialist native speakers. The data were analyzed in terms of discourse organization. It was shown that the subject performed differently in discourse organization related to the domain of talk. Talk on certain math domain topics was characterized by lengthy time at talk, including long, structured turns, illustrating the speaker's content control of the topic.

Whyte (1993) examined talk by four international professionals on topics in their work and life domains, as well as on general topics. In addition to discourse analysis, data were analyzed for fluency (i.e., speech time, turn length, and hesitation) and grammatical accuracy (i.e., past tense, copula, and noun marking in obligatory contexts). Results were mixed, although one subject emerged clearly as more fluent and accurate in conversation on topics in his professional field than on talk in his life domain.

In the third study, Whyte (1994a) collected data from the performance of eight advanced ESL students discussing their academic major topics which were compared with data on a general topic. As in the second study, the results were mixed. Only one subject performed more accurately and fluently on the topic with which he was familiar. Whyte (1994b, 1995) employed a research design similar to that of the previous study (Whyte 1994a) and distributed a post-interview questionnaire to subjects to verify their views on the topics discussed. The analysis of grammatical complexity and accuracy showed no cross-topic variation for either the invested or control subjects. The analysis of discourse organization

revealed evidence in support of the predictions that domain talk would be constructed more independently and more coherently than general talk. All invested subjects constructed longer episodes in talk on their academic major topics.

Even though limited research has been done to investigate the discourse domain hypothesis, several studies have been conducted to examine how topic influences a second language learner's participation in conversations. Eisenstein and Starbuck (1989) showed that learners' expertise in the discourse topic has a great impact on L2 learners' pronunciation. Zuengler (1989, 1993a, 1993b), and Zuengler and Bent (1991) investigated the relationship between topic knowledge and participation in conversations in NS-NNS interactions. In dyads consisting of subjects with different expertise levels, the results showed that interlocutors with greater content expertise (true both for NS and NNS relative content experts) participated more actively in the conversation than did their "non-expert" partners. The relative experts produced significantly more talk and more fillers. Zuengler's work on conversational interaction has shown that topic expertise may have a positive effect on learner production.

In the same vein, studies by Woken and Swales (1989) revealed that in NS-NNS interaction, greater content knowledge resulted in non-native speakers' dominance in dyadic conversations. Woken and Swales (1989) conducted a study to investigate how topic knowledge affects the NS-NNS interaction pattern. Six female subjects participated in the study. The NNSs, who were familiar with Volkswriter (a 1980's-era word processor), were asked to introduce it to NSs. They were paired into three dyads, each consisting of one native and one non-native speaker of English. It was found that the non-natives dominated in the conversation and generally exceeded the natives in the length of T-unit. In addition, the NSs did most of the inquiring. The non-natives supplied the natives with vocabulary, teaching them key terms from the subject area.

It is clear that research on topic-related interlanguage variation is in its infancy. The literature concerning the topic effects on learners' interlanguage variation is scant and the research findings are not consistent. Furthermore, the precise effects of the discourse topic on IL variation have not yet been established. For example, whereas Chang (2002) and Whyte (1992, 1994a, 1995) found topic effects for expert speakers in terms of fluency and discourse features, Whyte (1994b) did not find cross-topic differences in fluency measures. While several studies have shown that the discourse topic affects the syntactic area of learners' oral production (e.g., Cornu & Delahaye, 1987; Woken & Swales, 1989; Young, 1991), stud-

ies by Douglas and Selinker (1992, 1993,1994), Smith (1989, 1992), Whyte (1994b) and Chang (2002) did not find any topic effect on the syntactic area of learners' oral production.

Aside from the dearth of research on topic-related interlanguage variation and the inconclusive findings, previous studies have also suggested that special care in the research design of further study is needed. Most studies collected NS-NNS interaction data through interviews and some studies even compared the data elicited by different interviewers on different topics. This introduces an interlocutor factor into the studies as a confounding variable. Moreover, the majority of studies contrasted participants' performance on an academic major topic and a life story topic. Researchers assigned the topics assuming that the academic major topic was the discourse topic with which L2 learners were familiar and on which they would perform better. Individual differences, however, may need to be taken into consideration. Although assuming that international students can perform better on a topic from their major field than on other so-called "general" topics seems reasonable, the assumption fails to consider that for some learners, the input (content knowledge) that they get does not necessarily become output because of the linguistic barrier. It is more likely that it is the participant who knows the topic with which he/she is most familiar, and this need not be the topic of specialization.

If the purpose of the study is to examine the topic effects on learners' interlanguage variation, a research design which avoids the interlocutor factor as a possible confounding variable and takes individual differences into consideration is necessary. The present study attempted to contribute to this developing research with an investigation using a research design avoiding the aforementioned problems. The units of analysis chosen for the present study were based on the following review of the research.

## Unit of analysis

This study examined participants' performance from the perspectives of fluency and syntactic development. Since the discourse domain hypothesis predicts that learners will perform better on the domain topics, more fluent and more target-like syntactic structures were expected in participants' utterances on the familiar topics than on the unfamiliar topics. Fluency is defined by Schmidt (1992) as automatic procedural skill. He points out that the ability to produce fluent speech is a skill "emphasizing the performance aspect of actually doing something in real time rather than the knowledge of how something is to be done" (p. 395). In the same

vein, Skehan (1996a) defined fluency as the capacity of the learner to mobilize his/her system to communicate meaning in real time. Studies by Lennon (1990) and Riggenbach (1991) in which native-speaker ratings of fluency in non-native speech were compared with microanalyses of samples of that speech have shown that speech rate and number of pauses correlated with the listener's perception of fluency. Due to the technical nature of research into pausing in speech production, the present study has confined itself to an analysis of speech rate, an approach commonly used by L2 researchers to measure fluency (e.g., Whyte, 1994; Ellis, 2005). Following Riggenbach (1991), a measure of words per minute was used. In addition, this study included a global measure of the amount of talk which has also been used in second language research to gauge learner fluency (Woken & Swales, 1989; Zuengler, 1989; Zuengler & Bent, 1991).

Each participant's syntactic development was measured in terms of the grammatical complexity and grammatical accuracy of utterance. According to Skehan (1996b), accuracy refers to "how well the target language is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language" (p. 23). Complexity is concerned with the extent to which learners produce elaborate language. The analysis of accuracy for the present study focused on the grammatical errors including syntactic, morphological and lexical errors in learners' speech. The complexity of production was measured in terms of T-unit length. The T-unit was developed by Hunt (1970) as an index of syntactic maturity in writing and has been used as a research tool to measure the syntactic complexity of speech and writing samples in L1 and L2 research (Whyte, 1992, 1993, 1994; Ellis, 2005).

The research questions were:

1. What is the relationship between topic familiarity and the fluency of second-language learners' oral production?
2. What is the relationship between topic familiarity and the syntactical development of second-language learners' oral production?

## Method

Participants in this study were 26 Taiwanese college students—23 females and three males. All of them were English-major seniors with high-intermediate English proficiency. The male-female ratio in this study reflects the English-major student population in Taiwanese universities. They were all native speakers of Mandarin. They learned English

as their foreign language and were recruited from the English Department based on their availability at the time of the data collection. The task each participant was instructed to do was to have two conversations, both with the same partner. The purpose of the study was not revealed to the participants. Unlike the previously mentioned studies, in which participants were interviewed by a stranger or were asked to have a conversation with different persons on different topics, all 26 students each had two conversations, one on a familiar topic, and the other on an unfamiliar topic, with a conversation partner each participant selected for him/herself (usually the subject's best friend in the group), which resulted in 26 dyads in total. Allowing participants to converse on both topics with one conversation partner of their own selection minimized the interlocutor effect as a confounding variable in the study. This study employed a counterbalanced design. Half of the participants would start with the unfamiliar topic and the other half with the familiar topic.

Concerning the selection of conversation topics, instead of having the researcher assign the discourse topic for participants, an approach employed by several researchers, in this study the participants were asked to select the discourse topics on which they would prefer to talk because it was believed that it is the participant who knows the topic with which he/she is most familiar rather than the researcher. Each pair of participants was instructed to select one topic that they felt they were knowledgeable about, that they felt was important to them and that they were interested in talking about. The two participants were also asked to choose one topic with which they were unfamiliar. Twenty minutes were given for the participants to discuss the two topics with their partner. All the instructions were given in Mandarin. In order to avoid fatigue, there was a 10-minute break in between the two conversations. Each conversation lasted from three to ten minutes. The conversations were audiotape-recorded and then transcribed. The familiar/unfamiliar topics chosen by the participants are listed in Table 1.

As mentioned above, this study examined participants' performance from the perspectives of fluency and syntactic development. The performance of the participants' interlocutors was beyond the scope of the present study. Fluency was measured in terms of the speech rate, the total number of words uttered across topics, the mean number of turns and the mean turn length. The speech rate for each topic was calculated by dividing the total time at talk by the total number of words (i.e., number of words per minute). For the purposes of this study, filler pauses, such as "uh" and "um" were excluded from the word count. In addition to the

speech rate, global measures such as the amount of talk and the mean length of turns were used to gauge learner fluency. Talk on each topic was timed in its entirety. The participant's turn was timed from the end of the preceding interlocutor's turn to the beginning of the following one. Mean turn length was calculated by dividing the total time at talk of the participant by the number of turns the participant took.

**Table 1. The familiar/unfamiliar topics chosen by the participants**

| **Familiar topics** | Number of participants who selected the topic | | **Unfamiliar topics** |
|---|---|---|---|
| pets | 2 | 2 | computer programs |
| favorite foods | 3 | 1 | selection of notebooks |
| movies | 4 | 1 | function of Mp3 |
| TV programs | 2 | 1 | mobile phones |
| childhood | 3 | 4 | sports: baseball, basketball, swimming, tennis |
| jet lag | 1 | 1 | Egyptian mummies |
| Christmas party | 3 | 2 | online games |
| the experience of being an exchange student in the United States | 1 | 1 | the experience of teaching children English |
| fashion | 2 | 2 | tea, coffee |
| travel | 3 | 1 | Mexican food |
| shopping | 2 | 2 | music: classical, New Age music |
| | | 2 | religion |
| | | 2 | car |
| | | 2 | paintings |
| | | 1 | dinosaurs |
| | | 1 | cooking |

Each participant's syntactic development was measured in terms of the grammatical complexity and grammatical accuracy of utterance. The analysis of syntactic complexity began with division of the transcription data into T-units and was measured by the number of words per T-unit.

This analysis used Hunt's (1970) definition of T-units as an independent clause plus all associated dependent clauses. The output of Brady, one of the participants in this study, serves to illustrate the process by which participants' speech was divided into T-units. Her utterances "/I have been to the United States for one year./ / And I went there because I was studied in the exchange student program./" were coded as two separate T-units, indicated by slashes. The mean length of T-units was calculated by dividing the total number of words of each participant on each topic by the total number of T-units on each topic. This is an index of subordination which provides a measure of the complexity of a stretch of discourse.

With regard to the analysis of grammatical accuracy, the focus was on the grammatical errors including syntactic, morphological and lexical errors in learners' speech; hence, the phonological deviations were ignored except for the final stop sounds and the grammatical markers indicating person and number. The grammatical errors in the participants' oral production were checked by a native speaker of English. An example of an utterance with errors is the following:

*Example 1.*

Sometimes I **will go** to play **marble**.

To measure grammatical accuracy, the error rate on each discourse topic was calculated by dividing the total number of errors made in each topic by the total number of T-units.

## Results

Results are presented below in terms of fluency and grammatical development.

### *Fluency*

Table 2 shows the overall mean number of words uttered per minute: 60.19 words for the familiar topics and 41.44 words for the unfamiliar topics. This difference was found to be significant using the matched t-test, $t$= 7.303, $p<0.01$. Overall, the participants spoke faster and were more fluent on topics they were familiar with. Table 3 illustrates the mean number of words uttered across topics within three minutes of a conversation. It was found that participants uttered significantly more words within the time

span of conversation on a familiar topic than they did on an unfamiliar topic. Table 4 presents the mean number of turns taken within three minutes of a conversation across topics. As can be seen in Table 4, the total number of turns taken within three minutes of a conversation varied, ranging from 25 to 5 turns for the familiar topics, and from 21 to 3 turns for the unfamiliar topics. The mean number of turns taken was 14.15 for the familiar topics and 13.31 for the unfamiliar topics. The mean length of turn is presented in Table 5, where we see that the length of the turn on familiar topics (16.90 words per turn) was greater than on unfamiliar topics (9.32 words per turn). The difference was found to be statistically significant using the matched t-test, $t$=5.907, p<.01.

It is not surprising that the mean number of turns taken for the familiar topics and the unfamiliar topics was similar (14.15 vs. 13.13) because the data were dyadic conversations. The results indicate that participants speak more fluently in terms of the speech rate, talk more and hold the floor longer when talking on a familiar topic. An illustrative example: J talked on his familiar topic—"how jet lag affects the performance of professional baseball teams." As seen in this example, J, "the topic expert" did most of the talking. Aside from producing significantly more words, J also frequently checked the listener's comprehension by asking "you know?" and "do you understand?" and the listener's knowledge about the topic by asking "you know what is the reason?" His partner simply listened to him talking, then asked and responded to questions.

***Example* 2.**

J: Do you know jet lag will affect the performance of professional baseball teams?

C: Jet lag have affected the performance?

J: The performance of professional baseball teams, you know?

C: No, I don't know.

J: OK, I'll tell you. In America, there are more than 19 teams and you know, some of them are in Eastern or Pacific time zones. Sometimes a team will travel from one coast and the other.

C: When they arrive in the place where they will have a game, and don't they have enough time to take a rest?

J: OK, well, you know, in America, there are many many

baseball teams. So, their games will play very frequently, you know. So, they have, they haven't enough time to get enough rest. So, when they arrive to another team's home, they'll got to play. So, I'll give you a study. This study shows that changing time zones may hurt the performance of West Coast baseball teams traveling east for a game, but you know not East Coast teams traveling west. The reason, you know what is the reason?

C: No, I don't know.

J: OK, The researchers think is that people traveling east suffer more from the symptoms of jet lag. OK. I will give you an example.

C: OK.

J: In 1993, the San Francisco Giants and the Atlanta Braves try to their best to be the winner. The winner of the best-of-seven series goes on to play in the World Series to determine the best team in baseball. Do you understand?

C: Yeah, go on.

**Table 2. Number of words uttered per minute between topics**
(The unit is words)

| Topic type | High | Low | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Familiar | 93 | 29 | 60.19 | 17.96 |
| Unfamiliar | 58 | 8 | 41.44 | 20.45 |

$t = 7.303$, $p<0.01$

**Table 3. Total number of words uttered across topics within a 3-minute conversation**
(The unit is words)

| Topic type | High | Low | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Familiar | 281 | 89 | 180.58 | 53.87 |
| Unfamiliar | 174 | 25 | 124.31 | 61.35 |

$t=7.303$, $p<.01$

**Table 4. Mean number of turns taken within a three-minute interaction across topics**

| Topic type | High | Low | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Familiar | 25 | 5 | 14.15 | 6.04 |
| Unfamiliar | 21 | 3 | 13.31 | 6.08 |

**Table 5. Mean length of turn across topics, in words**

| Topic type | High | Low | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Familiar | 29.2 | 8.16 | 16.90 | 10.46 |
| Unfamiliar | 13.75 | 3.35 | 9.32 | 5.43 |

$t$=5.907, p<.01

## Grammatical Development

The measurement of grammatical development involves two levels of analysis: syntactic complexity and syntactic accuracy. The effect of topic knowledge on learners' syntactic complexity is measured in terms of the mean length of T-units. The matched t-test was computed to examine the differences. The means in Table 6 show that the mean length of T-units produced by the subjects was 6.99 words for familiar topics and 5.55 words for unfamiliar topics. The matched t-test detected a significant difference between the two types of topics, $t$=5.469, p< 0.01. This indicates that learners produced more complex structures on the familiar topics than on the unfamiliar topics.

**Table 6. Mean length of T-units between topics, in words**

| Topic type | High | Low | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Familiar | 9.95 | 5.32 | 6.99 | 1.28 |
| Unfamiliar | 7.58 | 2.86 | 5.55 | 1.44 |

$t$=5.469, p< 0.01

Table 7 reveals that the mean number of errors produced by the subjects was 0.63 per T-unit on the familiar topics and 0.44 on the unfamiliar topics. The matched t-test did detect a significant difference in the error rate between the two types of topics, $t$=4.22, p<0.01. In other words, participants produced less accurate speech on the topics they were familiar

with. Eager to share what they knew with their interlocutor and yet with limited ability to manage both content and linguistic form, the participants seemed to give priority to the content of the message when talking on the familiar topics. The following example serves as an illustration. Participant B, talking on her familiar topic, focused on the content so intently that she made lots of grammatical mistakes and, attempting to self-correct, used the wrong linguistic form.

**Table 7. Mean number of errors per T-unit between topics**

| Topic type | High | Low | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Familiar | 1.04 | 0.28 | 0.63 | 0.21 |
| Unfamiliar | 1 | 0.16 | 0.44 | 0.22 |

$t$=4.22, $p<0.01$

***Example 3.***

B: I remember my childhood. Sometimes I **will go** to play **marble**. Do you know **marble**?

A: No. What's that?

B: Marble, before you **play** this game, you **should** dig a small hole **on** the ground. So, then you play it. But, finally, **which one is winner, then he or she** can get more marbles from **others**. I remember, near my home, **there have a small mountain**. On **holiday** or **summer or winter vacation**, we will go there because **there have a river on it**. And sometimes we **will draw fish and take them go home with us.**

A: So, you play marble in the river?

B: No, usually play it on the ground. We **don't play** it **in the water on the water**.

## Discussion and Conclusion

While intuition and common sense suggest that an interlocutor's topic knowledge affects his/her oral performance, the precise effects of discourse topic on the oral production of second language learners have not been established.

The results show that discourse topics do affect second-language learners' conversational participation. It was found that participants produced significantly more words and held the floor longer when talking about a topic with which they were familiar. Similarly, the results of the fluency analysis manifested cross-topic variation in NNS-NNS conversational data. The participants, overall, were more fluent, as measured by counting the total number of words uttered per minute, on topics they were familiar with. As far as grammatical complexity is concerned, the degree of syntactic complexity of the subjects' oral production changed according to their familiarity with the discourse topics. The overall mean length of T-unit produced by the participants was significantly longer for the familiar topic than it was for the unfamiliar topic. With regard to accuracy, the results showed that the error rate produced by subjects for the familiar topic was higher than that for the unfamiliar topic. To sum up, analysis of the data reveals that participants were more fluent, produced longer T-units and had more syntactical errors when conversing on a topic with which they were familiar. The finding that participants produced more errors on a familiar topic could be due to their more active participation. Familiarity with the discourse topic enabled them to talk more and be more willing to take risks—using whatever linguistic forms they needed to express themselves.

Higher error rates on familiar-topic talk also indicate that second-language learners' content knowledge and L2 linguistic knowledge develop separately. The discourse domain hypothesis holds that discourse domains influence the syntactic units of IL learning. While there is no doubt that discourse topics and linguistic forms correlate to a certain extent, expertise in one topic area does not guarantee the mastery of L2 linguistic knowledge needed to express learners' content knowledge. For example, several participants in this study chose "childhood" as their familiar topic. This discourse topic entails the use of past tense. While all the participants in this study, as English-major seniors, knew the past tense, their performance did not seem to correspond to their competence in the use of past tense for a familiar-topic talk. Other errors that the participants frequently made include subject-verb agreement, singular/plural, word choices and sentence structure.

As already noted, most researchers (Selinker and Douglas, 1985, 1986, 1989; Whyte, 1992; Cornu & Delahaye, 1987; Zuengler, 1989) investigating topic-related interlanguage variation contrasted subjects' performance on the academic major topic with life domain topics and found that subjects performed better on the academic major topic. The fact that none of the

participants in the present study chose their academic major topic as their familiar topic when they had a choice to select a familiar topic to speak on could be interpreted in two ways. First, this simply manifests a personal choice and is unrelated to the topic familiarity issue. In other words, they might be familiar with the academic major topic, yet simply preferred not to talk about it when participating in a study. Another interpretation of the unpopularity of the academic major topic as participants' choice of familiar topic may, however, indicate that the academic major topic is not on the list of their familiar topics, which suggests that caution needs to be taken lest a researcher assume that the academic major topic is the familiar topic for all the subjects. This also implies that researchers need to take the time to discover what topics subjects are, or are not, familiar with before assigning a given topic to them.

The finding that the extent to which second language learners are familiar with the discourse topic has a dramatic impact on the fluency of their oral production strongly implies that the topic variable needs to be taken into account when teachers assess L2 students' oral proficiency. A single test does not reveal the complete picture of a student's oral proficiency because the topic may help or hinder their performance. In order to make accurate judgments about students' oral proficiency, teachers need to have students speak on more than one topic.

In classroom instruction, it is difficult for a teacher to choose topics which all students are interested in, familiar with, or willing to explore. In order to improve second-language learners' real-time oral production skills, teachers need to expose students to a mix of topics, some familiar and some not. Familiar topics increase learners' motivation and interest to talk. Learners can build confidence while they talk on the familiar topics. This can also apply to writing since both speaking and writing skills are closely related. The findings of the present study showed that students had a higher error rate on familiar topics. Teachers, therefore, need to help students improve the accuracy of their oral production when they talk on familiar topics. Teachers can record students' oral production and have them listen again and transcribe what they have talked about and look for the errors in their speech. In so doing, teachers raise learners' consciousness regarding their frequent grammatical errors.

Teachers should not avoid seemingly less interesting or less engaging topics since the teaching and practice of the less familiar topics builds up both learners' content knowledge and language ability. It sets high demands on the teacher to strike a balance between the topics chosen and the activities built around the topic. If the teacher assumes that the

students are not familiar with a certain topic, he or she may assist them to build up both their content knowledge and linguistic knowledge by providing "advance organizers" (Ausubel, Novak & Hanesian, 1978) such as related reading assignments, vocabulary lists and pre-introduction to the topic. Since L2 learners may be interested in, or familiar with, different topics, asking each student to give a presentation in class on a topic that s/he is interested in or familiar with is another way to expand learners' verbal repertoire.

The primary limitation of this study was the unbalanced male-female ratio. Further research involving a balanced male-female ratio is needed in order to investigate whether the findings of the present study span the effects of gender. Moreover, the subjects of this study only consisted of Taiwanese adult students. Generalizability to other demographics needs to be demonstrated as part of the future research agenda in this area.

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# Foreign Language Listening Anxiety: Its Dimensionality and Group Differences

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This paper investigates foreign language listening anxiety (FLLA) in line with social and interpersonal anxiety studies. Language-learning anxiety has been conceptualized as a unique, situation-specific entity, and recent research in second language acquisition (SLA) has examined anxiety with respect to such skill domains as reading and writing as well as in terms of spoken interaction. Too much emphasis on specificity, however, might have led researchers and practitioners to miss common features of anxiety as affective processes under tension. A Japanese translation of the Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS), which was created for Korean learners of English by Kim (2000), was administered to 452 Japanese learners. Data reduction through factor analysis indicated that this construct, as measured by the FLLAS, has three factors which were labeled *Emotionality, Worry,* and *Anticipatory Fear.* University major and gender were chosen as independent variables, and only the levels of the former were found to be significantly different in terms of one of the factors, *Emotionality*. Math students experienced more arousal of fear than social science students in this dimension of the FLLAS.

本論文は、日本人の英語学習者がリスニングを行う際どのような不安を覚えるかを調査したものである。韓国語を母語とする英語学習者向けに開発された尺度の日本語版を実施しその結果を因子分析および分散分析を用いて分析した。その結果、専攻分野によって学習者の不安には異なる型が認められることがわかった。その他の結果もあわせてモデルの構築を行った。

The impact of affect and emotional arousal in language learning has long been underestimated and under-researched with motivation and anxiety being the main exceptions. Language-learning anxiety can be defined as "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second-language contexts" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b, p. 284). Much of the past research has been conducted on the aspect of anxiety associated with oral production in L2, but recently interest has been extended to cover all of the four skill areas: speaking, writing, reading, and listening. The trend has been toward emphasizing the independent, distinguishable aspects of this affective construct in each of the four skill areas and the situation-dependent nature of anxiousness felt in specific contexts. For example, Matsuda and Gobel (2001; 2004) studied foreign language reading anxiety (FLRA) and suggested that foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) and FLRA were distinct, although they apparently shared an important sub-component: (lack of) self-confidence. In this paper, one of the skill-based constructs, foreign language listening anxiety (FLLA), is investigated to explore the internal structure of this psychological construct using the statistical method of factor analysis, and the identified factors are investigated in relation to two distinct variables, university major and gender, to examine group differences.

## Literature Review

As reviewed by MacIntyre (1999; 2002), Horwitz (2001), and Dörnyei (2002; 2005), anxiety has established itself as one of the important variables responsible for individual differences in the success or failure of second-language learning. The concept of language-learning anxiety is relatively new, however, and Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) were among the first to bring this affective variable into the SLA research trajectory, creating what they called the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). From the beginning, there has been debate over whether the specific type of nervous feeling associated with foreign language learning could be a transfer from, or a composite of, other types of anxiety, such as test anxiety, general trait anxiety, social anxiety, and communication apprehension (Horwitz, 1986; Kitano, 2001; Kleinmann, 1977; MacIntyre, 1999; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Scovel, 1978). The current consensus is that language anxiety should be seen as a situation-specific construct—i.e., a distinct type of anxiety. An emotionally stable person may be nervous in the language-learning context, while on the other hand a person with a predisposition to anxiety may not show significant nervousness in language learning.

Interestingly, the experimental study of MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a) unwittingly indicated that language-learning anxiety could also be induced by a non-linguistic, task-irrelevant stimulus. In this study, a video camera was put in a computer lab to artificially create an anxiety-provoking learning environment, and it "successfully" helped to impair language learning—in this case, computer-mediated vocabulary learning. Although language-learning anxiety might be situation- and task-specific and also independent of other types of anxiety to a certain extent, L2 learners seem to become nervous in ways that parallel other threatening situations. This can be inferred from the physiological, cognitive, and emotional reactions detected and examined in test anxiety—another performance anxiety (Zeidner, 1998)—and also in social anxiety (Leary & Kowalski, 1995).

Less-focused attention, less-effective information processing, and poorer retrieval of prior knowledge are noticeable features of poor performance in L2 listening (Arnold, 2000; Vogely, 1998). L2 listeners cannot manage or control the input and are at the mercy of the delivery of speech unless they are skillful enough to request that the input be slowed down, repeated, or clarified. In other words, they may be overloaded with unprocessed aural information. Listeners in L2 worry about misunderstanding or non-understanding, and they fear embarrassing outcomes (MacIntyre, 1995). Kim (2000) studied this specific type of anxiety, FLLA, but two things are worth noting. First, Kim's study was in line with other works of research that investigated domain-specific anxiety other than speaking anxiety in L2—e.g., Cheng, Horwitz, and Schallert (1999) in writing and Matsuda and Gobel (2001; 2004); Saito, Horwitz, and Garza (1999); and Young and Oxford (1997) in reading. These studies demonstrated the skill-specific characteristics of language-learning anxiety. Second, Kim used the FLCAS as a model for the development of his instrument, along with Wheeless's (1975) Receiver Apprehension Test, primarily in order to compare the construct of L2 listening anxiety with that of L2 interaction anxiety that is experienced in instructed learning situations. A considerable number of the items in the FLCAS and the FLLAS correspond between the listening and classroom-interaction domains. For example, Item 9 of the FLLAS and Item 8 of the FLCAS both refer to testing situations. Distraction is the issue on Item 7 of the FLLAS and Item 6 of the FLCAS. Moreover, one of the reverse items of the FLLAS, Item 14, is almost identical across domains to Item 18 of the FLCAS as shown below:

Item 14 of the FLLAS: I feel confident in my listening skills.

Item 18 of the FLCAS: I feel confident when I speak in foreign [-language] class.

Kim's (2000) doctoral dissertation involved extensive research, in which she observed that past anxiety studies had focused on overall second-language skills, not on listening *per se*. To investigate the nature and characteristics of FLLA, the author used (1) factor analyses of the FLLAS and the FLCAS; (2) MANOVAs by gender and major, among others; and (3) correlation analyses between anxiety scores and listening scores. The FLLAS was created in Korean, and the initial 41 items were rated for content validity by five Ph.D students in foreign language education at the University of Texas. The criterion for retaining items was 80% agreement for each of the four categories: fear of listening to spoken English, process-related anxiety, lack of self-confidence, and apprehension of insufficient prior knowledge. The instrument was piloted on "a sample of 36 Korean ESL students and their spouses, all of whom were university or college graduates" (Kim, 2000, p. 63). Eight items were removed after the analysis based on item-scale correlations, and the final instrument, consisting of 33 five-point Likert-scale items, was administered to a total of 253 Korean EFL students. Evidence of concurrent validity was established in Kim's study by examining correlations with scores of other instruments that measured related variables. The internal consistency estimate of reliability for the questionnaire was .93, and the test-retest reliability was .84. The items were translated into English by the author and modified by a colleague for easier understanding and clarification.

One of the main findings of Kim (2000) was the two-factor solution of her factor analysis of the FLLAS. She labeled the two factors "Tension and Worry over English Listening" and "Lack of Confidence in Listening," respectively, and she found no significant differences in gender or major (humanities and non-humanities majors) in terms of the two factors. The only significant difference was found in study experience in private language institutes or with private tutors in terms of the second factor, Lack of Confidence in Listening. However, she used the two factors of the FLLAS, along with the five factors of the FLCAS, for as dependent variables in her MANOVAs and made quite a few comparisons. In reviewing this study, I argue that she may have missed differences when there actually were some. It is important, however, that she also investigated the correlation between the students' FLCAS and FLLAS scores and found that half of the variance of the FLLAS was explained by the FLCAS ($r$ =

.71; $r^2$ = .50). However, she did not show in what ways FLCA and FLLA were similar and different—i.e., how they are related and how they are distinct. She also found a moderate association between listening anxiety and listening proficiency ($r$ = -.36) and demonstrated the somewhat obvious case "that listening anxiety actually interferes with foreign language listening" (p. 149).

In the current study, I narrow down Kim's research scope and study only the essential properties of the FLLA of Japanese university students in order to search for an appropriate measurement model for this construct using the FLLAS. These properties or features, which are identified as extracted factors, are investigated in relation to two independent variables: gender and university major. One of the independent variables, gender, has been commonly used in research but has produced mixed results in this area so far (Campbell, 1999; Kitano, 2001; MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Donovan, 2002; Young & Oxford, 1997). For example, Campbell (1999) found that male learners were more anxious but that there was an interaction effect with the time element on participants at the U.S. Defense Language Institute with a variety of L1s. After two weeks of intensive language training, male students felt more anxious while female students got slightly less anxious. Kitano's (2001) study of American learners of Japanese showed that self-perception of language skills affected the anxiety levels of male students but not those of female students in performing speaking tasks. In the Japanese context, Matsuda and Gobel (2004) did not detect any gender differences on the FLCAS or the FLRAS for their participants as a whole (first- to third-year university English majors) but found a difference among the first-year students. It might be safer to say that gender is one of the mediating factors and that a variety of variables are involved both in the level of anxiety and in the make-up of anxiety constructs. It is also interesting to point out that gender difference has produced "inconsistent and inconclusive" results in the studies of social anxiety (Leary & Kowalski, 1995, p. 123).

The other independent variable examined in this study is academic major. This variable has not been used in anxiety studies but should be examined because it could influence learners' studying orientations or attitudes toward learning. Humanities majors and science majors were compared in a study conducted by Andreou, Andreou, and Vlachos (2004) investigating the relationships among different tasks and the performance of students with different academic orientations. The academic departments the learners were in were also shown to be related to different approaches to studying in Ramsden and Entwistle (1981).

The research questions in this study were as follows:

1. What is an appropriate measurement model for scores generated by the Japanese-language version of this instrument?
2. How do students in different academic majors differ in terms of listening anxiety?
3. How does gender affect the sub-components of listening anxiety?

## Method

### *Participants*

A total of 452 students at a university in Japan participated in this study. All of the students were freshmen, and they were grouped into 20 separate English Communication classes, with approximately 25 in each class. There were 309 males and 143 females, and they were either social science (bunkei) majors (251) or math (rikei) majors (201). The social science majors met three times a week to have a 90-minute class, and the math majors met twice a week for the same period of time. Each time they met, the students studied with a native English teacher for 45 minutes to practice speaking, and then they spent another 45 minutes in a language lab where a non-native instructor worked with them on pronunciation, intonation, and listening comprehension skills. For the cross-tabulation of participants, see Table 1.

**Table 1. Cross-Tabulation of Participants**

| | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | Total |
| Major | | | |
| Social Science | 143 | 106 | 249 |
| | (143) | (108) | (251) |
| Math | 165 | 35 | 200 |
| | (166) | (35) | (201) |
| Total | 308 | 141 | 449 |
| | (309) | (143) | (452) |

Note: The original numbers of participants for factor analysis are in parentheses. Three outliers were excluded for two-way ANOVA analyses.

### *Materials*

The original version of the instrument (the FLLAS) was developed by Kim (2000). The items were translated by the author and modified by a colleague in pursuit of "naturalness" in the Japanese translation. One of the challenges of translating this instrument was deciding on the terms to use for expressing the "anxious feelings" of L2 listeners. The English version translated from Korean used a variety of words to show anxiousness: worried, worry, nervous, confused, uncomfortable, fear, upset, tense, uneasy, annoyed, and frightened. Among them, "worried" was used most often. The Japanese version had less variety, with only seven terms. For example, the verbs "fear" and "worry" are expressed with the same word, "fuan-ni-naru." These differences might have had subtle but significant influences on the endorsement of the participants. The full Japanese translation of the FLLAS (FLLAS-J) can be found in Appendix A, and a back-translation into English is in Appendix B. The words for anxious feelings in the original were kept intact in the back-translation and are indicated in boldface type.

### *Procedures*

The instrument was administered in class on the last day of the course, at the end of the second semester in the academic year of 2006, so as to partly reflect what had been encountered in the communicative English course. The 33-item questionnaire took most of the students about five minutes to complete. The students then answered three more open-ended questions, based on their answers on the scale, which were designed to have them look back at their activities and performance in the listening section of the course over the previous three months. The entire procedure took about 15 minutes of their class time. Only the survey results were used in this study.

## Results

In order to investigate the latent structure of the questionnaire, a principal-components analysis was conducted. Seven components with eigenvalues of 1.0 or above were extracted. However, the EV > 1 rule tends to overestimate the number of factors that should be retained (Henson & Roberts, 2006). There was a sharp decline after the third component (eigenvalue 1.53) according to the scree plot. Kim's original research extracted a two-factor solution, but in this study the items loading on

the third factor were rather high (.72 on average) and indicated a shared latent construct which was "anticipated apprehension." Based on inspection of the scree plot and the interpretability of the factor solution, it was decided that a three-factor solution should be rotated. The total amount of item variance accounted for by the three components was 38.55%: the first factor accounted for 27.78% of the variance, the second factor for 6.23%, and the third for 4.63%. The identities of the chosen factors and the variance accounted for are examined in the discussion section.

Principal-axis factoring was then conducted using an orthogonal rotation (varimax) consistent with findings in social psychology that there are distinct dimensions to anxiety (Morris, Davis, & Hutchings, 1981; Liebert & Morris, 1967). The appropriateness of the data matrix for factor analysis was checked using the KMO and Barlett's tests (Field, 2005). The KMO test showed a value of .92, and the Barlett's test of sphericity indicated a significance level of .00. These results suggested that the items were sufficiently correlated that factor analysis could yield reliable factors. Seven items, which were loaded below .40, were considered weak or double-loaded, and were eventually taken out (Field, 2005). The minimum loading criterion for retention of items in the measurement model was .43 (Table 2). Cronbach's alphas were .85 for the first factor, .85 for the second factor, and 0.80 for the last factor. Cronbach's alpha for the entire 26-item instrument was .91. Item communality with respect to the three factors is reported in Table 2.

In the original study by Kim (2000), two factors were extracted. One (Factor 1) was named "Lack of confidence in listening," and the other (Factor 2) was labeled "Tension and worry over English listening." I modified these to simply *Emotionality* and *Worry*, mainly because these terms better fit the emotional and cognitive dimensions of anxiety which have been elucidated in the field of educational psychology (e.g., Morris, et al., 1981). It should also be noted that a third factor (Factor 3), *Anticipatory Fear*, was identified in this study. One last fact to report was that the *Emotionality* component came as the first factor in this study, whereas it was the second in Kim's study.

Following the factor analysis and development of a measurement model for the instrument, three two-way ANOVAs were conducted to investigate the relationship between the academic areas of interest of the learners and their gender, and the three factors identified in the measurement model for the instrument. The Bonferroni method was employed to adjust the $p$ values for the three ANOVAs, and the significance level was $p < .017$. Three univariate outliers were identified on the basis that

**Table 2. Factor Loadings from Principal-Axis Factoring for FLLAS: Communalities and Percentages of Variance**

| | Factor loading | | | communality |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| item 6 | **.45** | .13 | .02 | .22 |
| item 10 | **.43** | .24 | .13 | .26 |
| item 11 | **.49** | .30 | .27 | .40 |
| item 12 | **.64** | .15 | .14 | .45 |
| item 14 | **.53** | .12 | .06 | .30 |
| item 15 | **.46** | .29 | .22 | .35 |
| item 17 | **.44** | .37 | .28 | .41 |
| item 19 | **.46** | .31 | -.01 | .30 |
| item 20 | **.55** | -.04 | .21 | .35 |
| item 29 | **.53** | .36 | .23 | .46 |
| item 30 | **.43** | .18 | .14 | .23 |
| item 31 | **.53** | .10 | .06 | .29 |
| item 32 | **.51** | .16 | .12 | .30 |
| item 1 | .35 | **.46** | -.01 | .34 |
| item 2 | .07 | **.54** | .00 | .30 |
| item 4 | .29 | **.51** | .18 | .38 |
| item 5 | .15 | **.46** | .29 | .32 |
| item 7 | -.00 | **.57** | .09 | .33 |
| item 9 | .28 | **.55** | .14 | .44 |
| item 16 | .20 | **.50** | .28 | .37 |
| item 18 | .32 | **.53** | .03 | .39 |
| item 21 | .38 | **.50** | .16 | .42 |
| item 23 | .25 | **.56** | .23 | .43 |
| item 33 | .29 | **.53** | .19 | .39 |
| item 26 | .18 | .24 | **.67** | .53 |
| item 27 | .19 | .21 | **.77** | .67 |
| item 3 | .31 | .25 | .12 | .17 |
| item 8 | -.03 | .33 | .18 | .14 |
| item 13 | .18 | .20 | .36 | .20 |
| item 22 | .26 | .39 | .19 | .25 |
| item 24 | .11 | .34 | .26 | .20 |
| item 25 | .28 | .00 | .21 | .12 |
| item 28 | .24 | .28 | .09 | .14 |
| % of variance | 29.01 | 4.74 | 3.51 | 37.28 |

Note: $N = 452$. Boldface indicates factor loadings higher than .40.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Items in FLLAS in Terms of Factors and Reliability of the Scale, Factors, and Items**

| | *N* | *M* | *SD* | α | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FLLAS-J | 452 | 92.83 | 16.59 | .91 | 130 |
| Factor 1 | 452 | 46.23 | 8.72 | .85 | 65 |
| (-) 6. | 452 | 3.73 | 1.07 | .84 | 5 |
| 10. | 452 | 3.89 | 1.11 | .84 | 5 |
| 11. | 452 | 3.43 | 1.19 | .84 | 5 |
| 12. | 452 | 3.89 | 1.22 | .83 | 5 |
| (-) 14. | 452 | 4.25 | .99 | .83 | 5 |
| 15. | 452 | 3.35 | 1.17 | .84 | 5 |
| 17. | 452 | 3.33 | 1.21 | .84 | 5 |
| 19. | 452 | 3.45 | 1.27 | .84 | 5 |
| 20. | 452 | 3.78 | 1.29 | .84 | 5 |
| 29. | 452 | 3.97 | 1.01 | .83 | 5 |
| 30. | 452 | 3.24 | 1.30 | .84 | 5 |
| (-) 31. | 452 | 3.89 | 1.08 | .84 | 5 |
| 32. | 452 | 3.30 | 1.13 | .84 | 5 |
| Factor 2 | 452 | 41.18 | 7.72 | .85 | 55 |
| 1. | 452 | 3.51 | 1.26 | .84 | 5 |
| 2. | 452 | 4.24 | 1.02 | .84 | 5 |
| 4. | 452 | 4.27 | 1.00 | .84 | 5 |
| 5. | 452 | 3.67 | 1.16 | .84 | 5 |
| 7. | 452 | 3.65 | 1.25 | .84 | 5 |
| 9. | 452 | 3.26 | 1.26 | .84 | 5 |
| 16. | 452 | 3.35 | 1.12 | .84 | 5 |
| 18. | 452 | 3.85 | 1.05 | .84 | 5 |
| 21. | 452 | 3.69 | 1.11 | .84 | 5 |
| 23. | 452 | 3.66 | 1.13 | .84 | 5 |
| 33. | 452 | 3.90 | 1.03 | .84 | 5 |
| Factor 3 | 452 | 5.67 | 2.31 | .80 | 10 |
| 26. | 452 | 3.00 | 1.30 | - | 5 |
| 27. | 452 | 2.66 | 1.24 | - | 5 |

Note: Reliability scores for factors are Cronbach's Alphas, and those for each of the items are Cronbach's Alphas if the item is deleted within each factor. Reversed items are shown with (-).

their z-scores on Factor 1 were below -3.3 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), and these were excluded. The total number of participants in the ANOVAs was 449.

A 2 x 2 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the effects of academic major and gender on Factor 1. The means and standard deviations for this factor are presented in Table 4 along with those for the other two factors. The test of homogeneity of variance was non-significant ($p$ = .25), and the variances between the groups were not statistically significant. Homogeneity was assumed. The ANOVA indicated no significant interaction between major and gender, $F(1, 445) = .39$, $p = .53$, and no significant main effects for gender, $F(1, 445) = 2.40$, $p = .12$, but it did show significant main effects for major, $F(1, 445) = 2.40$, $p < .017$ (.05 / 3). The effect size, however, was very small. This was measured by *Partial* $\acute{\eta}^2$ and was .03. The students in the two departments were statistically significantly different in their scores on *Emotionality* with math majors being more anxious than social science majors. No gender difference was found and there were no interaction effects on the factor involving the two independent variables.

A second analysis was done between major and gender, and Factor 2. The test of homogeneity of variance was non-significant ($p = .77$), so both groups were assumed to be from the same population. The ANOVA results were not significant for all three sources—major, gender, and interaction between major and gender. The values were: $F(1, 445) = .03$, $p = .86$; $F(1, 445) = .04$, $p = .85$; and $F(1, 445) = 1.61$, $p = .21$, respectively. The participants were not different in terms of the second factor, *Worry*.

A third 2 x 2 ANOVA was performed in relation to Factor 3. Homogeneity was assumed, with a $p$ value of .37. The ANOVA results between academic major and the scores on Factor 3 were almost—but not quite—significant: $F(1, 445) = 5.00$, $p = .03$. There was no significant difference between gender and Factor 3, $F(1, 445) = .02$, $p = .88$, and there were no interaction effects between the two independent variables and the factor scores, $F(1, 445) = .02$, $p = .89$. The data are summarized in Table 4 and Table 5.

To recap, three factors were found in the FLLAS among Japanese learners of English. The two groups with different academic majors were indeed statistically different in their emotional reactions to the act of listening in English but not in their cognitive perception of anxiety-provoking situations or in their anticipation of worrisome situations and consequences. No gender difference was found.

**Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Anxiety Over Listening in English in Terms of Academic Major and Gender Differences**

| Descriptive statistics | Factor 1 | | Factor 2 | | Factor 3 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SS | *MA* | *SS* | *MA* | *SS* | *MA* |
| | Total | | Total | | Total | |
| Male | | | | | | |
| *M* | 44.82 | 48.83 | 40.49 | 41.76 | 5.38 | 5.99 |
| *SD* | 8.36 | 8.07 | 7.28 | 8.21 | 2.14 | 2.61 |
| Female | | | | | | |
| *M* | 43.93 | 46.74 | 41.43 | 40.49 | 5.45 | 5.99 |
| *SD* | 8.86 | 10.32 | 7.44 | 8.00 | 2.24 | 2.41 |
| Total | | | | | | |
| *M* | 44.44 | 48.46 | 40.89 | 41.53 | 5.41 | 6.00 |
| *SD* | 8.57 | 8.41 | 7.35 | 8.17 | 2.18 | 2.60 |
| Male | | | | | | |
| *M* | 46.97 | | 41.17 | | 5.71 | |
| *SD* | 8.43 | | 7.81 | | 2.31 | |
| Female | | | | | | |
| *M* | 44.63 | | 41.20 | | 5.59 | |
| *SD* | 9.14 | | 7.57 | | 2.33 | |
| Total | | | | | | |
| *M* | 46.23 | | 41.18 | | 5.67 | |
| *SD* | 8.72 | | 7.72 | | 2.31 | |

Note: *SS* stands for social science majors, and *MA* stands for math majors.

**Table 5. Summary of Two-Way Analysis of Variance for Academic Major and Gender on Three Factors of FLLA**

| Source | *df* | *SS* | *MS* | *F* | $\acute{\eta}^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Factor 1 | | | | | |
| Major | 1 | 911.23 | 911.23 | 12.63** | .03 |
| Gender | 1 | 172.95 | 172.95 | 2.40 | .01 |
| Major * Gender | 1 | 28.36 | 28.36 | .39 | .00 |
| Residual | 445 | 32101.75 | 72.14 | | |
| Factor 2 | | | | | |
| Major | 1 | 1.98 | 1.98 | .03 | .00 |
| Gender | 1 | 2.08 | 2.08 | .04 | .00 |
| Major * Gender | 1 | 96.01 | 96.01 | 1.61 | .00 |
| Residual | 445 | 26516.76 | 59.72 | | |
| Factor 3 | | | | | |
| Major | 1 | 26.51 | 26.51 | 5.00 | .01 |
| Gender | 1 | .13 | .13 | .02 | .00 |
| Major * Gender | 1 | .09 | .09 | .02 | .00 |
| Residual | 445 | 2360.87 | 5.31 | | |

Note: $^{**}p < .05 / 3$.

## Discussion

### *Research Questions*

This study examined anxiety feelings that Japanese university students would experience in listening to English. The first research question concerned the measurement model for the Japanese-language version of the FLLAS. Thirteen items, related to the emotional elements involved in the act of listening in L2, loaded on Factor 1. Kim (2000) took the emotional component as language-specific lack of confidence. However, the items clustered in Factor 1, *Emotionality*, reflected not just lack of confidence but other emotional reactions as well: discomfort, dislike, annoyance, alienation, and intimidation. As a result, my broader term attempts to capture the full operational bandwidth of the factor. Item 19 seems to be confus-

ing because translation involves a series of expository mental processes, but the phrase "end up" suggests that one has encountered a barrier to thinking—it indicates a stopgap solution and as such might be deemed to be outside of the realm of reasoning or cognitive assessment for the ongoing L2 listening task. Likewise, Items 17 and 29 refer to new information that listeners have to deal with, and which could throw their minds off balance. Item 15 is about the confusion caused when the memory load in the task of L2 listening is excessive. The participants who scored high in this factor were not comfortable in listening to English; they experienced arousal of negative feelings and emotions to the point of distress.

The second factor, *Worry*, appears to be basically related to the cognitive perceptions of the tasks at hand for L2 listeners. This factor garnered high loadings from 11 items that describe situations that may give rise to feelings of worry involved in processing the auditory information. Items 7 and 23 are about understanding the ideas expressed, and items 5 and 16 focus on world knowledge. Concerns about vocabulary are expressed in Items 1, 9, and 33, and the delivery of the message is the source of anxiety in Items 4, 18, and 21—speed, time allocation, and pace, respectively. At first sight, the items that are clustered together in Factor 2 vary in their properties, but all of the statements have something to do with cognition. These items indicate that participants are monitoring and evaluating what they are doing and how they are managing the specific tasks involved in L2 listening. They perceive difficulties in dealing with the information in terms of interpersonal and social expectations, which causes *Worry*. The perception of the task while in a state of worry may also interfere with effective processing of the language input, as observed in MacIntyre and Gardner (1991, 1994a, 1994b). It will diminish the listener's capacity to pay attention to the linguistic stimuli and the encoding and interpretation of the information.

The third factor, *Anticipatory Fear*, may be the most controversial, and indeed this factor did not surface in Kim's (2000) original research, nor has it surfaced in other anxiety constructs in SLA, but the loadings, .67 for Item 26 and .77 for Item 27, are the highest among the loadings of all the items. There are four possible explanations. First, the two items indicate the anticipatory aspect of anxiety as a psychological construct. Anxious feelings, especially the feeling of being worried, can be learned patterns of thinking, but they are also future-oriented. People feel worried because they know of possible negative outcomes, and because of this worry they try to avoid or withdraw from future encounters with similar situations. Thus, the items are about possible future events and should be

distinguished from the other items. Second, listening is a highly anxiety-provoking activity in that listeners do not have as much control as do speakers, writers, or readers. Listeners cannot usually stop the aural flow of the incoming language or stop to think, and in this sense their locus of control becomes external rather than internal. This vulnerability may be the subject of the anticipatory aspect of anxiety being manifested. Item 26 refers to imagining oneself listening on the telephone, which can pose a very anxious situation for L2 listeners. Item 27 is also about listening to a lecture in L2, which the listener might expect to be incomprehensible. A third explanation might be found in the wording, as referred to in the results section. FLLA-J used the expression "souzou-suru" ("imagining"), which has to do with the learners using their imagination. This "imaginative" aspect might be emphasized with the connotation of fearful situations in the translation, in which the Japanese items stood out. It could therefore be considered an item-format effect.

One last explanation with respect to the third factor concerns the cultural aspect of learners' ways of thinking. Yamashiro and McLaughlin (2001) described this as the notion of "face" and collective thinking in interpersonal situations, which may cause Japanese learners of English to feel concerned about being evaluated by others or nervous about negative outcomes in L2 listening situations. The establishment of identity and self-presentation depends largely upon how others perceive us. These four possible accounts are all speculations, but their implications for future research may be worth exploring.

The second and third research questions are discussed in relation to group differences. University major did—although gender did not—make a difference in the anxiety scores in this study. Also, statistical significance was demonstrated with respect to the two independent variables only in Factor 1, *Emotionality.* Math students scored higher on this factor, but not on the others, *Worry* and *Anticipatory Fear*. It is not clear why students in different departments displayed different patterns with respect to Factor 1, but they might be distinct in their studying orientations or approaches to learning. Such difference has been detected in Andreou, Andreou, and Vlachos (2004) in SLA, and in Drew and Watkins (1998) and Ramsden and Entwistle (1981) in education. This line of argument in EFL and ESL settings awaits further research, but considering the small effect size in the variable "major" and on only one factor, it is arguable that the occurrence of FLLA is a function of a variety of person-specific, group-related, and situational variables. Person-specific variables could include personality, tendency to feel anxiety, self-knowledge, and past

language-learning experience, among others. Some of the potential group differences can be race, gender, age, university major, and first language. Situational variables could be interpersonal or related to specific listening tasks. Temporal factors such as fatigue and disturbance might also have to be considered. L2 listeners may experience discomfort to different degrees and for diverse reasons or combinations of reasons. At the same time, all of the participants were from the two departments of the same university, and thus they were not dissimilar enough to diverge in terms of these three factors identified in the FLLAS.

### *Implications*

Anxiety research in educational psychology and social psychology has reported that skills-acquisition treatments were effective in the cognitive aspect of anxiety, *Worry,* and that desensitization and relaxation worked better in the reduction of *Emotionality* (Leary & Kowalski, 1995; Morris, et al., 1981; Zeidner, 1998). These results indicate that in this particular teaching/learning context, strategy training and awareness-raising in L2 listening strategies would be promising for learners in both departments to help reduce the level of anxiety, and that a reassuring environment might be necessary, especially for math majors. In the area of SLA, learners who participated in the Vogely (1998) study cited inappropriate strategies as a source of listening-related anxiety, and this idea is consistent with the findings of this study.

Some recent studies performed in EFL settings in Japan have examined anxiety-reducing measures and learner emotions. Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) demonstrated that the overall level of anxiety and the frequency of strategy use were negatively correlated and that active, problem-focused coping measures can be effective. A descriptive study conducted by Tani-Fukuchi (2005) was intriguing in that 68 percent of her participants reported negative feelings such as anxiety, tense feelings, confusion, discomfort, resistance, and apathy, among others, while only 18 percent reported that they had experienced positive emotions while learning English. The author stated that this predominance of negative emotions should be dealt with and that treatment measures must be incorporated into curriculum and program planning. However, neither study took into account the ideas that learners might not be unitary in the dimensional formulation of their nervous feelings and that the composition of factors influencing anxious feelings might also be as important as the strength of those feelings.

Language-learning anxiety has been investigated in different skill domains, which represents a movement toward greater sophistication of research in this field. However, feelings of worry aroused in association with language learning may well have some characteristics in common across skill areas and across situations. In addition, it has been reported that socially anxious individuals tend to experience fear in multiple situations (Heimberg, Liebowitz, Hope, & Schneider, 1995). Just emphasizing the specificity might not be as rewarding as it looks. One way of measuring specificity v. generality would be to test participants using both general trait-anxiety scales and situation-specific scales like the FLLAS, and then examine the extent to which the general trait measure predicts the situational measure. In this study, L2 listening anxiety was shown to be susceptible to group differences. In future research, it will be necessary to investigate situational differences as well as social and cultural influences and their changes over time.

There are some limitations to this study that need to be pointed out. One is that the number of participants was not well balanced either between the two academic majors or in terms of gender (see Table 1). Another limitation is the small number of items that were clustered in Factor 3. Still another caution concerns the wording of items on the scale. In affective scales, which try to tap into learner psychology, subtle connotations and combinations of words used in items will affect the responses and thus the participants' scores.

## Conclusion

Listening in a foreign language can be anxiety-provoking, even though listening is a receptive skill. The anxiety felt by L2 listeners seems to have features specific to listening in L2 but also common underlying characteristics that are shared by emotionally and cognitively distressed people generally—namely, *Emotionality* and *Worry*. Also, the anticipatory aspect of L2 listening might be another feature influencing learners' psychological state: *Anticipatory Fear*. In this study, university major was found to have a statistically significant effect on the level of *Emotionality.*

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## Appendix A

### *Japanese Translation of Foreign Language Listening Anxiety (FLLAS-J)*

1. 英語を聞くとき、１つか２つの知らない単語にとまどってしまう。
2. 英語のリスニングテストが一回しか読まれないと緊張する。
3. 日本人の話す英語は分かりやすいが、それ以外の英語を聞くのは難しい。
4. あまりに早く英語で話されると、全部理解できないのではないかと不安になる。
5. よく知らないトピックについて英語で聞くのは、落ち着かない。
6. 英語を聞き逃しても、そこの意味を推測するのは簡単だ。
7. リスニング中に少しでも気が散ってしまうと、大切な点を聞き逃したのではないかと心配になる。
8. リスニング中に話者の口や表情が見えないと不安になる。
9. リスニングテストの最中、１つ１つの単語を理解できないと緊張するし混乱する。
10. 英語の聞き取りでは、１つ１つの単語を区別するのが難しい。
11. スクリプトなしで英語を聞くのは落ち着かない。
12. 口頭で行われる英語の指示についていくのは大変だ。
13. 話し手が自分のよく知らない人だと、集中して聞けない。
14. 英語のリスニングには自信がある。
15. 英語を聞くと混乱して、何を聞いたか覚えていられないことが多い。
16. リスニングの際、そのトピックの不十分な知識に不安になる。
17. 英語で重要な情報を聞いていると、頭が混乱してしまう。
18. 英語で聞いた内容に関してあまり考える時間がないと、心配になる。
19. 英語を聞いているとき、内容を理解せずに１つ１つの単語を訳してしまっていることがよくある。
20. できれば、人の話は英語で聞きたくない。
21. 自分のペースで英語が聞けないと、不安になる。
22. 自分以外の人は英語をよく理解していると、いつも思ってしまう。
23. 自分が英語を正確に理解したかどうかわからないとき、焦ってしまう。
24. 小さな声で英語を話されると、理解できていないのではないかと心配になる。
25. 聴衆のひとりとしてなら、英語を聞くことに不安はない。
26. 電話で英語を聞くときや、その場面を想像してみただけでも、緊張する。
27. 講演会などで英語を聞いたり、その場面を想像してみただけでも、緊張する。
28. 少しでも騒音があると、英語は聞き取りにくい。
29. 英語で新しい情報を聞くのは不安だ。
30. 英語を聞いていて、理解できない単語に出会うといらいらする。
31. 英語の強弱（ストレス）やイントネーションには慣れている。
32. 英語のリスニングで、単語は理解できても話し手の言いたいことは理解できていないことが多い。
33. リスニングでキーワードが聞き取れないと心配になる。

## Appendix B

### *Back-translation of Foreign Language Listening Anxiety (FLLAS-J)*

*When listening to English:*

1. I **get stuck** with one or two unfamiliar words.
2. I **get nervous** if listening test passages are read just once.
3. It is difficult to understand people with English pronunciation that is different from mine.
4. I **worry** that I might not be able to understand when people talk too fast.
5. I **am nervous** when I'm not familiar with the topic.
6. It is easy to make guesses about the parts I missed.
7. I **worry** that I might have missed important information while I was distracted.
8. I **am worried** when I cannot see the lips or facial expressions of the person.
9. I **get nervous** and confused when I don't understand every word in listening test situations.
10. It is difficult to differentiate words.
11. I **feel uncomfortable** listening without a chance to read the transcript of the speech.
12. I have difficulty in understanding oral instructions.
13. It is difficult to concentrate on and hear a speaker I do not know well.
14. I **feel confident** in my listening skills.
15. I often **get so confused** that I cannot remember what I have heard.
16. I **fear** I might have an inadequate knowledge about the topic.
17. My thoughts **become jumbled and confused** in listening for important information.

18. I **get worried** when I have little time to think about what I have heard.
19. I often end up translating word by word without understanding what I'm listening to.
20. I would rather not listen to people talking in English.
21. I **get worried** when I cannot listen at the pace I'm comfortable with.
22. I tend to think that other people understand the content well enough.
23. I **get upset** when I'm not sure whether I have understood well.
24. I **am worried** I might not understand when the person lowers their voice while speaking in English.
25. I **have no fear** of listening to public speeches in English.
26. I **am nervous** when listening to English over the phone or when imagining myself listening over the phone.
27. I **feel tense** when listening to, or imagining myself listening to, a lecture.
28. I have difficulty when the environment around me is noisy.
29. Listening to new information **makes me uneasy.**
30. I **get annoyed** when I come across new words.
31. English stress and intonation patterns are familiar to me.
32. It often happens that I do not understand what English speakers say.
33. The thought that I may be missing key words **frightens** me.

*Note.* The original English translation from Korean was published in Kim (2000).

# The Effect of Excessively Difficult Listening Lessons on Motivation and the Influence of Authentic Listening as a "Lesson-Selling" Tag

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Although the use of authentic material is widely advocated, it is often assumed that the difficulty posed by such material may demotivate lower-level students. This paper reports on a study showing that *excessively* difficult authentic listening can be motivational for such learners, partly because of their very inability to comprehend it. Another finding examined is that *selling*, or emphasizing the authentic provenance of such materials, can positively effect students' perception of the lesson in which they are used. The practical application of such *Level-Excessive Authentic Listening* (LEAL) and *Lesson-Selling Tags* (LST) is also discussed.

英語の教材として真正性の高い（いわゆるauthenticな）教材の使用が薦められることが多い。しかしながら一方、レベルが高すぎて特に英語力の低い学習者のやる気を削ぐこともあるという欠点も指摘されることがある。本論文では大学で英語を学ぶ学習者を対象に実証研究を行った。その結果以下の点を明らかにした。1）難しいとされる教材であっても英語力の低い学習者の動機付けを行う効果があること、2）学習者が実際に使われる（authenticな）英語を学んでいるのだということを意識させることにより授業に肯定的な意義を認めさせる効果があること。結果に基づき、レベルの高い実用英語（Level-Excessive Authentic Listening)と対象の英語が実用的であると意識させるための指標（Lesson-Selling Tags）の関係について論じた。

The use of authentic materials has been widely advocated and there is, as Guariento and Morley (2001) point out, "a general consensus in language teaching" (p. 347) that it benefits the learning process.

A principal advantage proposed for presenting samples of genuine spoken interaction is that it exposes learners to those language features that are often missing from concocted texts. As Willis (2003) cautions, "there is a serious danger that specifically designed texts will show the language not as it really is, but as the course writers imagine it to be or would like it to be" (p. 224).

Less apparent, perhaps, than the benefit from exposure to this *real-world* language, is the affective role of authentic resources. Peacock (1997) suggests that amongst language teachers there is a "subjective impression" that these resources confer "a positive effect on learner motivation" (p. 144). His study found an increase in on-task behavior and observed motivation when a variety of authentic materials were incorporated into language classes.

Despite the fact that authentic resources are often seen as having the potential to motivate learners, Rost (2002) points out that some teachers believe authentic material "is too difficult for the students to handle[1]"(p. 125). Such a view reflects a general concern, no doubt influenced to some extent by Krashen's (1981) input hypothesis, to ensure that task difficulty be set at an appropriate level. After all, most teachers would want to avoid possibly demoralizing learners with input too far beyond their linguistic competence. Apart from being dispiriting, exposing learners to incomprehensible listening materials can, Anderson and Lynch (1988) stress, "encourage passive and unsuccessful listening habits where the learners equate 'listening' with sitting back and letting a largely meaningless sequence of sound wash over them" (p. 45).

This paper reports on a piece of action research carried out to assess learners' reactions to authentic listening of a level that could be described as *excessively difficult*. The aim was to determine whether motivation would be adversely affected by such *Level-Excessive Authentic Listening* (LEAL), or if the motivational effect of authentic materials found by Peacock (1997) would still apply.

Although the listening material, recordings from Internet radio (for more on using this resource see Rebuck, 2006a), had previously been used successfully with advanced adult learners (average TOEIC score 800+), prior to this study the author had not attempted to use it with lower-level university students. Midway through a Communication English course, the author taught the first LEAL lesson with such students. Considering that the previous lessons, focusing on topics such as jobs, eating out and traveling, had been relatively easy, the author was quite prepared for the

LEAL-imposed jump in difficulty to overwhelm and possibly demoralize the class as a whole. However, contrary to expectations, the lesson, as far as one could observe from student reaction, was well received and motivational.

Reflecting on the language spoken when introducing and managing the lesson, the author suspected that its apparent success was partly related to the use of the very word that described the nature of the material: *authentic*. Dörnyei (2001) suggests that generating interest in a language learning activity is, to a great degree, a "selling task" (p. 53). From the start of the lesson the author intentionally sought to "sell" the lesson with the help of the *authentic* label, or tag. It is argued that the term *authentic listening* acted as a *Lesson-Selling Tag* (LST).

In the light of this insight, it was decided to widen the scope of the study to determine the influence of this LST on learner motivation. There were, therefore, two main aims for this study: first, to establish whether LEAL, despite its difficulty, could be motivational; and, second, to test if the teacher's use of the phrase *authentic listening* served to raise student motivation more than another LST.

## Method

The same two LEAL lessons were taught by the author to students during the first semester (S1) and subsequently to another group of students in the second semester (S2) of a university Communication English course. In S1, the "selling" of the LEAL lesson began with elicitation of the meaning of the word *authentic*. The author then explained to the students, in words approximating those below, what *authentic* meant in relation to their lesson:

> Today we are going to do an authentic listening lesson. The recording you will hear is not from a textbook, but from the BBC, and was not made for learners of English, but for native speakers. Remember that because it was made for native speakers, you will probably find it very difficult, so don't worry if you can't understand much.

Throughout the lesson, and particularly when the author felt the attention of the class was waning, the students were reminded that they were doing authentic listening, which was not made [expressly] for them, but for native speakers. The students in S2 were also "sold" the lesson,

but instead of *authentic*, the LST *advanced listening* was used. Also, unlike the S1 students, those in S2 were not told the source of the material (i.e., BBC radio). Thus the introduction to an S2 listening lesson approximated the following:

> Today we are going to do an advanced listening lesson. The recording you will hear was not made for your level, but for advanced students. Remember that because this listening was made for high-level students, you will probably find it very difficult, so don't worry if you can't understand much.

The word *advanced* was chosen for comparison because it was considered to be one familiar to Japanese students. A conscious effort was made by the author to project the same level of enthusiasm to both S1 and S2 groups. This was important because, as Dörnyei (2001, p. 33) emphasizes, the teacher's enthusiasm is an important factor in creating an environment that generates motivation.

In week 10 of both S1 and S2, the students completed Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix A for the Japanese original and English translation). Before the completion of the questionnaires, both recordings were played again in order to help the students recall the lessons about which they were to be asked.

A key word in the questionnaire, *iyoku* (意欲), which can be described as a feeling of wanting to do something with enthusiasm, was considered by the author, and native Japanese speakers consulted, to be the most suitable word to express the meaning of *motivation* that was intended in this study.

In addition to Likert scale items, the questionnaire included two open-ended questions. Although more difficult to analyze, Wallace (2001, p. 135) points out that such questions provide respondents with the opportunity for free expression and are more likely to yield unexpected and, potentially, more interesting data.

To determine the influence of LST in more detail, S2 students only were played a third recording (see Appendix B, transcript C) in the week following the completion of Questionnaire 1. Unlike their previous two lessons, however, this one was "sold" as authentic listening. Having now been exposed to both LSTs, S2 students were asked in Questionnaire 2 (see Appendix A) which they preferred and why.

### *Participants*

The LEAL lessons were attended by a total of 238 (S1=144; S2=94) male and female, non-English majors, taking English as a compulsory first-year subject at a university in Nagoya. The overall level of students was estimated by the author and his colleagues as low intermediate. TOEIC scores, which provide a more objective measure of language level, were available for only one class, whose average score was 467. This figure would probably approximate the average of all S1 and S2 students.

### *Materials*

The LEAL lessons used recorded extracts from the following three BBC Radio 4 programs (transcripts in Appendix B):

(A) *You and Yours:* A caller explains why she is "waiting anxiously" for her mother, stricken by senile dementia, to die.

(B) *Any Answers:* A caller to this phone-in program argues that smoking should be considered "another form of child abuse."

(C) *Night in the City:* A monologue in which a nurse talks about how he "got into" nursing and the way he copes when patients die.

These recordings were selected for two reasons. Firstly, they dealt with subjects that were topical and/or considered to be relevant to the students. The second reason relates to the naturalness of the speech. More so than scripted news reports, the three recordings contained many of the features that characterize unplanned spoken discourse such as fillers, terminal overlap (when two interlocutors attempt to speak at the same time), false starts and repetition (for details of these and other features, see Rost, 2002; Willis, 2003; Gilmore, 2004).

### *The LEAL Lessons*

Buck (as cited in Helgesen, 2002) explains that pre-listening "provides context for interpretation and activates the background knowledge which will help interpretation." (p. 29). In the *LEAL A* lesson, for example, the students were primed for the topic by questions about an item of realia, namely a poster of the Japanese film *Ashita no Kioku* (Memories of Tomorrow), about a young man diagnosed with early-onset dementia. Pre-teaching of vocabulary at this stage, however, was deliberately kept to a minimum, for reasons that will be discussed later.

Although the activities varied slightly among the three LEAL lessons, a typical lesson followed the procedure (a-k) shown below.

*Note*. NT (no transcript) indicates no transcript was used; WT (with transcript) shows the transcript was used during this step.

a. Pre-listening

b. Listening 1 (NT): Students listened to the recording and then indicated on a comprehension scale (0%-100%) how much they understood. They then compared their completed scales with a partner.

c. Listening 2 (NT): Students answered several comprehension questions that focused their attention on key points in the text.

d. Listening 3 (WT): Students listened and attempted a cloze exercise.

e. Intensive study of transcript: The teacher went through the whole text line by line, explaining the meaning of difficult sections and unfamiliar vocabulary, while supplying the answers to the cloze for students to check.

f. Listening 4 (WT): Students followed the recording on their transcripts.

g. Alternate reading of the transcript: In pairs, students read the transcript aloud, initially line by line and then as a roleplay.

h. Listening 5 (NT): The CD was paused at certain points to focus on pronunciation difficulties noticed during monitoring of the previous step.

i. Roleplay of a concocted dialogue: Students practice a modified, simplified version of the original text.

j. Listening 6 (WT→NT): Repeated choral shadowing of a section of the text until students were able to speak simultaneously with the recording, unaided by the transcript.

k. Listening 7 (NT): Immediately after this final listening, students marked the comprehension scale a second time. Time did not permit inclusion of an important stage in the lesson: discussion. However, end-of-semester assessed-interviews did provide the opportunity for students to "relate to the text as individuals" (Anderson & Lynch, 1988, p. 77).

### *Analysis*

In this study, the analytical process was performed on SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Cross-tabulations were run on the data in order to ascertain the interrelationship between the independent variable (authentic or advanced listening) and responses to items on the questionnaire (the dependent variable). Pearson's chi-square was then calculated to see if the pattern revealed by the cross-tabulations was statistically significant.

To determine whether motivation to study English could have influenced the response to LEAL, S1 and S2 students respectively were divided into two subgroups according to the results of Question 1 (*How would you rate your general level of motivation to study English?*):

1. HM (High Motivation): self-rated motivation of *very high* or *quite high*.
2. LM (Low Motivation): self-rated motivation of *not very high* or *not at all high*.

The statistical analysis was repeated to determine whether, within each of the listening groups S1 and S2, a significant relationship existed between self-rated motivation and the answers to the questionnaire items.

Students' comments from the open-questions were read by the author and classified, with a native Japanese speaker being consulted as necessary. The main categories of comments, which emerged from the more than 200 read, are introduced later in this paper.

## Results

The results are presented for each question, except 2, which was used simply to determine attendance. All numbers are percentages, except *Total*, which indicates the total number of students who actually responded to the question. Results for significance are reported at the .05 level.

There was no statistically significant difference between S1 and S2 students' general inclination to study English (Table 1). Any changes in self-rated motivation were, therefore, likely to be due to the influence of the LEAL lessons.

There was no significant difference between S1 and S2, or between HM and LM sub-groups, on Q3, suggesting that all students found the LEAL lessons equally difficult (Table 2 & 3). Further evidence for the difficulty

presented by LEAL comes from the comprehension scale completed by the students. After the initial listening, most students rated their level of understanding from 0% to 10%.

**Table 1. Results for Q1 concerning general level of motivation to study English**

| | Very high | Quite high | Not very high | Not at all high | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 (Authentic Listening) | 17.4 | 50.0 | 30.6 | 2.1 | 144 |
| S2 (Advanced Listening) | 18.3 | 46.2 | 32.3 | 3.2 | 93 |

**Table 2. Results for Q3 concerning perceived difficulty of lesson (Dementia)**

| | | Very difficult | Quite difficult | Not very difficult | Not difficult at all | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | All | 32.8 | 43.1 | 17.5 | 6.6 | 137 |
| | HM | 28.0 | 46.2 | 20.4 | 5.4 | 93 |
| | LM | 43.2 | 36.4 | 11.4 | 9.1 | 44 |
| S2 | All | 41.6 | 46.1 | 10.1 | 2.2 | 89 |
| | HM | 46.4 | 37.5 | 14.3 | 1.8 | 56 |
| | LM | 34.4 | 59.4 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 32 |

**Table 3. Results for Q3 concerning perceived difficulty of lesson (Smoking)**

| | | Very difficult | Quite difficult | Not very difficult | Not difficult at all | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | All | 43.9 | 43.9 | 10.1 | 2.2 | 139 |
| | HM | 41.3 | 44.6 | 12.0 | 2.2 | 92 |
| | LM | 48.9 | 42.6 | 6.4 | 2.1 | 47 |
| S2 | All | 44.9 | 44.9 | 10.1 | 0.0 | 89 |
| | HM | 42.1 | 45.6 | 12.3 | 0.0 | 57 |
| | LM | 45.5 | 44.3 | 10.2 | 0.0 | 88 |

Concerning Q4, the rapid speed of the discourse was the most common reason for perceived difficulty cited. Other reasons included: the use of unknown vocabulary, interruptions, the occurrence of connected speech, weak forms, elision and ellipsis, difficulty understanding English accents, and subject matter.

**Table 4. Results for Q5 concerning the impact of authentic materials on motivation**

| | | Substantially | Somewhat | Not much | Not at all | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | All | 20.8 | 64.6 | 13.9 | 0.7 | 144 |
| | HM | 24.7 | 63.9 | 10.3 | 1.0 | 97 |
| | LM | 12.8 | 66.0 | 21.3 | 0.0 | 47 |
| S2 | All | 12.8 | 59.6 | 26.6 | 1.1 | 94 |
| | HM | 16.7 | 66.7 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 60 |
| | LM | 6.1 | 45.5 | 45.5 | 3.0 | 33 |

As shown in Table 4, 85.4% of S1 students and 72.4% of S2 students reported that their level of motivation for studying English had either risen *substantially* or *somewhat*. It appears that LEAL was effective in raising the motivation of students overall. However, the increase in the motivation of S1 students, in comparison with those in S2, was not statistically significant. No statistically significant difference was found between HM and LM students in S1. However, a statistically significant difference was observed between the two S2 sub-groups.

**Table 5. Results for Q6a concerning the perceived value of the authentic listening lessons**

| | | Extremely | Quite | Not very | Not at all | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | All | 63.2 | 34.0 | 2.8 | 0.0 | 144 |
| | HM | 66.0 | 30.9 | 3.1 | 0.0 | 97 |
| | LM | 57.4 | 40.4 | 2.1 | 0.0 | 47 |
| S2 | All | 41.5 | 51.1 | 7.4 | 0.0 | 94 |
| | HM | 51.7 | 40.0 | 8.3 | 0.0 | 60 |
| | LM | 21.2 | 72.7 | 6.1 | 0.0 | 33 |

While the results of Question 5 did not show that the LST "authentic" listening was significantly more effective as a motivator than "advanced" listening, those of Question 6 suggest otherwise. When "sold" as authentic listening, 63.2% thought that LEAL was *extremely* worthwhile. Significantly, in comparison, only 41.5% of the students who were "sold" the same lesson with the advanced listening LST gave this rating (see Table 5).

In effect, Question 6 is seeking to ascertain the student's perceived value of the LEAL lessons, and motivation is, as Williams and Burden (as cited in Doyon, 2003, Perceived Value section, para. 2) point out, closely related to such perception:

> The greater the value that individuals attach to the accomplishment of or involvement in an activity, the more highly motivated they will be both to engage in it initially, and later put sustained effort into succeeding in the activity.

While the S1-S2 comparison in Question 5 was inconclusive, the results for Question 6a suggest that, if perceived value is equated with motivation, the S1 students could be expected to have gained more motivational benefit from LEAL than those in S2.

Looking within the groups, the results mirrored those of Question 5: a statistically significant difference was found between HM and LM students in S2 but not in S1.

When asked to give reasons for the perceived value of LEAL lessons as *extremely* or *quite* worthwhile the students offered various responses. A small sample of these comments, categorized under five main headings, is introduced below.

### *1. The Positive Perception of Difficulty*

Comment *1a*, and numerous others, suggested that the difficulty of the material itself was viewed positively. For some, including the writer of 1*b*, this was because they considered LEAL as preparation for real-life situations. A similar sentiment, expressed, for example, in *1c*, was that coping with English outside the classroom requires more than being exposed to the relatively undemanding listening they had been given at school:

*a. [I thought the authentic listening lessons were extremely worthwhile] because most students, including me, were unable to catch hardly anything.* (S1)

b. *[The lessons] made me understand about the speed and pronunciation of native speech, and I think that I would be mentally prepared if I actually went abroad.* (S1)

c. *[I thought it was extremely worthwhile] because it was real English. We did listening in junior and high school, but there the material used had been slowed down, so it was easier to hear. You'll never be able to comprehend what is being said in a real-life situation that way.* (S1)

**2. *Appreciation of one's English Ability***

Students commented that the LEAL lessons had made them more aware of their own level of English. This possibly sobering realization, however, seems to have been perceived positively rather than with a sense of discouragement.

a. *I really felt how low my English ability was. Even though I can translate grammar and sentences, when it actually came to listening, I was unable to answer [the comprehension questions] at all. But it was a great stimulus to make me want to study English conversation.* (S1)

b. *The lessons were of value because I realized that the level of English we usually listen to is completely useless, and that it's necessary to practice with a variety of levels.* (S1)

c. *[I thought the lessons were extremely worthwhile] because it made me acutely aware of my lack of English ability, and made me think that I had to at least study a bit by myself.* (S1)

**3. *Exposure to what is Perceived as an Inaccessible Media***

Despite the proliferation of authentic material available on video and on the Internet, some students commented that they had been afforded a rare opportunity to hear native speakers. It is possible that English language radio is regarded as particularly difficult or inaccessible, and consequently the opportunity to learn from it, as opposed to a more familiar authentic medium, for example movies, may have been motivational for S1 students (S2 students were not, of course, told the true source of the recordings):

a. *[It was quite worthwhile] because even though we're studying English, there's not much opportunity to experience authentic English.* (S1)

***4. Stimulating Subject Matter***

From the comments it was clear that many students responded positively to the content of the listening material:

a. *I was able to learn a different point of view.* (S2)

b. *The content [of the recordings] dealt with things that we ourselves will have to face.* (S2)

c. *Because the content had substance and depth, it was impossible to come up with the answer just like that. In this regard the subjects were difficult, but I think these lessons were important.* (S1)

***5. Teaching Procedures***

Comments indicated that certain aspects of how the lessons were conducted, in particular the use of the script and repeated playing of the recordings, seemed to have contributed to the overall positive perception of the lessons:

a. *After looking at the script it wasn't that difficult, but before we saw the script the speed was so fast we couldn't catch anything.* (S2)

b. *The lessons were good because I came to understand more and more as the recordings were played repeatedly.* (S1)

c. *[It was extremely worthwhile] because although at first I didn't understand, after listening repeatedly I was able to comprehend what was being said. This is the point when I felt that my listening ability had improved.* (S1)

d. *It was difficult because it took some time to understand the content, but after the teacher explained it to us, and we practiced in other ways, I was able to understand it well.* (S1)

Although greatly outnumbered by positive responses, a number of negative comments were received. These were mainly concerned with the difficultly of the lesson:

a. *[I thought it was not worthwhile] because I couldn't understand anything. I think we should have done something easier.* (S2)

b. *It was impossible to understand with such high-level English from the start.* (S2)

c. *I didn't expect that I would only be able to catch so little, and I felt disappointed with myself.* (S1)

d. *Just realizing that [authentic listening] is so different from what we did at junior high and high school has some value. But I felt myself feeling even more turned off English than before. My motivation didn't increase.* (S1)

***Comparison of S1 and S2 Comments***

Analyzing the written responses of both groups of students, it was apparent that those by S1 students often included *authentic* (sometimes written in *katakana*). In contrast, the word *advanced* occurred in relatively few S2 comments. This may indicate that of the two LSTs, *authentic* had been more internalized, possibly because, being a new term for most students, it was attended to more readily than the already familiar *advanced*.

Another difference observed was the greater number of S1 comments comparing the LEAL lessons with the listening they had done at school, including for examination preparation. This suggests, perhaps, that *authentic* signaled to students a departure from previous listening practice in a way that *advanced* did not.

Out of the 80 students in S2 who responded to Questionnaire 2 (see Appendix A), 54 indicated they would choose "authentic listening" over "advanced listening" if they were naming the lesson. Responses to the open question for Questionnaire 2 suggest that the associations students attached to particular LST influenced how they perceived a lesson:

a. *There's no denying it was difficult, but I think the term* authentic *is better than* advanced *because it is more suitable for a lesson, which, rather than being at a high level, was more a chance to experience English as it is really spoken.*

b. Authentic *has a more practical ring to it.*

c. *[*Authentic English*] just sounds closer to native.*

d. *[I'm against* advanced*] because it feels that it was made for Japanese people.*

e. *[I'm for* advanced*] because the word is more familiar to Japanese.*

f. *The word* advanced *gives the feeling that if you study this, you will go one step up.*

The results for both Questions 5 and 6 showed that, while no statistically significant difference was found between HM and LM sub-groups in S1, such a difference was found in S2. This suggests that HM S2 students may have benefited affectively from the challenge of advanced listening, while LM S2 learners were to some extent inhibited or demoralized by the level of difficulty. In contrast, when LEAL was "sold" as authentic listening (S1), students reacted in a similar (positive) way regardless of self-rated motivation.

Differences in the connotative meaning triggered by each LST may partly explain these results. Because the word *advanced* seems to be imbued with connotations of levels or grades (see above), LM students may have wondered why they were being subjected to material obviously meant for more proficient learners. On the other hand, *authentic listening*, being free or less suggestive of such associations, may not have inhibited LM students in the same way. Even for learners in whom *authentic* did evoke connotations of difficultly, it was more likely to be that difficulty associated with real-life communication rather than exams or formal study.

## Discussion

The responses to Question 5 showed that Japanese learners valued the opportunity of being exposed to samples of authentic English despite, and also, in some cases, because of its difficulty.

Although LEAL was rated positively by the students in this study, Cauldwell (1998) points out that there is a general reluctance amongst teachers to use anything but listening materials that cater to what the learners "can manage at their current level" (p. 7). Insufficient consideration is given, he argues, to the ability level that is needed to understand spontaneous fast speech. Such "misdirected charity" as he describes it (p. 7), deprives students of the opportunity to become aware of the divide between their present level and the target level.

Faerch and Kasper (cited in Anderson and Lynch, 1988, p. 35) also stress the need for learners "to experience comprehension problems." They argued it is only after learners are alerted to gaps in their internal L2 systems that they will try to plug these gaps, and thereby learn. By showing that LEAL can be motivational, the results of this present study complement the linguistic arguments for difficult input.

Peaty (2003) stresses that "students should not have to waste a lot of time deciphering authentic texts" (p. 4), and it could well be argued that

incorporating LEAL into a communicative English course is time squandered when what Japanese students most require is level-appropriate input and every opportunity to use practical English. This study suggests, however, that regardless of the immediate usefulness of the content, the psychological impact of LEAL, even in terms of making students acutely aware of what they do not know, could justify its inclusion in conversation courses.

## The Theory and Practice of LEAL

This study was a piece of action research conducted by a single teacher who no doubt influenced the results to some degree. Although, as Wallace (2001, p. 18) points out, the priority of action research is not to make "general statements," certain aspects of this study may have relevance for other EFL professionals. The following section, therefore, includes some points to consider when implementing LEAL in the classroom.

### *Appropriate Number and Frequency of LEAL Lessons*

The experience of teaching LEAL to lower-level students since this study, has led the author to feel that two or three of these lessons over 15 weeks appears to inject an appropriate amount of positive tension into his course, which is not specifically a listening one. Further research is necessary to establish whether exceeding a certain number of LEAL lessons would be counterproductive in terms of motivation.

### *Interesting and Relevant Subject Matter*

Dörnyei (2001) stresses the importance of relevance for motivation:

> One of the most demotivating factors for learners is when they have to learn something that they cannot see the point of because it has no seeming relevance whatsoever to their lives. (p. 63)

A particular topic may, of course, have been especially meaningful to certain individuals (the impact of LEAL 1, for example, was probably greater for the handful of students who may have been living with a grandparent suffering from dementia), but student feedback indicated a general interest in the content of the recordings.

If the recordings had not been relevant to the students, it is unlikely that motivation would have been maintained to the extent observed.

Moreover, the relevance of a particular topic is most likely amplified when it is made explicit (as it was for S1 students[2]) that it is "real" people, as opposed to actors, who are speaking.

### *Mimimal Pre-teaching*

A possible reason why even students with low self-rated motivation generally responded positively to LEAL was that its extreme relative difficulty served as an equalizer of learners. In effect, the first playing of the recording acted to place the whole class in the same boat of minimal comprehension.

As was explained earlier, after the first playing of the recording, students marked on their comprehension scale the degree to which they had understood and then compared their rating with a partner. While comparing, the author observed a number of students giggling as they revealed to each other how *little* they had understood. It seemed to the author that the realization they had not fared any worse than their classmates had a reassuring and anxiety-lowering effect. By the end of this rating-comparison, the atmosphere felt more relaxed and the class appeared more ready to tackle the lesson.

Students were not asked to learn a list of key vocabulary or do other out-of-class preparation. Although it is considered sound pedagogical practice, the author decided against setting such pre-listening homework as it might have placed certain students, particularly those more inclined to study autonomously, at an initial advantage. Listening to the first playing of the LEAL selection cold was designed to maximize the alleviation of anxiety described above as well as the distance that needed to be traveled to span the *achievement gap* (see below).

Comments by students (see Question 6 [1]) revealed that part of the value of LEAL was that it simulated what they considered to be the real world outside the classroom, where language is often highly unpredictable and filled with unknown vocabulary. Having students listen with limited preparation brings them closer to the kind of situation they may encounter and the emotions they may feel on the *communication front line* (as mentioned earlier in this paper, activities that contextualized the topic of the recording were included before the listening).

### *Creating an Achievement-Gap*

The results of this study have led the author to hypothesize that the motivational benefit of LEAL is greatest when the gap between what

learners had been unable to do and what they ended up accomplishing is greatest. This hypothesis could inform future inquiry in the area.

Rost (2002, p. 125) points out that task design is a pivotal factor, allowing authentic listening material to be calibrated and utilized in a way that is motivational for different ability levels. However, the priority of task design for LEAL lessons was not to render the material manageable from the start by, for example, previewing vocabulary, but rather to ensure that the initially incomprehensible became, in the space of a 90-minute lesson, comprehensible. The two main lesson procedures that enabled students to span this gap were repeated exposure to the input and use of the transcript.

### *Traversing the Achievement Gap*

Among the things that White (1998) considers wrong with the typical listening lesson is the limited time spent actually listening to the tape. He laments that, "students perhaps hear a two-to-three-minute tape three or four times in the lesson at the most—a total of about 12 minutes' listening," and spend the rest of the lesson "discussing the answers, and doing transfer activities" (p. 5).

Repeated exposure to the text, which is generally regarded as an important factor promoting comprehension (Takefuta & Kusagaya, 2004, p. 148), was feasible in this study because the three LEAL recordings were relatively short (104, 80, and 67 seconds for LEAL 1, 2, and 3 respectively). This brevity also made it less likely that students would switch off during any of the eight times the recording was played during a single lesson.

The input load placed on students by the difficulty of LEAL and the target of reaching maximum comprehension in a short time, necessitated intensive study of the transcript during the lesson.

The author observed that, after the final listening, the majority of students indicated on their comprehension scales that they had understood from 50% to 80% of the recording, compared with 0% to 10% after the initial playing. It is unlikely that such increases would have been seen without bottom-up processing achieved by concentrated attention to the details of the text.

Such a drastic increase in comprehension seems to have made some students (see, for example, comment 5c) feel that their listening ability had improved. It is unlikely, however, that any real gains could have been made in only two lessons, especially since listening strategies, for instance, predicting and listening for gist, were not explicitly covered

in class. Instead, the increased comprehension students experienced was most likely limited to the understanding of the particular recording. Nevertheless, even such a lesson-specific improvement was in itself important motivationally because it showed learners what they could achieve through application. Students, as D.Verity commented (personal communication, June 23, 2007), were given a glimpse of their potential future selves.

Listening comprehension was supplemented by production activities, mostly using the transcript, such as class and peer shadowing (Wiltshier, 2007, p. 43), role-play, and practice of concocted conversations adapted from the transcript.

***Lesson-selling tags***

Understanding that words can often evoke associations beyond their literal meaning is important for teachers. Ikeoka (2007), for example, suggests that teachers in junior high schools consider the emotional reaction of pupils to certain labels when streaming classes. He offers the following caution:

> A little thought needs to be given when naming the different levels… *beginners' course*, *intermediate course* and *advanced course* may be easy to understand, but there is a chance these names will have a considerable impact on both the individual pupils and on interpersonal relationships in the class. (p. 14; my translation)

Using the homeroom teacher's nickname instead, will, Ikeoka suggests, help produce an all-important "at-home atmosphere" (p.14).

The results of this present study suggest that connotations perceived by learners to certain words can influence their response to a lesson. It was seen that "selling" LEAL as authentic evoked more positive connotations than presenting it as advanced listening. One student, for example, wrote that *authentic* triggered associations of "native [speaker]," a concept that has considerable status in Japan.

Of course, just as good retailers conduct their sales talk with enthusiasm, teachers should pay attention to the manner in which they deliver their pedagogical "sales pitch". It is also important to remember that what the lesson learners are being persuaded to "buy into" should be well planned and based on material that has value commensurate with the effort they are expending in order to understand it. Desperately justifying

a lesson's rationale by emphasizing its "authentic" credentials is unlikely to galvanize the class if the material is irrelevant and uninteresting.

## Conclusion

In this study it was shown that material pitched substantially above the learners' current level tended to motivate rather than demoralize. There are other ways, besides its challenging nature, that authentic material can serve to motivate learners. Guariento and Morley's (2001) description of one of these may resonate with many language learners: "[authentic resources] give [learners] a feeling that…[they] are in touch with a living entity, the target language as it is used by the community which speaks it" (p. 347). In the classroom, this feeling is more likely to be inspired in learners when the authentic provenance of material is made explicit and emphasized by the teacher, as it was to the S1 students.

Finally, as a university teacher of Communication English, this author agrees with Moteki Hiromichi, who declares that higher education should provide more than a "mere extension" of what he views as the increasingly undemanding English education taught in schools (Rebuck, 2006b). To this end, LEAL can affirm to students the challenging nature of their academic environment and provide an indication of the teacher's confidence in their potential as language learners.

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## Notes

1. "Authentic" does not necessarily have to equate with "difficult". In fact, as Ueda (2005, p. 94) points out, the redundancy that characterizes natural speech often provides many more semantic cues for the listener than a cleaned-up concocted text.

2. While it is necessary to acknowledge that some S2 (advanced listening) students would have guessed correctly that the recording they had heard was not concocted, the results suggest that it is the teacher's promotion of

class resources as authentic that is more important in raising motivation than the assumptions of individual students as to the source.

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## Appendix A

### *Questionnaire 1*

質問１. あなたは、自分の「英語の学習意欲」をどのくらいだと思いますか。

１. 非常に高い　　２. やや高い　　３. あまり高くない　　４. 全く高くない

質問2. あなたは、次の話題を扱ったオーセンティックリスニングAuthentic Listeningの授業に出席していましたか?出席していたものに〇をつけてください。(複数回答可)

1. オーセンティックリスニング「認知症Dementia」
2. オーセンティックリスニング「喫煙Smoking」

質問3　これらの授業はあなたにとって難しいものでしたか?

「認知症Dementia」の話題について

１. 非常に難しかった　　２. まあまあ難しかった
３. あまり難しくなかった　　４. 全く難しくなかった

「喫煙Smoking」の話題について

１. 非常に難しかった　　２. まあまあ難しかった
３. あまり難しくなかった　　４. 全く難しくなかった

質問4a　「非常に難しかった」あるいは「まあまあ難しかった」と答えた方に伺います。

質問4b　どのようなところが難しかったですか?

質問5　あなたはオーセンティックリスニングAuthentic　Listeningの授業を受けて、英語への学習意欲が高まりましたか?

１. 非常に高まった　　２. まあまあ高まった
３. あまり高まらなかった　　４. 全く高まらなかった

質問6a　あなたはオーセンティックリスニングAuthentic Listeningの授業は価値があると思いますか?またなぜそう思いますか?

１.　非常に価値がある　　２. まあまあ価値がある
３. あまり価値がない　　４. 価値はない

質問6bその理由

***Translation of Questionnaire 1***

*Note.* While the questionnaire completed by S2 students was the same as the one below, *Authentic* was replaced with the word *Advanced.*

**Q1.** How would you rate your general level of motivation to study English?

1. Very high 2. Quite high 3. Not very high 4. Not at all high

**Q2.** Did you attend the *Authentic Listening* lessons dealing with the following topics? Circle the lesson(s) that you attended:

1. Authentic English: Dementia
2. Authentic English: Smoking

**Q3.** Were these lessons difficult for you?

*Dementia*

1. Very difficult 2. Quite difficult
3. Not very difficult 4. Not difficult at all

*Smoking*

1. Very difficult 2. Quite difficult
3. Not very difficult 4. Not difficult at all

**Q4.** If you replied *very difficult* or *quite difficult*, in what way was it difficult?

**Q5.** Did taking the *Authentic Listening* lessons increase your motivation to study English?

1. Substantially 2. Somewhat 3. Not much 4. Not at all

**Q6a.** Do you think the *Authentic Listening* lessons were worthwhile?

1. Extremely 2. Quite 3. Not very 4. Not at all

**Q6b.** Give reasons for your answers to 6a below.

### *Questionnaire 2*

この授業で扱ったリスニングは、すべてイギリスのラジオ番組から取ったものです。来学期からこのリスニングを、アドバンスト・リスニングAdvanced Listeningと呼ぶか、オーセンティック・リスニングAuthentic Listeningと呼ぶか、現在、考え中です。あなたはどう思いますか。ぜひご意見を聞かせてください。

1. アドバンスト・リスニングAdvanced Listeningと呼んだほうががいい
2. オーセンティック・リスニングAuthentic Listeningと呼んだほうががいい

その理由

### *Translation of Questionnaire 2*

All the listening material used in the [listening] lessons was recorded from British radio. At present, your teacher is deciding whether to call these lessons *Advanced Listening* or *Authentic Listening*. What do you think the lessons should be called?

1. It would be better to call the lessons *Advanced Listening*.
2. It would be better to call the lessons *Authentic Listening*.

Your reason:

## Appendix B (Transcripts)

*LEAL 1* (*You and Yours*, BBC Radio 4, November 29, 2005)
*Presenter*: Jean, good afternoon

*Caller*: Good afternoon.

*Presenter*: It is your mother as well who has dementia, explain your own feelings about that… that you called us about.

*Caller*: My feeling is that I'm waiting anxiously for my mother to die. That sounds awful, doesn't it? But I think first of all she's in a rather worse state than any of your earlier callers have described. I've been through all those states. My mother has been in care for nine years; she hasn't spoken a coherent word for five. She can't walk. She can't do anything for herself. There is no… she once had a lovely smile… there is no human interaction at all. You don't make eye contact with her. She doesn't respond when you hold her hand. She's been in this state for a year or so now. About two years ago, I found that I was starting to talk about her in the past tense as though she were already dead; and indeed she is. The mother I knew and loved is already dead. She's not there anymore. But we're left with this awful situation where, apart from this wicked disease, she appears to be in quite good health.

*Presenter*: And you feel guilty, obviously, about your reactions even though you're being very honest about them to a lot of people.

*Caller*: Dreadfully guilty. But at the same time I think we have to be honest about it. There doesn't seem to be any point. There is no prospect of any cure, any help, any recovery, any return to any sort of quality of life. Erm… we don't know what to do.

*LEAL 2* (*Any answers*, BBC Radio 4, October 29, 2005)

*Interviewer:* Dr Tom Goodfellow from Rugby.

*Caller:* I'm a doctor. I'm a radiologist and I actually diagnose the nasty work, the nasty cancers. My point is that I lived with my parents, god rest them, for over 20 years, and they were both heavy smokers, and as a result I've got a mild chronic bronchitis; not life threatening, not serious, but, you know, unpleasant. Now, when everyone is discussing the effects of smoking in pubs and clubs and bars, no one is mentioning the effects of passive smoking on children by their parents. You can choose to go in a

pub or club, but you can't choose who your parents are. And actually the effect of passive smoking on children is quite appalling. We forbid and ban all sorts of other abuse of children, but somehow this one is ignored.

*Interviewer:* That's an extraordinarily interesting point. If you were to have such a ban, you would effectively be banning cigarettes altogether, wouldn't you? Would there be anywhere where you could smoke cigarettes?

*Caller:* I think that if people choose to smoke, they have to do it outside, completely separate. But certainly there must be a real rule that parents must not be allowed to subject their children to a smoky atmosphere with all the negative effects on it. Yes, I think we have to… as a society.

*Interviewer:* Quite difficult to enforce, wouldn't it?

*Caller:* Very difficult to enforce and that's why I'm very disappointed the government have been so mealy-mouthed about this bill. Rather than taking a real clear stand, they've just watered it down unacceptably. And children can't choose, that's the tragedy; and it's another form of child abuse.

*Interviewer:* Thank you.

*LEAL 3* (*A Night in the City*, BBC Radio 4, 12 December 2005)

I got into nursing by pure fluke really. Me and my best mate at school, we decided to play a prank on everybody. The prank was that we were going to apply for nursing and fish farming as a wind up.

Anyway, they wrote back and offered me an interview, so I came over to England, had a whale of a time—again didn't think any else of it, 'cause I wasn't interested in doing it— and then they offered me a place. So, that's how I've ended up doing this. True story… true story.

I've always been very realistic. I'll do the best for patients. I accept that some patients are going to be unwell. I accept that some patients I see are going to die. And I accept that some patients just don't need our treatment, but they're going to be here anyway.

I know it sounds very harsh and callous, doesn't it, for a nurse to say, but people do die, and me dwelling on somebody passing away isn't going to change the fact that they have passed away. That sounds horrible, doesn't it? But that's the way, that's the way I work.

# Self-initiated Modified Output on the Road to Comprehensibility

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As the importance of developing students' communicative competence has been emphasized, activities in which students can have opportunities for speaking and communication have been widely employed in the Japanese English class. For learning or language acquisition to occur during communicative activities, students have to self-initiate their utterances (Shehadeh, 2001). This study, with Japanese high school students, examines whether self-initiation would occur effectively in three communicative activities involving only students. The results of this descriptive study revealed that successful self-initiated modified output did not occur frequently. Possible reasons for the findings, pedagogical implications and suggestions are proposed.

本研究は日本の高校生英語学習者が、コミュニケーション活動を行う際、自ら発話を行う(self-initiated utterances)ことにより習得が促進されるのかどうかを探ったものである。3 種類の言語使用活動を行わせた結果を分析したところ、これについて期待したほどの頻度が認められなかった。その原因を探り、発話の特徴についても合わせて考察を行い結論とした。

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, in the "Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities," proposed goals of "English language abilities required for all Japanese Nationals," which require that senior high school graduates can conduct normal communication with regard to certain topics, for example, relating to daily life (MEXT, 2003). It is clear that teachers have to

respond to an urgent need for students to have practical English skills to live and work in what is popularly termed the international 21st century. In this English teaching context, we have seen an unprecedented number of output-based communicative activities aimed at enhancing students' ability to communicate introduced into authorized textbooks. Empirically, many previous studies show that learners' output and participation in interaction during communicative activities have an important role in the learning process (e.g., Long, 1983, 1996; Swain, 1985, 1993). Communicative Language Teaching, which aims to develop the ability of learners to use language for real communication, is seen as critical in helping students to access and converse with the rest of the world in the 21st century.

In output-based activities without a teacher, students are required to perform communicative activities with other students and demonstrate "self-initiation," which refers to the attempt to produce more accurate and more comprehensible output leading learners to reprocess and restructure their interlanguage (Shehadeh, 2001). However, some may be skeptical as to whether Japanese high school learners, most of whom are not high in English proficiency, can self-initiate and self-repair their production in an output-based communicative activity. To identify the difficulties with self-initiated self-completed repairs, or self-initiated modified output, it is necessary to examine whether learners can self-initiate their own utterances. As most of our students do not appear competent enough for real communication, especially when they are required to converse with others open-endedly and without structure, the classroom teacher and I focused on a class with low-level English proficiency.

## Theoretical Background

### *Role of Output*

The important functions of output for second language acquisition were proposed by Swain in the Output Hypothesis (1993, 1995), which claims that output has three functions: a hypothesis-testing function, in which learners are potentially testing their hypotheses about the target language; a metalinguistic function, enabling learners to control and internalize linguistic knowledge; and a noticing-the-gap function, in which learners perceive a difference between what they can say and what they want to say. Swain and Lapkin (1995) mention one more function of output: it enhances fluency through practice. Skehan (1995) also takes the view that fluency, the capacity to communicate meaning in real time, re-

quires learners to exercise their memory-based system by accessing and deploying chunks of language.

However, some weaknesses in Swain's argument have been pointed out. Ellis (2003) argues that production would seem to play a limited role in acquisition since it just motivates learners to attend to input without directly contributing to the processing needed for acquisition to take place. Pienemann (1985) suggests in "the Learnability Hypothesis" that requiring learners to produce target structures for which they are not yet developmentally ready may prevent successful acquisition of the forms, and this makes us think that premature emphasis on output may work the other way depending on the situation. When we consider the fact that English language instruction in Japan has been mainly comprehension- and translation-based and that many researchers and educators insist that we need to keep a good balance between input and output by providing students with more opportunities for output as a focus in second language teaching (e.g., Saito, 1996; Yoshida, 2003), it is necessary to examine whether and how output-based communicative activities influence Japanese students' learning.

### *Self-initiation*

The act of correcting an error in speech is termed a repair and when the repair is initiated by the current speaker it is referred to as self-initiated (Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks, 1977). Shehadeh (2001) has defined self-initiation as a situation in which non-native speakers (NNSs) themselves attempt to clarify an utterance or part of an utterance by lexical or non-lexical means. He states that self-initiations occur when the NNS notices that the interlocutor has not understood or has misunderstood an utterance, or when the utterance is ill-formed. In this situation, he argues, the NNS realizes that he/she needs to reformulate or modify output toward comprehensibility for successful transmission of the message. Lyster and Ranta (1997) argue that NNSs' attempts to produce more accurate and more comprehensible output will push them to reprocess and restructure their interlanguage toward modified output. According to Schegloff et al. (1977), a self-initiated repair may occur within the same turn, immediately after the end of the turn, or in a subsequent turn, and Schegloff (1979) has concluded that "self-initiation, same turn repair is the most common and most successful, too" (p. 268). Modifications made by NNSs, when they realize their previous utterance was not sufficient to communicate their message as intended, are referred to as self-initiated,

self-completed repairs. The following is an example of self-initiated, self-completed repairs, or self-initiated modified output we produced in our high school English class.

Teacher: What did you do last night?
Student: I watch *watched* TV and go… *went* to bed at 11:00.
*Note*. Self-initiated modified output is written in italics.

In this example the student realized the mistakes and corrected them by herself without being prompted by the teacher.

The main purpose of this study is to inspect verbal reports made during communicative activities to examine whether learners self-initiate their utterances while performing output-based communicative activities. The research questions posed for this study are:

1. Does self-initiation frequently occur during the communicative activities selected for the study?
2. If not, what are the factors that hinder self-initiation?

These research questions were motivated by the need to explore the effectiveness of output-based communicative activities with Japanese high school students. As is pointed out by Ellis (1997), most English classes are taken up with teaching grammar without communicative activities, and most teachers do not provide students with much opportunity for output through actual communication. To improve this situation, it is crucial to examine the effect of output-based communicative activities. Specifically focusing on self-initiated modified output, this study examines how effectively students correct their mistakes and errors, and explores factors which may constrain the occurrence of self-initiated modified output. This is a descriptive study focusing on how students successfully or unsuccessfully self-repair their utterances in three different communicative activities.

## Method

### *Participants*

The participants in this study were 38 second-year students (20 males and 18 females) at a public high school in Hokkaido who were not college

bound. Most of them were not highly motivated to learn English. The students were divided into two groups in such a way that there was no overall difference in English ability between the groups. This was done by using the test score in the most recent end-term test: Group A , n=18; Group B, n=20. In performing communicative activities, it is a truism that students should feel comfortable and be able to relax with their partners to maximize their performance. Their English teacher, who was also their homeroom teacher and was acquainted with the personality of each student, put the students of each group into pairs with careful consideration of their character so that every student would feel comfortable with his/her partner: Group A consisted of nine pairs and Group B ten. After they finished each activity, they found another partner and continued with the activities. Group A performed the activities on the first day of the class and Group B performed on the second day. This measure (separation of groups) was taken so that two teachers would be able to observe and record students' utterances more effectively and in detail.

### *Procedure*

Three activities, namely, play-acting, a skeleton dialogue and an interview, which are typical and traditional activities widely found in many textbooks authorized by the Japanese government, were developed for this study. In play-acting activities students are usually required to practice and learn their role by heart to perform the model dialogue. Our participants were told that if they had not been able to memorize all the words or had forgotten what they had memorized during the dialogue, they should use their own words or expressions which could serve to continue the conversation (see Appendix 1). In the skeleton-dialogue activity, students were required to fill in the blanks of the model dialogue. The students were given time to fill in the blanks by themselves and then they performed the dialogue. Livingstone (1983) explains, "skeleton dialogues give a very limited choice and can be used where the situation and function are concrete" (p. 53). The following is an example from three skeleton dialogues he introduced.

A: Excuse me, when's the next train to__?

B: At_____.

A: How much is a ____ ticket?

B: _____.

A: And which platform does it leave from?

B: _____.

A: Thank you. (p. 53)

In this skeleton dialogue, students are simply required to put in information by using a railway timetable. They only have to deal with simple facts, not abstract or personal concepts. However, for the current study a traditional skeleton dialogue activity was developed in a way that would encourage students to give opinions and to express their ideas, and likes and dislikes, thus promoting authentic communication and interaction. In addition, students were required to continue conversation freely about the topic (see Appendix 2). In the interview activity, students were asked to take the role of an interviewer and to interview somebody. They were directed to ask other students what they would do if they had a lot of free time. Both interviewers and interviewees had to use the subjunctive mood. They were required to obtain some information from the interviewees and then to continue the conversation freely (see Appendix 3). In the skeleton dialogue and the interview, the main focus was on free conversation. These three activities, chosen from the authorized textbook, were pilot-tested by three high school teachers with more than 15 years experience of teaching. By using their feedback some revisions and modifications were made so that the students would have little or no difficulty with the activities. As the students had opportunities for communication and interaction during the activities, we regarded them as output-based communicative activities. All of the students performed the activities in pairs at the same time. For logistic reasons we could not tape-record the dialogues of all the pairs, and only a few pairs were recorded and monitored by us for this study. Specifically, during the activities three volunteer students used a microphone to record their utterances and teacher A, with her own microphone, tape-recorded some pairs' dialogues. Teacher B observed and transcribed some dialogues for further analysis. In total, 26 play-acting activities, 29 skeleton dialogues and 27 interviews were recorded. All recordings were transcribed and re-checked by the researchers (teacher A and teacher B) to ensure their accuracy and in a limited number of cases where there were still unsolved transcription difficulties the original participants were invited to interpret. In both of the groups, students first performed play-acting (25 min.), followed by the skeleton dialogue (15 min.) and then the interview (15 min).

## Results and Discussion

The results did not show much successful self-initiated modified output. The following is one of few successful examples from a play-acting activity.

1. Student A: Oh, you are very taller… *tall*, Yasu!

B: Yes. Everybody says so.

A: If I were you, I play… *I would play* basketball.

B: I don't like it. Takeshi, you are good at English.

A: Thank you. I study English every day.

B: I would try to make American friends if I'm.. *if I were* you.

A: I see, but our English teacher speaks English very well.

*Note*. Self-initiated modified output is written in italics.

However, in the following dialogue, student D noticed her mistake and corrected it, but earlier, student C did not notice her own mistake and D did not notice it either; they continued the conversation.

2. Student C: Oh, you are very tall, Yuki!

D: Yes. Everybody says so.

C: If I were you, <u>I play basketball.</u>

D: I don't like it. Miki, you are good at English.

C: Thank you. I study English every day.

D: I would try to make American friends if I'm…
*I were* you.

C: I see, but our English teacher speaks English very well.

*Note*. Self-initiated modified output is written in italics.
The erroneous utterance is underlined.

Among the tape-recorded dialogues there were many conversations without any self-initiated modified output. In example 3, both students made mistakes without self-initiated correction. However, they continued the dialogue and finished it.

3. Student E: Oh, you are very tall, Yosuke!

F: Yes. Everybody say so.

E: If I were you, I play basketball.

F: I don't like it. Shin, you are good at English.

E: Thank you. I'm study English every day.

F: I …….. make American friends if I were you.

E: I see, but our English teacher speaks English very well.

*Note*. The erroneous utterances are underlined

In approximately half of the recorded play acting dialogues, we found successful attempts at self-initiated correction. In the activity, students were required to memorize words and expressions as accurately as possible, which made it easier for self-initiations to occur within the same turn. In other words, as students were pushed to produce the exact words and expressions used in the model dialogue, it was not difficult for them to notice when they produced incorrect words and expressions and correct them.

However, in open tasks the situation was totally different. In the skeleton dialogue students were told to fill in the blanks with their own words, and in the interview they were told to ask and answer freely. In both of these activities they were asked to have a free conversation. In the free conversations we rarely found successful attempts at self-initiated repair. The following are examples (students' own utterances in parentheses):

4. Student G: If you had a lot of money what would you buy in the country?

H: I would (buy a many soccer goods).

G: (Soccer?)

H: (Yes. I play soccer junior high school.

G: (I play soccer yesterday. I'm soccer club.)

*Note*. The students' own utterances are placed within parentheses; the given text is not within parentheses.

5. Student I: What would you buy if you had a lot of money?

J: I (buy many CD).

I: (What are CD?)

J: (I don't know. Because many… many, many).

I: ……

J: (I hear music always.)

*Note*. The students' own utterances are placed within parentheses; the given text is not within parentheses.

In the examples, students did not correct their erroneous utterances nor did they appear to notice them. In example 5, despite student I's implication that he did not understand the previous utterance, student J did not correct or modify it. In the case of open tasks they had difficulty in noticing mistakes or errors they made because they had not had model expressions as they had in play-acting. Table 1 shows the number of conversations with successful and unsuccessful self-initiated modified output.

**Table 1. The number of conversations with successful and unsuccessful self-initiation**

| Activity | The number of pairs recorded | Conversations with successful self-initiated modified output by both students | Conversations with successful self-initiated modified output by one student | Conversations with unsuccessful self-initiated modified output |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Play-acting | 26 | 10 | 15 | 8 |
| Skeleton dialogue | 29 | 4 | 7 | 5 |
| Interview | 27 | 3 | 5 | 7 |

Notes: 1. In play-acting, some conversations contained two or more types of output.
2. In 13 skeleton dialogues and 12 interviews, no self-initiated modified output was attempted.

In the present study, self-initiation did not occur frequently. The main reason for this may have been students' low English proficiency. Lyster and Ranta (1997) argue that self-initiated, self-completed repairs will not happen if learners do not have an adequate level of English proficiency. A reason for this has been offered by VanPatten (1990, 1996) who claims that for low-level learners it is enough just to maintain communication. For most of the students in the study, continuing the conversation could have been their first priority and it is arguable that it is premature for them to produce self-repairs. It stands to reason that without knowing or internalizing some grammatical structures or expressions, learners cannot notice their own mistakes and so cannot correct them.

A second factor that constrained self-initiation may have been the interlocutors' feigned comprehension. In self-initiation, NNSs modify their output to produce more comprehensible output when they realize that their current or previous utterance is insufficient to communicate their intended meaning (Kasper, 1985). However, in support of Aston's (1986) remark that "interlocutors sometimes feign comprehension in order to keep the conversation going, reaffirm satisfactory communication, and maintain a satisfying rapport" (p. 139), our participants often pretended to have understood the previous utterance. In the following example, student K's utterance "Who you buy?" was not understood by student L. However, she continued the conversation and K also kept the conversation going. The interview with L after the class revealed that she feigned comprehension to keep the conversation going.

6. Student K: If you had a lot of money, what would you buy in the country?

L: I would buy many Omiyage.

K: Who you buy*?*

L: I buy foods and….foods.

K: Please give me.

In example 7, both students must have had difficulties in understanding their partners' utterances or could not understand them as they were intended, but they continued the conversation anyway.

7. Student M: What would you buy if you had a lot of money?

N: I would buy many clothes.

M: Do you go… where depart… or shop?

N: …I like Seibu.

M: Let's go together.

N: OK.

Another possible reason why they feigned comprehension might have been their motivation. As previously mentioned, the students were not highly motivated in learning English so they may have been more interested in completing the activities than in genuinely communicating in English. During my teaching career, I have seen a lot of students who did not want to talk in English and just wanted to finish the conversations, even if they have not understood what was being said to them. In the examples, they must have pretended to have understood the utterances in order to continue and finish the conversation. We could argue that feigned comprehension, as introduced in examples 6 and 7, hindered students from producing self-initiation attempts.

The situation in the current study, in which only novice learners took part may have constrained the frequency of self-initiation. In the following example, students produced self-initiated modified output only to end up making erroneous utterances. In four places, the modification is from correct to incorrect.

8. Student O: What would you buy if you had …have a lot of money?

P: I would…..I will buy a camera.

O: Oh, good idea. Do you have a camera?

P: No, I don't. Do you have a … you have it?

O: Yes, I do…no, no, I have.

Regarding the results across the three activities, Table 1 shows that play-acting led to more successful self-initiated modified output than the skeleton dialogue or the interview did. In the play-acting, which was a closed task, students made an effort to memorize lines, and in the dialogue they persisted in using the models. On the other hand, in the skeleton dialogue and the interview, they could continue talking freely

without any models to refer to, which may have made it difficult for them to self-repair their errors and mistakes. Table 1 shows the number of students' unsuccessful self-initiated utterances. It could be argued that since students were given accurate models on which to base their interactions in play-acting, which was not the case with the other two activities, they were more likely to notice their errors and mistakes in this activity than in the skeleton dialogue or the interview, and therefore they tried to self-repair their incorrect utterances, sometimes unsuccessfully.

Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) asserted that tutors should continuously assess learners' needs in order to provide appropriate help, and went on to make the claim that, "this process can be accomplished only through the collaborative interaction of the expert and the novice" (1994, p. 468). Students left on their own to solve their immediate production problems or difficulties were required to engage in various thought processes that consolidate existing knowledge or possibly generate new knowledge on the basis of their current knowledge (Kormos, 2000). This must have been too difficult for the students in this study, with very limited linguistic knowledge of English, which sometimes made them produce erroneous utterances through insufficient or unnecessary self-initiated repairs.

### *Pedagogical Implications*

Qualitative analyses offer some pedagogical implications. It is unlikely that low-level students, such as those in the study, would notice their own mistakes or errors and their failed attempts to convey messages. Thus it is arguable that low-level students are unable to engage in self-initiated correction and modification. Allowing such students to converse freely may not necessarily lead to acquisition. One could argue that communicative activities should only be used if teachers can intervene frequently (e.g., in situations where class sizes are smaller or there are more teachers in the classroom so that students and teachers can have more interaction). However, we should be careful not to dismiss the use of communicative activities in the form of pair work or group work even in a large class. Rather, we should justify the use of those activities in enhancing students' communicative abilities to meet the requirement of being "Japanese with English Abilities", because it is self-evident that students can use English for real communication during the activities. In the study, students were using English, even with some errors and mistakes, for real communication. It remains valuable to provide students with many opportunities for output through real communication even with mistakes and errors. We

should take into consideration and utilize a number of previous studies which documented the significant advantages of communicative activities. With a little thought we could make pair work and group work more effective. One possible measure to cope with the issue of large class sizes is "peer-supervision" or "peer-intervention." While students are engaged in interaction with their partners it is not easy to attend both to meaning and form at the same time, making it difficult for them to notice their errors and mistakes. As VanPatten (1990) has suggested, because of their cognitive constraints, learners have difficulty in achieving a high level of linguistic accuracy just through communicative activities.

Proficient students, who are appointed by the teacher as peer-supervisors, could, while observing other students' dialogues, implicitly or explicitly get speakers to notice erroneous utterances they have made so as to lead them to self-repair. This would be beneficial for student-supervisors as well since they would have to attend to interactions with full concentration, exercising their metalinguistic knowledge of English. It would, of course, be crucial for peer-supervisors to be briefed by the teacher that they should observe in an unobtrusive manner; so as not to discourage their peers from speaking. Some may claim that this would be impractical considering students' limited metalinguistic knowledge, but we argue that the approach could be facilitated by teachers giving prior instruction on linguistic points to peer-supervisors. Peer-supervisors are not necessarily highly proficient students. Students could be given the role in rotation, which would make the activities much more student-centered, motivating them to participate in output-based communicative activities with more enthusiasm.

Another suggestion to make the activities more effective is that teachers should, after the first activity, give students negative feedback, grammar points, key expressions and words so that they can self-initiate their re-production more easily, and then the students should be asked to perform again. To provide students with explicit instruction including controlled production drills that focus on accuracy can help enable successful self-initiation to occur when the students perform communicative activities again. Additionally, after the activity, teachers could ask students to write sentences they wanted to but could not yet produce, by using dictionaries or grammar books. In some cases a teacher may have to explain grammatical rules students have not yet fully acquired. In the post-activity of completing their target expressions or sentences, students can learn new words, expressions and even grammatical rules. As for which types of activities should be employed for self-initiation to occur,

this study revealed that closed tasks are more likely to be beneficial for the purpose. However, as Sato's experimental study (2005) revealed, a closed task has a more facilitating role in acquiring a target grammatical structure than open tasks and that open tasks are more beneficial in encouraging learners to be more communicative. We should decide which type of task should be used according to the purpose of the classes.

There are two limitations to our analysis and discussion. The first limitation is that not all utterances in the activities were recorded for further analysis. Ideally we should have tape-recorded all interactions. The second limitation concerns the English proficiency of the students. Most of the students in this study were not proficient. More proficient students might have shown different results and provided a more secure basis for inference on the basis of proficiency. Conceivably, the more proficient students who self-initiate repair can lead their partners to do so by example. It is suggested that research be conducted to compare self-initiated modified output across different proficiency levels.

This study revealed that self-initiations did not occur as frequently as previous studies had shown (e.g., Schegloff et al., 1977; Schegloff, 1979; Shehadeh, 2001). This doesn't mean, however, that output-based communicative activities are not effective for language acquisition. In the activities, students showed signs of struggling to make meaning, which, we argue, is itself an important learning endeavor. The students, who were still at the beginner stage, were actually communicating by making use of their limited knowledge of English, though not always with correct form. It may be true that low-level students are not able to self-repair as they have not yet acquired enough skill to do so, but they did make a significant effort to exchange information and ideas through communication. The act of producing language constitutes part of the process of language learning, even taking into consideration some mistakes and errors. Making mistakes and errors itself is an important part of the process of language acquisition. As Brown (1994) mentions, we should "regard learners' errors as important windows to their underlying system…" (p. 27) and "errors are a necessary manifestation of interlanguage development…" (p. 177). I remain convinced that many more opportunities for communication in English should be provided even to low-level learners to improve their English learning despite the cautionary implications of limited self-initiated repair in the case of students with low proficiency that was the central finding of this study.

As this classroom research is a small-scale study, it would be improper to draw firm conclusions. As the first study to examine self-initiation in

EFL situations in Japan, it should be seen as preliminary. Further large-scale studies with large samples and greater diversity of activities are needed to confirm the results of the study.

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## Appendix 1

Play-acting (modified from *Select oral communication I* [2005])

二人でペアになり、以下の会話について

1. 役割を決めて、スクリプトを見ながら会話してください
2. 次に自分のパートを出来るだけ暗記して会話してください（暗記できなかった

り、会話の途中で忘れてしまったら自分の言葉で会話を続けなさい
3. 役割を変えて①、②と同じ活動をしてください

Get into pairs. Practice the conversation below with your partner.

1. Decide which part you will each take, and carry out the conversation, looking at the script.
2. Next, try to memorize your part and practice the conversation again. (If you haven't fully memorized your lines and find you have forgotten something, use your own words to keep the conversation going.)
3. Exchange roles and repeat the activity.

***Dialogue***

Mai: Oh, you are very tall, Ken!
Ken: Yes. Everybody says so.
Mai: If I were you I would play basketball.
Ken: I don't like it. Mai, you are good at English.
Mai: Thank you. I study English every day.
Ken: I would try to make American friends if I were you.
Mai: I see, but our English teacher speaks English very well.
Ken: But I think if he were an American his English class would be better.

## *Appendix 2*

Skeleton dialogue (drawn from *Select oral communication I* [2005])

以下の会話について、
1. 役割を決め、空欄を埋めながら会話をしてください（英文は見てもかまわない）
2. 次に英文を見ないで会話をしてください
3. 役割を交代し、①、②の活動を繰り返してください

For the conversation below:

1. After deciding who takes which part, fill in the blanks and practice the dialogue. It's OK to look at the words.
2. Next, practice the dialog without looking at the words.
3. Now change roles and repeat the activity.

***Dialogue***

Mai: Which country do you want to visit?
Ken: I want to visit (国 名 ).
Mai: Why?
Ken: Because (国 名 ) is famous for (何でも可 ).
または because (国名) is ( ).
Mai: If you had a lot of money what would you buy in the country?
Ken: I would (その国で買う物を答える ).
Mai: (自由に会話する )
Ken: (自由に会話する )
(以後、自由に英語で会話を続けてください)

## Appendix 3

Interview (drawn from *Select oral communication I* [2005])

もし自由な時間がたくさんあったら何をするか、出来るだけ多くの人にインタビューして表に名前と、何をするかについて書いてください。又それ以外の質問を一つ加えて、その人の情報を聞き出し、以後自由に会話を続けてください（質問は何でもいいです）

※ 出来るだけ何も見ないで会話すること
※ 完全な英文で会話するようにすること

Interview as many classmates as you can, one by one, asking them, "If you had lots of free time, what would you do?" Write each person's name and reply in the table. Continue by asking another question (any question is OK) and enter any new information you obtain. Keep talking freely with your partner.

- Try to converse as much as possible without looking at any written text.
- Try to speak in correct, well-formed English.

| 名前 [Name] | 何をするか [What would you do?] | その他の情報 [other information] |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |

質問例 If you had a lot of time what would you do?

# Perspectives

## The Place of Culture in Teaching English as an International Language (EIL)

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In the conventional ELT paradigm it has often been said that teaching English cannot be separated from teaching the culture of its native speakers. But in the paradigm of English as an International Language (EIL), which focuses on the functions of English as a means of communication among people from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds, the traditional view of culture must be thoroughly reconsidered. Attempting to define the place of culture in EIL, this article presents a new conceptual framework consisting of three kinds of culture: (1) culture as social custom, (2) culture in the pragmatic sense, and (3) culture in the semantic sense. Based upon this classification, the article attempts to clarify how culture should be understood and dealt with in the EIL perspective, and proposes what cultural factors should be incorporated into the classroom, both in the general ELT context and in the specific context of Japanese English education.

従来の英語教育の理論的枠組みにおいては、英語を教えることはその母語話者の文化を教えることと切り離せないとよく言われてきた。しかし、多様な言語的・文化的背景を持つ人々の間での意思疎通の手段としての英語の機能を重視する「国際語としての英語」(EIL)という理論的枠組みにおいては、このような伝統的文化観は根本から見直さなければならないだろう。EILにおける文化の位置を見定めるための試みとして、本稿は「社会習慣としての文化」「語用論的意味における文化」「意味論的意味における文化」の 3 種類からなる新しい文化概念を提起する。この三分法に基づき、一般的な英語教育のコンテクストと日本の英語教育という特定のコンテクストの双方において、EILの観点から文化をどのように理解し、取り扱うべきかを明らかにし、どのような文化的要素を授業に取り入れていくべきかについて具体的な提案をする。

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## Introduction[1]

It has generally been accepted that language and culture are inextricably interrelated with each other. Such an idea can be traced to the 'Weltanshauung' (worldview) Hypothesis, formulated by a German philosopher, Karl Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), which postulates that human thought cannot exist without language, and that the diversity of human language is a diversity of ways of looking at the world. Humboldt's notion of linguistic relativity was inherited by American anthropologists Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941). Their view, known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, centers upon the idea that culture determines or influences language, which in turn determines or influences ways humans categorize their thoughts about the world and their experiences in it.

Drawing directly or indirectly on the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, many ELT professionals have emphasized the essential relationship between language and culture and the importance of incorporating culture into language teaching. For example, Lado (1964) states that "a language is part of the culture of a people and the chief means by which the members of a society communicate" (p. 23), and defines the goal of foreign language teaching as "the ability to use it, understanding its meanings and connotations in terms of the target language and culture, and the ability to understand the speech and writing of natives of the target culture in terms of their meanings" (p. 25). Chastain (1976) also states that "in the ideal second-language class the teaching of culture is an integral, organized component of the course content," noting that in such a course the students "expect to gain some degree of functional ability in the culture as well as in the language" (p. 383). Crawford-Lange and Lange (1984) pointedly maintain that "to study language without studying the culture of native speakers of the language is a lifeless endeavor" (p. 140).

Nowadays, however, a lot of people pay attention to the global spread of English and its extensive use as a *lingua franca*, and in many non-English-speaking countries English is taught and learned as an international language rather than as the Anglo-American language. It is not easy to define what EIL means, but according to Smith (1987), the essence of the concept can be summarized as follows: (1) English is a means of communication among various people from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds; (2) English is the property of its users, native and nonnative; (3) Non-native speakers do not have to use English the same way native speakers do. If such a concept is accepted, simple and direct connections

between English and its native-speaker cultures can no longer be presupposed, and it is a logical consequence that the traditional view of culture in language teaching must be thoroughly reexamined.

## Is culture irrelevant in EIL?

One extreme view is that there is no need to include cultural factors in EIL. Some ELT professionals regard English in the international context as a culture-free or culturally-neutral language. For instance, González emphasizes that in the teaching of English as an International Auxiliary Language (EIAL), "English is deracinated or uprooted from its original cultural soil; only special registers of science and technology, business and geopolitics are used" (cited in McKay 2002, p. 84). Quirk (1982) considers Nuclear English "culture-free as calculus, with no literary, aesthetic, emotional aspirations" (p. 43). Kunihiro (1999) compares English to Morse Code, though he acknowledges that this is an exaggeration.

However, this article does not take the position that culture is irrelevant in EIL. A language can never be culture-free in its essential sense as long as it is a natural language. A natural language is a historical entity, and so the English language, however geographically spread it may be, is still bound to the long socio-cultural history of the nations from which the language originated. It is also true that as a language is actually used by various people, it is inevitably associated with their ways of living and thinking. The acculturation of English means that English is no longer bound to Anglo-American culture exclusively, not that English is now being used or can be used in a cultural vacuum. Kachru (1992) emphasizes that "English represents a repertoire of cultures, not a monolithic culture" (p. 362); in essence, the spread of English has entailed the diversification of culture associated with the language. Then, which culture or whose culture should be dealt with in the EIL classroom is an important question.

## Proposing a new conceptual framework of culture

One fundamental problem in discussing culture in ELT is the ambiguity of the term 'culture.' Culture, which Hall (1973) calls a "muddied concept" (p. 20), is notoriously difficult to define. It covers an extremely wide range of ideas, thoughts, beliefs, views, values, manners, customs, and institutions. Even within the teaching of language, the term culture has diverse definitions (e.g. Hammerly 1982; Byram & Risager 1999, Ito

2002), and so it is highly possible that when several ELT professionals are talking about culture, each of them is referring to an entirely different sort of culture.

A well-known classification of culture is the dichotomy of high culture and anthropological culture, and the same idea is often expressed by the difference between "large C" culture and "small c" culture. Given this dichotomy, most teachers interested in EIL would agree that culture in the classroom should refer mainly to the latter. But this is still too broad.

In this article, modifying the categorization presented by Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990)[2], I propose a conceptual framework in which culture is divided into three kinds. They are:

- culture as social custom
- culture in the pragmatic sense
- culture in the semantic sense.

Though many cultural factors are omitted, this framework seems to serve the practical purpose of clarifying the place of culture in teaching English as an international language. I will next briefly define each of the three kinds of culture, place it in the EIL paradigm, and put forth my proposals of how culture should be incorporated into the EIL classroom, with specific attention to the ELT context in Japan.

## Culture as social custom

Culture as social custom covers a wide spectrum of things related to human life and society. It is represented by ways, styles, and customs of daily life, and by various commodities such as houses, food, and clothes involved in everyday life. For instance, *kimchi* and *chima chogori* are good examples of Korean culture. Culture in this sense is also represented by social customs or institutions such as traditional celebrations or festivals like Thanksgiving Day and Halloween in America. When one casually says 'Korean culture' or 'American culture,' it usually means this sort of culture.

In the conventional ELT paradigm, culture in this sense means Anglo-American culture. It has been taken for granted that when learning English one is justly learning about British and American life and society. However, this is not the case in EIL. As English is used extensively by a countless number of people outside of its original cultural sphere, it would be unreasonable to think that cultural content in EIL must directly

concern Anglo-American culture. In the EIL paradigm culture as a social custom does not have to be relevant to traditional English-speaking nations at all, and any cultural theme or topic can be included, provided that the choice can be justified on pedagogical grounds.

Thus, the appropriate cultural content can greatly vary, and its choice essentially depends upon the purpose of each teaching situation. EIL teachers must be sensitive and flexible to learners' needs and interests, and they must be careful about imbuing the English language with a national culture which may not be central to learners' purposes for learning the language (Bowers 1999; Prodromou 1992). It would be ideal for individual learners to be able to choose their optimal cultural content. For example, in a class of Korean businessmen soon to be assigned to Singapore, the culture which would be emphasized would be that of Singapore.

### Culture as social custom in the Japanese context

In Japan, English education was vigorously promoted with the aim of modernization and industrialization in the late 19th century, and for a long time, the main purpose of learning English was to absorb what was considered to be superior, advanced English culture and civilization. Therefore, the tendency to think that to learn English means to learn about the Anglo-Americans has been quite strong. For instance, the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education in 1947 specified that one of the objectives of teaching English was "to get to know about English-speaking nations, especially about their manners and customs and their daily life."[3] In particular, American life styles, customs, and various other Americana constituted cultural contents of teaching materials. This orientation can be observed typically in *Jack and Betty*, published in 1948. This was the leading textbook for junior high school in the postwar era, which centered on the daily life of a white, middle-class American family living in the suburbs of Chicago. This textbook seems to symbolize the postwar Japanese longing for rich, advanced and democratic American life. For those who perceived such longing as the motivation to learn English, the language was inseparable from American daily-life culture, and this can be said of many English learners even in today's Japan.

While the tendency is still notable in many aspects of ELT in Japan, there have been certain changes in recent years. Around 1980, junior high school textbooks began to deal with the Third World and Southeast Asia from a cross-cultural viewpoint. The present guidelines by the Ministry of Education suggest that textbooks should cover "topics that relate to

the daily lives, manners and customs, stories, geography, history, etc. of Japanese people and the peoples of the world, focusing on countries that use English," [4] and actually high school textbooks today include many different societies and cultures in the world along with Japanese society and culture. University-level textbooks, which used to center around British and American literature, now covers diverse cultural topics and contents including global issues and current affairs around the world.

Fundamentally, the concept of EIL supports this trend, but it is hard to say that a clear direction is shared among Japanese ELT professionals. Some emphasize the importance of incorporating Japanese culture from the viewpoint of explaining it to foreigners (e. g. Suzuki 1999), and this is practiced in many textbooks. Legitimate as the idea may be, there is a concern that the typical lesson taught by a Japanese teacher focusing on Japanese culture tends to be the work of a self-complacent monologist in which otherness is not involved. I am also concerned that the use of various world cultures in English class often stays at a quite superficial level, and is likely to end up with presenting an arbitrary array of world cultures and customs. Even worse, it may lead to an oversimplified view of English as a panacea for international understanding.

In this light, I propose that more attention should be paid to Asian Englishes and cultures associated with them. In view of English as an Asian language, Japanese EIL teachers may incorporate into the classroom the questions of how English has been used in Asian countries, and what influences, either positive or negative, it has exerted on local cultures and identities. In consideration of the fact that Japanese people have more opportunities to communicate in English with Asians than with Anglo-American native speakers, these cultural topics will stimulate students to reconsider raisons d'être of English education, and give them a new incentive to learn the language.

## Culture in the pragmatic sense

Crystal (2003) defines pragmatics as "the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in an act of communication" (p. 364). Based on this, this article defines culture in the pragmatic sense as "culture accompanied with the actual use of language, especially cultural choices, constraints, and effects in an act of interpersonal communication."

In the traditional ELT paradigm, learners are required or expected to conform to culture in the pragmatic sense of native speakers, so that they can appropriately communicate with them or preempt misunderstanding. They need to get acquainted with and hopefully internalize pragmatic norms and conversational patterns of native speakers in greeting, thanking, complimenting, apologizing, complaining, requesting, turn-taking and so forth. They are also supposed to learn and use native speakers' non-verbal communication cues such as making eye contact or maintaining a certain distance from the interlocutor.

In the EIL paradigm, however, such conformism is no longer appropriate. On the assumption that English is associated with diverse cultures, it is not valid to require all English speakers to follow and adopt the norms and patterns of native speakers. Expecting to speak with various English speakers, ideally EIL learners need to know various norms and patterns. Needless to say, it is very difficult to get familiar with numerous pragmatic variations. Therefore, the main goal of teaching this kind of culture should be to develop flexible, generous, and empathetic attitudes toward diverse pragmatic norms of diverse English speakers in the world. It means to cultivate the ability to be aware of cultural differences in a nonjudgmental way, and use the awareness for better communication. Byram (1997) and Kramsch (1998) call a speaker with such ability an "intercultural speaker." This should be a key concept of teaching pragmatics in the EIL paradigm.

In this perspective, it is important for EIL teachers to pay attention to research in the new academic field of intercultural pragmatics, represented by the journal *Intercultural Pragmatics* which started in 2004. EIL teachers are now expected to be well aware of issues and problems related to language use and communication in which different cultures are involved. As a classroom practice, they need to learn and teach communicative strategies to accommodate different sociolinguistic norms and a range of repair strategies which can be used in the face of misunderstanding (Kirkpatrick 2007). It will also be meaningful to provide learners with opportunities to interact with English speakers from various backgrounds, and to encourage them to "act as amateur ethnographers and collect their own examples of speech acts" (Judd 1999, p. 156). It is expected that cooperative cross-cultural communication activities with strategic consciousness will help learners become aware of pragmatic differences and similarities, and manage to make their own informed choices, depending upon the situation or the interlocutor.

**Culture in the pragmatic sense in the Japanese context**

In Japanese English education, the premise that non-native speakers should conform to native speakers' norms seems to have been unquestioned, and pragmatic variations in view of communication between non-native speakers have not yet been taken into account. For instance, Yokomori (1998) analyzed eight high school textbooks of oral communication and identified the characters appearing in these textbooks. According to him, 43% of the characters were native speakers, and 48% were Japanese. This indicates that most model dialogues are between native speakers and Japanese. Moreover, many articles about pragmatics written by Japanese researchers usually focus on advice as to how to communicate smoothly and appropriately with native speakers. They often state that pragmatic transfer from L1 will cause misunderstandings, and sometimes grave offense, implying that non-native speakers are always responsible for such communication problems. In addition, according to some observers, Japanese students in the classroom are often told to make direct eye contact, avoid scratching hair to control embarrassment, and to point a forefinger to the chest, not to the nose when saying 'I' or 'me' (Honna & Takeshita 1998).

To be sure, it is necessary to teach basic pragmatic norms of native speakers, but teachers must be careful about imposing them on students. Moreover, teachers should have students realize that there are pragmatic variations in non-native speaker Englishes, and that intercultural speakers need to learn to cope flexibly with such variations. In this light, it is worth noting that Asians at large share culture in the pragmatic sense. For instance, modest or circumlocutory expressions, which are often said to cause misunderstanding in English, may sound natural among Asians. Kawahara (2002) points out that Filipinos often use 'I'll try' as an indirect way to say 'No,' or 'No, I can't do that.' Also, compliment rejections seem to be widely shared among Asians. As the response to a compliment, according to Honna (2006), 'I'm not that good. You've overpraised me' is heard more frequently among speakers of English in China than 'Thank you.' These instances imply that Asian English speakers may be able to communicate smoothly and comfortably with each other based upon their traditional communication patterns. As it is natural that the more frequently English is used among Asians, the more Asian communication patterns will seep into their Englishes, some pragmatic characteristics of Asian English speakers should be recognized not as something negative which is deviant from norms but as something legitimate which reflects Asian culture. Such recognition will encourage Japanese people to use

English more actively as part of their own linguistic repertoire. A pedagogical implication here is that there should be more Asian English speakers engaged in ELT in Japan, and that teacher recruitment policy such as in the JET Programme should be reconsidered in this perspective.

## Culture in the semantic sense

Humans shape the perception of reality through categorizing the world and their experiences by language, and the way a language cuts up the semantic universe reflects culture's interests and concerns. Thus, culture in the semantic sense can be defined as culture embedded in the semantic system of a language.

There are a number of examples to show that culture is embedded in the lexical structure of a language. A well-known example is the multiplicity of Inuit words for snow, which is said to reflect the importance of snow in Inuit culture. In comparing English with Japanese, a simple, everyday example can be found in the lexical structure related to siblings. There is no word in Japanese equivalent to the word 'brother' in English, because it must always be clarified in Japanese whether the referent is 'younger brother' or 'elder brother.' In addition, when we compare Japanese with Korean, we notice that in Korean there is no single word for 'elder brother': there are two distinct words referring to 'elder brother of a [younger] brother' and 'elder brother of a [younger] sister.' As Seelye (1984) succinctly says, "Perceptions of colors, kinship relations, space and time, all differ from language to language and from culture to culture" (p. 22). Strictly speaking, the meaning of a word is determined only in the linguistic and cultural system in which the word exists, and therefore, "one-to-one equivalences can rarely be established between words and expressions in two languages" (Rivers 1981, p. 318). In this way, studying the meaning of a word in another language nearly always leads to discovery of different views, perceptions and thoughts.

No matter how internationalized English may be, the semantic features of English words are so deeply embedded that they cannot easily be subject to change, and in this sense native-speaker culture should be respected as the reference source for various users of English to communicate accurately with one another. If learners have little awareness of this kind of culture and arbitrarily transfer their L1 semantic system, the international intelligibility can be seriously damaged. It is true that even the meanings of words can go through changes over time as they are used by different speakers in the world, but changes should be seen not only as

peripheral but also as referable and traceable back to the semantic system of native-speaker English.

## Culture in the semantic sense in the Japanese context

Culture in the semantic sense is an essential component in any language teaching situation, and awareness-raising of this kind of culture seems especially important for Japanese students because of the vast difference between English and Japanese in their semantic structures. There can be several ways to raise such awareness, but I emphasize that translation exercise serves the purpose well because it naturally requires flexible search for the most suitable words to convey accurately what is meant in the original test. In conveying the meaning of such words as 'mind,' 'heart,' 'soul' or 'spirit' into Japanese, translators must be very sensitive to the semantic field of each word. Similarly, one will easily notice that heavily culturally-loaded concepts such as 'giri' (義理) and 'on' (恩) or 'wabi' (侘び) and 'sabi' (寂び) are awfully difficult to translate into English. Furthermore, it is important to be aware that many simple everyday words are deeply related to culture. For example, the simple Japanese word 'koshi' (腰) is a formidable one for a translator. While it basically means 'the lower back part of our body,' it has a large semantic field, and in English it can be translated as 'waist,' 'hip,' 'back,' 'lumbar' or even 'knees,' depending upon the context. There are also a number of expressions using 'koshi' metaphorically, like 'koshi ga hikui (humble, or feigning humility)' or 'koshi ga kudakeru (become dispirited).' These expressions are utterly impossible to translate word by word, and must be rephrased entirely in order to make sense in English. Perhaps the extensive use of 'koshi' in Japanese is related to the traditional life style of wearing *kimono* and sitting on *tatami* mats (Ando 1986). Thus, in translating from English to Japanese, and vice versa, learners are often required to think in depth of culture embedded in words, expanding their insight into the essential relationship between language and culture. I propose that translation exercise should be revaluated in this perspective.

## Conclusions

In this article, I have proposed a threefold classification of culture to determine the place of culture in EIL. The central argument is that in dealing with culture as a social custom and culture in the pragmatic sense, the diversity of culture associated with the worldwide spread of English should be taken into full consideration, while in dealing with culture in

the semantic sense, native-speaker culture should be respected in order to carry out precise communication.

Despite the emphasis on the value and functions of English as an international language in educational settings, it seems that the implications of the acculturation of English have not yet been fully reflected in the classroom. In Japan especially, in the name of 'kokusai-rikai' (international understanding) or 'ibunka-rikai' (cross-cultural understanding), culture is regarded as an integral part of English education, but enough consideration does not seem to be given to the implications of the extensive international use of English, and the term 'culture' is often used quite carelessly and vaguely. Particularly there often seems to be confusion between the idea of teaching Anglo-American culture in English and the idea of teaching various cultures in the world through English. If we are to move toward EIL, the complicated relationship between language and culture must be examined in a new light. Without such examination, attempts to teach culture could easily fall prey to stereotyping or lead to the inappropriate dissemination of specific cultural values. It is hoped that my arguments in this article can be of service to the consideration of the place of culture in teaching English as an international language.

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**Notes**

1. This article is a revised version of a plenary address given at the annual International Conference of the Korea Association of Teachers of English at Gyeongin National University of Education on July 6, 2007.

2. Adaskou , Britten and Fahsi (1990) present four kinds of culture: 'culture in the aesthetic sense,' 'culture in the sociological sense,' 'culture in the pragmatic sense' and 'culture in the semantic sense.' I deleted the first one because it is equivalent to "large C" culture, and I changed 'sociological sense' to '…as a social custom' because the latter seems more suitable in this article.

3. http://www.nicer.go.jp/guideline/old/s22ejl/chap1.htm

4. http://www.mext.go.jp/english/shotou/030301.htm

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# Reviews

## *Task Design, Implementation and Assessment. Integrating Information and Communication Technology in English Language Teaching and Learning*. Phillip A. Towndrow. Singapore: McGraw-Hill, 2007. ix + 125 pp.

*Reviewed by*
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In this short, nine-chapter book Phillip Towndrow has produced a basic 'survival guide' for educators wishing to incorporate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) effectively into their language classrooms. Though probably best suited for teachers with little or no experience, the book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in teaching using computers and Internet technology. The book has two major objectives. First, it is a resource for developing language teachers, providing an introduction into the benefits and drawbacks of integrating computers and ICT into their classrooms. Second, it presents language teachers with a range of possibilities for the use of computer technology and the Internet in their classrooms. The book is written in an accessible, easy-to-follow style with Towndrow drawing on his own experience as an educator and teacher educator to demonstrate how ICT can successfully be put to work in administratively efficient and pedagogically effective ways. Some readers may be put off by Towndrow's deliberate attempts to keep the content simple and non-technical. I found his use of endnotes for academic references to be frustrating. While this may assist in the readability of the book, I was constantly flipping back and forth through the chapter to learn who was being cited. If the book is being used as a textbook in a teacher-training course, the reflection questions appearing at the end of each chapter might be good for further discussion.

In Chapter 1, Towndrow sets the tone for the rest of the book, stating his desire to help language teachers "make better decisions about the design, implementation and evaluation of their actions and presence in their classrooms so that students can reap maximum benefits from learning with ICT" (p. 2). Chapter 2, getting into what teachers can do

with ICT, lays the groundwork for determining students' language and communication needs. The author lays out three areas of exploration: information on literacy in the digital age; the uses of ICT in social and academic situations; and introducing students to collaboration and negotiation with peers, whether distant or local. Chapter 3 demonstrates the need for language students to develop and enhance their literacy skills cooperatively for use on the Web and other digital media. According to Towndrow, skills like locating, assessing, and using information disseminated on the Web are best acquired when learners work together toward achieving socially-oriented, knowledge-building objectives. In so doing, learners come to discard the view that the Web is simply something "out there somewhere to be exploited" (p. 33).

Chapter 4 opens with a discussion concerning the tripartite relationship between teachers, students and technology in language classrooms. Towndrow sees a student-centered pedagogy as crucial, with teachers at the forefront orchestrating and coordinating the interaction of all three. According to Towndrow, increased funding and accessibility cannot be used to rationalize the worth of ICT in language acquisition, "rather the way to establish the utility and usefulness of ICT in language learning is through demonstration of value-added learning outcomes now and in the future" (p. 51). Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are probably the most interesting of the book for here Towndrow first introduces his notion of task design, implementation, and assessment as it relates to ICT. Like Long (1985), Towndrow opts for a dictionary definition of tasks which includes all activities, even those with little or no linguistic or communicative outcome. The book picks up speed, however, introducing five key characteristics of ICT-based task design: choice of task, media and tool use, outcomes, strategies and learning support. Task implementation follows design but teachers need to be cautious of two additional variables which can affect the outcome of a task: monitoring and the physical landscape of the classroom. Curiously, Towndrow makes no mention here of what may arguably be the first task-based ICT activity ever, the WebQuest. In Chapter 8, he sets up a framework for describing and explaining language teachers' professional development and use of ICT and provides helpful advice. Here, as elsewhere in the book, Towndrow urges teachers to reflect critically on the choices they make and to consider the implications their choices have on students' potential to learn. According to Towndrow, ICT can act as the catalyst in making these two things happen productively. The last chapter summarizes the ideas presented in the book and restates Towndrow's thoughts on the foundational beliefs, values, and practices

as well as the obstacles and hindrances teachers face relating to language teaching with ICT.

Overall, the book is effective in providing readers and future teachers with a global view of a range of topics concerned with ICT in language classrooms. However, I feel it attempts to do too much in a limited space and thus leaves one wanting a more thorough discussion and analysis. Despite this drawback, Towndrow provides a service to novice educators by introducing them to ICT, and suggesting ways in which technology can be incorporated in the classroom.

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## *Describing Discourse: A Practical Guide to Discourse Analysis*. Nicola Woods. London: Hodder Education, 2006. xviii + 204 pp.

*Reviewed by*
Howard Doyle
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In her book *Describing Discourse*, Nicola Woods offers a succinct take on discourse: "language plus context", though subsequently admits "there is neither a single coherent theory nor a single definition of discourse" (p. x). She attributes this to the broad scope of understandings, inconsistent register and contentious approaches and interpretations of 'discourse', as well as concepts of discourse and what they represent.

The Introduction (pp. viii – xviii) outlines the generic and theoretical starting point for Woods to present and examine the characteristic discourse in advertising, politics, the legal and medical professions, and the field of education (Chapters 1 to 5 respectively). Within these contexts she states that the focus of her book is "the interface between institutions and ordinary people" (p. xvi). To this end she proposes the *top-down* approach (starting with the analyst's own understanding of the

context of the discourse), and the more speculative, even forensic *bottom up* approach (beginning with what is elsewhere referred to as "layers of discourse" [Hatch, 1992, Chapter 9]). She suggests "an intricate (and almost symbiotic) interplay between the approaches" (p. xi). But this promising, open-minded approach dwindles through the course of the book, as Woods' preference for a critically analytical, top-down view takes hold; she explicitly invokes it, stating that the focus of the book is "the interface between institutions and 'ordinary people'" (p. xi).

This begins in Chapter 1, 'Come and get it: The discourse of advertising'. Contending that in attempting to persuade would-be consumers, the purpose of advertising is "promotional" (p. 1) Woods pays attention to non-language discourse and frequent symbiosis between language and non-language discourse in advertising - including graphics, pictures, and commercial logos to illustrate this point. However beyond this valid and useful digression, the rest of the book follows her view that language is the basis of discourse and language analysis is at the base of discourse analysis.

Chapter 2, on Politics, frequently reads like a case study of Britain's New Labour political party, and as such could have limited relevance outside of Britain. Woods' main discussion point is manipulation of language by politicians and she shows how: about 18 out of the 37 example texts are drawn from the speeches and writings of former Prime Minister Tony Blair. She mentions that political manifestos and publicity for party and government policy resemble the discourse of advertising. Woods' leanings and bias become most apparent, including her faith in Fairclough's (1992) more extensive research on discourse in politics in Britain.

Description of discourse proceeds in Chapter 3 with the discourse of law. Woods' sub-theme, the tension between the need for law discourse to be both consistent and adaptable, is subsumed by differences in knowledge and power between professionals and non-professionals found in a paternalistic profession. She points out that such a situation is sanctioned by socio-political tradition, as exemplified by archaic and arcane language requiring ceremonial form and display—"terms of art" (p. 86)—embedded in the discourse of the society and culture. Woods later exemplifies how power differences appear and are maintained in spoken discourse, such as the cross-examination of witnesses in court and police interviews. Here she adopts a bottom-up approach, including rigorous and detailed commentary on discourse in review exercises. In this chapter, for the first time, syntax, lexical choice and register receive

extensive analysis. One wonders if other chapters should have been given the same categorical treatment.

Still, Woods' analyses act as critique of the profession rather than description of its discourse. She focuses on four types of discourse: statute, contract, court, and interview (including cross-examination and police interview). However, in the field of law—and also in many other professional and cultural fields—the range of contexts and text-types is more extensive (e.g., law reports, commentary and debate relating to law in broadcast media, contexts outside the profession extending into the lay / non-professional domain, not to mention the plain-English movements in various countries). Woods' omission of the key socio-linguistic concepts of 'genre' and 'text-type' limits the value of this chapter.

Taking up the discourse of Medicine (Chapter 4), Woods continues to employ the hierarchy of power theme, along with "tension between *care* and *cure*" (p. 121). Woods is best in her discussions of complexity of language, of maintaining power relations by obfuscation in specialised language and control maintained over patients in interviews, a characteristic of the discourse of medicine even more marked than that of law. However, Woods digresses into discourses of other fields, such as public health policy, without taking the opportunity to link them in theory to the discourse of medicine. Inexplicably, she fails to draw on the interdiscursivity concept, developed extensively by Fairclough (1992) among others.

In the final chapter, covering discourse in Education (her own profession), Woods effectively draws various themes together. The last 22 pages contain valuable, instructive, well-illustrated and supported discussion for teachers on facilitative interaction with students—the only place where she makes overtly clear the utility of being able to describe discourse without necessarily drawing in socio-political criticism as in other chapters.

This raises the question of whether readers are able to describe discourse after reading Woods' book. Clearly yes, they should be, especially if they have practised with the sets of in-chapter tasks and taken note of their attendant main-text commentary. But how well can the reader refer to specific approaches to, or elements of, discourse analysis? With a glossary of all the highlighted terms (I counted 66, of which 11 were not in the index) cross-referenced to the plentiful examples in the book, certainly *Describing Discours*e could be an excellent introductory text for any teacher, sociologist, even medical practitioner, advertiser, lawyer

or aspiring prime minister. References to seminal discourse analysis literature are plentiful but are glossed over more than discussed. But this is not Woods' purpose, which is to provide a basic guide for teachers or students of linguistics or literacy and language education—especially for those in Britain.

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## *Literature, Metaphor, and the Foreign Language Learner.* Jonathan D. Picken. Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. (xiii + 174 pp.)

*Reviewed by*
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At first thought it might seem the appeal of this book's topic would be severely restricted, but there are clearly identifiable links between literature and non-literary discourse all around us. Consider how pervasive in society are conceptual metaphors like 'Life is a Journey'. This is discussed by the author within the context of teaching a Robert Frost poem (pp.100-103) and was seen recently by this reviewer as the catchphrase on a flyer for a guest house in Okinawa. Since the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), the way our discourse is often shaped by such ideas has become widely recognized. Consider, too, Shakespeare's famous "Juliet is the sun" metaphor, also discussed by Picken (in various sections). This is a clear example of literary metaphor used to memorable and accessible enough effect for most of our students. Love and relationships are topics most of them are interested in and they can appreciate and find stimulating such figurative language.

However, despite the accessibility of the topic, this book is undoubtedly academic, both in writing style and in approach. It is crammed with references to research and should not be read for classroom activities (although there are a few suggestions in the last chapter). There are other

books for that, many cited in this volume. Rather, Picken's book is an excellent and comprehensive synthesis of recent research into literature, metaphor and language learning, and a report on his own research which, having been conducted with Japanese college students, should be of interest to most of this journal's readers. Picken's research has focused on presenting original or manipulated endings of short stories and poems to find out what his students made of the metaphors therein.

This book has seven chapters. The first, an introduction, includes discussions of what literature is – agreed by most critics rather vaguely to be "valued writing" (p. 3) – and why literature should be used in the foreign language classroom. Despite being in favor of its use, Picken accepts that some "language teachers may well have their doubts" (p. 2). This balanced and realistic view is one of the most commendable aspects of the book. For example, in chapter 1 and, in more depth, in chapter 2, the author weighs the arguments of stylisticians against those advocates of affective reader-response activities. Stylistics is a rather intellectual approach which can be too much like hard work for many students, but undoubtedly is useful in small doses and can lead to deeper insights into a text for the more motivated. As one who has tried stylistics tasks in Japanese classrooms with mixed success, I appreciate Picken's attempt "to find a middle ground" (p. 156) which combines interpretation and evaluation.

Chapter 3 outlines linguistic metaphors and conceptual metaphors before introducing three topics which are next afforded chapters of their own. In them he discusses and evaluates metaphor research in three areas: Comprehension (chapter 4), Interpretation (5) and Evaluation (6) of Metaphor in Literature. If the distinctions between these chapter headings are not immediately clear, the chapter sub-headings in the numerically dense social science style (e.g., 4.2.1 Conventionality and salience) may be even less clear to those unfamiliar with the field. In the text, however, the author has explained the terms clearly, and has achieved his stated goal of trying "to produce a book that does not depend on expert knowledge" (p. 9) for "L2 teachers who are keen to include work with literature in their..... classrooms" (p. 9).

One thing I liked in the author's discussion of the research and theories of teaching literature, and metaphor in particular, was his willingness to cast judgment. For example, he takes one researcher to task for a "counterproductive" (p. 57) rejection of Conceptual Metaphor theory when it "would be relevant and useful in his work" (p. 57) on poems.

Such comments help to guide the reader through the mass of research summarized in the book.

Picken closes with a chapter addressing the ways language teachers can incorporate literature into their courses. Metaphor: Curriculum, Methodology and Materials includes a useful discussion of widely available textbooks and recommendations for which English-English learner's dictionaries are best at dealing with metaphor. He makes the interesting point, backed up by research, that it is probably more helpful for students to learn the core meaning of a word before the figurative one, even when the latter is used more frequently. The influence of corpus linguistics has tended to make frequency an increasingly dominant factor in how words are presented. Teachers, perhaps even publishers, should bear in mind Picken's point when dealing with vocabulary.

At the JALT2007 conference alone there were at least ten presentations, including some by famous reading experts, which argued for students reading extensively and quickly. While the research clearly suggests such reading is a good thing for language learners, both foregrounding theory and the idea of schema refreshment, which are both discussed throughout Picken's book, show that figurative language slows down readers. Still, being encouraged to embrace metaphor benefits readers in their appreciation of, and the development of their, proficiency in language, and thereby in their way of thinking about the world. As McCarthy and Carter (1994) aphoristically put it, "A more reflective language learner is a more effective language learner." (p. 165).

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## *The Bilingual Edge: Why, When, and How to Teach Your Child a Second Language*. Kendall King & Alison Mackey. New York: Collins, 2007. x + 289 pp.

*Reviewed by*
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In *The Bilingual Edge: Why, When, and How to Teach Your Child a Second Language*, Kendall King and Alison Mackey summarize decades of research in linguistics and second language acquisition to give parents a clear and concise guide to raising their children bilingually. Though written in simple language for a general audience, each of King and Mackey's recommendations is supported by published scientific research. In addition, each chapter is peppered with anecdotes from parents who are raising their children bilingually, including King and Mackey, who are both Georgetown University linguistics professors *and* mothers of bilingual children.

The book is divided into four sections, the first three covering the "why, when, and how" of the subtitle, and the fourth addressing problems that may occur when teaching children a second language. In the first chapter, King and Mackey briefly discuss the obvious benefits of learning a second language—such as improved cross-cultural understanding and greater job opportunities in the future—then move on to the perhaps lesser known cognitive benefits, including increased creativity and metalinguistic awareness. The second chapter tackles ten myths about learning a second language.

The next section addresses the issues of choosing a language and deciding when to start teaching it. The third chapter includes exercises to assess the language profiles of families and communities as well as statistics on languages throughout the world. The main conclusion of the fourth chapter is that there is no wrong time to start teaching children a language. King and Mackey mention that children who start young tend to have better accents, but adolescents have been shown to learn languages more rapidly in some studies. The fifth chapter discusses individual differences that parents need to consider, such as gender, personality, and birth order.

The third section of the book, covering how to teach children a second language, is the most useful to parents and educators alike. Chapter six

asserts that any type of language learning must be fun, used in everyday interactions, and connected to the lives of the children. King and Mackey list strategies for different types of families and communities, including majority-language families, minority-language families, mixed-language families, and one-parent-one-language in mixed families. They even discuss how to use babysitters and nannies to give children more language exposure. The seventh chapter discusses language learning products; the eighth covers how to find solid language programs and teachers.

The final section is the most practical part of the book. While the first three sections list the characteristics of the ideal language learning environment, King and Mackey acknowledge that things can be messy when teaching children to be bilingual, and again they offer both research-based and anecdotal information on how to deal with problems. There are chapters on mixing and switching languages, and on what to do about slow progress, multilingualism, dialects, and motivation. This section also addresses some of the major concerns parents have about raising children bilingually—specifically, they dispel myths that bilingual children will experience a language delay caused by code switching.

Overall, King and Mackey have written a thorough and accessible book that covers almost every aspect of raising children bilingually. They include recent research without confusing the general audience with statistics and technical language. While academics might find the ideas too basic, this book will give anyone who teaches a second language new ideas and a broader perspective on second language acquisition. Specifically, teachers at bilingual or international schools will find this book helpful in better understanding the issues and struggles facing their bilingual students and their families.

## *Shogakusei ni eigo wo oshierutowa? Ajia to nihon no kyouiku genba kara [What is the Meaning of Teaching English to Elementary School Children?]*. Kawahara Toshiaki (Ed.). Tokyo: Mekong Publishing, 2008. 330 pp.

*Reviewed by*
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With English becoming a compulsory elementary school subject in the academic year 2011, *Shogakusei ni eigo wo oshierutowa? Ajia to nihon no kyouiku genba kara*, edited by Kawahara Toshiaki, is a timely publication. In the preface, Kawahara recognizes that the English-in-elementary-schools (EES) debate may have become wearisome to some, but he stresses that by focusing also on the situation abroad, this book will help readers to consider afresh the issues in Japan.

The book is divided into three parts: (1) current issues surrounding EES in Japan, (2) case studies in Japan, and (3) EES in other Asian countries. Although entitled "The Present State of English Education in this Country", the first chapter, allocates over four pages to describing its development from the Meiji restoration. The background information, however, is by no means tangential; indeed, the placing of the present in historical, political and social context is a feature of this book and one that makes it informative. In chapter 2, the author argues that if *kokusa rikai* (international understanding), an oft-espoused aim of EES, is to be realized, more non-native English speaking ALTs (particularly from Asia) must be employed. Chapter 3 asks why it should be that in an increasing multi-lingual Japan, foreign language teaching has become practically synonymous with the teaching of English.

Part 2 opens with a chapter explaining what can be done to prevent pupils turning into *eigo girai* ("English-haters"), while chapter 5 describes the content of pupil-centered communicative lessons in the city of Kanazawa. Chapter 6 suggests how the coordination of English education between elementary and junior-high school has been facilitated in Kitakyushu.

Each of the nine chapters in part 3 covers a country in Asia. Chapter 1 describes South Korea's sometimes rocky path to the introduction of EES in 1997. It also surveys some long-term concerns over the increas-

ing influence of English, one of which is a widening of first-language linguistic and social differences between the two Koreas. In his conclusion, the author cautions that, despite its geographic proximity to and numerous commonalities with Japan, social, political, and religious differences mean that caution is needed when looking to adopt aspects of South Korea's system.

A chapter on Taiwan, where 40% of children learn English even before they enter elementary school, is followed by one on Hong Kong describing the testing system both for pupils and teachers. The uniform system of English teaching qualifications employed in Hong Kong could, the author suggests, be beneficially adopted in Japan, where no standard system exists.

In the first of two chapters on the Philippines, the reader learns that the counterpart of the native-speaker ALT does not exist; the Filipino teacher is the model for the pupils. Another contrast to emerge relates to textbooks, which in the Philippines are invariably written by women and tend to reinforce gender stereotypes — "Mothers bear children and fathers support them" is an example sentence found in one (p. 188). In contrast, sexual stereotyping is avoided in Japanese textbooks, which are authored overwhelmingly by men.

Streaming by ability-level, and its consequences, is the focus of the chapter on Singapore. A comparison of textbooks in the following chapter, on Vietnam, reveals that what is taught during three years at a Japanese junior high school is covered during elementary school there. A teacher interviewed in the chapter on Indonesia describes how her lower grades concentrate on receptive skills rather than speaking in order to avoid "bad habits" —a far cry from the classes in Japan described in part 2. A chapter on Fiji, where English plays a vital role in maintaining social cohesion, ends part 3.

The concluding chapter is an excellent overview of Japan's EES debate. Although penned by the editor, a footnote states that the views represent those of all fifteen authors. While opposing viewpoints are presented, Kawahara makes his stance clear. In, for example, the section entitled "Should pronunciation be acquired early?" he asserts that wanting a child to speak like an American is not only unnecessary (considering that most communication is now with non-inner-circle speakers), but undesirable because a Japanese with an American accent seems "unnatural" and "incongruous" (p. 320). There is also criticism of the government which, it is asserted, used "the worthy cause" of promoting English for *kokusa*

*rikai kyoiku* (education for international understanding) during lessons for integrated study as a Trojan horse to make the "future introduction of *gogaku kyoiku* (education for language learning) easier" (p. 324). Incidentally, Kawahara states in the preface that this debate over the role of English education—international understanding vs. language learning—has not occurred in the rest of Asia.

In the final four pages the authors set out their recommendations for EES in Japan. That English education exists to expand the pupil's potential and not the national interest is the first point made. The priority, therefore, must not be on *sokusenteki* (immediately practical) English, but on developing fundamental skills. This echoes somewhat Moteki's (2004) criticism of the widespread teaching of "hamburger" English, superficially communicative (you can order a hamburger with it), but of little use for building a solid foundation for language learning.

Readers with no experience of teaching in elementary schools may find the sections on classroom activities, textbooks, and curricula of less interest than those with direct involvement in EES. Also, in part 3, although comparisons with Japan abound, since each chapter follows a different format, inter-country comparison of basic data (the year EES was officially introduced into each country, for example) is impractical. It could have been facilitated by the inclusion of a simple table.

These small caveats aside, this book provides a readable examination of EES across Asia and insights into areas of the bigger picture such as language planning, the status of English in society, and problems, particularly those related to different forms of inequality—the word *kakusai* appeared throughout the book—caused by the spread of English. It is essential reading for those for whom April 1st , 2011 promises to be a significant date.

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## *Tasks in Second Language Learning*. Virginia Samuda & Martin Bygate. Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillian, 2008. viii + 299 pp.

*Reviewed by*
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Most books on tasks in language learning can be divided into those taking a more empirical/theoretical perspective on tasks, and those with a more practical focus on how tasks can be used in the classroom. *Tasks in Second Language Learning* is aimed at teachers wishing to conduct their own research into tasks in second language learning.

The book is divided into four parts. Part 1 (Chapters 1-7) provides an overview of the historical and conceptual background of tasks as pedagogic and research instruments. While they cover much the same ground as previous books on tasks (e.g., Ellis, 2003), the authors view past task studies "in terms of their potential to inform users and designers of tasks in pedagogically useful ways—that is, in terms of their pedagogical relevance" (p. 82). For example, Chapter 7 looks at the various research designs of a number of task studies in terms of the type of data the different research methods generate, and how such data could be applied to make pedagogic decisions.

In Part 2 (Chapters 8-9), Chapter 8 focuses on only eight example studies the authors consider to "illustrate a range of task-related issues that researchers have focused on" (p. 113). Unlike the brief summaries of past research found in other books on task-studies, the eight example studies are presented in considerable detail. Each study is examined over five to seven pages with a separate text box providing, in essence, an abridged reprint of the entire original study. The advantage in presenting a limited set of detailed example studies is that the reader can clearly see the kinds of pedagogically motivated questions they could be asking, and how these questions can be investigated.

Chapter 9, examining situations where tasks have been used as part of a second/foreign language curriculum or lesson, reveals that, in practice, tasks are infrequently used in a Task-Based Learning Teaching (TBLT) syllabus, where tasks define and drive the syllabus and where task performance is a catalyst for focusing attention on form, not vice versa. Rather, tasks are employed more often in Task-Supported Learning Teaching

(TSLT) contexts, where tasks are one element in an overall program of instruction within a range of syllabus types (e.g., grammar-based, skills-based). Therefore, the authors argue it would be more fruitful to view tasks as pedagogic devices independent of any particular teaching methodology, asserting that tasks can perform different and valid pedagogic roles whether placed in sequence at the beginning, the middle, and/or the end of a lesson. The chapter concludes with a call for future investigations of how teachers actually use tasks and the rationale behind their choices.

Part 3 is solely dedicated to providing ideas for future research into tasks and how the reader could design these studies. Included are 32 research proposals grouped under five themes discussed throughout the book: tasks and language; tasks and process; tasks and development; tasks and teachers and learners; tasks and their ecological context. Each proposal outlines the research question, the "problem" (i.e. limitations in prior related research to date), and the steps required to conduct the study. Part 4 provides an extensive list of further resources on tasks divided by type, such as books taking an empirical/theoretical focus and those focusing on tasks in pedagogy, journals, and professional associations/websites/conferences dedicated to TBLT.

*Tasks in Second Language Learning* is a compact, well-organized volume, with each chapter reviewing the one preceding it and previewing the chapter to come. The extensive use of text boxes makes it easy to look up key quotes, concepts and studies, making this a useful resource for teachers or students taking post-graduate courses in TEFL/TESL.

The book stands well on its own merits, but is best read in conjunction with other works on tasks in second language learning/teaching and research methodology. *Tasks in Second Language Learning* is not intended for readers new to designing and using tasks in the classroom, nor does it explicitly try to convince readers of the case for using tasks in their teaching (as does, for example, Willis, 2007). Also, by focusing on a limited set of prior task-studies, the book does not provide the more exhaustive coverage of prior task research contained in works such as Ellis (2003). While the book outlines the steps required to undertake suggested further task research, it is not a book illustrating how to conduct research *per se*, for example, how to actually design a survey or analyze learner language. However, for readers already attempting to use tasks in their teaching and who would like to undertake further research into the use of tasks, and are familiar with research methodology, I highly recommend this volume.

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## *The Politics of Second Language Writing: In Search of the Promised Land*. Paul Kei Matsuda, Christina Ortmeier-Hooper, & Xiaoye You (Eds.). West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2006. xiii + 320 pp.

*Reviewd by*
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Matsuda, Ortmeier-Hooper, and You have edited a series of reports by second language specialists concerning their struggles created by institutional policies and their efforts to change them to better serve L2 writer development. The papers derive from the 2004 Symposium on Second Language Writing, whose organizing theme was "Second Language Writing Instruction in Context(s): The Effects of Institutional Politics and Policies." To give an overview, *The policies of second language writing: In search of the promised land* explores how institutional policies affect the instructional practices of second language writing in various settings such as language support programs from K-12 to postsecondary education and the ESL sections of first-year composition. Accordingly, this book describes various types of L2 writers who have received insufficient support: domestic ESL students, Generation 1.5 students (ESL students who have reached conversational fluency but need further support in obtaining academic writing skills), and international students.

This book is composed of 16 chapters organized into six parts. Part 1, "The Politics of L2 Writers in U.S. K-12 Schools," discusses how effective classroom practices can be offered for ESL students in a bilingual program and for Generation 1.5 students who are enrolled in language programs for academic writing skills. Part 2, "The Politics of L2 Writing Support Programs," points out deficiencies in the institutional language support systems at some universities and suggests ways to improve language

systems in order to meet the ongoing language needs of international students. Most notable in Part 2 is Chapter 6, which examines the roles of university writing centers. Jessica Williams points out that many university writing centers are not well prepared to serve an increasing number of international students who need help with their writing. Part 3, "The Politics of English Writing for Academic and Professional Purposes," discusses how the teaching of writing in this area can be improved to better serve L2 writer development. What echoes throughout the chapters is the importance of the cooperation of divisions within an institution.

Part 4, "The Politics of Second Language Writing Assessment," explores proper placement and writing exams in composition classes for international students. Part 5, "The Politics of Profession," describes the influence of institutional policies on the work of second language writing specialists. In the last part, Barbara Kroll outlines five major obstacles to overcome in order to provide an optimal learning environment for L2 writers.

Although this book's focus is on identifying institutional policies which hinder writing instructors in their efforts to offer proper academic support for L2 writer development, some chapters provide readers with insights into the unique characteristics of L2 writer development and L2 writers' needs. For example, Chapter 1, in which Danling Fu and Marylou Matoush advocate bilingual education, describes four transitional stages of writing development in ESL students in a bilingual program and discusses how their L1 literacy serves to develop their academic writing skills in L2. They argue that if such students are restricted to writing in their limited English, which prevents them from expressing the depth of their thinking, their cognitive growth will be thwarted. They claim that allowing ESL students to go back and forth between their native language and English helps them express the depth and fluency of their thoughts in English. As another example, in Chapter 14, which discusses the impact disciplinary institutions and their borders can have on teachers, Christine Norris and Christine Tardy describe a writing instructor's uneasiness about having graduate ESL students practice discipline-specific writing in an EAP course offered by the English Department. They state that their research showed that ESL students in the course valued the instructor's expertise in rhetoric and composition in English and they were not bothered by the instructor's lack of content knowledge in their field.

The limitation of this book, if any, is that almost all the chapters deal with situations in the U.S. with only two chapters written by researchers in other parts of the world. The editors explain that research in this area

has grown for the past three decades in the U.S., and that, as a result, almost all of the contributors to this anthology are researchers based there.

Overall, this book provides readers with valuable insights into the characteristics of L2 writer development and makes suggestions for those writing instructors who are struggling with the constraints created by institutional policies or who are making an effort to change them to better serve L2 writer development.

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# 日本語論文投稿要領

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