JALT Publications • Online Journals

JALT Journal

JALT Journal is the research journal of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT). It is published semiannually, in May and November. As a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting excellence in language learning, teaching, and research, JALT has a rich tradition of publishing relevant material in its many publications.

Links

- JALT Publications: http://jalt-publications.org
- *JALT Journal*: http://jalt-publications.org/jj
- *The Language Teacher*: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt
- *Conference Proceedings*: http://jalt-publications.org/proceedings

- JALT National: http://jalt.org
- Membership: http://jalt.org/main/membership

Foreign Language Anxiety in Teachers

Hiroshi Suzuki
Macquarie University, Australia

Peter Roger
Macquarie University, Australia

In the 2013 Course of Study for senior high schools, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) mandated that English should be taught, wherever possible, through the medium of English. Against this backdrop, we investigated the experiences of foreign language anxiety (FLA) among 15 Japanese teachers of English in relation to their teaching practices and beliefs. The findings, from interviews, questionnaires, and self-reflections, indicate that experiences of FLA among participants stem from two broad categories of factors. The first is the teachers' conceptualisation of their own role as teachers; the second concerns their perception of student needs and expectations. We examined the findings in the context of Borg's (2006) framework of Language Teacher Cognition and developed a preliminary model of FLA among this group of language teachers. Using this model, we outline ways in which anxiety related to English use in the classroom could be alleviated.

　平成25年度施行の高校新学習指導要領において、文部科学省は「授業を実際のコミュニケーションの場面とするため、授業は英語で行なうことを基本とする」という文言を取り入れた。この背景を基に、本研究はBorg（2006）の「言語教師認知をめぐる枠組」を理論的モデルとして、15名の日本人高校英語教師の外国語使用不安（foreign language anxiety）を教師の信条及び教育実践と関連付けて検証した。インタビュー、質問紙、自己内省に基づく質的データの分析結果として、調査協力者の外国語使用不安は、教師としての役割に関する自己認知、学習者のニーズ及び学習志向に関する教師認知に起因することが判明した。これらの結果に基づき、我々は教師の外国語使用不安研究におけるパイロットモデルを提示し、さらに教師の外国語使用不安の対処法略を提案した。

Historically speaking, English education in Japan can be characterized as "alternating between a focus on *English for practical purposes* and *English for entrance examination for higher education* [emphasis in original]" (Butler & Iino, 2005, p. 27). Over the last three decades, however, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has identified English for practical purposes as a priority and put in place policies that emphasise the use of English rather than knowledge about the language. MEXT has gradually foregrounded the "development of communication skills" as the main purpose of English education over the last three curriculum changes (MEXT, 1989, 1999, 2009). It is well known, however, that previous curriculum changes have not always been fully implemented, and there remains a gap between the stated objectives and actual teaching practices in high school English classrooms in Japan. Some researchers have attributed this gap to sociocultural factors such as the "culture of learning" (Tanaka, 2009) and "school (technical) culture" (Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004), including the entrance examination system in Japan (e.g., Gorsuch, 2000). Others have attributed it to English teachers themselves, as summarised by Kikuchi and Browne's (2009) conclusion that Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) are "either unwilling or unable to teach English in a communicative manner" (p. 189).

As part of significant steps to reform English education in Japan, the new Course of Study for high schools stipulated English to be used as the primary medium of instruction starting in 2013, along with the reorganisation of the English curriculum (MEXT, 2009). This approach, however, has already provoked heated discussion in educational circles (see Nakai, 2010; Tanabe, 2011). In response to this, a further, rather vague, explanation was added to the Course of Study Guidelines stating that as long as using English remains the focus of the lesson, teachers may consider using Japanese when conducting a class "if necessary" (MEXT, 2010, p. 51). Softened as the policy may be, English teachers at high schools are still expected to use English as the primary medium of instruction. In order for such a curriculum innovation to be effective, it would seem productive to explore the factors that make JTEs "unwilling" to conduct classes through the medium of English.

Teacher Cognition and Foreign Language Anxiety

Teacher cognition has been increasingly researched in the last 20 years in an attempt to understand its relationship to teachers' classroom practices (Borg, 2006). In developing a conceptual framework for language-teacher-cognition research, Borg (2003, 2006) established four categories of factors

that may affect teacher cognition: *schooling* (prior language learning experience), *professional coursework* (preservice and in-service teacher training), *classroom practice*, and *contextual factors*. In his framework, teacher cognition—which is affected by previous learning experience and teacher training—interacts with contextual factors to determine classroom practice (see Figure 1).
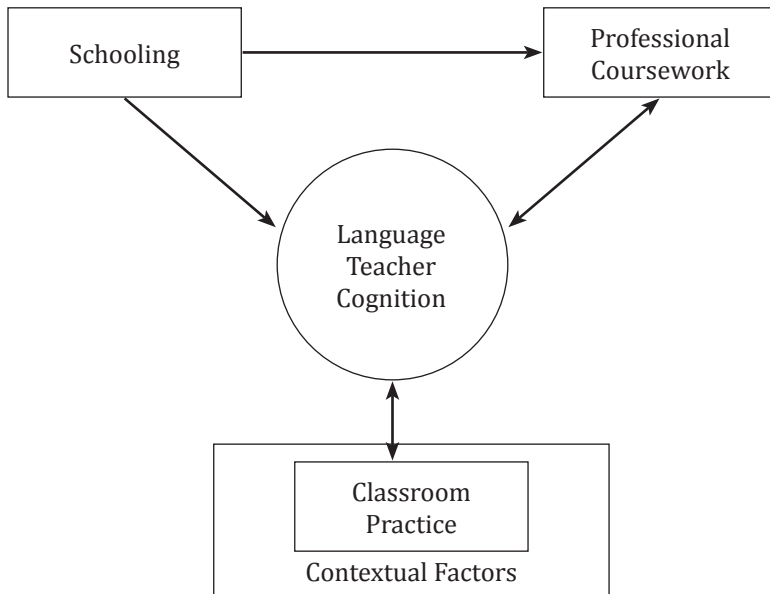

Figure 1. Borg's framework for language teacher cognition research (Borg, 2006, p. 283).

During a study into the context of high school curriculum change in Japan, Nishino (2012) constructed a path model of teacher beliefs and practices, based on Borg's framework. Nishino's model described the relationships between classroom practices and teacher beliefs, perceived teaching efficacy, and socioeducational factors, concluding that teachers' beliefs about Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)[1] alone cannot lead to their use of CLT in class. To unravel such complex relationships between teacher cognition and classroom practices, Nishino suggested that language cognition research also needs to shed light on a wide range of constructs, such as teacher cognition about language, learners, and self.

Given the conceptual ambiguity of teacher cognition as reported in the literature (e.g., Pajares, 1992), Borg (2006) defined the term *teacher cognition* as "an inclusive term to embrace the complexity of teachers' mental lives" (p. 50). In line with this broad concept of teacher cognition, Borg suggested that previous research lacked a holistic approach that takes into account the role of affective, moral, and emotional factors in shaping teachers' classroom practices. Indeed, the large body of previous research in this area has seldom focused on the emotional and affective aspects connected with teacher cognition in language teaching, the most notable of which is the phenomenon known as foreign language anxiety (FLA).

According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), FLA is "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning" (p. 284). Although FLA has been researched mainly among foreign language learners over the last three decades, it is not a phenomenon that is limited to learners. Horwitz (1996) pointed out that many nonnative foreign language teachers also experience FLA, which could affect their cognition about self (e.g., "feelings of self-confidence") and teaching methods (e.g., "instructional choices") as well as classroom practices (e.g., "use of the target language"; p. 365). FLA in learners can be predicted by factors such as their self-perception of language proficiency, self-worth, and scholastic competence (Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999), all of which could equally apply to language teachers. However, key differences are their roles in the classroom as well as the purpose for which they use the target language in the classroom context. The classical elements of FLA in language learners are communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986), but such characterisations of FLA are not precisely applicable to language teachers, whose role involves testing and evaluating their students.

In the context of Japan, research in English and Japanese that focuses on anxiety among language teachers is very limited. Tanabe (2011), while exploring difficulties that teachers encountered when conducting classes in English, uncovered some evidence of FLA among JTEs, such as concern about their spontaneous or appropriate use of English in class. However, Tanabe did not set out specifically to explore JTEs' experiences of FLA, and her paper called for further in-depth study through interviews or class observation to reveal the relationship between JTEs' beliefs about teaching English through English and their own teaching practices in this respect. A deeper understanding of the origins of FLA among teachers in the Japanese context is particularly urgent given the 2013 curriculum changes that call

for English to be used as the primary medium of instruction. In this study, we aimed to explore this issue from the perspective of teacher cognition, as outlined in Borg's framework. In doing so, we explored the phenomenon of FLA from the viewpoint of "the interaction of the person in the situation producing that anxiety," as advocated by MacIntyre and Gardner (1989, p. 254).

Research Questions

In conducting this study, we set out to address the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the causes or triggers of JTEs' experiences of FLA, and how do these relate to their cognition and teaching practices?

RQ2: How might FLA among JTEs be alleviated or managed in the context of the new curriculum innovations?

In line with the abovementioned definition of FLA (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994), in this study we define FLA in teachers as a unique type of anxiety specific to foreign language learning and teaching.

Methodology

Data Collection

Our original aim was to collect qualitative data through a combination of two different methods: Skype (videoconferencing) interviews with JTEs working at public high schools, followed by question-prompted written self-reflections on one particular teaching day. After the necessary ethics clearances were obtained from the research ethics committee at our university, advertisements (including an outline of the study and the first researcher's contact information) to recruit study participants were placed on a subscription-based mailing list for *Shin-Eiken* (New English Teachers' Association) and distributed through personal networks. Despite multiple circulations of the recruitment advertisement, initially only two participants volunteered for the interviews. Feedback from some subscribers to the Shin-Eiken mailing list suggested that this low participation rate was due to the difficulty of scheduling a time for the interview as well as a general unfamiliarity with Skype. The study methodology was therefore revised so that participants were able to choose either a Skype interview or a written questionnaire. In

all, 15 teachers participated, four by Skype and 11 via email questionnaire, between July and October 2012. The information and consent forms were sent via email to the participants prior to the Skype interview or written questionnaire, and they had the opportunity to ask questions before deciding whether to participate. All participants provided their consent in written or oral form.

Participants

Table 1 provides demographic information about the participants, listed by format of participation: A to D via Skype interview and E to O via written questionnaire. Ten participants were female and five participants were male. The English teaching experience of participants varied: less than 5 years (one participant), 5-10 years (five participants), 11-20 years (three participants), 21-30 years (four participants) and more than 30 years (two participants), with an average of 16.6 years of teaching experience. In Japan, high schools are ranked by private educational institutes according to the students' academic achievements; although such rankings are unofficial, they figure prominently in parents' decisions about where to enrol their children. Three participants reported that they teach at high schools ranked high; seven at those ranked middle; and five at those ranked low in the academic hierarchy of the local area. This wide range of teaching experience and different high school teaching contexts allowed us to maximise the range of perspectives represented by the participants.

Table 1. Participant Demographics (*N* = 15)

Interview method	Participant	Sex	Experience of living overseas	Teaching experience	
				Years	School ranking
Skype	A	F	24 months	8	Middle
	B	M	15 months	4.5	High
	C	F	13 months	9	Low
	D	M	Never	9	High

Interview method	Participant	Sex	Experience of living overseas	Teaching experience	
				Years	School ranking
Written question-naire	E	M	6 months	30	High
	F	F	Never	37	Low
	G	F	12 months	6	Low
	H	F	Never	24	Low
	I	F	Never	29.5	Low
	J	M	Never	19	Middle
	K	F	Never	19	Middle
	L	F	Yes*	22	Middle
	M	F	Never	7	Middle
	N	F	Never	15	Middle
	O	M	Never	23	Middle

Note. *as reported by participant.

Procedures

Skype Interviews

One-hour interviews via Skype were conducted with participants A-D in Japanese. The interviews were semi-structured and consisted of three parts. In the first part, we investigated the causes and triggers of FLA in JTEs under the current Course of Study. The participants were asked about their experiences related to teaching English (including studying and living overseas), their teaching beliefs and practices, the frequency of their use of English in and outside the classroom, as well as their experience of FLA. In the second part of the interview, we explored the ways in which participants anticipated the new curriculum would affect them, particularly from the perspective of FLA. The third part involved eliciting teachers' reactions to a videotaped interview with a language teacher and a demonstration lesson based on a section of the new prescribed textbook; data from the third part of the interviews is not reported here as the topic falls outside the scope of this paper. Each of the Skype interviews was audio recorded and manually transcribed. Verbatim transcription of responses was undertaken in a way that would allow a natural translation into English (see below) for coding purposes. Features deemed irrelevant to the focus of the analysis (e.g.,

written representations of idiosyncratic pronunciations and precise pause timings) were not included in the transcriptions. Interview questions are in Appendix A.

Questionnaires

To extract a similar kind of qualitative data to that which was collected via oral interviews, items in the questionnaires were structured to match the questions used in the Skype interviews, with slight adjustments to the wording where necessary. These questions were provided in Japanese so that in-depth responses (also in Japanese) could be ensured. The questionnaires were distributed to 11 participants via email between August and October 2012. The participants received each part of the questionnaire only after completing the preceding part in order to avoid overloading them and to prevent their responses to questions in Part 1 from being influenced by the nature of the questions in Part 2. Nine participants (81.8%) completed both the first and second part of the questionnaire, and two participants (18.2%) completed only the first part. The questions are in Appendix B.

Email Self-Reflection

To triangulate the data collected via Skype interviews and written questionnaires, participants were asked (via email) to answer a set of questions regarding their teaching experiences on one particular day of their choosing. The emails were sent in the middle of September to the participants who had completed the Skype interview or both parts of the written questionnaire; five participants responded to the emails by the end of October.

Data Analysis

The transcribed interviews, questionnaires, and self-reflection data were translated from Japanese into English and coded through the *cyclical* process for analysis (Saldaña, 2013). In first cycle coding, the causes and triggers of the participants' FLA were coded in three stages. First, the occasions in the data when the participants had experienced or expected to experience FLA were identified. Second, for each occasion, the causes and triggers were coded by referring to their beliefs and teaching practices, including their teaching context, and further categorised into "internal" and "external" dimensions of causality for causation coding (Saldaña, 2013, p. 164). Third, these coded factors were cross-referenced with the responses from other participants, including those who reported that they did not experience FLA. This cross-

referencing was to confirm how absence of these anxiety-inducing factors contributed to those participants' lack of FLA experience. In second cycle coding, the FLA causes and triggers were reframed through theoretical coding (Saldaña, 2013) to yield the themes discussed in the following section.

Findings and Discussion

Amount of English Used in Class

Table 2 shows the percentage of class time that participants reported teaching in English. As can be seen, 58.0% of classes were conducted using less than 10% English; more than 50% English was used in only 9.7% of classes. This indicates that most of the classes taught by these participants were still conducted mainly in Japanese, highlighting the gap between current practice and the *English as the medium of instruction* policy outlined in the new Course of Study. This result is consistent with results reported in other studies (MEXT, 2006; Tanabe, 2011).

Table 2. Percentage of the Class Conducted in English

Percentage of the class	No.	%
0-10%	18	58.0%
11-20%	3	9.7%
21-30%	3	9.7%
31-40%	1	3.2%
41-50%	3	9.7%
51%-100%	3	9.7%

Note. No. = the number of classes about which data was gathered; participants responded about more than one class.

With regard to the use of English in class, interview data revealed that participants use English mainly in the following situations: greeting students and giving basic instructions (known as *classroom English*), introducing a topic related to the lesson, reading passages aloud from a textbook, asking questions, paraphrasing what an English-speaking assistant language teacher (ALT) has said, or presenting a model summary of a reading passage. Out of these modes of English use in class, classroom English was most frequently reported—by 10 out of 15 participants.

Experience of FLA

The majority of participants (13 out of 15) reported experiencing some degree of anxiety on occasions when they used English in class. However, their experience of FLA appeared to vary depending on contextual factors such as mode of teaching (i.e., with or without an ALT). Ten participants reported that they experienced FLA while teaching their regular classes, but only five participants reported experiencing FLA while team-teaching with an ALT. Two participants reported that they had not experienced anxiety in their current teaching situation.

The first cycle coding of the data revealed that the participants' experience of FLA was affected by two broad categories: internal factors related to the teachers themselves (e.g., perceived lack of English proficiency) and external factors related to others (e.g., the presence of a particular cohort of students). Further analysis indicated that it was not necessarily external factors that caused teachers to experience FLA, but their *perception* of these external factors and the dynamic interaction between internal and external factors. This suggests that internal and external factors cannot be completely separated in explaining individual experiences of FLA. Rather, they can be effectively conceptualized by mapping them onto Borg's (2006) framework in order to capture the situation-specific characteristics of FLA.

Finally, two major themes were identified as causes of FLA: *teacher cognition about their role in relation to target language use* and *teacher cognition about learners*. Incorporated into Borg's framework, these themes are depicted in Figure 2 and discussed below with illustrative extracts from the data. However, these individual themes, including their subcategories, do not necessarily work in isolation to trigger an experience of FLA but are interconnected and affect each other. These interactive aspects will also be discussed when relevant.
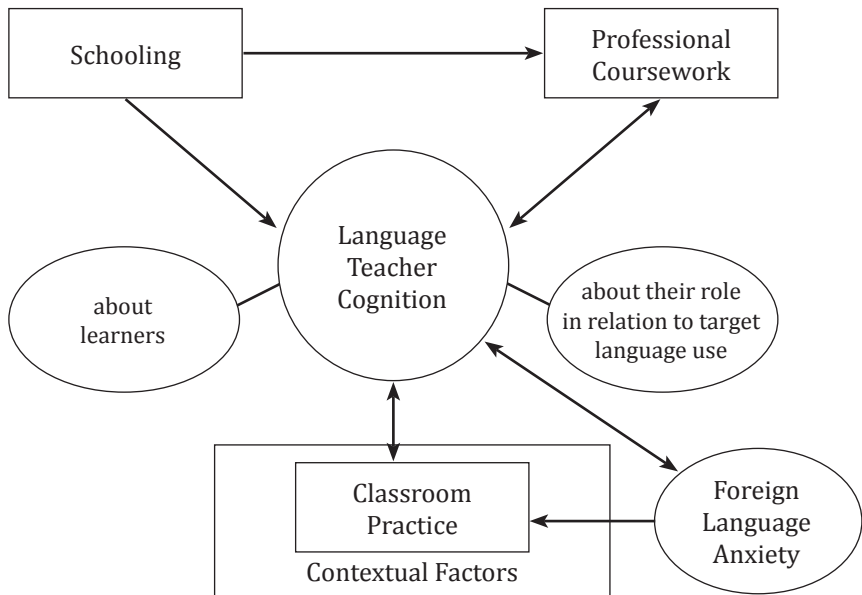
Figure 2: Preliminary model of foreign language anxiety (FLA) in teachers. The FLA component, which involves emotional aspects rather than cognitive aspects, is positioned outside of Language Teacher Cognition, in line with recent research on FLA that sheds light on stakeholders' *awareness* of (and attitudes towards) FLA with the view to alleviating learners' FLA (see, e.g., Tran, Baldauf, & Moni, 2013).

Teacher Cognition About Their Role in Relation to Target Language Use

Of the 13 participants who reported experiencing FLA, nine reported their perception of their use of the target language as a cause of FLA. Two anxiety-inducing factors were identified from the data: concerns over accuracy and perceived lack of English proficiency.

Concerns Over Accuracy

Four participants reported concern over the accuracy of their English as a cause of their experiencing FLA. Some, for example, reported feelings of anxiety when they were not sure if their English was correct while speaking English in class. Although this is in line with the findings of studies of FLA in learners (see, e.g., Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989),

there appeared to be an additional, critical element associated with these teacher-participants' concerns about accuracy that stemmed from their teacher beliefs about their role. As participant G noted:

> I usually didn't care much about making mistakes as long as l could make myself understood, but I feel pressured when it comes to speaking English in class because I should not make mistakes in front of my students.

As was pointed out by participant G, it may not be a teacher's English proficiency itself that causes anxiety, but the belief that teachers should be always correct. This belief may be common among teaching professionals, but nonnative language teachers might be more susceptible to excessive preoccupation with the correctness of their target language use due to the ongoing feature of performance evaluation in most foreign language classes (Horwitz et al., 1986). Following Gregersen's (2003) argument that the fear of making mistakes could lead to avoidance of conveying authentic and personal messages due to a focus on form rather than content, the JTEs might limit their use of the target language in accordance with their unwillingness to make mistakes. Furthermore, the teacher's perceived role as "authoritative expert" (Tanaka, 2009) might place more pressure on JTEs not to make errors in front of their students. Participant B attributed his concern over accuracy to his perceived (and expected) role as a teaching expert:

> I do not want my students to doubt my skills as an English teacher. I am not a native speaker of English, so I try to convince myself that I don't need to know everything. However, I think students expect me to know everything as a teaching expert.

As was pointed out by participant B, making mistakes could be a threat to the maintenance of a teacher's position as an authority figure, for such errors could be perceived as a sign of incompetence as a teacher. Importantly, this may be the case even if the students themselves do not notice the errors; teacher beliefs about their role and their own awareness of the errors that they may be making are sufficient to provoke anxiety. These teacher beliefs may be initially influenced by what Borg defines as "schooling" (2006, p. 283), that is, their own learning experience in the "teacher-centred" classroom culture in Japan (Tanaka, 2009). These beliefs could also be reinforced by contextual factors such as school cultures that place emphasis on dis-

ciplined classroom management (Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004), as well as the prevalence of form-focused assessment tasks including university entrance examinations (Gorsuch, 2000; Kikuchi, 2006).

It is also worth noting that participants' concerns over accuracy were sometimes at odds with their beliefs about the processes of language learning and the advice that they reported giving to students. Participant B reported a gap between his beliefs and teaching practices:

> I always tell my students not to hesitate to speak English, not to worry about making mistakes, but actually I do feel that way. I know my English is not perfect (so I cannot help making mistakes), but I do not want to feel ashamed (*haji*) by making mistakes in front of my students because of my position as a teacher.

Participant B repeatedly used the term *haji*[2] (shame) to describe his concern over making mistakes in front of students. It seems that the sense of haji causes him to be more self-conscious about the accuracy of his English and therefore could make him avoid using English to save face as a teacher. Participant B seems to have a dilemmatic perception of his teaching practice, due to the conflict between what he thinks is ideal language teaching and the pressure he feels to fulfill expectations of him as a teacher. This kind of discrepancy between beliefs and teaching practices has been reported in other studies of Japanese high schools (e.g., Nishino, 2008, 2011).

Perceived Lack of English Proficiency

Five participants also mentioned their perceived lack of English proficiency as a cause of their FLA. In this respect, contextual factors such as the presence or absence of a native English-speaking ALT[3] in the classroom appeared to affect the cognition about their role in relation to their target language use.

When an ALT was not present, reported experiences of FLA were often attributed to a perceived lack of oral production skills. As Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) argued, the inability to fully express oneself can cause mature foreign-language users to feel frustrated and apprehensive due to the mismatch between their mature thoughts and immature foreign language proficiency. In the case of nonnative language teachers, frustration and apprehension seems to derive from their role in the classroom; that is, they are responsible for clearly explaining the subject matter and managing the

classroom while using the target language. Participant B, for instance, stated that he felt pressured when trying to explain grammar points in English because his explanations were not as smooth as they would have been in Japanese. Participant A also expressed her anxious feelings that she could not get students fully engaged in activities due to her "imperfectly controlled" second language. These anxiety-inducing factors could be perceived as threats to a JTE's self-concept of competence, not only as a language user but also as a language teacher.

When team-teaching with an ALT, participants reported experiencing FLA when they could not make themselves understood in English, when they could not properly explain to an ALT what was happening in class or what students were asking, and when they did not understand something that an ALT had said. Participant B described one such incident:

> Once an ALT said "Siberia" while talking with me in class, which I didn't understand. I felt very anxious and went blank. I can't forget that feeling even now, though it was 5 or 6 years ago. At that time, I thought he was talking about a family restaurant called "Saizeria."

These experiences of FLA are a manifestation of communication apprehension (Horwitz et al., 1986) in the sense that they arise when a teacher has to communicate spontaneously with an ALT. Participant B reported that this spontaneity triggers anxiety because he cannot prepare in advance, nor can he avoid using English. Interestingly, however, half of the participants who did feel anxiety in regular classes reported that that was not the case when team-teaching. Some of them attributed their absence of FLA to their use of simpler English and easier textbooks, which were used with the aim of helping students become more familiar with the language. Others reported that they felt fewer burdens in terms of class management because the ALT mainly took charge in team-teaching. The latter confirms that it is not always perceived English proficiency alone that affects their FLA level, but also their sense of self-efficacy in fulfilling their class-manager role using the target language.

Teacher Cognition About Learners

As depicted in Figure 2, teachers' experiences of FLA also seemed to be triggered by contextual factors mainly associated with students. However, teacher perception of these contextual factors varied. Seven participants

pointed out such factors as a cause of FLA, and three main student-related factors were identified from the data: students who fall behind in class, students who threaten the status of the teacher, and students' exam-related expectations.

Students Who Fall Behind in Class

It seems that for some JTEs, experiences of anxiety were induced by their concerns over students. For example, they reported that they experienced FLA when they were not sure how much their students understood, when they saw their students falling behind, and when they were not sure if they were helping students develop their English proficiency. Participant A reported her experience of FLA:

> It is not my English proficiency itself that causes my anxiety, but my feeling that I may leave my students behind by speaking English . . . . This may be partly because I have seen my students actually falling behind in class due to their inexperience of taking a class conducted in English.

Her comment demonstrates that FLA is not simply limited to target language use but is the result of the interaction of multiple factors. Her previous teaching experience presented her with a dilemma regarding the use of English in the classroom. Her concern over "leaving students behind" might stem from perceived pressure from the "school's (technical) culture" (Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004) to keep pace with other teachers within the set curriculum. In addition to these contextual factors, more affective and moral aspects of teacher cognition seem to be involved here. Participants C and E, for example, expressed their concerns that constant target language use could lead to a wider academic gap between students. Participants A, E, and F also commented that they did not want their students to "dislike" or "give up on" learning English through constantly being in a position where they did not understand what the teacher was saying. These affective and moral aspects of teacher cognition about learners cannot be overlooked because they play an important role in understanding the gap between the teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices (see Golombek, 1998).

For some teachers working at schools ranked lower in the academic hierarchy, the new Course of Study presents even more daunting challenges. Participant G reported that some of her students had trouble understanding explanations provided in their native language, much less in the target lan-

guage. Participant F commented that she could only realistically use English for greetings and "thank you" in her teaching context. It is obvious that these contextual factors can limit teachers' target language use through their concern over their students' ability to understand.

In contrast, however, participant A reported that she did not feel uncomfortable giving instructions in English when conducting routine activities, such as reading passages from textbooks. She stated that students seemed to "figure out" instructions, not just through verbal cues but also utilizing contextual cues such as the routines that she regularly follows when conducting her classes. Participant C also noted that she did not experience FLA when she used classroom English because her students had been accustomed to the use of English for routine instructions since junior high school.

In contrast to the first theme discussed (teacher cognition about their role in relation to the target language), these teacher concerns over students appeared to arise through interaction with students in their own teaching contexts rather than through their own language learning experiences and preservice or in-service training—schooling and professional coursework, respectively, in Borg's (2006) framework. In fact, participant A reflected that teacher training tends to pursue an ideal teaching methodology that does not necessarily correspond with actual classroom environments.

Students Who Threaten the Status of the Teacher

Some teachers reported feeling that their status was open to challenge by students in their classrooms. Participant B, who teaches at a highly ranked school, described anxiety when students asked him difficult questions in an apparent attempt to test his knowledge of English. Participant F also expressed her apprehension that students might make fun of her "poor" English if she needs to conduct her class in English. The most notable example of such "threatening" students seems to be *kikokushijo*, students who have returned to Japan after living overseas. For example, participants B and D reported experiencing FLA when there were *kikokushijo* in the class, who they believed had high levels of English proficiency. Participant D reflected on his previous experience of FLA:

> There are many students who used to live overseas because of their parents' jobs and therefore speak English more fluently than I do. I've gotten used to it, but it was sometimes painful, to be honest, speaking English in front of those students . . .

In many language classes, foreign language learners are exposed to ongoing evaluation by "the only fluent speaker in the class, the teacher" (Horwitz et al. 1986, p. 128). The mere presence of *kikokushijo* may therefore threaten the status of the teacher, who is expected to be the most fluent speaker in the classroom. Participant B reported his experience of FLA in such a situation:

> When I was team-teaching with an ALT, I felt intimidated because there was a *kikokushijo* in my class. Once, I did not know a word that the ALT said and I felt ashamed of myself because the *kikokushijo* might have realized that I did not know the word.

His comment suggests that multiple anxiety-inducing factors were interacting to cause his experience of FLA. The presence of *kikokushijo* in class created anxiety about losing face as a teacher, which seemed to be amplified by interaction with the ALT. This is clearly an example of the dynamic aspects of FLA in teachers, when teacher cognition and contextual factors interact.

Exam-Related Expectations

At schools where many students expect to advance to university for further education, teachers also seem to feel anxiety about using the target language due to exam-related expectations. Participants B and E discussed their reluctance to speak English in class due to their students' preference for studying "exam English." Participant B remembered a teaching experience when conducting a class all in English:

> It didn't go well. Students were like, "It has nothing to do with what we want to learn, so can you just explain it thoroughly in Japanese?" I believe that conducting class in English will be effective in several senses, but I am not going to go against their preference . . . . In addition, no matter how much I speak English in class, it's different from what is assessed in the test.

His comment suggests that contextual factors such as school assessment systems including entrance examinations may have a (negative) washback effect on learner preference for exam English, leading to the teacher's reluctance to use the target language in class. He also mentioned that he even avoided using "classroom English" because it sounds childish to those students whose academic ability is perceived to be high. Participant M also reported that she felt uncomfortable using the target language when her

students did not "take it seriously" because it was not directly linked to the assessments.

Nishino (2008) argued that teachers' concern over university entrance examinations had a strong influence on their perception of the important skills and knowledge that students need to acquire. She implied that teachers' perception that grammar, vocabulary, and *yakudoku* (grammar translation) are important for their students' success in entrance examinations partly contributed to JTEs' resistance to the implementation of communicative activities in class. Although MEXT has set out plans for reforming the university entrance examinations in the "Action Plan for University Reform" (MEXT, 2012), the responses of our participants suggest that an ability to use English for communicative purposes is still not seen as relevant to the goal of examination success.

Conclusions

The first research question was, "What are the causes or triggers of JTEs' experiences of FLA, and how do these relate to their cognition and teaching practices?" This study revealed that the causes or triggers of JTEs' experience of FLA can be traced to how JTEs perceive potentially anxiety-inducing factors in their own teaching context. This study also demonstrated how the various factors do not always operate in isolation but interact with each other to trigger experiences of FLA. These interactive (and dynamic) characteristics align with the "situation-specific" characteristic of FLA in learners (see, e.g., MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) and were explained with reference to Borg's (2006) framework of Language Teacher Cognition. Most of these FLA-inducing factors stem from threats to the status of the teacher, a particularly salient point in a country like Japan, where a traditional teacher-centred classroom culture still prevails. Our findings thus demonstrate that FLA among teachers cannot be understood simply as one form of language learner anxiety; teachers' cognition about their role and status is at the core of the triggering factors that we identified from the data.

The second research question was, "How might FLA among JTEs be alleviated or managed in the context of the new curriculum innovation?" Our mapping of the elements of FLA in teachers onto Borg's (2006) model (see Figure 2) suggests points at which the seeds of FLA could be targeted (professional coursework) as well as areas where ongoing systemic changes may lead to a natural decline in levels of FLA among teachers (classroom context).

First, through their preservice and ongoing professional training, JTEs could legitimately be challenged to adopt a broader view of their role as teachers of a global language in the 21st century. This does not mean ignoring the realities of examinations that are beyond their control, but rather seeing themselves as role-model bilingual speakers, who are able to use two languages adroitly to accomplish different classroom goals. In this way, individual teachers can develop a principled approach to decisions about when to use English and when to use Japanese in their classroom practice. As occupational role was at the core of much of the anxiety that our participants reported, targeting teachers' understanding of their role in this way seems a logical step.

Second, with new English language tests for university entrance that include speaking, listening, reading, and writing components becoming available in mid-2014 (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 2014), it appears that the classroom context will continue to evolve. As students begin to need listening and speaking skills for the examinations, anxiety stemming from tension between student expectations and the teacher's use of English in the classroom may well begin to ease.

Limitations and Implications for Further Research

This study represents a step in the process of unravelling the complex web of FLA-inducing factors in relation to JTEs' teaching practices and beliefs. The findings led us to propose a preliminary model (Figure 2) of FLA as it affects high school English teachers in Japan. Although the modest scale of this study means that the findings will not represent all JTEs' experiences of FLA, we hope that our model provides a starting point and that it will be further tested through larger scale studies. Such studies could include a classroom observation component. As Tanabe (2011) suggested, it is possible that JTEs' actual teaching practices and beliefs are not always precisely reflected in their responses in interviews and on questionnaires. Triangulation through classroom observation would thus strengthen the validity of the data in terms of JTEs' actual teaching practices, including codeswitching and the dynamics of their classroom interaction with students and ALTs. Given that this study of FLA in JTEs was conducted just months before the implementation of the new Course of Study, we intend to carry out further research in order to maintain a focus on teachers' experiences of FLA during the implementation of the new curriculum.

Notes

1. Even though MEXT does not actually use the exact term *Communicative Language Teaching* (CLT) in its official policies, we can assume that the policies of MEXT (including English as the medium of instruction approach) are developed from a CLT approach.
2. Lebra (1971, 1983) acknowledged the pervasiveness of shame in Japanese culture and elaborated on the characteristics of *haji* as a status-contingent concept, commenting that one of the most shame-eliciting stimuli was related to occupational status.
3. It is also interesting to mention that some participants reported FLA when their colleague(s) observed their class. This presence of other teachers is not discussed in this paper because such occasions are limited to teacher training (excluding team-teaching) rather than teacher practice. Also, this kind of anxiety is outside the scope of FLA study because such anxiety may affect teachers of any subject.

Hiroshi Suzuki is an Associate Lecturer in Japanese Studies, Department of International Studies, Macquarie University. He has an MA in translating and interpreting with an MA in applied linguistics (TESOL). His research interests include language teacher cognition, teacher education, and foreign language anxiety.

Peter Roger is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Linguistics at Macquarie University. He holds a PhD from the University of Sydney, and his research interests include individual differences in second language acquisition and the role of linguistic and cultural differences in healthcare communication.

References

Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe and do. *Language Teaching, 36*, 81-109. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0261444803001903

Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education: Research and practice.* London: Continuum.

Butler, Y. G., & Iino, M. (2005). Current Japanese reforms in English language education: The 2003 "Action Plan." *Language Policy, 4*, 25-45.

Golombek, P. R. (1998). A study of language teachers' personal practical knowledge, *TESOL Quarterly, 32*, 447-464. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3588117.

Gorsuch, G. J. (2000). EFL educational policies and educational cultures: Influences on teachers' approval of communicative activities. *TESOL Quarterly, 34*, 675-710. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3587781.

Gregersen, T., & Horwitz, E. K. (2002). Language learning and perfectionism: Anxious and non-anxious language learners' reactions to their own oral performance. *The Modern Language Journal*, *86*, 562-570. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1540-4781.00161

Gregersen, T. S. (2003). To err is human: A reminder to teachers of language-anxious students. *Foreign Language Annals*, *36*, 25-32. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2003.tb01929.x

Horwitz, E. K. (1996). Even teachers get the blues: Recognizing and alleviating language teachers' feelings of foreign language anxiety. *Foreign Language Annals*, *29*, 362-372. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1996.tb01248.x

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, *70*, 125-132.

Kikuchi, K. (2006). Revisiting English entrance examinations at Japanese universities after a decade. *JALT Journal*, *28*, 77-96.

Kikuchi, K., & Browne, C. (2009). English educational policy for high schools in Japan: Ideals vs. reality. *RELC Journal, 40*, 172-191. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0033688209105865

Lebra, T. S. (1971). The social mechanism of guilt and shame: The Japanese case. *Anthropological Quarterly*, *44*, 241-255.

Lebra, T. S. (1983). Shame and guilt: A psycho cultural view of the Japanese self. *Ethos*, *11*, 192-209. http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/eth.1983.11.3.02a00070

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1989). Anxiety and second-language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification. *Language Learning, 39*, 251-275. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1989.tb00423.x

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1994). The subtle effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language. *Language Learning*, *44*, 283-305. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1994.tb01103.x

Mainichi Shimbun. (2014, February 15). New English language tests developed for university entrance examinations in Japan. Retrieved from http://nihongodaisuki.com/whatsnew/new-english-language-tests-developed-university-entrance-examinations-japan/

MEXT. (1989). *Kōtō gakkō gakushū shidō yōryō* [Course of Study for high schools]. Tokyo: Monbusho.

MEXT. (1999). *Kōtō gakkō gakushū shidō yōryō* [Course of Study for high schools]. Tokyo: MEXT.

MEXT. (2006). *Eigo kyōiku kaizen jisshi jyōkyō chōsa kekka* [Results of the survey on the implementation of reform in English education]. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kokusai/gaikokugo/1261353.htm

MEXT. (2009). *Kōtō gakkō gakushū shidō yōryō* [Course of Study for high schools]. Tokyo: MEXT.

MEXT. (2010). *Kōtō gakkō gakusyū shidō yōryō kaisetsu gaikokugo hen eigo hen* [Course of Study guideline for foreign languages and English]. Tokyo: MEXT.

MEXT. (2012). *Daigaku kaikaku jikkō puran ni tsuite* [About the action plan for university reform]. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/houdou/24/06/1321798.htm

Nakai, H. (2010). An inquiry into teaching English in English at senior high schools. *Journal of Osaka Jogakuin University*, *7*, 33-53.

Nishino, T. (2008). Japanese secondary school teachers' beliefs and practices regarding communicative language teaching: An exploratory survey. *JALT Journal*, *30*, 27-50.

Nishino, T. (2011). Japanese high school teachers' beliefs and practices regarding communicative language teaching. *JALT Journal*, *33*, 131-155.

Nishino, T. (2012). Modeling teacher beliefs and practices in context: A multimethods approach. *The Modern Language Journal, 96*, 380-399. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2012.01364.x

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Bailey, P., & Daley, C. E. (1999). Factors associated with foreign language anxiety. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 20*, 217-239.

Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research*, *62*, 307-332. http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/00346543062003307

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Sato, K., & Kleinsasser, R. C. (2004). Beliefs, practices, and interactions of teachers in a Japanese high school English department. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 20*, 797-816. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2004.09.004

Tanabe, N. (2011). High school teachers' impressions about their use of English in classes: A questionnaire survey after the announcement of the new Course of Study. *JACET Chūgoku-Shikoku Chapter Research Bulletin*, *8*, 27-39.

Tanaka, T. (2009). Communicative language teaching and its cultural appropriateness in Japan. *Doshisha Studies in English*, *84*, 107-123.

Tran, T. T. T., Baldauf, R. B., & Moni, K. (2013). Foreign language anxiety: Understanding its status and insiders' awareness and attitudes. *TESOL Quarterly, 47*, 216-243. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/tesq.85

Appendix A

Interview Questions

Part 1

A. Background information

    1. How long have you been teaching English?

    2. What kind of classes are you teaching this year?

    3. Have you ever studied (or lived) abroad?

       If yes, please give me the details.

    4. Do you have the chance to use English outside of the classroom?

       If yes, please give me the details.

B. Teaching practice and experience of FLA in the current teaching context

    1. To what extent do you conduct your class in English?

    2. When do you speak English in class?

    3. Do you feel anxiety when you use English in class?

    If yes . . .

      (1) When do you feel anxiety in class?

      (2) What do you think causes the anxiety?

      (3) Which part of your English skills do you worry about?

      (4) How do you deal with feelings of anxiety?

    If no…

      (1) Why do you think you don't feel anxiety when using English in class?

Part 2. Perception of the new Course of Study and expected FLA under the new curriculum innovations

    1. The new Course of Study states that classes, in principle, should be conducted in English. What do you think about that?

2. When you have to conduct the class all in English next year, how do you think you will feel about that?

3. This textbook is one of the textbooks that will be used under the new curriculum . . .
    (1) How do you think you might teach 1st-year students using this textbook?
    (2) When do you think you may feel anxiety?
    (3) How would you deal with feelings of anxiety?

Appendix B

Questions in Written Questionnaires

Part 1

Section 1

Q1.   How long have you been teaching English?

Q2.   What kind of classes are you teaching this year?

Q3.   Have you ever studied (or lived) abroad?

Q4.   Could you share the details of your experience?

Q5.   Have your experiences of studying (living) abroad affected your current teaching beliefs and/or practice?

Q6.   How have your experiences of studying (living) abroad affected your current teaching beliefs and/or practice?

Q7.   Have your experiences of not studying (living) abroad affected your current teaching beliefs and/or practice?

Q8.   How have your experiences of not studying (living) abroad affected your current teaching beliefs and/or practice?

Q9.   Do you have the chance to use English outside of the classroom (including a chat with an ALT in the staff room)?

Q10. Could you elaborate on the kinds of situations where you would use English?

Q11. How many minutes or hours on average do you speak English in total per week?

Section 2

Q1.   To what extent do you conduct your class in English?

Q2.   When do you speak English in class?

Q3.   Do you feel anxiety when you use English in class?

Q4. When do you feel anxiety in class?

Q5. What do you think causes the anxiety?

Q6. How do you deal with feelings of anxiety?

Q7. Why do you think you don't feel anxiety when using English in class?

Q8. Have you had the chance to team-teach with someone who is a native speaker of English?

Q9. Could you share the details of your experience of team-teaching?

Q10. Do you feel anxiety when you team-teach with someone who is a native speaker of English?

Q11. When do you feel anxiety in team-teaching?

Q12. What do you think causes the anxiety?

Q13. How do you deal with feelings of anxiety?

Q14. If there is any other specific situation in class that causes foreign language anxiety, please write it down.

Part 2

Q1. The new Course of Study Guidelines state that classes, in principle, should be conducted in English. What do you think about that?

Q2. When you have to conduct your classes entirely in English next year, how do you think you will feel about that?

Q3. Attached is an excerpt from one of the textbook series (*Crown English Communication I*) that will be used under the new curriculum. How do you think you might teach 1st-year students using this material?

Q4. Do you think you may feel anxiety in the course of teaching this material in English?

Q5. When do you think you may feel anxiety?

Q6. Why do you think you may feel anxiety?

Q7. How would you deal with feelings of anxiety?

Q8. Why do you think you may not feel anxiety?