The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly

June   2005

Volume   7   Issue 2.

Editors: Robertson, P., Dash, P., Jung, J.

Contents:

A Tale of Two Mainland Chinese English Learners

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Bio:

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Abstract:

This paper reports a biographic enquiry of two tertiary English learners from mainland China and attempts to capture the developmental processes of their language learning approaches. Through sharing their past language learning experiences, two Chinese learners verbalized their struggles in language learning and revealed the deep impact that their learning settings had on their perceptions of self and language learning. Their adopted learning approaches, as revealed in their biographical accounts, seem to be extremely exam-oriented and are dependent on the learners' self-will and effort as well as teachers' support and attention. Both learners' accounts suggest that their language learning approaches are influenced by the contextual discourses about learning English,

stressful social processes and a sense of threatened self-identity as English major graduates in a highly competitive educational context.

Key words: Language learning approaches, The Chinese learner, Research protocols

I. Introduction

Studies of Chinese learners' learning approaches have produced contradictory findings. Some(e.g. Ballard & Clanchy, 1997, cited in Biggs, 1998) have found Chinese learners 'passive', dependent on teachers, or 'reticent', or 'unwilling to take much responsibility for their own learning', while others(Cheng, 2000 & 2002; Stephens, 1997) have argued that Chinese learners can be active and full of initiatives in learning. In the debate over Chinese language learners' learning approaches, many researchers (e.g. Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Hu, 2002; Wen & Clement, 2003) have used Chinese traditional cultural values as an important resource to support their arguments, findings, and interpretations. Central to this cultural debate on Chinese learners, as other researchers (e.g. Kubota, 1999; Kumaradivelu, 2003) have cautioned, is the problem that concepts, such as 'Chinese learners' or 'Chinese cultural values', often evoke notions of monolithic ethnic groups and ethnical cultural values and tend to suppress the reality of existence of many different sub-groups of individual learners and sets of divergent sub-values. In fact, most of the established research (e.g. Gu & Hu, 2002) on Chinese learners involves learners broadly categorized as 'Chinese' at different localities including North America, Europe, Southeast Asia as well as mainland China. Among the limited studies undertaken in mainland China, research efforts seem to have concentrated on language learners from high-profile cities or universities (e.g. Cheng, 2002; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Gan et al, 2004; Gao et al, 2002; Gu, 2003; Gu & Johnson, 1996) while there are huge inter- and intra-regional differences in teaching and learning English experienced everyday by different learners (Hu, 2003; Lam, 2003). As an alternative, some researchers (Holliday, 1996; Kumaradivelu, 2003; Littlewood, 1999) have recently advanced a non-cultural approach or 'small culture' approach to understand learners' language learning approaches, in which researchers take a step back from the position of national/ethnic culture to focus on processes and interactions in small contexts. Along similar lines,

Benson and Voller (1997, p.12) recommend more rigorous research on 'the content of learning and the relationship between students, teachers, and institutions', which helps to reveal the developmental process of learners' language learning approaches, especially their autonomous learning approaches.

In this paper, I intend to use two mainland Chinese English learners' (Ling and Feng, pseudonyms) learning experiences to illustrate how particular learning contexts and social processes pushed them to adopt highly examined-oriented learning approaches and be dependent on teachers in an extremely competitive learning process. I chose the learners out of a larger and undergoing learners' biographical enquiry for reporting because I found them an unusual pair of learners. Both learners went to secondary vocational schools and were granted opportunities to pursue tertiary vocational opportunities by the recent educational reform in mainland China (Shen & Li, 2004). They were, apparently close friends, always appeared together in and outside of classrooms, but both complained about isolation in learning yet neither of them was willing to form an alliance with each other. Moreover, Ling was a high-profile learner with glittering academic record, but Feng was an under-achieving one with little academic achievement. In the following sections, I will firstly describe the study and the participants before moving on to present two learning biographies based on the learners' own narratives. Then I will highlight important themes and issues from the biographies for analysis. Finally, I will close the report with some reflections on how the two Chinese learners' stories are able to inform teachers and researchers interested in English learners from mainland China.

II The Study

The enquiry concerning two Chinese learners, Ling and Feng, started with a broad research question: How can learners' experiential learning accounts inform us about the developmental process of their language learning approaches across various educational settings in mainland China?

1. Research Participants and Setting

Ling and Feng were two third-year students from the English Language Department at a tertiary vocational college, doing a three-year diploma program in Business English. The tertiary vocational college is ranked lowest in China's hierarchy of tertiary institutions. Similar such Colleges admit graduates from secondary technical schools or regular high schools, who would never become tertiary students without the recent expansion of China's higher education (Shen & Li, 2004). Characteristic of such type of colleges, there are more students coming from rural and low-income families, where they receive less educational and financial resources to support their learning, have fewer further educational opportunities and bleaker employment prospects than their counterparts in urban centers or high-profile universities (Hu, 2004; Shen & Li, 2004). However, they probably represent the majority of English learners in mainland Chinese schools.

2. Data-Collection

I used interviews to collect the informants' English language learning history since many researchers have found interviews particularly helpful to capture learners' voices and enhance our understanding of their learning reality (Benson, *forthcoming*; Block, 1998; Gao et al, 2002). There were two rounds of interview: the first interview, lasting about 45 minutes, was loosely semi-structured (refer to appendix) and engaged the learners in sharing their English learning past with me. The second interviews lasted about 20-25 minutes and were about specific issues that I felt interested in after initial readings of the transcript of the first interviews. Both rounds of interview were in Chinese and recorded on tapes for later verbatim transcription and analysis.

3. Data-Analysis

I followed the basic operations in a grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to analyze the data: asking questions and making comparisons. Essential to the process of analyzing data are the questions guiding my investigation. In order to undertake the analysis procedures, I was particularly informed by Layder's (1993) research resource map. I examined learners' statements concerning learners themselves and the situated activity (English learning) at institutional settings in the macro social context. The statements related to 'social settings' were further divided into those about

peer-to-peer, student-to-teacher, and student-to-school relationships, as recommended by Benson and Voller (1997) and Oxford (2001). I repeatedly compared answers to these guiding questions and clustered them according to different educational settings they had been through: junior middle schools (including any early English language learning activities), senior middle schools and the college. These steps helped me to establish answers to the central research questions:

1. What are particularly significant features of two learners' language learning approaches?

2. What has influenced the learners' English learning approaches in particular settings?

III Learning Biographies

Before I describe what the students' learning stories can inform us of in relation to the research questions, I shall present their learning biographies to pave the ground for analyzing their learning experiences.

1. Ling's Learning Story

1.1 In the Beginning

Ling grew up in a small town and was sent to a private English tutor in her last year at primary school by her mother. She did not particularly like English in the beginning. However, after she started attending English classes at junior middle school, she found that she had advantages over other students in learning English.

> I was able to answer questions asked by English teacher at middle school because I had learnt them all before. My quick answers left a deep impression on my English teacher. From then on, she paid a lot of attention to me and always praised my performance. Therefore, I felt that I could do well in English.
>
> Teachers' attention and praises were crucial to her because they kept motivating her in learning English.
>
> The more praise I got from my teachers, the more interested I became in learning English. Without their attention and praise, I would not do well in learning English.

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In her final year at middle school, she had a new English teacher. He required his students to read loudly the words in a vocabulary list from A to Z every morning but he forgot on which section of the list his students had finished reading in the previous reading sessions. Ling and her classmates were alarmed by the fact that they kept repeating themselves everyday while the school-leaving exam was around the corner. So they decided to rebel against the teacher's instructions and read the vocabulary list in their own way. This particular incident marked the beginning of her effort to manage her own English learning, as she recalled:

> I started learning English in my own way gradually although I was not totally aware of it. […] I just knew that it was boring to listen to the teacher and I liked to read what I was interested in. In the end, I borrowed grammar exercise books myself and worked on mock tests.

1.2 At Secondary Technical School

At secondary technical school, she met a teacher who had graduated from a prestigious university in Beijing and spoke English with a 'perfect' accent. In the first semester, she and her classmates did not learn anything except how to pronounce twenty-six English alphabetical letters. The teacher told her that she could learn other things easily if she could pronounce the letters accurately. The teacher also spent a lot of time correcting students' pronunciation. Ling apparently appreciated highly what the teacher had taught her.

> The way she taught us English pronunciation will benefit me for the whole life. Upon my entrance to the school, she taught us now to study on our own. I still feel highly indebted to her and grateful for having a teacher like her.

She did seem to have learnt a lot from the teacher, particularly about how to learn English. We may notice that she took a similar approach to improve her grammar. After a semester's learning (which was all about pronunciation), I felt that I forgot all the grammar and knew nothing about grammar. I then discovered a book called 'The Ultimate Grammar (for the Beginners)' and read it from the first page

to the last page. I felt that I improved my grammatical knowledge by doing so. Later, I even went to buy the same grammar book for intermediate learners.

But why did she have such persistence for learning English in such an apparently stressful way? It was partly related to the fact that she had close access to the teacher as a student leader, which gave her a sense of responsibility for learning more English than others.

> I was then the liaison student between the teacher and the whole class. If the teacher asked a question and nobody was able to answer it, including me, I would be surely reprimanded by her. I had to learn more because my teacher and classmates expected me to do so. […] It was stressful. I do not want to say that I liked this kind of life. But there was no better choice, I guess.

1.3 At College

She chose to take tertiary education in Business English because her mother argued that China's inevitable entry to the World Trade Organization would bring more English-related jobs. After entering the college, she found that she had more time for self-study and teachers were less involved in students' language learning. She felt quite lost in the beginning but she quickly began to value the independence.

> The society after my graduation is a big classroom, where I will have many things to learn. If I follow my teachers' instructions to walk every step, or I only do what my teachers tell me to do, I will be in an awkward situation in the future. After all, I have to rely on myself in the future.

She welcomed opportunities to discuss with her classmates about problems in learning but she could have such conversations with very few people. The class in the college, unlike classes in secondary schools, was no longer a closely bound collective group any more.

> Although we belong to the same class, without close relationship, it is unlikely for me to discuss study matters with my classmates. […] Besides, we all lived in different dormitories. […] Even in the same dormitory, we tend to split up in

smaller groups of twos or threes. […] There was little communication among the classmates. Therefore, I do not fully understand what are on other people's minds.

The relationship between her and her fellow students became worse on occasions, such as winning a scholarship competition or student leaders' election. She talked about the consequences of competition among the classmates for scholarship:

> Competition caused fissures in our relationship. […] If someone got the first scholarship and others got none, the way that they look at you will be different. I did not know and did not try to know what they thought about me.

As a result, she felt a bit lonesome and wanted to be understood. In order to solve these problems, she was active in seeking the teachers' advice and suggestions and would even go to consult psychiatrists in the college, which was quite rare among students. After passing the College English Test (CET) Band 6, one of the key national English tests, she lost a prime motivating learning target and wondered what to do next. Meanwhile, she had been asking herself many times how she could prove that she had better English as an English major graduate.

> I have passed the CET-6 and now I felt like a ship without sailing directions. I feel lost in learning. […] I have been always asking myself: "how much English have I learnt? Is it enough for me to have CET-4 and -6 scores?" For graduates in accounting majors, they specialize in accounting at least. They also had CET-4 results. But what and how well have we, English major graduates, specialized in? I cannot answer this question.

Then she decided to take another test to improve her oral competency. But she could not find someone who shared similar learning objectives to work with her on enhancing communicative competence in English.

> It is a problem in the learning environment. Some students are motivated in learning English but not all of us are. Maybe some students feel lonely in learning, too. Because we do not have much communication, it is difficult for us to form learning collaboration.

Therefore, she believed that the college should take measures to promote English learning on the campus, including establishing a campus English radio, requiring all the students and staff from the English Department to speak English, organizing English debates or speech contests, and setting up English learning places like self-access centers.

At the same time, she had developed a highly quantitative learning approach (Benson & Lor, 1999). When asked on what occasions she felt that she had improved in learning English, her initial responses were directly related to vocabulary and phrases.

> As an obvious example, I tried to memorize a word before and the word appeared in a book or my teachers' lectures. I had some knowledge about that word but its re-appearance deepened my understanding of this word. I feel that I have learnt something. It is the same with a phrase. […] I could not think of other scenarios at the moment.

2. Feng's Learning Story

2.1 In the Beginning

Growing up in countryside, Feng described her start in learning English at a countryside middle school:

> Very few students in my class were interested in learning English because my school was in the countryside. But at that time, I cannot say that I liked English, I just felt so much interested in learning English. I did not work very hard at all. Only for exams, I worked a little bit. Then I always got decent scores.

Then one of her middle school English teachers took an interest in her and believed that she had potential for further improvement. He gave her special tuition to improve her learning methods, gave her extra exercises to work on, and recommended good test-preparation books to her. Somehow Feng disappointed the teacher by choosing not to respond to his 'favor' with extra learning efforts.

But I did not fully understand why I had to do these. Maybe I was not fully motivated to learn English or I was too young to (make decisions). I thought my English was OK, if not excellent. […] I did not keep pursuing it. […] Had I persisted in doing more exercises, my English would not have been that terrible.

As a result, she soon found that she slowly fell behind others in later years at the middle school. The second teacher she met at the same school had a boring classroom teaching style. Facing the school-leaving exam, he kept giving endless exam exercises to his students.

It was all about exams. He didn't teach what we were interested in. […] He tried to cram into your head. Exercises, exercises. And exercises were all about grammar. […] We felt so bored with his teaching. […] It was not unusual for some boys to get single-digit-grades in exams.

2.2 At Secondary Technical School

Entering secondary technical school, she felt a strong urge to take a rest after going through a year of intense exam preparation activities. The school had a relaxing atmosphere and teachers there did not interfere with students' learning. English teachers at the school often had teaching duties in other schools and had to leave right after they finished teaching.

They (teachers) might routinely ask whether we had any questions. Sometimes, they did not even bother to ask. We had few opportunities to talk to them. […] I was then only seventeen or eighteen and did not have strong self-control. […] I felt that I did not have to work hard. […] My teachers did not make us work hard as well.

She took the opportunity to have some fun until she realized that she would graduate with limited English skills from the technical school.

After two years, […] I did not learn anything. […] I did not think that I had acquired any professional skills. At that time, I was also an English major student

at the technical school. My English was so bad that I could not possibly find any work. So I had to do further education.

So she decided to take National College Entrance Test like many others in the same school. The school organized a special class and assigned a responsible teacher for them. The teacher tried her best to boost their morale for test-preparation. In the end, she did manage to pass the exam and went to the college.

> The teacher worked very hard so we might go to university. […] She was afraid that we were not motivated enough so she organized class meetings everyday. […] Because she had a tight control of our learning, I started realizing that I had to work hard, too. […] She also told us that we could have choices on matters such as where we could go for further education, only after we had good scores in the coming exam.

2.3 At College

At college, she had more time to study by herself and remained a low-profile learner. She appreciated that some pedagogic activities, such as classroom drama performance, helped to increase students' courage in speaking English in public. However, on many occasions, she experienced more failures than successes and became even less willing to speak English.

> After all, we all have some sense of pride in ourselves. […] I felt so nervous that I had to stutter. Later on, I lost my confidence in speaking in English. […] I can remain silent in class. It is my right to do so.

The peer relationship had been often quite stressful with little communication between her and her classmates before and after she came to the college. The teamwork projects promoted by some teachers might encourage them to exchange ideas among team members but it was often difficult for her and her classmates to accomplish anything because different team members might have different ideas in dealing with tasks or have different interests at stake. Consequently, Feng normally preferred tasks with clearly specified instructions from teachers.

We are all concerned with our own interest. If it does not matter to our own interest, we would not be motivated to do anything. […] It is better for teachers to assign roles to us clearly in the project or give us individual work.

Meanwhile, she had developed a strong desire for success. She visualized how she would feel a sense of achievement in learning:

Sometimes, when answering teachers' questions, […] I do not have to translate from Chinese into English. […] I can just stand up and answer their questions. […] I consider this as progress in my learning.

However, her visualized success seldom happened. Meanwhile, she developed a quite extreme conceptualization of learning achievement.

When we (and my classmates) are talking about something and I find that I know something that they do not know, I feel that I have learnt something.

She also thought that it was 'a great loss' to her if she could not prove she had better English than other degree or diploma graduates. That is why she regarded it 'a political necessity' for her to pass the CET-6 test after passing the CET- 4 test, one of the graduation requirements at the college.

She firmly believed that she was responsible for failures in her language learning but she trusted that she had the ability to learn English and optimize learning resources available at learning sites.

I do not think that I am particularly bad in learning or have lesser capacity for learning English than others. It is impossible! I just didn't work hard enough. […] I cannot blame atmosphere, facilities or environment. I did not try myself.

Although she assumed responsibilities for her own learning failures, she complained loudly that she had received little attention and support from her teachers in the past. She thought that she had been invisible to them most of the time.

It was always like this. […] You know, schools and teachers always pay much attention to good students. They always neglect some students, particularly those

in the middle, like me. If you are still able to catch with others and do not pose serious problems, you will be neglected.

In her perception, a teacher still had important roles in students' language learning. In addition to promoting independent learning skills among learners,

A teacher should encourage us to get used, for example, to an opened teaching style. They should help us to get used to it gradually.

A teacher should try to create strong desires for learning among learners.

Meanwhile, she hoped that the college could help to make it a more legitimate thing to speak English on the campus since her fellow students would normally look at her differently if she spoke English. Because it was not easy for her to find a collaborative learning partner, she chose to prepare for the English test alone.

IV Analysis and Discussion

To some extent, the language learning experiences of Ling and Feng epitomize many Chinese English learners' struggles with learning English in similar educational settings. Based on their accounts, their adopted learning approaches seem to be highly exam-oriented and contingent on individual learners' will and effort. At the same time, they voiced their expectations of teachers' participation in their learning process. Further analysis indicates that their seemingly contradictory inclinations to be self-reliant and teacher-dependent appear to be complicated by the contextual discourses about learning English, a tense peer relationship and threatened identities as English major graduates from a low-ranking institution.

1. Characteristics of Two Learners' Language Learning Approaches

Exam-orientedness is the most salient feature of two learners' learning approaches. Exams were initially imposed by the educational system onto them early in their educational experiences. The learners attached increasing importance to exams as they became fully aware that exams provided a means of competition for them to move upward in the educational hierarchy to gain better access to higher positions in the social hierarchy. Two learners seemed to have different attitudes towards examination in the

beginning of their English learning careers. While Ling appeared to pursue better results more actively to secure honors and teachers' support in learning, Feng was not particularly motivated to achieve better grades in English exams even though an English teacher at middle school offered her special assistance. After they came to the college, both of them seemed to be more than willing to use exams as 'authoritative' tools to define their achieved language proficiency and 'objective' goals to upgrade their linguistic knowledge (Shohamy, 2000). As a result, Lings' language learning focused on accumulation of discrete linguistic knowledge, such as vocabulary and phrases, while Feng wished to take delight at learning that she had outsmarted her classmates although she rarely succeeded.

One of the consequences of such an exam-oriented learning approach is that learners conceive learning as cognitive activities involving memorization and reproduction of discrete knowledge. For them, learning has to be sustained and enhanced at all cost and contingent on individual learners' self-will and efforts. For Ling, her personal experiences had proven it as a truth that one could achieve good learning (exam) results if one was committed to this end. For Feng, in contrast to successful learners within reach like Ling, she felt that she was a proven case of failure due to the fact that she put too little effort into conscientious learning. Both learners seemed to be convinced that a strong will and intensive effort were crucial to learning (exam) results. However, if we fully subscribe to their conviction, we would have a blurred understanding of the reality. In fact, they have revealed, by telling their learning stories, that many other factors, such as unequal access to learning resources and different learning settings, might have also affected their learning and learning (exam) achievements.

Furthermore, they both voiced explicitly dependence on teachers, although this did not seem to negate the importance of learners' self-will and efforts as well as their growing sense of responsibility for their own learning. We often have an impression that good and autonomous learners require little involvement from teachers in their language learning. However, in fact, Ling, the apparently more autonomous learner, solicited more help and received more attention from teachers than Feng ever did. Meanwhile, neither learner expressed a desire to be spoon-fed by teachers. What they wanted teachers to do was something related to the emotional and affective aspects of language learning or

learning in general, which included sharing their learning problems, offering guidance in learning, fostering the capacity for autonomous learning, and enhancing motivation for learning. If necessary, they also wanted teachers to be disciplinary forces coercing them into making intense learning efforts for high-stake exams.

2. *Language Learning Approaches Under Constraints*

The learners' biographical accounts provide a unique opportunity for us to understand reasons why two learners adopted such learning approaches, the social context in which their English learning took place, the socialization processes that affected their language learning paths as well as how they perceived themselves as English learners at particular learning sites. Each of these aspects-the social context, socialization processes, and the learners' identity development will be explored in turn in the following sections.

2.1 Social Context

The learners' discourses about learning English language were often linked to future employment, reflecting popular conceptualizations of education as a way to social and economic mobility, and English proficiency as a gatekeeper controlling access to material and social capital (Cheng, 1996, cited in Cheah, 1998; Pennycook, 1994; Yang, 2002; Zhao & Campbell, 1995). In the learners' learning context, English proficiency was often equal to high-stake English exam scores. Both learners knew that they needed better exam grades or more certificates in English to secure further educational or job opportunities. Therefore, they could only choose ways of learning English from those helping to achieve successful exam results. The social context did not provide other alternatives, at least in the learners' perceptions.

2.2 Socialization (Peer) Process

The second issue emerging from their learning experiences is the stressful peer relationships, fragmentary social fabric, and feelings of alienation among language learners, which often undermined their effort to organize effective language learning collaboration. Unfortunately, in many cases (e.g. Ross, 1993; Turner & Acker, 2002), 'harmony' may not be the best word to describe social processes among Chinese learners. In the last two decades, China's educational system has institutionalized tertiary students' competition for better exam grades and performance-based academic awards under the

name of ' promoting better learning' while Chinese students' pre-tertiary learning has traditionally been fiercely competitive (Turner & Acker, 2002; Yang, 2002). As an aftermath of such a competitive and exam-oriented learning process, the relationship among Chinese students can be stressful and inhibitive against learners' learning collaboration and cooperation. In both learners' accounts, it becomes quite difficult for them to have effective learning cooperation/collaboration without teachers' intervention. As a result, both Ling and Feng expected institutions and teachers to accomplish what they had failed to achieve as individual learners, for instance, creating a better learning environment, or promoting English learning on the campus and so on.

2.3 Identity Crisis

The third issue arising from their stories is that the two learners seemed to have an identity crisis. Being English major graduates from a tertiary vocational institution, both learners feared that their identity as English major learners was compromised by major and non-major graduates from other institutions of higher ranking. In the first place, they were in disadvantageous positions in comparison with other university graduates upon their graduation because of their achieved academic level and institutional reputation (Shen & Li, 2004, p.75). Secondly, there has been a national craze for learning English. For instance, Gu (2003) found his research participants spent much more time on learning English than any other subjects even though they were not English major students. The learners were aware that many university or college graduates from other academic fields had an advantage over English major graduates due to their professional expertise in their specialized fields in addition to well-documented English language competency in terms of standard test scores. Consequently, the learners felt that they were pushed to take more and more exams to prove that they were better English achievers.

V. Conclusion

The paper describes two Chinese learners' language learning experiences, revealing the deep impact that their learning context and sites had on their conceptualization of language learning and self. Their adopted learning approaches, as revealed in their biographical accounts, seem to be extremely exam-oriented and dependent on learners' self-will and effort as well as teachers' support and attention.

Their stories demonstrate a particular variety of language learning experiences for Chinese learners. Together with those told about mainland Chinese English learners by other researchers (e.g. Gu, 2003; He, 2003; Lam, 2003), their stories suggest that there is a range of social processes and material conditions shaping Chinese English learners' English learning at different learning sites. More than often, we, as language teachers or researchers, cannot solve (significant/major) social issues for our learners. However, perhaps through listening to learners' stories, we may help to alleviate these learners' anxiety and frustrations, reduce the intensity of competition, and tactfully reorient them towards successful collaborative/cooperative learning activities. Furthermore, their stories also give us opportunities to reflect on how much effort we have to invest into developing learners to become more autonomous and whether in fact we can afford to make such investment in particular learning contexts such as the institution reported in this study.

Notes About Transcription: *[…] stands for 'omitted material'.*

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Appendix: Interview Schedule

1. Can you share with me your past English learning experiences?
2. When did you start learning English?
3. How did you like English at that time?
4. How did you learn English at junior(senior)middle school?
5. How about life at junior (senior) middle school?
6. What was an English lesson at junior (senior) middle school like?
7. Could you share with me your memories of your English teachers?
8. Any other memories of significant people or events related to your English-learning at junior (senior) school?
9. How are you learning English at college?
10. Any changes in your life and study at college in comparison with the past?
11. What was an English lesson at the college like?
12. Any interesting events or people at college you wish to talk about?

Frequency Effects on Japanese EFL Learners' Perception of

Morphologically Complex Words

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1. Introduction
1.1 Studies on Word Structure in Formal Linguistic Theory

Looking back over the history of the theory of generative linguistics, we notice that the structure of the lexicon or the lexical component of the grammar, which was once considered mere storage filled with unpredictable information, has drawn a number of researchers' attention since early 1970s. From the late 1970s through the mid-1980s, a theory called Lexical Morphology (Siegel, 1974; Kiparsky 1982; Mohanan 1986, among others) took shape and played an undeniably important role in explicating a number of intricate phenomena related to the interface between phonology and morphology. The theory seemed successful in explaining the following observations. First, there are two types of suffixes in English with respect to their phonological properties: Class I suffixes and Class II suffixes. Class I suffixes may affect word stress assignment while Class II suffixes show no such effect. Second, suffixation is subject to a certain ordering relation. Put simply, a Class I suffix is always attached to the stem before any Class II suffixation takes place. To handle these observations, the theory was so constructed as to have a multi-layered structure which allows Class I suffixation to take place at the first layer (Level 1) and Class II suffixation at the second layer (Level 2), thereby ruling out such forms as *neighborlity*. This ill-formed word offers a contrast to its well-formed counterpart *neighborliness* in that *-ly*, a Class II suffix, can precede another Class II suffix *-ness* for the attested form *neighborliness*, while for the unattested form

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neighborlity, *-ity* is no longer available at Level 2 due to its Class I status. The internal structures of *neighborliness* and *neighborlity* are represented in (1) and their licit and illicit derivational processes are illustrated in (2).

(1)   [[[neighbor] $_N$ly] $_A$ness] $_N$
           *[[[neighbor] $_N$ly] $_A$ity] $_N$

(2)   Underlying Representation   /neighbor/   /neighbor/

Level 1:   *-ity*   NA   NA

Level 2:   1st cycle   *-ly*   [neighbor-ly]   [neighbor-ly]
                 2nd cycle   *-ness*   [[neighbor-ly]-ness]   NA

Output Representation   [neighborliness]   --------

It should be pointed out, however, that the validity of building up a theory of mental lexicon purely on formal grounds does not seem well-justified, given that we consider the nature of word formation and the lexicon in conjunction with issues on the psychological reality of word accessibility/decomposability. For example, in such a framework, we do not seem capable of explaining the following questions: (i) why native speakers of English almost always answer that *perceptiveness* sounds better and *perceptivity* sounds awkward or strange although both of them are possible (Aronoff, 1976: 35); (ii) why they judge the word *pipeful*, for example, to be more complex (i.e., easier to decompose) than the word *bowful* despite the fact that they share the same suffix *-ful*. (Hay, 2000: 280).

1.2 Frequency-Based Theory of Word Structure and Decomposability
        In contrast to formal approaches to word structure in generative theory, we see alternative theories in psycholinguistics seeking to capture the way in which speech streams are perceived, recognized and organized into word forms, by means of lexical frequencies. Regarding how a given word is accessed through one's mental lexicon, there are some important proposals worth reviewing. Cutler (1981) asserts that the acceptability of new words relies crucially on the degree of their phonological transparency. Bybee (2001:28) argues that "high-frequency items grow strong and

therefore are easier to access" and "little-used items will tend to fade in representational strength and grow more difficult to access".   Among others, Hay's (2000) study on word access in derivational morphology seems particularly important for the present study because of her argument for the assumption that the difference in the frequencies of a given suffixed word and its base form has an influence on the distribution, phonological alternations, and productivity of the word.   This type of frequency relation is termed "relative frequency", to which we will turn later.

First, it is helpful to provide a brief description of the theory of lexical decomposability and then summarize the conclusion that Hay (2000) drew from her experiment with L1 subjects.   In the diagram in Figure 1, Hay (2000: 9) presents a schema of the dual-route model of morphological access.

Figure 1: Schema of the dual-route access model
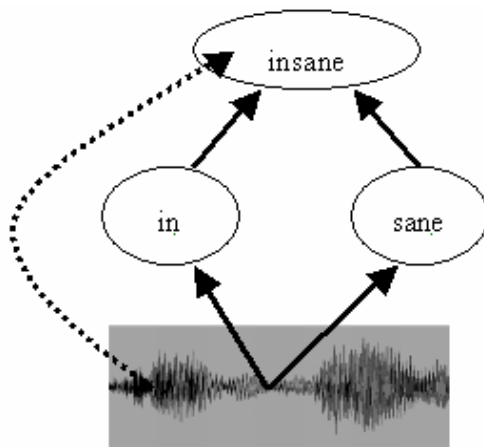
The solid lines above the fast phonological preprocessor indicate the decomposed route, and the broken line indicates the direct access route. Frauenfelder and Schreuder (1991) assume that the parsing route is facilitated by both phonological and semantic transparency. For example, despite the fact that *insane* and *sanity* both contain the base form *sane*, *insane* exhibits a greater degree of transparency both phonologically and semantically than *sanity* does. Hay (2000), taking advantage of information on lexical frequency obtained from the CELEX database,[1] demonstrates that a choice between the two routes for a given complex word relies heavily on the information on the frequency of the word; she also emphasizes that what is crucial for such a choice is not

the surface frequency of the complex word but the relative frequency of the word against that of the base form it contains.

Hay's analysis is based on the responses that 16 Northwestern University undergraduate students made in completing a lexical decomposability task which asked them to indicate which member of the pair they considered more "complex", i.e. easier to break down into parts, for a set of stimuli composed of 64 word pairs (30 fillers included). She states that "[f]orms which were more frequent than the bases they contained were consistently rated less complex than their counterparts, which were less frequent than the bases they contained" (p. 126). Her conclusion is drawn from the fact that for prefixed forms, 65% of the responses judged forms that were less frequent than their bases to be more complex (easier to decompose), and for suffixed forms 66% of the responses made the same judgment.

The present paper is organized as follows. Section 3 presents a brief description of the material we employed, the participants in the experiment, and the procedure of the experiment. Section 4 examines the results of the experiment, starting with an overview of the entire data, followed by discussions on the relevance of vocabulary size to the learners' perception of morphological complexity. Section 5 concludes this exploration and comments on its practical aspect and a remaining issue for future studies.

2. Method

Material: Forty-nine pairs of morphologically complex words were selected from the Longman Defining Vocabulary (LDV), which we considered would provide a range of words familiar and approachable to EFL learners.[2] The selection of these words was intended to make sure that the members of each pair exhibit surface frequencies close to each other but differ in that one member is more frequent than its own base form while the other member shows the opposite type of frequency profile.[3] Table 1 presents a description of the frequency profiles of two out of the 49 pairs: *insurance* and *formal* and *infection* and *determination*.

Table 1: Samples of stimuli

ID #	Derivative	Frequency	Base	Frequency	Type
#10	*Insurance*	5704	*Insure*	342	D > B
	Formal	6111	*Form*	33246	D < B
#28	*Infection*	2636	Infect	106	D > B
	Determinatio n	2667	*Determine*	3852	D < B

The task sheet was completed with a random transposition and sequencing of these 49 word pairs.

Subjects: 96 first- to third-year students at a national university and a prefectural university in Japan.

Procedure: A statement describing instructions for the subjects was prepared. They were asked to read a description of the notion "complex word" first and say which one of the two members of each pair they considered more decomposable.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 An Overview

In Table 2 below, the cells in the column headed by "D>B", on the one hand, show the numbers of responses chosen as derivatives (D) which are of higher frequency than their base words (B) and more decomposable. The cells in the column headed by "D<B", on the other hand, show the responses judging the derivatives as less frequent than their base words as more decomposable.

Table 2: Results (all subjects, N=96)

Pair	D > B	D < B	Pair	D > B	D < B	Pair	D > B	D < B
#1	71	25	#21	64	32	#41	76	20
#2	18	78	#22	71	25	#42	31	65
#3	93	3	#23	56	40	#43	26	70
#4	72	24	#24	22	74	#44	76	20
#5	59	37	#25	61	35	#45	41	55
#6	38	58	#26	52	44	#46	23	73
#7	57	39	#27	61	35	#47	75	21
#8	35	61	#28	76	20	#48	26	70
#9	70	26	#29	44	52	#49	56	40
#10	75	21	#30	75	21	N	49	49
#11	28	68	#31	54	42	Total	2667	2037

#12	68	28	#32	66	30	%	56.70	43.30
#13	28	68	#33	60	36	M	54.43	41.57
#14	89	7	#34	12	84	SD	21.46	21.46
#15	70	26	#35	42	54	*t*-value	2.097*	
#16	75	21	#36	78	18	*p < .05		
#17	70	26	#37	74	22			
#18	40	56	#38	50	46			
#19	19	77	#39	41	55			
#20	22	74	#40	81	15			

The total number of responses judging "D>B" derivatives as more decomposable is 2667 (56.70%) and the number of the responses calling for the opposite type is 2037 (56.70%).   A T-test conducted against this result indicates that the differences between these two categories are statistically significant at the .05 level. This seems to support the hypothesis that the relative frequency between the surface frequency of a suffixed word and that of its base form exerts a certain influence on the learners' acquisition of complex words.

3.2 Relevance of Vocabulary Size

Next, we examine the possibility of some correlation between the vocabulary sizes of learners and the results of their decomposability judgments. Making use of Mochizuki's (1998) vocabulary-size measuring tests at the 1000 through 5000 word-levels, we obtained the results reported in Table 3.

Table 3:   The make up of the upper and lower groups

Voc Size	N	M	SD	*t*-value
Upper	54	4147.59	258.79	11.17**
Lower	42	3388.07	377.13	**p<.01

The participants revealed approximately 3800 words as their mean vocabulary size (N=96, M= 815.302, SD=492.144). This point divides all the subjects into two groups, the upper and the lower. Table 3 shows the make up of these two groups, for which Welch's T-test indicates a difference statistically significant at the .01 level. Then, the data in Table 2 was split into two sets, as shown in Table 4 and Table 5, according to

the distinction in vocabulary size based on the two groups. Table 4 represents the results from the 54 subjects in the upper group, and Table 5 the 42 subjects in the lower group.

Table 4: Results (upper group) (N=54)

Pair	D > B	D < B	Pair	D > B	D < B	Pair	D > B	D < B
#1	41	13	#21	42	12	#41	41	13
#2	8	46	#22	40	14	#42	16	38
#3	51	3	#23	38	16	#43	16	38
#4	38	16	#24	11	43	#44	46	8
#5	33	21	#25	33	21	#45	23	31
#6	23	31	#26	27	27	#46	13	41
#7	33	21	#27	35	19	#47	42	12
#8	19	35	#28	46	8	#48	13	41
#9	38	16	#29	25	29	#49	33	21
#10	42	12	#30	43	11	Total	1492	1154
#11	10	44	#31	28	26	%	56.39	43.61
#12	35	19	#32	37	17	M	30.45	23.55
#13	17	37	#33	32	22	SD	12.67	12.67
#14	52	2	#34	5	49	*t*-value	1.91	n.s.
#15	41	13	#35	27	27			
#16	39	15	#36	41	13			
#17	43	11	#37	40	14			
#18	22	32	#38	26	28			
#19	9	45	#39	22	32			
#20	12	42	#40	45	9			

Table 5: Results (lower group) (N=42)

Pair	D > B	D < B	Pair	D > B	D < B	Pair	D > B	D < B
#1	30	12	#21	22	20	#41	35	7
#2	10	32	#22	31	11	#42	15	27
#3	42	0	#23	18	24	#43	10	32
#4	34	8	#24	11	31	#44	30	12
#5	26	16	#25	28	14	#45	18	24
#6	15	27	#26	25	17	#46	10	32
#7	24	18	#27	26	16	#47	33	9
#8	16	26	#28	30	12	#48	13	29
#9	32	10	#29	19	23	#49	23	19
#10	33	9	#30	32	10	Total	1175	883
#11	18	24	#31	26	16	%	57.09	42.91
#12	33	9	#32	29	13	M	23.98	18.02
#13	11	31	#33	28	14	SD	9.28	9.28

#14	37	5	#34	7	35	*t*-value 2.247*
#15	29	13	#35	15	27	*p* < .05
#16	36	6	#36	37	5	
#17	27	15	#37	34	8	
#18	18	24	#38	24	18	
#19	10	32	#39	19	23	
#20	10	32	#40	36	6	

The numbers of responses favoring the "D>B" type and the "D<B" type are each accounted for by 56.39% and 43.61% of the total of 2546 responses for the upper group and by 57.09% and 42.91% of the total of 2058 responses for the lower group. The "D>B" type outnumbers the "D<B" type for both sets of subjects, but the T-tests we performed against these results did not show a statistically significant difference between the two relative frequency types although it did indicate a statistically significant difference at the p< .5 level.

Finally, we consider the data in Table 6, which summarizes the scores presented in Table 4 and Table 5 for the "D>B" type.

Table 6: Rates in favor of the decomposability of the "D>B"- type words

Pair	Upper	Lower	Pair	Upper	Lower	Pair	Upper	Lower
#1	0.759	0.714	#21	0.778	0.524	#41	0.759	0.833
#2	0.148	0.238	#22	0.741	0.738	#42	0.296	0.357
#3	0.944	1.000	#23	0.704	0.429	#43	0.296	0.238
#4	0.704	0.810	#24	0.204	0.262	#44	0.852	0.714
#5	0.611	0.619	#25	0.611	0.667	#45	0.426	0.429
#6	0.426	0.357	#26	0.500	0.595	#46	0.241	0.238
#7	0.611	0.571	#27	0.648	0.619	#47	0.778	0.786
#8	0.352	0.381	#28	0.852	0.714	#48	0.241	0.310
#9	0.704	0.762	#29	0.463	0.452	#49	0.611	0.548
#10	0.778	0.786	#30	0.796	0.762	N	49	49
#11	0.185	0.429	#31	0.519	0.619	Total	27.63	28.00
#12	0.648	0.786	#32	0.685	0.690	M	0.56	0.57
#13	0.315	0.262	#33	0.593	0.667	SD	0.23	0.22
#14	0.963	0.881	#34	0.093	0.167	*t*-value	-0.550	n.s.
#15	0.759	0.690	#35	0.500	0.357			
#16	0.722	0.857	#36	0.759	0.881			
#17	0.796	0.643	#37	0.741	0.810			
#18	0.407	0.429	#38	0.481	0.571			
#19	0.167	0.238	#39	0.407	0.452			
#20	0.222	0.238	#40	0.833	0.857			

This table presents the rates of the relevant responses divided by their total score for each of the two frequency types. The two groups each exhibited totals of 27.63 and 28.00 and mean scores of 0.56 (SD=0.23) and 0.57 (SD=0.22). We conducted a T-test on these two groups and gained no statistically significant level of difference; therefore, the relevance of vocabulary size to decomposability perception was not confirmed.

4. Conclusion

In this paper we have argued that lexical frequency information is likely to affect the way in which Japanese EFL learners organize morphologically complex words in their mental lexicon. This result has much in common with Hay's (2000) precursory experiment on native speakers of English, leading us to conclude that it is likely that EFL learners perceive morphologically complex words that are less frequent than their bases as single sequences and those of the opposite type as sequences composed of separate substrings.

Next, a practical aspect of the findings of the present study should be pointed out. Selection and presentation of vocabulary items to learners, especially of morphologically complex words, should take into consideration the frequencies of the words in relation to their base words. By this, it is meant that the learning and storage of suffixed words may not always develop in an analytic way based on formal properties. Teachers can benefit from being able to make distinctions between items that can or should be handled as single units and those which are dissoluble into constituent structures, in that they can avoid overloading the learner with an unnecessary range of morphological information.

Finally, we would like to touch on a residual issue yet to be further investigated. It should be recalled that not all the "D>B" words in Table 6 attracted positive responses regarding their decomposability judgment. In fact, we find some which show the reverse tendency in both upper and lower groups: *pressure* (0.148, 0.238), *existence* (0.352, 0.381), *division* (0.315, 0.262), *dependent* (0.167, 0.238), *approval* (0.222, 0.238), *arrangement* (0.204, 0.262), *invitation* (0.093, 0.167), *cheerful* (0.96, 0.357), *admiration* (0.296, 0.238), *amusing* (0.241, 0.238), *infectious* (0.241, 0.31). This state of affairs seems to indicate that we need re-examine these rather unwanted results thoroughly in

order to confirm whether they suggest the existence of some hierarchical relations among the suffixes that may override frequency effects or they can simply be attributed to the source of frequency information that could be tested against Japanese EFL learners.

Notes

1. Abundant information on the CELEX database is available at http://www.ru.nl/celex/ index.html#Info.
2. The Longman Defining Vocabulary is made up of about 2250 words.
3. The frequencies of the derived words and their bases were obtained from a frequency list extracted from the British National Corpus.

Appendix
The list of the complex words from which the stimuli presented to subjects were made

	Type "D>B"	Surface frequency	Base frequency	Type "D<B"	Surface frequency	Base frequency
1	production	14858	10535	personal	15967	24496
2	pressure	11579	10436	recently	11512	14735
3	manager	10976	3925	successful	10464	12823
4	operation	9236	3977	industrial	9852	17168
5	employment	9103	1697	effective	9646	22894
6	failure	7257	3295	powerful	6975	29977
7	protection	6450	4962	possibility	6968	33430
8	existence	6449	5355	possibly	6558	33430
9	famous	6204	1044	difficulty	6169	21465
10	insurance	5704	342	formal	6111	33246
11	relative	5673	2486	reasonable	6096	17699
12	opposite	5462	851	dangerous	5462	5664
13	division	5211	1566	appearance	5262	10738
14	attractive	4978	2504	historical	5066	16535
15	introduction	4959	3394	careful	4788	22729
16	intention	4647	2021	explanation	4585	7436
17	association	3981	1071	criminal	4040	6413
18	comfortable	3790	2948	northern	3932	9672

19	dependent	3713	3441	specialist	3931	19244
20	approval	3640	1030	improvement	3916	6095
21	arrival	3278	2800	friendly	3645	11329
22	electricity	3216	2742	southern	3631	9373
23	exciting	3196	205	establishment	3581	5139
24	arrangement	3178	2082	representative	3458	4519
25	permission	3097	1594	healthy	3382	17585
26	comparison	3076	2141	judgment	3139	5654
27	preparation	3018	2740	helpful	3084	35710
28	infection	2636	106	determination	2669	3852
29	destruction	2240	1914	childhood	2620	23128
30	instruction	2135	335	desirable	2068	5218
31	punishment	2021	456	addition	2010	7205
32	entertainment	1799	641	refusal	1831	2367
33	complaint	1772	1313	influential	1802	10252
34	invitation	1758	1177	attendance	1624	3522
35	explosion	1603	355	servant	1614	4929
36	declaration	1572	914	peaceful	1557	7725
37	loyalty	1550	1245	kingdom	1549	5853
38	probability	1507	1171	tourist	1527	5432
39	disappointment	1433	181	favorable	1450	3256
40	dismissal	1408	802	encouragement	1416	4946
41	advertisement	1074	491	fashionable	1101	4304
42	cheerful	1064	682	foolish	1060	1714
43	admiration	913	745	faithful	925	4553
44	decoration	887	321	harmful	804	2861
45	explosive	770	355	similarity	787	17365
46	amusing	764	219	sticky	785	3999
47	enclosure	556	423	musician	577	13186
48	infectious	452	106	careless	512	22729
49	annoyance	442	227	slippery	423	2252

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Spoken Features of Dialogue Journal Writing

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Abstract:

This paper uses a student-generated sample of written discourse from a dialogue journal writing project as a means of exploring the interface between written and spoken language. The written sample yields marked similarities with spoken language such as unplanned discourse, a clear interlocutory style and vocabulary selection. The paper includes examples of how dialogue journal entries can be mined for classroom use by the EFL teacher to point out successful discourse strategies, vocabulary choices and features of both written and spoken English. Dialogue journal writing is particularly effective for integrating the skills of returnee students into the EFL classroom.

Key Words: journal writing, discourse analysis, returnees

Introduction

Aspects of written and spoken language are often studied as separate domains and much has been written about how the two mediums differ. Written texts may be neatly categorised as planned, organized and transactional while spoken communication is often presented as unplanned, less structured and interactive in nature. However, features of

written language can easily be found in spoken language just as written texts can exhibit aspects of conversation. One obvious example of the latter is the common journal entry, which contains many features of spoken language and can be studied from the perspective of spoken discourse. This paper will consider a student-generated sample of dialogue journal writing, an entry in a journal exchange with the instructor, as a means of exploring the interface between written and spoken language with particular emphasis on how this written sample employs aspects of speaking. By way of summary, the paper will also suggest ways for incorporating dialogue journal writing in the language classroom.

Rationale for journal writing analysis

Halliday (1989) outlines the strong connection between language and its social context. He notes that this dimension "is the one that has been most neglected in discussions of language in education" (p.5). Emphasizing learning as "a social process" (p.5), Halliday's social-semiotic perspective has obvious relevance to studies of interaction of many kinds, including that found in dialogue journal writing. Citing Halliday (1975), Burton and Carroll (2001, p.5) argue that journal writing, as an exchange in social language, "is an aid to making meaning, with language as a reflective tool." They highlight interactive aspects of journals such as their inherent conversational and social nature. Journal writing is thus a worthwhile endeavour in that the ability to express our feelings and share meaning is important to our overall linguistic repertoire. More specifically, Halliday (1989, p.12) outlines three features of the context of situation, which can be applied to an analysis of a text, in our case dialogue journal writing. Questions regarding the 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode' of a discourse serve to contextualize the text sample. Beginning our analysis by addressing the sample as such provides us with a model for framing the journal entry in a proper social context.

Of fundamental consideration in choosing a text for analysis, whether written or spoken, is to first identify its purpose. Halliday's 'field' of discourse (1989, p.12) includes questions about what is happening in the discourse and what the participants are engaged in. The written text sample used for this study is culled from a journal-writing project undertaken by three third-year Japanese university seminar students. The project was not carried out with specific pedagogical aims but rather as a means of encouraging

students to regularly write and communicate with the instructor. Journal notebooks were provided to each student with a set of very liberal guidelines for writing. First, the journal activity was set up as a means of communicating ideas and students were told that the instructor would react to the content of the writing rather than correct grammar. Students were completely free in their choice of topics, no word limit was given, and they were encouraged to express personal thoughts only to the degree they felt comfortable in doing so. It was made clear to students that this was not a mandatory exercise and that their final course assessment would in no way be related to the journal entries. Likewise, it was made clear that the instructor would respond regularly in relation to what was written by students and, while under no obligation to do so, might periodically express his ideas or thoughts on any given topic.   To this date, the journal-writing project continues to elicit regular and meaningful correspondence between students and instructor.

The piece of writing chosen for this paper (Appendix 1) focuses on a single student entry in a journal. The entry marks one portion of a student-instructor dialogue which would be decontextualised in isolation. Therefore, inclusion of more than one entry is needed in order to place the text sample in proper context. To keep the emphasis on what has been written by the student, the instructor's entries have been minimized in the sample. The student's entry prior to the target sample is also shortened though not to the extent of the instructor's, as it too contains useful data which will be used to emphasize interlocutionary aspects of the medium. The additional entries are included mainly to underline the interactive nature of this journal-writing exercise and to frame for the reader what has been written leading up to and in response to the main text. As the sample text is part of a "written conversation" exchange, some reference will be necessary to the supporting entries.

Student profile

The sample selected was written by "Emi", a third-year student in the Department of International Studies in a Japanese university. Emi has spent a year in a Canadian high school and is strongly motivated to reach a higher language level. She recognizes that her level has reached a "plateau" at which she can comfortably communicate but not easily advance. Her task is further burdened by a lack of language learning structure in a

department which considers English as a key subject but has no official English language major and no structured programme. Emi is also politically active in the local peace movement and has spent considerable time doing volunteer work in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. She views herself as a student who has much to say but frequently complains both that the Japanese university system does not allow her adequate means of personal expression and that instructor feedback on reports and assignments is minimal at best. Like many students who have returned to Japan after a year of study abroad, she finds the level of language classes to be unsatisfying. The dialogue journal writing project was in large part undertaken to meet the needs of students like Emi.

The writer-reader relationship

According to Halliday, (1989, p.12) discourse is shaped by the participants and their respective roles and statuses in a text (the 'tenor' of discourse). Though the focus of this study is on one specific entry, it is nevertheless part of a student-teacher interaction and there are obvious examples of what McCarthy (1991, p.24) refers to as "signals of deference". This written conversation, as can be seen throughout the preceding and subsequent entries, is directed to the instructor who, in his responses, often takes on an advisory tone. Evidence of deference toward a "dominant speaker" (McCarthy, 1991, p.24) in the journal exchange can be found in the writer's account of her boyfriend's description of his relationship to the reader (lines 45-46). Examples of the instructor playing an advisory or guiding role can be found in lines 3, 23 and 51 and deferential acceptance of advice is seen in lines 5-8. Both participants in the exchange either wittingly or unwittingly contribute to the confirmation of their respective role and status. However, notwithstanding these instances of inequality in the sample, the writing style of both student and instructor remains rather informal and free.

Quirk (1986) has suggested that a writer or speaker highly values and seeks the addressee's co-operation in discourse. The category of "writing to an individual" (WI) exemplified by dialogue journal writing - omitted in Quirk's "intersecting dimension" (p. 91) description perhaps due to its obvious interactive possibilities - provides us with both obvious and subtle examples of "wooing" (p. 92) co-operation. Among the obvious examples are the use of direct personal address like 'you' (lines 24 and 45-46) and the

use of a rhetorical question: He is funny, isn't he? (lines 46-47). Even the more subtle case in the text sample, where the writer expresses a high degree of vulnerability (lines 27-31), twice using the verb 'feel' (…I felt shameful and …I didn't feel comfortable…) in explaining her feelings of inferiority toward a fellow student, effectively draws in her addressee who responds in detail in the subsequent entry. In concluding this topic (lines 36-37), the writer three times uses what Quirk refers to as the apologetic or confessional "I" (p. 93), often found in appeals for co-operation in face-to-face communication. The writer's two subtle attempts at humour (lines 34 and 46), perhaps not easily discernable to anyone other than the discourse participants, also serve to build solidarity with the reader. Taken as a whole, the text is a clear example of interactional talk serving the function of "lubricating the social wheels" (McCarthy, 1991, p.136) by consolidating the relationship between writer and reader.

While Hughes (1996) emphasizes "the non-equivalence of written and spoken language", there are many ways in which the written sample in this study displays features of spoken language. In general terms, the language seen in journal writing is often colloquial in style, is often in the first person and emphasizes personal expression, all aspects of spoken language. More specifically, dialogue journal writing is strongly interactive and, by definition, a written conversation. Its focus on conveying meaning and expression without undue attention to language editing is similar to spoken communication as is the fact that the discourse in dialogue journals is designed for a single specific reader. In this regard the reader is in fact a participant, responding in turn to what has been written. As McCarthy (1991) notes, the act of interpreting a text "depends as much on what we as readers bring to a text as what the author puts into it." (p.27). As this is a text with a very specific reader in mind, many of the language choices the writer makes are impacted by what is known about the reader and the relationship of the reader to the writer. Whereas Coulthard (1994, p.4) speaks to the necessity of preparing most written texts for an imagined reader, ours is clearly shaped by its very strong interpersonal aspects. We can therefore argue that this form of writing should be placed at the far interactive end of the spectrum of written discourse.

Discussion of spoken features in the sample

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One way of determining the spoken features of a written text is to find examples of unplanned discourse. Ochs (1979, cited in Stubbs 1983, pp.34-35) defines unplanned discourse as "talk which is not thought out prior to its expression". She lists several features of unplanned discourse including frequent repetition, simple active sentences, and use of rudimentarily linked co-ordinate clauses instead of more complicated subordinate clauses all of which can be found in our sample. We might add to this list examples of "right-dislocation" structures. Displaying the talk voice of journal writing, one such example of right dislocation is found at the very beginning of our text sample to introduce the topic of the journal entry: It was a busy day today (line 24). In addition, there are four changes in topic in a relatively small target sample. While individual topics are expressed coherently, the overall coherence accomplished by linking topics in a planned discourse is lacking.

Other features of the text also reveal examples of unplanned discourse. The writer makes no effort to translate 'kokkomi' (line 28) which is the shortened Japanese name for "Department of International Studies" to which she belongs. Other examples are 'Imai-sensei' (line 24) for 'Professor Imai' and 'enshu' (line 26) for 'seminar'. These examples of Japanese usage might be explained by any number of factors including the medium of free expression provided in journal writing, familiarity with and knowledge of her reader's level of understanding, or even laziness. Rather than view them as 'slips' they might more accurately be regarded as representing the strong interplay between the writer and the addressee with the writer relying on the interpretive powers of the reader, much like what happens in conversation. McCarthy (1991) notes this by arguing that "the active listener and the active reader are engaged in very similar processes" (p.147). It should be noted that the instructor does not use language modeling to correct the student in his response, referring back to the subject as 'Imai-sensei' (line 53) and adding to the unplanned nature of the medium by using 'enkais' for 'parties' (line 54), further bastardizing by adding the English plural form (s) which is not possible in Japanese. Negotiation of allowances for such use of local words is complicated by the fact that many local English native speakers sprinkle their vocabulary with them. Though they do represent a more free flowing unplanned discourse, strategies could be included to prevent the habit in a more tightly controlled journal-writing exercise.

This is not to suggest that some more planned features common in written texts are not present in the sample. While the text is littered with simple coordinating conjunctions more prevalent in speech such 'and', 'but' and 'so', the writer does make an effort to add written stature to the entry by using written devices for transition like 'however'. Even the more conversational style conjunctions serve to lend greater organization to the text than would likely be seen in an equivalent spoken example. She also makes an effort to use written punctuation conventions for expressing dialogue as is evidenced by the recounting of the fortune-telling experience (lines 32-34) and in quoting her boyfriend (lines 45-46). Furthermore, a complex grammatical structure is employed when Emi shares that she and her boyfriend "will have been together for two years" (line 44). This structure does not come naturally to Japanese EFL learners and we can guess that she either wanted to practice this pattern or took the time to construct it. Finally, we can see evidence of more planned discourse in one particular chunk of the target sample, that from lines 27-37 in which the writer uses time sequencing devices such as This week, I prepared… (line 27) and At first, I didn't…(line 30) and more complex sentences in which the main clause follows a subordinate clause. For example, Being a (sic) honest girl, I thought…(lines 34-35) and If you stop doing this…, you'll be more successful (lines 33-34). There is also an instance of fairly complex conjunction in line 29: I was confident with what I had, yet I felt really shameful.

There are also obvious ways in which our text is different from a conversation. Dialogue journal writing is not spontaneous talk and real time factors such as being constrained by what your interlocutor puts forward, back channeling and people speaking at the same time. Turn taking is present but is obviously different from conversational turn taking. In its dialogue format, journal writing has very clear mechanisms for the negotiation of turns and because the writers have time to think about how to respond, the sentences are for the most part well formed whereas conversational discourse is not. Only the broadest definition of what constitutes a conversation would include the journal writing medium.

Nevertheless, our sample text seems more like a spoken interaction in many respects. The writer is speaking to the reader in the sense that there is a clear interlocutory relationship, much the same as might occur in an email exchange. Seen in the context of

previous entries, it is a dialogue in which topics are being negotiated by the writers, to be either taken up or disregarded by the reader. Entries in isolation remain non-conversational "static entities" (McCarthy, 1991, p.70) only until they are read and responded to by the reader. The content also suggests a degree of spontaneity with unmarked shifts in topic within a particular "turn" like that seen when introducing the last topic in the target sample (line 44). The overall text also has the rhythm of everyday speech. This is accomplished most obviously by wide use of contractions and by use of first and second person pronouns. The writer also uses a spoken device in line 37: Well…I hope I am… Stubbs (1983) describes 'well', as an "utterance-initial particle…almost entirely restricted to spoken English" (p. 69). Used here as a way to conclude her topic and combining it with the dangling (…) mark, the writer wishes to express in some written form an interactive signal of uncertainty or vagueness more easily accomplished in face-to-face spoken interaction. It can be seen either as a remark on her own previous utterance lending cohesion or as introducing "an explanatory comment" (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p.269).

In addition to the evidence of unplanned discourse, there are other ways in which the journal entry seems to be written as if spoken. Vocabulary is often non-explicit (nice and kind, line 25 and <u>know</u> [instead of "learn" or "discover"] what is happening there). Admittedly, this may indicate the limited vocabulary of a language learner but it might also be explained by the fact that the writer and the reader share common knowledge therefore relieving the writer of the need for explicitness. There is also wide usage of more informal vocabulary and expressions more commonly associated with speech. In the target text, four such examples can be found. When she writes, "I think <u>it's good in a way</u>…" (line 29), "<u>I kind a want to</u>…" (line 39), "<u>Me and my boyfriend</u>…" (line 44) and "<u>I bet</u> you don't…" (line 46), the text most convincingly comes across like writing as speaking. Another example of vague and imprecise vocabulary use is when she writes "a <u>not-so-rich</u> country" (line 40). It is not difficult to imagine a spoken context wherein the speaker might invent offhand a similar word play.

Limitations

This study of a student's ongoing written dialogue with her instructor must address several issues not least of which is the instructor's proximity to the sample. While every

effort has been made to view the text in an objective way, direct involvement in the sample presents the possibility of placing value on aspects of the text based on the closeness of the interlocutors. Scollon and Scollon (2001) have noted, however, that studies of interdiscourse communication often involve the researcher as participant leading to observations "rich in nuance" (p. 17). Still, it is difficult to determine whether the instructor's proximity to the student's work serves to attach meaning that an unrelated observer might not find.

Moreover, analysis of a text produced by a non-native language learner is more complicated than one produced by a native speaker. For example, we must consider to what extent any use of written or spoken features are symptomatic of a non-native student's failure to recognize their respective differences. Likewise, the lack of precision in vocabulary choice cannot easily be explained as an example of unplanned discourse when it could very well be representative of a limited vocabulary. It is therefore difficult to make assumptions about language choices in such a sample. Finally, while language is a means of personal expression and dialogue journal writing facilitates such expression, it has been noted by Johns (1997), that in spite of this, there comes a point when "students must contend with grammar and form and more public contexts of writing"(p.10). However, as will be suggested in the following section, journal entries can be used by the teacher to demonstrate what is appropriate for writing and what is not.

Applications for the EFL Classroom

Beyond the obvious merits in creating a forum for students to carry on meaningful written interaction with the instructor on any number of topics, journal entries can have more specific applications for language teaching. McCarthy (1991, p.149) writes that while many discourse studies are not undertaken with "overt pedagogical aims", they can nonetheless be useful for the language teacher. The dialogue journal writing entries discussed in this paper are a good example of this. As stated, no particular language items, skills or functions were specified when the project began. However, after a year of maintaining a journal-form dialogue with students, a wide selection of written data is now available to be used by the teacher with future language classes. This data can be used for either writing or speaking aims. Journal entries characterized by the "writing-as-if-

speaking" style include good examples of both speaking and of writing, which can be mined according to teaching objectives. We might also add, parenthetically, that there are a growing number of Japanese students who are returning to Japan after a period of study abroad. For various reasons, many of these students are often unwilling to act as "language models" by interacting with weaker students and it is sometimes difficult for the teacher to integrate their skills into the lower level language classroom situations common in Japan. Gathering a body of "writing-as-if-speaking" journal entry data produced by student returnees to be used by the teacher in an alternative way effectively utilizes this growing resource.

One possibility is to present written journal entry samples as authentic materials for speaking practice. McCarthy (1991, p.137) notes Belton's (1988) criticism of the overemphasis on transactional language in English teaching. Journal entries satisfy Belton's call for wider use of interactional materials in a number of ways. First, language learners could be asked to remember short segments of journal entries and express them orally by guessing what tone the writer meant to convey. A text reconstruction approach, either teacher or learner centred, could also be used. With data retrieved from more advanced students, the teacher might exploit the text to point out successful discourse strategies, vocabulary choices, features of natural and spoken English and perhaps even as sample for a more elaborate analysis as we have attempted here. In a more learner centred approach, students could be invited to substitute examples of written forms found in the text into more colloquial expressions and vice versa. Entries could also be used as oral practice for more specific conversation practice, such as the intonation of asides. Our sample elicited one such possibility, redrafted in corrected form:

A: It was a busy day today. I went to see you, Ryan and Professor

Imai. He's one of my favorite teachers. Oh, he said "hello" to you.

B: I don't know him very well but he seems like a very nice man.

Indeed, written journal entries provide the teacher with a means of incorporating McCarthy and Carter's (1995, p.217) call for a "three 'I's" methodology. The spoken aspects of the journal entries provide the "real data" for examination in the 'illustration' stage, a body of interpersonal uses of language to be practiced in the 'interaction' phase and in a learner-centred activity as noted above, teachers can give students exercises to

better recognize and understand different lexical options needed to facilitate the 'induction' stage. Even though McCarthy and Carter focus on spoken data, written journal entries can be mined to the extent that they represent aspects of students writing as they speak.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to place a sample of dialogue journal writing in the context of the spoken features it exhibits. In spite of its written form, the selected sample suggests many ways in which features of speaking are employed by the writer. These include evidence of unplanned discourse, the many colloquial aspects of the text such as use of contractions and vocabulary choices, and an interactive nature to the discourse more reflective of speech than writing. As a text that bridges both spoken and written styles, this paper has also suggested ideas for using journal writing data in the language classroom, with a focus on utilizing the skills of returnee students who are able to produce near authentic renderings of natural speech.

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A Mutual Learning Experience: Collaborative Journaling between A Nonnative-Speaker Intern and Native-Speaker Cooperating-Teacher

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Abstract

Teaching journals have been used in the TESOL field for both preservice and inservice teachers to promote reflection and awareness and to explore their teaching beliefs and practices.   Although the various benefits of teaching journals have been reported on previously, the use of collaborative teaching journals has not received much research attention in the field.   In this article, we report on a collaborative teaching journal kept between a graduate student intern (Japanese) and a cooperating-teacher (American) and

discuss the value of keeping a collaborative teaching journal for meaningful ESL/EFL teacher development.

Keywords

Journaling, a teaching journal, a collaborative journal, teacher development, teacher education, internship, nonnative-speaker and native-speaker cooperation

Introduction

There are a number of activities second/foreign language teachers can use to critically reflect on their teaching beliefs and practices, such as those discussed in Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan (1998, 2001), Freeman and Cornwell (1993), Gebhard and Oprandy (1999), Johnson and Golombek (2002), Murphy (2001), Richards and Nunan (1990), and Richards (1998). One of the activities that have emerged as a way to promote critical reflection is that of keeping a teaching journal. Since "the act of writing begins a reflective, analytic process" (Bailey et al., 2001, p. 48), a teaching journal is regarded not only as a recording tool of teachers' thoughts, ideas, and practices, but also as a tool to promote teachers' reflective teaching (Bailey et al., 2001; Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999; Richards, Gallo, & Renandya, 2001).

In this article, we report on the use of a collaborative journal kept between ourselves – a nonnative-speaker (NNS) graduate student intern and a native-speaker (NS) cooperating-teacher: the former with three years of teaching experience, and the latter with twenty-five. Stimulated by the work of Brock, Yu, and Wong (1992), Cole, Raffier, Rogan, and Schleicher (1998), and Matsuda and Matsuda (2004), we decided that our journal would be collaborative. Our goals were to process a single journal in which we focused on issues, problems, and concerns within a class we were both teaching.

Literature Review

Educators in the TESOL field have written about the methodology of processing a teaching journal (Bailey, 1990; Bailey et al., 2001; Burton & Carroll, 2001; Gebhard, 1999; Jarvis, 1992), as well as concentrated research efforts on the use of journals. For example, researchers in the field have focused on journal entries as a way to understand

novice teachers' "evolving perceptions of themselves as teachers" (Brinton & Holten, 1989, p. 344), teaching issues and shifting awareness (Holten & Brinton, 1995; McDonough, 1994), personal learning experience about power and communication (Esbenshade, 2002), and teachers' common concerns and pressing needs (Numrich, 1996). Other researchers have looked into the reflective nature of journal writing. Farrell (1998) studied three Korean teachers' journals to consider if "regular journal writing promotes reflective thinking" (p. 92), while Richards and Ho (1998) studied teachers' narratives and questions to interpret "whether journal-writing experiences developed teachers' sense of critical reflectivity over time" (p. 157). Yahya (2000) took her research one step further by studying the ways teaching journals seem to help teachers solve teaching problems, as well as how sharing journals can possibly contribute to teachers' professional growth.

Much of the methodological and research literature on teaching journals focuses on teachers keeping either a diary-like journal (intrapersonal) or a dialogue journal with a teacher educator. However, Brock et al. (1992), Cole et al. (1998), and Matsuda and Matsuda (2004) looked into the use of journals as an interactive experience between teachers. These three collaborative groups processed a single journal that they passed from person to person, each writing about teaching issues, problems, and concerns, as well as responding to each other's questions. Their discussion of problems (e.g., managing time to write; maintaining their interest) and benefits (e.g., insight into reflection; a new awareness of beliefs and teaching practices; redefinition of themselves as teachers) provided insight into the collaborative journaling process the authors began in 2001.

In what follows, we describe the context of our journaling experience and our process of keeping the journal. Subsequently, we, the intern (NNS) and the assigned course instructor (NS), each give an individual analysis of the journal content in relation to issues we raised. Finally, we offer our opinions about the value of keeping the collaborative journal from our individual perspectives.

Our Teaching Context and Decision to Keep a Journal

We both opted to teach an ESL section of ENGL 101: College Writing, a four-credit fourteen-week compulsory course for all freshmen at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The course includes a one-and-a-half hour class meeting twice a week and required individual writing conferences. The ESL section of the course was designated for NNS students, as well as one of the internship sites for students in the graduate program who want to gain teaching experience. The ESL section that we were to teach during the fall semester of 2001 was composed of twenty-five NNS students. At the time of our journaling experience, one of us, the course instructor, Jerry, was a professor in the English Department for seventeen years and had taught the course many times. The other, an intern, Toshinobu, was a second year doctoral student in the program with three years teaching experience, including teaching Japanese to undergraduates at the university.

It should be noted that a collaborative journal was not a required task for student-teachers to complete the internship; it was our voluntary exercise. We decided to keep the collaborative journal as we planned the writing course. We thought that this journal would help us to clarify the roles that each of us might take to meet the students' needs as writers and new students to the university and local culture. Through this journal we hoped to communicate our observations about what went on in class, as well as our experiences with individual students during writing conferences. We also wanted to record our thoughts about teaching, the problems students were having, the use of a selected text, and anything else that might help us in our decision making about what to do during our bi-weekly ninety-minute class meetings and required writing conferences outside classroom hours.

In addition to our hope that we could meet the students' academic and expressive writing needs, our collaborative journal was also born out of an interest in our own professional development. We wanted to gain further insight into our teaching beliefs and practices, and in particular, to explore our teaching by systematically writing in a teaching journal.

The Collaborative Journaling Process

We decided to keep an electronic journal in the form of a Microsoft Word file and exchange the file twice a week. We each kept a floppy disk and a printout of the journal, and when we received or wrote entries, we would add them to the file.   We decided to include our observations of what went on in class, of conferences with individual students, questions we wanted to ask each other, perceived problems, and any other content we felt would be relevant to reach our goals. We kept the journal for twelve weeks and wrote a total of twenty-seven entries by the end of the course.

At the end of the semester, following the advice of Bailey (1990), we both read and analyzed the journal entries for "recurring patterns or salient events" (p. 215). Observed recurring patterns or events were categorized into major themes (or codes) for qualitative analysis (cf., Miles & Huberman, 1994). Each of us individually reviewed themes, reflected on them, and wrote up an analysis report for later cooperative analysis (cf., Bailey et al., 2001).   By so doing, we hoped that we would be able to gain insight for mutual, as well as individual, professional growth. We also presented our collaborative journaling process and analysis at an end-of-the-semester eat-and-talk meeting with graduate program students who did their internships at other sites.

The Content of the Journal: Issues Raised

The process of writing and responding to each other's journal entries, as well as reflecting on the collaborative experience as a whole, led us to identify issues that are unique to each of us. In this section, the authors, Toshinobu and Jerry, discuss our issues, each in our own words, namely, in the form of a first-person narrative. We add excerpts from the journal to highlight points we make.

Issues Raised for Toshinobu, the Intern

The Issue of Being Accepted by the ESL Students

I wanted to feel comfortable interacting with the students in class. Being a NNS intern, however, I was very anxious about the ESL students' perceptions of myself. This is evident in the following entry:

Last week after the class some students were making a line to ask you some questions. I was listening to you, standing nearby. I talked to a student waiting in the line to see if I could help her. She asked me a few questions about the assignments, so I answered them. She seemed to understand what I said, but she was still in the line. I thought I answered all the questions she had, so I started wondering what she would ask you. When her turn came, she asked you exactly the same questions… I was listening to your answers to her questions and realized that you gave her about the same answers as mine, but she showed a different reaction to you; she seemed to me that she felt secure when she heard your answers. I started wondering what made her react differently…

In response to the above entry, Jerry, the cooperating-teacher wrote:

You believe that she needed to ask me to feel secure, as I am the "professor." This fairly much shows the issue of having to teach someone else's course. I am the one who the students perceive as the one with power and answers. It really isn't fair to you. Labels! Aren't they powerful? … Students are very fast at understanding power relationships. We both need to be very aware of our way of talking to each other and the students and truly share the teaching responsibilities.

I was under pressure at the beginning of the internship: I often wondered if the students could really accept me as a teacher despite the fact that most of the students might have expected to be taught only by a NS instructor. If I had received the aforementioned reaction from the student after I had actually taught her, then I would not have worried too much, considering the lack of sufficient teaching experience and knowledge base compared to Jerry. When I noticed the student's reaction, however, I had not yet started teaching the class; I was merely observing the class.

Instead of allowing me to escape from the reality of the situation, Jerry helped me face it by writing, for instance, the following entry:

I am sure that the students see you as an "intern." As you were introduced as a doctoral student doing an internship, how else can they see you! So, this is the way it is. I doubt that the students will ever see you as a co-professor of the course.

Responding to the above entry, I wrote as follows:

> I do not believe that they see me as a co-professor of the course, which is absolutely impossible. I am a doctoral student doing an internship. Unlike non-academic ESL programs, College Writing 101 is a course that students see you not only as a teacher/instructor but also a professor. This fact might be one of the factors that affect how students see you and me… It is all about the power relationships among students, you, and me. I strongly believe that it is impossible for students to perceive a professor and an intern to have an equal status, especially, if most of the students in class are from Asian countries.

While exchanging such journal entries, I started realizing that I was too sensitive to students' perceptions, and that I needed to accept the reality of the internship site. As my journal entry shows, I realized that I should confront this issue while discussing my concerns with the cooperating-teacher. Without the collaborative journal, I would not have been able to touch upon my insecurity with Jerry.

The Issue of Developing a Sense of Collaboration with the Cooperating-Teacher

It was very challenging to me, at least in the beginning of the internship, to give feedback or to offer suggestions about Jerry's teaching. Firstly, I knew that Jerry had a lot more teaching experience than I did. Thus, when I started the internship, the temptation was to copy Jerry's teaching style, rather than to develop my own teaching. Secondly, in my culture, an intern-instructor rarely offers suggestions or feedback to his/her cooperating-teacher; only experienced, often older, teachers can critique inexperienced, younger teachers in Japan (Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). Having an understanding of my cultural background, Jerry replied with the following:

> I imagine that it isn't easy for you to give your opinion on the professor's teaching and interaction with the students. But, if you could step back and simply see me as another teacher that would be useful. Like most teachers, I cannot always see what I am doing in the classroom as clearly as someone who is observing it. Can you offer me any productive feedback?

In order for us to conduct the class collaboratively, I had to develop a sense of collaboration with Jerry and change my attitude towards him. Jerry's journal entries,

such as the one cited above, helped me start developing a sense of collaboration, which enabled me to feel that the class became 'ours' later on. Interestingly, it was our interactions in collaborative journaling outside of the class that developed my awareness and attitude. The positive change in my attitude can be clearly seen, for example, in the following entry in which I gave feedback to Jerry for the first time.

> Because of some of the things you mentioned in this journal, I think I started feeling that the class is "ours" and that I will be able to give some feedback to you. … One thing that I would like to suggest is that we should ask students to type all essay drafts in that I realized that there are discrepancies in the number of words per page due to different notebook papers…   This may not be a significant matter, but this is something that I noticed while I was assessing their writing.

I also asked a few questions to deepen my understanding of Jerry's teaching beliefs and practices.

> I decided to write these two questions here because I would like to hear your ideas/opinions: (1) I have found some students talking with one another and/or using a computerized dictionary to check some words or phrases while you were talking.   I thought these students might have to be called upon and told to stop whatever they were doing, but then, I thought this idea might have occurred to me because I was taught in Japan that teachers need to be authoritative…   What do you think?; and (2) I have noticed that some students tend to use their native languages to communicate with each other while they are working in groups... Could you tell me what you think about the use of the international students' first languages in a writing class?

Thus, I gradually developed a sense of collaboration with Jerry by changing personal aspects of teaching and learning to more mutual, collaborative ones.

The Issue of Problem-Posing and Problem-Solving

When I started one-on-one conferences with the students, I found that some students were too anxious about grammar.   Thinking about how the students' anxiety about grammar might interfere with their learning to write, I wrote:

… some of the students who had conferences today became nervous once we started interacting. I wondered why for a while, and I realized that they were a little worried about showing their work to me because they seemed to think that I would correct their grammar and spelling right in front of them, and that the number of corrected errors/mistakes would affect their grades… I told them in class that I would not even try to look for grammatical errors/mistakes, but some of them showed their great anxiety about being assessed in terms of grammar and spelling. In fact, most of the students asked me a question such as "Is my grammar OK?" or "How can I improve my grammar?" It seems to me that most of the students are concerned about their grammatical skills instead of writing skills.

Jerry wrote this in response:

I have done more conferences than I can recall and have had the same questions and comments as you. As for the questions about grammar students have during the conferences, I have found that this is often the first question students ask: "How is my grammar?" Such a question is natural for students to ask. After all, many students coming from other countries… are not really taught how to write an essay. They are asked to write an essay… Then, the teacher marks up their papers with red ink, and almost all the feedback is on grammar. So, when you say, "It seems that most of the students are concerned about their grammatical skills instead of writing skills," you are very exact about why students ask questions like the ones they do.

Jerry and I discussed the students' anxiety about grammar and generated a new teaching idea, i.e., to give a twenty-minute grammar lesson once a week. Jerry wrote about this idea as follows:

I have a question for you --- Do you think a twenty-minute grammar lesson on Thursdays would be something the students would appreciate? We could do this, using the students' grammar problems and the other book, *Grammar Troublespots*, which we haven't used yet. Would you like doing this? Each week pick a different grammar point to cover? I actually don't know if this would be useful to the students or not. After all, they have had years of grammar

already!   But, maybe they would feel one of their needs is being met and it could be useful if they actually used the grammar points in their papers.   Let me know what you think.

Jerry's entry cited above stimulated me to think of a contexualized grammar lesson.   Accordingly, I proposed a lesson plan in my journal entry, and then I took on the responsibility to conduct twenty-minute grammar lessons. After we started implementing the teaching idea, we saw some positive change in students' behavior in writing conferences.

This whole experience of posing a problem, planning an action, and implementing the action to solve the problem became a great opportunity for me to develop as a teacher.   Since we were keeping the collaborative journal, I was able to reflect upon the entire teaching process and become aware of how and what we were doing.

The Issue of Teaching Awareness

As I wrote entries and reflected on them, I could objectively and critically view my teaching practices and teaching assumptions, and such entries helped me to see my teaching differently. For example, I included entries in which I analyzed and reflected on a few tape-recorded writing conferences. Part of such entries reads:

> When I listened to the tape a few times, I was annoyed...   Let me explain why...   Obviously, as we can see from the transcript, I was interfering with his speech, saying "OK" or "yes' a lot.   ...   I also found my tendency to ask questions while students were talking.   ...   After listening to a couple of other recorded conferences, I found several parts where I interrupted students' speech while they were talking.   That is, I tend to interfere with students' speech unconsciously, which I will definitely have to modify in terms of students' language learning anxiety.   ...   There may be some students who have low language proficiency and might not be able to keep talking if I interfere with their speech.

I included a variety of entries in which I reflected on my teaching and was able to gain awareness because of the feedback from Jerry. When I was asked to teach the class alone while Jerry was away, it became clear to me that I had developed much confidence in my teaching. I was fully aware of what I was doing as a teacher, both in and outside class.

Here is an example of what I mean. I wrote about how I could make use of the knowledge I had gained from meeting with each student in writing conferences:

> … I realized that my tutorial experience in writing conferences had helped me effectively teach the (last) two classes. I had known what kinds of problems they (the students) had and how they had been working on their drafts before I taught these (two) classes. I think I could prepare the possible questions or issues that they were concerned about well in advance through the writing conferences. I could give clear examples to show my points because I did talk about them with every single student in the writing conferences. I could handle all the students' individually different questions because I had known every single student's problems and thought about what kinds of suggestions I should give.

In response to the above entry, Jerry wrote the following with reference to Schön's (1983) work on reflective teaching. This kind of response was exactly what I needed to gain more awareness of my teaching.

> I see that (your experience during the past week) has given you a chance to gain a little more insight into your teaching. Your journal entries show me that you had a positive experience. I especially appreciate the awareness you gained from working with students during writing conferences. ... I also see that you gained experience reflecting-in-action. A few times you wrote about your in-class spontaneous teaching decisions. For example, in the entry on November 13, you wrote about a change you made while teaching because the students were not prepared; they didn't do the homework. As such, you decided not to do a whole class activity and to have students read silently in class then talk in groups (something like that!). The idea is you changed what you had planned to do based on the circumstances. This shows a flexibility that is seen in experienced teachers who can think fast based on an understanding of the students' abilities, difficulty level of the materials and task, and other complex factors.

The collaborative journal became a place where I reflected and reported on my teaching as well as a place where I could get immediate feedback on my reflections from the

cooperating-teacher. Such reflections and feedback helped me gain awareness of teaching to further improve my teaching practice.

In what follows, Jerry, the cooperating-teacher, discusses his issues in his own words.

Issues Raised for Jerry, the Cooperating-Teacher

The Issue of Collaboration

One of the issues that I needed to face early in the semester was my expectation of having a collaborative relationship with Toshinobu. I had initially thought that if we could be on more equal footing, than we would be free to converse openly about our teaching and the consequences this seemed to have on the students. I knew that this would not be easy for Toshinobu, but I attempted to persuade him to treat me as just another teacher in several early entries. For example, in my second journal entry, I wrote:

> If you could step back and simply see me as another teacher that would be useful…I am simply a teacher with different and more varied teaching experience. We have the opportunity to teach a course together, and it would be great if we could get beyond the traditional perception of me as a supervisor/more powerful person and simply see me as another teacher.

However, although Toshinobu tried to accommodate me, I soon realized how difficult this was for him to do. I realized that it would take time to create a relationship of parity between us. First, I am much older and have many more years of teaching experience. Second, a given rule is that the cooperating-teacher is of a higher status and is expected to tell the intern what to do as a teacher, rather than to collaborate about what could be done. Third, Toshinobu comes from a culture steeped in a traditional *sempai-kohai* (a companion who is ahead – companion that is behind) mentoring relationship. It is much easier for him to accept me as the more powerful dominate influence on what we do in this class.

However, Toshinobu surprised me. After the first few weeks, I recognized that Toshinobu was exceptionally motivated to work collaboratively with me. In his words:

This journal will definitely give me ample chance to express my ideas, thoughts, and my own voice as a teacher, and importantly, we will be able to communicate frequently and closely.

The Issue of Empowerment

As the cooperating-teacher, one of my issues became how I can provide opportunities for Toshinobu to develop as a teacher. I wanted him to gain more than just my classroom teaching techniques, the way I was using portfolio assessment, and how I solve classroom problems. I wanted to empower him to experience his own informed teaching decisions. As such, based on issues and problems Toshinobu raised in the journal, I tried to provide more and more chances for him to take on the responsibility for teaching the students. For example, after Toshinobu wrote about a problem with students wanting more emphasis on grammar, I asked him if he wanted to teach a weekly twenty-minute grammar lesson. I also asked him if he would like to do all the required writing conferences with students outside of the class, as well as to teach for two weeks while I was away. He gladly accepted all these responsibilities.

Reflecting on the content of our journal entries, I can see how Toshinobu was able to gain some useful experience in making his own informed teaching decisions. For example, as he wrote about in the previous section, he not only decided to tape record his interactions with some of the students during writing conferences, but he used descriptive feedback from analyzing these conversations to make decisions about how to change his interactions with students in the future. I could clearly see that he was applying what he had learned in previous course work on how to make his own informed teaching decisions, and through this process he was indeed becoming more empowered as a teacher (cf., Fanselow 1987, 1988, 1992; Gebhard & Oprandy 1999; Jarvis, 1972).

Teaching Issues

In addition to the issues of equality and empowerment, I had the chance to address a number of teaching issues through my collaborative journal writing. Toshinobu raised a number of issues, and his words gave me a number of things to think about. One topic he raised was about students' perceptions about what it means to write. He wrote:

When I had the first writing conferences with students, there were a few students who told me that they tended to think in their native languages and translate into English when they had worked on their drafts.

As I thought about this statement, it occurred to me that this might be the reason why some of the students don't write much during in-class writing activities. Some have given excuses such as, "I can't concentrate in class. I write better at home." However, I could imagine that they were embarrassed about their process of writing in their native language, then translating it into English. I could also understand why these students' writing seemed so rhetorically stilted toward their native language. This thought also raised a variety of teaching possibilities: What would happen if I asked all the students to write in their native languages, then, translate? Then, talk about the process? What might happen if I did a series of in-class writing activities that focused on speed and writing, such as to have a contest to see who could list the most items on a grocery store shopping list?

We also discussed other issues, such as when to teach grammar and how to teach students the importance of providing a clear thesis at the beginning of an essay, offering convincing support in the body of the paper to prove the thesis, and giving a strong conclusion. But in economy of space, I will not elaborate on these here.

In the following section we offer our opinions about the value of keeping the collaborative journal from our individual perspectives, again, in our own words.

The Value of Keeping the Collaborative Journal

The Intern's Perspective: Toshinobu

Keeping a journal is generally considered a private act of writing. Thus, it may be challenging for some people to share their journal with others. Since collaborative journaling entails a social as well as a personal aspect of writing, however, there are various benefits not only to preservice/inservice teachers but also to an entire professional community or institution. Unlike an intrapersonal journal, a collaborative journal "creates both an audience for our writing and a relationship with someone who is sensitive to our teaching explorations" (Gebhard, 1999, p. 82).

As can be seen, interns might go through some difficulty redefining themselves as teachers within the power relationship with other teachers/cooperating-teachers. If an intern is a NNS who is assigned to an ESL internship site (or an EFL class in which a NNS intern is to work with a NS cooperating teacher), there may be some anxieties or concerns that he/she would like to discuss with a cooperating-teacher privately. To support such NNS interns, I would like to emphasize the value of keeping the collaborative journal (see Matsuda, 1999; Matsuda & Matsuda, 2004). In my case, I was able to cope with such difficulties, in that Jerry was listening to my voice through the journal and was always aware of the feelings, concerns, and questions that I expressed in the journal during the internship.

When I wrote down any issues, concerns, or questions to share with Jerry, I felt secure because I knew that I would get a helpful response from him. After getting his response, I could explore some recurrent issues and topics in more depth. Reflecting on what he wrote, as well as what I wrote, I was able to deepen my insights into teaching and learning. Taking into account different perspectives was crucial in enabling me to ponder upon some relevant issues. The collaborative journal became sort of a second internship site where Jerry and I gradually built a closer, stronger relationship or rapport. The collaborative journal provided me with a supportive environment where I could explore my teaching beliefs, assumptions, and teaching practices efficiently and comfortably.

I often think that it would not have been possible for me to adopt an autonomous attitude towards teaching and learning and develop as a teacher if we had not kept the collaborative journal. Although Jerry and I stopped keeping the journal three years ago, I continue to learn from the meaningful dialogue recorded in the journal every time I read it.

The Cooperating-Teacher's Perspective: Jerry

When Toshinobu and I began to keep our collaborative journal, I expected that the process would provide chances for both of us to gain awareness of our teaching beliefs and practices, and it has done that. However, I did not expect the process of writing in the journal and talking about our teaching over time to be as empowering as it was for me as

a cooperating-teacher. Our written letter-like entries and conversations in and outside class related to these journal entries gave me a much stronger awareness of the ESL students writing and learning problems, anxieties, and writing strategies. This awareness empowered me to make more informed teaching decisions. For example, Toshinobu wrote about his observations on how some of the students tended to sit with other students who speak their same first language. They tended to use their native language while doing group work activities, especially when we were not near them. They also would whisper to each other in their native languages during silent writing or teacher lectures. I was not especially aware of this, for whatever reason, and because of Toshinobu shared this observation with me, I was able to focus my observations on what was going on with these particular students, as well as explore different ways to group students to see what might happen, such as group students who speak different languages, or group all students by their first language to see what might happen when they knew I did this on purpose.

I also gained a greater awareness of my role as cooperating-teacher. I have had many different roles in my career – Those of ESL teacher, EFL teacher, teacher educator/professor, and teacher supervisor. But, I had only been a cooperating-teacher a few times before. As such, as I wrote in the journal, I was able to record and reflect on my way of interacting with Toshinobu as a cooperating-teacher. I was not his supervisor; I did not grade him; nor was I a colleague of equal standing. Instead, I was in the unique position of being an experienced teacher who was teaching and observing Toshinobu teach in the same class. The wonderful thing about being in this position was that I was able to see my own teaching in his (cf., Fanselow, 1988). For example, as I observed over time how he taught points of grammar, I wondered if I am as capable as he is of predicting the kinds of questions students would ask. This, I thought, had to be one of the benefits of being a NNS of English who had experienced some of the same grammatical accuracy problems as the students in the class (see Matsuda, 1999).

Based on our collaboration, I was able to see student interaction in the class differently, as well as reconsider my beliefs about teaching and learning a second language. For example, I had the chance to consider my beliefs about whether or not students gain something of value by using their first language in the class or if their first

languages block them from making progress in the second language. As Cole et al. put this, our collaborative journaling fostered opportunities "to inquire, explore, and discover together" (1998, p. 561). This discovery-oriented learning process empowered us to understand the students and us as teachers.

Through this collaborative journaling experience, I also learned more about teacher development. It is easier to develop our teaching beliefs and practices through collaborative efforts. Edge (1992) contends:

> I want to investigate and assess my own teaching. I can't do that without understanding it, and I can't understand it on my own… I need other people: colleagues and students. By cooperating with others, we can come to understand our own experience and opinions. We can also enrich them with the understandings and experiences of others (p. 4).

In other words, "seeking to find myself, alone, is like trying to use a pair of scissors with only one blade" (Fanselow, 1997, p. 166).

Concluding Remarks

In this article, we reported on the use of a collaborative journal kept between ourselves – a NNS graduate student intern and a NS cooperating-teacher. On the basis of the qualitative analysis of our journal entries, we discussed major themes and issues found in the journal content. We also offered our opinions about the value of keeping the collaborative journal from our individual perspectives. As our journaling experience depicts, a collaborative journal is dynamic and constructive, in that the exchange of ideas and thoughts about issues and problems related to learning and teaching enables the writers to work together to improve their teaching practices in a cooperative manner.

Finally, on the basis of our journaling experience, we recommend that other teachers and student-teachers starting the same type of journaling project negotiate goals and expectations, the form and the content of the journal, and the frequency of journaling before they start. As Cole et al. (1998) and Matsuda and Matsuda (2004) assert, this negotiation process is crucial to avoid or solve unforeseen problems in the process of collaborative work. In addition, it is the negotiation process that plays an important role

in constructively transforming a private act of writing to a social, collaborative act of writing for mutual professional growth.

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Teaching Korean University Writing Class:

Balancing the Process and the Genre Approach

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Abstract

This paper comes out of concerns about teaching English writing to Korean university students. This study points out four problems in university writing classes: first, a heavy emphasis on grammatical form; second, overemphasis on final product; third, lack of genre-specific writing across the curriculum; and fourth, the need for more diverse types of feedback. To solve these problems, it suggests utilizing the balanced instructional and curricular approach of the process and genre-based approach to teaching writing. Based on these two approaches to teaching, this paper provides four principles (guidelines) that can be applied to Korean university level writing classes. The four principles (guidelines) are: balancing form and function, scaffolding language and learning, extending the writing curriculum, and providing meaningful response and formative assessment. It is believed that these four principles demonstrate how university writing teachers can apply them to class effectively.

Introduction

Learning the process of writing is a difficult skill for students to develop and learn, especially in EFL context, where exposure to English is limited to a few hours per week. Students, learning English composition as a second or foreign language, struggle with many structural issues including selecting proper words, using correct grammar, generating ideas, and developing ideas about specific topics. More importantly, they have trouble developing functional language skills, such as proper natural language use in different social contexts and using language in creative ways. These functional language use problems are worsened because writing teachers tend to focus largely on teaching students grammar, and proper language structure, and typically see students as passive writers. These factors tend to hamper students from improving their classroom interaction and keep them from developing more active learning in writing. Due to this gap between students' needs and teachers' instructional methodology, the issue becomes how teachers can help students express themselves freely and fluently to be more autonomous writers, and how teachers can help students become more successful readers and writers of academic and workplace texts. Additionally, the issue is how teachers can help students understand social functions, allowing them to make writing more meaningful and

productive in different social contexts. There is pressing need for composition class to help students develop their skills in using language by experiencing a whole writing process as well as knowledge of the contexts in which writing happens and the purpose of the writing.

This paper attempts to provide some guidance to teaching writing in EFL contexts, especially in Korea. First, we more specifically discuss major problems of teaching writing in EFL contexts. Second, we review the literature on two major strands of writing methodology: the process approach and the genre approach. Finally, we provide four principles toward the process genre approach, which could be introduced in the curriculum of university composition classes.

Major problems of Korean university writing

Both authors have experienced teaching university students in Korea. The first author has taught college English in a national university located in Busan. The second author also has worked for an English institute that provides English classes for English proficiency tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and GRE. Based on our teaching experiences in public and private institutes, we discuss the major problems of writing instruction for Korean university students that keep students from realizing their full potential: 1. Heavy emphasis on grammatical form. 2. Overemphasis on the final product. 3. Lack of genre-specific writing across the curriculum. 4. The need for more diverse types of feedback.

Heavy emphasis on grammatical form

Much of teaching writing in Korea still concentrates heavily on traditional form-dominated approach that is mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of language, and writing development as the result of the imitation of input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher (Pincas, 1982b; Badger and White, 2000). In this approach, the writing reinforces or tests the accurate application of grammatical rules. Controlled composition tasks provide the text and ask the student to manipulate linguistic forms within that text (Raimes, 1991). In other words, Korean university writing classes emphasizes using the grammar correctly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, punctuating meaningfully, and spelling accurately (Hedge, 1988). Also the

issue is teachers often find difficulties in adapting a new method successfully in their classroom because students need for grammar instruction, and so they continue to place linguistic accuracy at the forefront of their instruction.

Most students have been taught grammatical features separate from the context and failed to find a close relationship between grammatical form and function; therefore, their knowledge of grammar was not carried over to their ability to write. In addition, even if the students have developed a large vocabulary, which can be enough to express when writing, their vocabulary cannot be applied into real communication.

Overemphasis on the final product

Another issue is that Korean college students believe writing is a linear process (Rohman, 1965), in which they follow fixed steps, such as Pre-write, Write, and Re-write. However, in fact, it is claimed that writing is a recursive process (Shaughnessy, 1977; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Zamel, 1983, and Hedge, 1988), which allows students to go back and forth while writing in order to support or modify the initial ideas. Kim (2000) points out Korean college students spent relatively little time in editing and revising; thus, they show little flexibility in changing their original ideas. Her study also shows their lack of competence in composing is partially because of emphasis on the final product, and their insufficient knowledge on writing strategies. Due to emphasis on the final product, the interaction between a teacher and students or between students themselves does not exist.

Lack of genre-specific writing across the curriculum

Korean university students enrolled in writing classes have a variety of majors, and various reasons for attending the class, such as further academic studying and improved job opportunity. Therefore, writing classes might need to help students understand the social functions or actions of genres and the contexts in which these genres are used (Bazerman, 1988; Freedman & Medway, 1994). Thus, classroom instruction that addresses multiple genres would support students' needs in their various academic and workplace. As part of this instructional change, university writing teachers

might consider initiating students into the academic discourse community (Bizzell, 1982), and teach the discourse conventions of school and workplace genres as a tool for empowering students with linguistic resources for social success (Kress, 1993; Martin, 1993b).

The need for more diverse types of feedback

Korean students are traditionally accustomed to being given specific instructions from teachers, and to receive authoritative feedback from the teachers. Thus, students write for the teacher, not for themselves, and as a result, teachers are the only audience for whom students gain experience writing for. One result of this is that writing teachers are often overwhelmed by the task of giving a feedback and correcting students' writing. Due to the fact that students are passive in the classroom, they naturally feel uncomfortable with cooperative interaction that requires them to take an active role. Consequently, the teacher-led assessment, which is prevalent in Korea, makes writing meaningless and unproductive.

Theoretical Background

Badger and White (2000) state that the process and the genre approach are complementary. Thus, we believe that examining their underlying assumptions, the eclectic use of both the process and the genre approaches, could offer a new insight on EFL writing.

The process approach

A process-oriented approach to teaching writing is an idea that began to flourish 30 years ago, as a result of extensive research on first-language writing (Reyes, cited in Montague, 1995). The attention to the writer as language learner and creator of text has led to a "process approach," with a new range of classroom tasks characterized by the use of journals, invention, peer collaboration, revision, and attention to content before form (Raimes, 1991). A concern with the process approach is how writers generate ideas, record them, and refine them in order to form a text. Process approach researchers explore writing behaviors, by focusing on studying and understanding the process of

composing (Zamel, 1983). Flower and Hayes (1981) established the model of writing processes: planning, writing, and reviewing. These processes are recursive and interactive, and these mental acts can be reviewed, evaluated, and revised, even before any text has been produced at all. They suggest that the best way to model the writing process is to study a writer's thinking aloud protocols as the principle research tool, thus capturing a detailed record of what is going on in the writer's mind during the act of composing itself.

The process approach to teaching writing emphasizes the writer as an independent producer of texts so that teachers allow their students' time and opportunity to develop students' abilities to plan, define a rhetorical problem, and propose and evaluate solutions. Response is crucial in assisting learners to move through the stages of the writing process, and various means of providing feedback are used, including teacher-student conferences, peer response, audio taped feedback, and reformulation (Hyland, 2003).

In spite of the fact that the process approach emphasizes the writer's independent self, it has its drawbacks (Bazerman, 1980). The disadvantages of process approaches are that first, they often regard all writing as being produced by the same set of processes; second, they give insufficient importance to the kind of texts writers produce and why such texts are produced; and third, they offer learners insufficient input, particularly, in terms of linguistic knowledge, to write successfully (Badger & White, 2000). Bizzell (1982; 1992) suggests teachers need to focus on the conventions of academic discourse, emphasizing the relationship between discourse, community, and knowledge. The outside forces that help guide the individual writer to define problems, frame solutions, and shape the texts also need to be considered. Horowitz (1986) also raises cautions about the process approach saying that the process-oriented approach fails to prepare students for at least one essential type of academic writing, overuse of peer evaluation may leave students with an unrealistic view of their abilities, and the process-oriented approach gives students a false impression of how university writing will be evaluated.

The Genre approach

The process approach focuses on the writer, the creativity and individualism of writing, and the process of writing as a whole, starting from the generation of ideas through to the edition of work. Genre approaches, on the other hand, focus more on the reader, and on the conventions that a piece of writing needs to follow in order to be successfully accepted by its readership (Muncie, 2002).

Table 1

A comparison of genre and process orientations (Source: Hyland, 2003; Badger & White, 2000)

Attribute	Process	Genre
Main Idea	Writing is thinking process Concerned with the act of writing	Writing is a social activity Concerned with the final product
Teaching Focus	Emphasis on creative writer Skills in using languages	Emphasis on reader expectations and product Knowledge about language Knowledge of the context in which writing happens
Advantages	How to produce and link ideas Makes processes of writing transparent Provides basic for teaching	How to express social purposes effectively Makes textual conventions transparent Contextualizes writing for audiences and purpose
Disadvantages	Assume L1 and L2 writing similar Overlooks L2 language difficulties Insufficient attention to product Assumes all writing uses same processes	Requires rhetorical understanding of texts Can result in prescriptive teaching of texts Can lead to overattention to written products Undervalue skills needed to produce texts

Genre instruction has emerged as both a set of pedagogies rooted in linguistic theory and a critical response to some of the tenets of whole language instruction (Hicks, 1997). According to Hyon (1996), current genre theories have developed in three research areas; English for specific purposes (ESP), North American New Rhetoric studies, and Australian systematic functional linguistics. Generally, the philosophy of the genre approach is that all texts confirm to certain conventions, and that if a student is to be successful in joining a particular English-language discourse community, the student

will need to be able to produce texts which fulfill the expectations of its readers in regards to grammar, organization, and content (Muncie, 2002).

Traditionally, genres were seen as fixed and classifiable into neat and mutually exclusive categories and subcategories. For example, exposition, argument, description, and narratives were treated as the large categories, with sub-types such as the business letter and the lab report (Freeman & Medway, 1994). Thus, in the traditional view of genres, teaching genres means teaching textual regularities in form and content of each genre.

Table 2

Factual and Narrative Genres

Genres	Types	Purposes
Factual genres	Procedure	How something is done
	Description	What some particular thing is like
	Report	What an entire class of things is like
	Explanation	A reason why a judgment is made
	Argument	Argument why a thesis has been produced
Narrative genres	Recounts	Narrative based on personal experience
		Narrative based on fantasy
		The moral tale
		Myths, spoofs, series
		Thematic narratives

However, this traditional view has been criticized and recently the notion of genre has been reconceived. As Hicks (1997) indicates, genre theory calls for a return to grammar instruction, but grammar instruction at the level of text, where personal intentions are filtered through the typical rhetorical forms available to accomplish particular social purposes. In other words, the central belief is that "we don't just *write*, we write *something* to achieve some *purpose*" (Hyland, 2003, p. 18). Most simply, reflecting Halliday's concern for linking form, function, and social context, Martin and his colleges (1992) defines genre as a goal-oriented, staged social process. Genres are social processes because members of a culture interact to achieve them; they are goal-

oriented because they have evolved to achieve things; and staged because meanings are made in steps and it usually takes writers more than one step to reach their goals (Richardson, 1994).

The positive sides of the genre approach are that it acknowledges that writing takes place in a social situation and is a reflection of a particular purpose, and it understands that learning can happen consciously through imitation and analysis (Badger and white, 2000). In the ESL context, the genre approach is also useful for sensitizing ESL instructors to link between formal and functional properties that they teach in the classroom. As Bhatia (1993) suggested, it is important for writing teachers to connect these two elements in order to help students understand how and why linguistic conventions are used for particular rhetorical effects. Moreover, because genres reflect a cultural ideology, the study of genres additionally opens for students an awareness of the assumption of groups who uses specific genres for specific ends, allowing students to critique not only the types of knowledge they learn, but also the ways in which knowledge is valued and in which it reflects covert assumptions (Coe, 1994).

However, an argument has been raised at times that teaching students' genres would degenerate into teaching arbitrary models and textual organization with little connection to a student's learning purposes (Freedman, 1983). Sometimes, misunderstanding of the meaning of "explicit" teaching caused this argument to arise. This means that, according to Gibbons (2002), students are encouraged to reflect on how language is used for a range of purposes and with a range of audiences, and that teacher's focus explicitly on these aspects of language. Another limitation of genre approaches that has been addressed is about students' role in this approach. As Badger and White (2000) point out, the negative aspect of genre approaches is that they undervalue skills needed to produce a text, and see learners as largely passive.

The process genre approach

The model of the process genre approach is described in terms of a view of writing and a view of the development of writing. In this approach, writing is viewed as

involving knowledge about language (as in genre and product approaches)[1], knowledge of the context in which writing happens and especially the purpose for the writing (as in genre approaches), and skills in using language (as in process approaches). The model also describes that writing development happens by drawing out the learners' potential (as in genre approaches) and by providing input to which the learners respond (as in process approaches) (Badger and White, 2000).

Badger and White suggest five features of a process genre model; situation, purpose, consideration of mode/field/tenor, planning/drafting/publishing, and text. According to them, in the writing classroom, teachers need to replicate the situation as closely as possible and then provide sufficient support for learners to identify the purpose and other aspects of the social contexts, such as tenor, field, and mode of their writing[2]. For instance (if using manipulating Badger and White's example), writers who want to be car dealers would need to take into consideration that their description is intended to sell

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[1] *"In some ways, genre approaches can be regarded as an extension of product approaches. Like product approaches, genre approaches regard writing as predominantly linguistic (in other words, writing involves knowledge about language) but, unlike product approaches, they emphasize that writing varies with the social context in which it is produced" (Badger & White, 2000).*

[2] *"What we need to know about a context of situation in order to predict the linguistic features that are likely to be associated with it has been summarized under three headings: 'field of discourse', 'tenor of discourse', and 'mode of discourse'. Field refers to the topic of the text. Tenor refers to the relationship between writer and reader. Mode refers to the channel of communication. These three elements together determine the register of language" (Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Hasan, 1989).*

the car (purpose), that it might appeal to a certain group of people (tenor), that it might include certain information (field), and that there are ways in which car descriptions are presented (mode). After experiencing a whole process of writing, the students would use the skills appropriate to the genre, such as redrafting and proofreading, and finally complete their texts.

By following the conditions set out above, composition courses will not only afford students the chance to enjoy the creativity of writing and to become independent writers (as in process approaches), but also help them understand the linguistic features of each genre and emphasize the discourse value of the structures they are using (as in genre approaches).

Principles of the process and the genre approach

To compensate for major problems of current writing instruction for university students in Korea, we provide four principles (suggestions) of balanced instruction and curriculum toward both the process and genre approach. In addition to describing our suggestions, we provide examples of how writing teachers can effectively apply them to class instruction.

Balancing form and function

Because writing class in Korea stresses grammatical rules and skills, a more balanced approach between linguistic form and function is required. Batstone (1994) summarizes the product and the process approach to teaching grammar: in the product perspective (and genre perspective), grammar is regarded as essentially a formal framework: a set of categories and forms. But, instead of thinking of grammar in terms of an analytic display of separate forms, the process perspective considers grammar as dynamic, as a resource which language users exploit as they navigate their way through discourse. Thus, the distinction, in brief, is between 'the careful control of language for learner (as in product), and the creative use of language by the learner (as in process)' (Batstone, 1994).

Integrating the formal aspects of writing with the writing process must be an important component in writing instruction. However, as Grabe and Kaplan argue, the issue is not whether language forms and structures are useful, but whether students can recognize the relation between language structures and the roles they play in conveying appropriate meaning. Unfortunately, as Muncie (2002) indicates, students in EFL countries taking composition courses are likely to be used to traditional grammar instruction and put more importance on forms and structures than on functions of language. Thus, Korean writing teachers need to help their students understand that grammatical rules and linguistic forms aids in clear understanding of meaning and is always related to its function in the discourse. Also, teachers' motivation to focus on form should come from an analysis of learner's communicative needs, rather than from an externally imposed linguistic syllabus.

Scaffolding language and learning

A scaffolding language and learning strategy is recommended in Korean writing classroom because this strategy helps create active interactions between a teacher and students and also between students themselves. The term *scaffolding* was first used by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976, cited in Gibbons, 2002) in their examination of parent-child conversation in the early years. The scaffolding is temporary, as it is essential for the successful construction of building, but it is a special kind of assistance that helps learners to move toward new skills, concepts, or levels of understanding (Gibbons, 2002). This emphasizes the view that learning occurs best when learners engage in tasks that are within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZDP), the area between what they can do independently and what they can do with assistance (Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, the role of the teacher is pivotal in scaffolding this development.

Derewianka and others (1990) involved in the "genre" movement in Australia have identified four stages, named the Curriculum Cycle, through which a particular text type can be made explicit to students. The four stages of the Curriculum Cycle are: Stage 1. Developing control of the genre. Stage 2. Modeling the text type. Stage 3. Joint

construction. Stage 4. Independent construction of text (Richardson, 1994; Gibbons, 2002; Hyland, 2003).

During the beginning stages, direct instruction is crucial, as the learner gradually assimilates the task demands and procedures for constructing the genre effectively. The teacher takes an interventionist role, ensuring that students are able to understand and reproduce the typical rhetorical patterns they need to express their meanings (Hyland, 2003). The focus is on the form and function of the particular text type, and on illustrating the process of writing a text, considering both the content and the language (Gibbons, 2002). Before reaching later stages, students have developed considerable background knowledge about the subject, are aware of linguistic features of the text type, and have jointly (with a teacher) constructed a similar text.

Figure 1

The teaching leaning cycle (source: Hyland, 2003, p. 21)
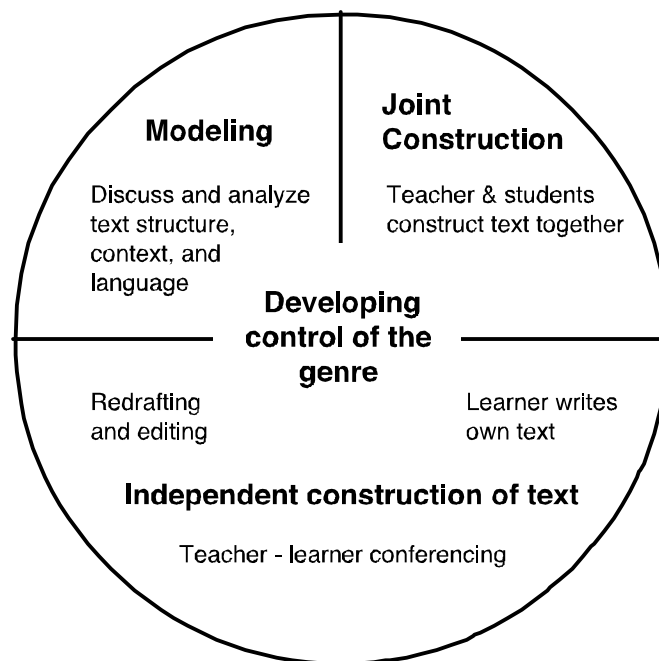
This scaffolding method of writing will help students acquire the knowledge and skills to be able to write their own texts with confidence. In later stages, learners require

more autonomy.   As students write, they should keep in mind the process of writing: creating a first draft, self-editing, discussing the draft with peers and later with the teacher, and finally producing a "published" text (Gibbons, 2002). This scaffolding learning strategy will help Korean students foster creativity (as in process writing) while acknowledging the ways language is conventionally used to express meanings (as in genre approach).

Extending the writing curriculum

Since Korean writing classes are composed of students from different departments, such as English, architecture, science, and economics, academic writing in an English composition course should be incorporated with other subject-area program. English writing teachers cannot be held responsible for teaching writing in the disciplines, but they can strive to create a program in which students learn general strategies, rhetorical principles, and tasks that they can carry over into their course work (Horowitz, 1986). To accomplish this, university writing teachers should demystify academic discourse through identifying and analyzing key genres for university students, in an effort to determine what might best prepare students to acquire discipline-specific discourses and what tools would be useful to them in their accommodation to the demands of various disciplines (Swales, 1986; Leki, 1995).

From data collected from handouts in university classes, Horowitz classified seven categories of writing tasks: summary of /reaction to a reading, annotated bibliography, report on a specified participatory experience, connection of theory and data, case study, synthesis of multiple sources, and research project. In the Asian English for Specific Purposes (ESP) world, Bhatia and English for business and technology (EBT) specialists (1993, cited in Hyon) provide students with models of genres, such as the sales promotion letter, business memo, job application, and lab report as well as a set of worksheets, for identifying the language strategies in these genres and for constructing business and scientific texts using these strategies.

These categories of writing tasks by Horowitz and the models of genres by Bhatia are examples that might be practiced in Korean writing classrooms to help Korean students (having diverse majors in writing class) expand specific and relevant genres and

disciplines for a specific audience, and to help them become more successful writers of academic and workplace texts. Not only are these writing tasks and genre models a fundamental planning tool for teachers uniting syllabus goals, materials, and methodology, they are the ways that students come to understand and develop the abilities to write effectively (Hyland, 2003).

To experience diverse kinds of texts and to apply various writing tasks and genre models, students should construct their knowledge about the specific contents. Teachers of ESL/EFL students should always consider the background knowledge that readers are expected to bring to written texts, whatever readings are chosen (Spack, 1988). Accordingly, the writing curriculum should be integrated with various resources including extensive reading materials (books, articles, and magazines), searching for different types of information on the Internet, and watching movies and documentaries. The wide range of reading resources will help students extend their ideas and knowledge, and support them to complete their final writings. In addition, by using diverse resources, students develop the additional and useful vocabulary, experience the important linguistic and semantic features of language, and have an opportunity to practice a wide range of writings. Moreover, with self-discovery in writing, students will be familiar with solving the problems by themselves, and thereby they will be able to develop autonomy.

Providing meaningful response and formative assessment

To provide more meaningful and productive assessment, Korean writing teachers might consider applying various types of assessment that helps students' interaction in the classroom and encourages more active learning. While feedback to written text is probably essential for the development of writing skills, there is less certainty about who should give the response, the form it should take, and whether it should focus more on ideas or on forms (Hyland, 2003). However, teacher's written feedback is still highly valued by second language writers, and many writers particularly favor their feedback on their grammar (Leki, 1990). Some process advocates have argued that excessive attention on student errors may short-circuit students' writing and thinking process, making writing only an exercise in practicing grammar and vocabulary rather than a way to discover and express meaning (Zamel, 1982). But, well-constructed error feedback, especially when combined with judiciously delivered strategy training and grammar mini-lessons is not

only highly valued by students but may also be of great benefit to their development as writers and to their overall second language acquisition (Ferris, 2002). Thus, rather than just focusing on teacher's written feedback, Korean writing teachers need to apply alternative forms of feedback, such as teacher-student conferencing, peer feedback, in-class grammar instruction (particularly problematic issues in writing), and maintenance of error charts or logs into class (Ferris, 2002).

Because teacher's written feedback cannot be ignored, a variety of feedback techniques to students could be provided. The most common forms are commentary, cover sheets, minimal marking, rubrics, taped comments, and electronic feedback, but all aspects of student texts (structure, organization, style, content, and presentation) should be utilized (Hyland, 2003).

The other alternative form of error feedback is teacher-student conferencing (process-oriented feedback), referring to face-to-face conversation. It supplements the limitations of one-way written feedback with opportunities for teacher and student to negotiate the meaning of a text through dialogue (McCarthey, 1992). The advantages for students are that they can be active participants, ask questions, clarify meaning, and discuss their papers rather than passively accepting advice (Hedge, 1988; Florio-Ruane and Dunn, 1985; Pattey-Chavez and Ferris, 1997).

The idea of peer responses was developed from the L1 process class and has become an important alternative to teacher-based forms of response in ESL contexts. Peer response (process-oriented feedback) is said to provide a means of both improving writers' drafts and developing readers' understandings of good writing (Hyland, 2003). Pros and cons of peer review have been debated.

Table 3

Different forms of feedback

(This table is developed by referring to Hedge, 1988, Kaplan& Grabe, 1996, Ferris, 2002, and Hyland, 2003)

Types	Forms	Characteristics
Teacher Written Feedback	Commentary	The most common type /Handwritten comments on the student paper itself
	Rubrics	A variation on commentary/The use of cover sheets with criteria

	Minimal Marking	A type of in-text, form-based feedback/ Indication of the location and perhaps type of error, rather than direct correction/ More effective in stimulating a student response and in developing self-editing strategies
	Taped Commentary	An alternative to marginal comments/ Recording remarks on a tape recorder/ Saving time and adding novelty
	Electronic Feedback	Comments on electronic submission by email/ Liking to online explanations of grammar
Teacher-Student Conferencing	Teacher/Whole class conference	Supplement for the limitations of one-way written feedback Encouraging students to think about writing as something that can be organized and improved Giving writers an opportunity to talk about their writing and reflecting on the process Giving teachers a chance to listen, learn, and diagnose
	Teacher-mini conference	
	One-on-one conference	
Peer Feedback		Creating an authentic social context for interaction and learning Creating a learner's participation, and nonjudgmental environment Developing critical reading skills Understanding reader needs Reducing teacher's workload

The advantages of collaborative peer review are: helps learners engage in a discourse community and create an authentic social context for interaction and learning (Mittan, 1989), and learners participate actively in learning (Medonca and Johnson, 1994). Moreover, students benefit from seeing how readers understand their ideas and also gain the skills necessary to critically analyze and revise their own writing (Leki, 1990; Zhang, 1995). The disadvantages of peer feedback in a Korean context are that culturally and affectively, students are not willing to share their unsuccessful or unfinished writing with their peers. Additionally, they might feel threatened by receiving feedback from their classmates, as well as being as distrustful of feedback from other students (Moon, 2000), they have a tendency to focus on surface forms rather than ideas and organization, and their comments may be vague and unhelpful (Leki, 1990).

However, in Korean writing classes, where written feedback from the teachers is the standard, using various alternative forms of feedback will help students actively participate in writing, help them gain the skills necessary to revise their own writing, and reduce teachers' workload. Song (1998) shows an integrated written feedback, which

focuses more on meaning without excluding corrections on linguistic errors, is more effective than either surface-error correction alone or just meaning-based feedback alone in terms of improving students' writing skills.

Conclusion

In EFL contexts, where exposure to English is extremely limited, more effective approaches to writing and teachable skills should be applied to writing instruction. To do this, what we suggest is using the balanced instructional and curricular approach of the process and genre-based approach to teaching writing. Both approaches have benefits and drawbacks; accordingly, it is believed that complementary use of both approaches helps student writers develop their skills in using language by experiencing a whole writing process as well as gain knowledge of the contexts in which writing happens and the purpose of their writing.

We have provided four principles based on the process and the genre approaches to compensate for major problems of Korean university writing instruction. Due to the fact that Korean writing instruction places heavy emphasis on grammatical form, we suggest balancing form and function to help students recognize the relationships between language structures (as in product and genre) and the roles they play in conveying approaches meaning (as in process). Additionally, Korean writing instruction overstresses the final product; therefore, what we suggest is a scaffolding language and learning strategy that helps create active interaction between a teacher and students and also between students themselves. Through scaffolding writing instruction, students are able to understand and reproduce the typical rhetorical patterns they need to express their ideas. They are also able to illustrate the process of writing a text, considering both the content and the language. Later, students can write their own texts with confidence. In Korean writing classes, the need for genre-specific writing across the curriculum is required because Korean university students in the class have a variety of majors and diverse purposes for attending the class, such as academic goals or obtaining better jobs. For this reason, teachers need to help students become more successful writers of academic and workplace texts and help them understand the social functions of genres and the contexts in which these genres are used. To make writing more meaningful and

productive, and to help Korean university students become more active learners, the writing teachers need to encourage students to experience diverse types of feedback. Rather than just focus on teacher's written feedback, writing teachers need to apply alternative forms of feedback, such as teacher-student conferencing and peer-feedback. These various types of feedback give both a teacher and students a chance to negotiate the meaning of a text through dialogue.

Implications

English teaching methodologies, such as communicative language teaching (CLT), the process approach, the genre approach, and the product approach, are oriented towards English language education based in Britain, Australia, and North America (ESL or BANA). These approaches cannot be successfully applied to EFL contexts without consideration of different goals of teaching writing to EFL learners because these approaches were not developed specifically for the rest of the ELT world (EFL or TESEP countries), (Holliday, 1994).

In the Korean social contexts, before these teaching methods are utilized, Korean educators and the Korean government need to consider if these methods are suitable to the needs and goals of students within EFL social and academic contexts. To provide the best learning environment and to effectively facilitate Korean students' learning English, we need to identify the best teaching methodologies within Korean social and academic contexts. In order to achieve appropriate classroom methodologies in Korean contexts, we need to identify what Korean university students expect from writing classes and what goals and objectives they have when taking Korean university writing classes.

This study might be generalized to the countries that have similar issues in terms of the learning and teaching of writing, such as those that Kachru (1982; 1992) indicates as countries belonging to the Expanding Circle, countries that recognize the importance of English as an international language and that teach English as a foreign language, including Japan, China, and Taiwan. Additionally, these Asian countries share many social and cultural values with Korea, and so in many ways face similar issues in terms of English language teaching.

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Article Title

A Validation Study on the English language test in a Japanese Nationwide University Entrance Examination

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Bio Data

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Abstract

The present study employs validation study on the English language test of the Japanese nationwide university entrance examination- the Joint First Achievement Test (JFSAT). Two studies are presented. The first examines the reliability and concurrent validity of the JFSAT-English test. The reliability was acceptable. Criterion validity was estimated by correlating the JFSAT-English test and English language ability measure (a carefully constructed cloze test) and was found to be satisfactory. The second study reports on a construct validation study on the test through internal correlation study. The

JFSAT-English test was divided into five subtests. Examination of the correlation matrix indicated that the paper-pencil pronunciation test had low validity with almost no significant contribution to the total test score. It is argued that though the JFSAT-English test can work as a reliable and somewhat valid measure of English language ability, the paper-pencil pronunciation test should be eliminated and a listening comprehension test might be included as one of the subtests in the JFSAT-English test. The other subtests, however, showed satisfactory validity.

Introduction.

English language tests are widely used as one of the components of the tests for screening students in Japanese university entrance examinations. However, there has been very little research to indicate just how effective an English language test in university entrance examination settings is in terms of reliability and validity. The test data used in the entrance examinations are almost never disclosed, presumably for security reasons. This has served as the motive for the present research. In this paper the author would like to report on a study investigating reliability and validity of the most widely taken English language test in Japan. The test is the English test in the Joint First Stage Achievement Test' (henceforth, the JFSAT-English test).

Each Japanese university used to construct its own annual entrance examinations independently. There had been a wide variety of types of entrance examinations. As a consequence, the content and difficulty of items in the entrance examinations were never standardized. As a trial to promote the standardization of test content, the Mombusho (henceforth, Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture) made a decision to administer a nation wide test to be called the Kyotsu Ichiji Gakuryoku Shiken (JFSAT) in 1971. The Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture spent 8 years planning and developing the test with multiple-choice format and giving ample notification about the nature of the test to the entire educational system. In so doing, the Daigaku Nyushi Center (henceforth, the National Center for University Entrance Examinations), where the JFSAT is constructed, distributed and scored, was established. In 1979, the first JFSAT was introduced to Japanese government-sponsored universities as one of the components of the entrance examination. The purpose of the JFSAT was to measure

applicants' basic knowledge and ability in various subjects such as Japanese, mathematics, science, social studies and foreign language (about 99 per cent of the JFSAT examinees choose English though a test in German, French, Chinese and Korean can be chosen at present).

In 1989, the university examination system slightly changed and the JFSAT was revised to a different version. However, the content remained virtually the same. The JFSAT is "a first stage exam, somewhat analogous to the College Board SAT, in that many universities subscribe to it" (Brown and Yamashita, 1995, p. 12). As a result, the present Japanese university entrance examination system requires the examinee eager to enter the government-sponsored university to take two examinations: the JFSAT and second stage test at their prospective university. In most government-sponsored university entrance examinations, the total score of the two tests (the JFSAT and the second screening test) are used for screening the applicants, though each university 'has the power to determine the relative value of the JFSAT and the second stage test, so some universities focus on the JFSAT, others on the second stage test' (Ingulsrud, 1994, p. 67). In addition, since 1989, some private universities started to use the results of the JFSAT as one of their tools for screening the applicants, not only the applicants for government-sponsored university but also those for some private universities take the JFSAT. Since then, the number of JFSAT test-takers has been increasing every year. In January 2002, the JFSAT-English test was administered to 552,971 examinees.

Empirical research on the quality of the JFSAT-English tests is extremely limited. The first reason might be related to the difficulty of access to the test data for the people outside of the central location: The National Center for University Entrance Examinations. The National Center for University Entrance Examinations in Tokyo reports annually on the quality of components of the JFSAT through soliciting opinions from a variety of high-school teacher organizations. This source of information is the only one that we can access. Though we may see descriptive statistics of the JFSAT-English test such as mean scores and standard deviations, we cannot see if the test worked well in terms of reliability and validity. The second reason might be related to the difficulty of defining the nature of the JFSAT-English test. The JFSAT is supposedly an achievement test based on the Japanese high school curriculum centrally determined by

the Mombukagakusho (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, formerly the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture). An achievement test is a test given to language learners at the end of a program to check if the learners have mastered the target grammatical items or skill. However, some people may doubt whether the JFSAT is really an achievement test. The reason might be related to the fact that high school teachers are not appointed to the test development committee and the JFSAT is basically considered to be a university entrance examination developed by Japanese university professors (see Ingrulsrud, 1994 for further discussion on this matter). In fact, the JFSAT is not a test based on specific English language programs or classes in Japanese high school education. Based on this, the author believes that the JFSAT could be called a proficiency test. However, the author has no intention to completely deny the concept of the JFSAT as an achievement test. This is because, as Brindley (1989) argues, the distinction between proficiency and achievement is not as clear-cut as it would first seem. In this paper, therefore, the author would like to use the term 'ability' as the wider concept including 'achievement' and 'proficiency' when discussing what the JFSAT may be measuring.

Because of the difficulty of access to JFSAT test data and the difficulty of defining the test type of the JFSAT, there is not much research directly investigating the question: Is the JFSAT-English test really measuring the applicant's English ability? The author could only find two studies dealing with the issues of reliability and validity of the JFSAT-English test. Kiyomura (1989) argues that the English questions in the JFSAT are relatively valid for predicting students' performance levels in English in high school. He reported a moderate correlation coefficient (r=.330 to .620) between the examinees' scores in the JFSAT-English test and their high school performance as measured by their transcripts. Yanai, Maekawa and Ikeda (1989), who were members of the test development section in the National Center for University Entrance Examination in Tokyo, report constantly high reliability coefficients of English tests (r=.940 to .956) in the JFSAT.

There is not much specific criticism on English tests in the JFSAT from the public. Only one serious problem with the construction of JFSAT-English test, however, has been discussed in Japan for about the last 25 years. This concerns the use of paper-

pencil pronunciation test for measuring the students' oral English ability (Ishii, 1981; Kira, 1981; Kuniyoshi, 1981; Masukawa, 1981; H. Suzuki, 1981; Ibe, 1983; Kashima, Tanaka, Tanabe and Nakamura, 1983; Ohtomo, 1983; Shiozawa, 1983; S. Suzuki, 1985; Ikeura, 1990; Takanashi, 1990; Wakabayashi and Negishi, 1994). Buck (1989) explains that written tests of pronunciation used in Japanese university entrance examinations are based on the simple idea, which was suggested by the American structural linguist and language testing expert Robert Lado, that the language learners choose appropriate places in stress or pronunciation in written tests if they can speak with appropriate stress and pronunciation in actual language use. Written test of stress and pronunciation are easy to administer to large numbers of students without the use of an actual interview or recorder and may even be more economical in that raters do not have to have good English pronunciation. A several Japanese researchers have recently conducted research on the validity of paper-pencil pronunciation tests. Shirahata (1991) sampled 40 high school students and administered paper and oral tests of primary stress. Each of the tests contained 40 items. The test items were taken from English tests (1990 and 1991 version) in the JFSAT. Results indicated that learners' actual performance in primary stress can be predicted by paper and pencil pronunciation tests because there was a relatively high agreement rate (82.6%) between the learners' actual performance in primary stress and their scores in the written test of pronunciation.

The target of the item type of written pronunciation test shifted in another study by Inoi (1995). His experiment was administered to 60 college freshman students. The participants were given a written test first, then an oral version followed. Each test contained 30 items which were sampled from recent English tests in the JFSAT. Results indicated that a relatively strong correlation was obtained between the scores in the two tests (r=.810, p<.01). The agreement rate, however, was unexpectedly not so high (66.8%). Inoi (1995) concludes that some phoneme discrimination items on his test were not valid for assessing the participants' actual pronunciation ability of English words. As a consequence, he added that good performance on a written test does not guarantee good performance on an oral test. These two studies have shown a moderate validity of the paper-pencil pronunciation test for assessing students' actual performance in

pronunciation such as primary stress and/or phoneme discrimination (Komazawa and Ito, 1997).

Wakabayashi and Negishi (1994) argue that the simplest way of measuring the student's aural/oral ability in English is to develop a listening comprehension test and administer the test as one of the sections (subtests) in the JFSAT-English test. However, the paper-pencil pronunciation test has been used to indirectly measure student's oral ability, not aural ability (listening comprehension ability). Therefore, if we would like to argue that a listening comprehension test should be administered in the JFSAT-English test, we should first prove that there is no correlation between the pronunciation ability measured in the paper-pencil pronunciation test and the ability measured in the listening comprehension test.

The possible need of introducing a listening comprehension test in the JFSAT-English test is also discussed in relation to the content of the Course of Study by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture. Though Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (1994) implemented aural/oral guidelines for the Course of Study for Upper Secondary School (high school) and has tried to enhance high school students' listening comprehension skills, the JFSAT-English tests have not changed to reflect the new direction toward emphasizing aural skills. In short, as Brown and Yamashita (1995, p. 28) say, "there is a contradiction between what is tested in the JFSAT-English test and what the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture promotes in its curriculum." The Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (1999) has issued a new version of the Course of Study for Upper Secondary School (high school) and in its new curriculum has again emphasized the importance of developing high school students' listening comprehension skills as was the case in the old version.

According to the Final Report on the Contents of Future JFSAT of 2008 (National Center for University Entrance Examinations, 2003), which is displayed on the web site (http//www.dnc.ac.jp/center_exam/18kyouka-saishuu.html), the National Center for University Entrance Examinations reports with the date of 8 June, 2003, that the center has made a final decision to administer a listening comprehension test as one of the subtests in the JFSAT-English test to be administered from 2008 on the basis of examination of 'the Council on the Improvement of Method in Screening University

Applicants' in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (formerly Ministry of Education, Science and Culture).

In summary, an ongoing debate has been discussed regarding the introduction of listening components to the JFSAT-English test for about 25 years. A listening test will indeed be administered from 2008 in the JFSAT-English test. However, as mentioned, there is not much research proving whether there is a lack of correlation between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and the listening comprehension test. In addition, the reliability and validity has not yet been much investigated.

Two studies are reported here. The first was designed to examine the reliability and criterion validity of the JFSAT-English test. Specifically, the criterion validity of the JFSAT-English test and correlation between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and a listening comprehension test will be examined. The second study looks at the construct validity of the JFSAT-English test, employing internal correlation study.

The Study

Purpose

As the purpose of the present study was to investigate the reliability and validity of English questions in the JFSAT, the goals were to determine if the JFSAT-English test is a reliable and valid measure of student's English ability. The present study investigates the criterion validity and construct validity of the JFSAT-English test.

The following research questions are set up.

Study 1

(1) How high are the reliability and criterion validity of the JFSAT-English test? Does the JFSAT-English test measure student's English ability?

(2) Is there a lack of correlation between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and a listening comprehension test?

Study 2

(3) How high is the construct validity of the JFSAT-English test?

The first research question will be addressed by measuring the reliability coefficient of the English test in JFSAT such as Cronbach's alpha and Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients between the JFSAT-English test and an external criterion test such as a cloze test and between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and a listening comprehension test such as the listening section of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

The second research question will be addressed by measuring the correlation coefficients among the subtests in the JFSAT-English test and examining the correlation coefficients on the basis of the criteria used in past internal correlation studies (e.g. Alderson, Clapham and Wall, 1995; Ito, 2000b; Imai and Ito, 2001). In order to carry out the internal correlation study, the JFSAT-English test should be divided into subtests supposedly measuring the same ability. According to Hitano's (1983, 1986) theoretical classification of the internal structure of JFSAT-English test, the test can be basically divided into five subtests. The first subtest is constructed to measure the knowledge and ability of pronunciation and stress; the second the knowledge and ability of English grammar; the third the knowledge and ability of spoken English; the forth the knowledge and ability of written English; and the fifth the knowledge and ability of reading comprehension. On the basis of the Hitano's classification, the JFSAT-English test will be categorized into five sections (subtests) and they are named as follows for the conveniece: (1) Pronunciation, (2) Grammar, (3) Spoken English, (4) Written English and (5) Reading Comprehension. Though it cannot be denied the internal structure of the JFSAT-English test may change each year, the author believes that the subtests of the JFSAT-English test to be engaged in the present study generally follow Hitano's classification.

Participants

The participants (N=100) were sampled from first-year students who were enrolled in an undergraduate class in general English at Aichi University of Education in Japan. Most of them were eighteen years old.   The average age was 18 years and 2 months. The ratio between male and female was 1 to 1.   All of them would have taken more than six years

of formal English courses prior to this study. They were majoring in a scientific field. The sample was thus homogeneous with regard to nationality, language background, educational level and age.

Instruments

The following instruments were used in the present investigation.

1. An open-ended cloze test (70 items) (Appendix 1). The full score was 70 points. The participants were allowed 30 minutes for completion.

2. The TOEFL Listening Comprehension Test (Steinberg, 1987) (50 items). The full score was 50 points. It took 25 minutes to finish the listening test.

3. The JFSAT-English test 1991 version (Kyogakusha, 1994) (58 items). The full score was 200. The description of test content and the item point value in each subtest are as follows:

Subtest 1: Pronunciation (7 items (5 items X 2 points and 2 items X 3

        points: Total: 16 points)

        In this section, the participants are asked to match one word with another having the same segmental phoneme out of four choices.

Subtest 2: Grammar (14 items X 2 points: 34 points)

        In this section, the participants are required to select from the four choices the most appropriate word to be filled in the presented sentence out of four choices.

Subtest 3: Spoken English (6 items X 3 points: 18 points)

        In this section, the participants are required to select the most appropriate word from four choices to be filled into the presented sentence.

Subtest 4: Written English (10 items X 4 points: 40 points)

In this section, the participants are asked to place given words into the correct order to produce a meaningful sentence.

Subtest 5: Reading Comprehension (18 items (16 items X 5 points: 80
        points and 2 items X 6 points: 12 points.   Total: 92 points)
        In this section, the participants are asked to read passages and answer multiple choice questions.   The participants are required to select the most appropriate answer from four choices.

The full score is 200 points.
The participants were allowed 80 minutes for completion.

4. The paper-pencil pronunciation test 1989 and 1992 versions (Kyogakusha, 1992, 1994)
        (20 items X 2 points: 40 points). The paper-pencil pronunciation tests in the JFSAT-English test are basically divided into three types. In the present study, the paper-pencil pronunciation test where participants are required to distinguish the segmental phonemes was used. The participants were given 10 minutes for completion.

The Construction of the External Criterion Test: The Cloze Test

In order to examine the JFSAT-English test in question, a carefully constructed cloze test was used as an external criterion test. The cloze test was produced on the basis of recent research on cloze test construction: (1) the selection of appropriate cloze texts for Japanese learners of English (Nishida, 1986, 1987; Mochizuki, 1984, 1994; Takanashi, 1984, 1988; Ito, 2000a); (2) appropriate word-level of the cloze text for Japanese learners of English (Mochizuki, 1992); and (3) the essential number of questions and scoring methods in cloze testing (Alderson, 1979; Nishida, 1985; Siarone and Schoorl, 1989). The cloze passage was adapted from a low intermediate reader (700 word level) for Japanese high school students by Ishiguro and Tucker (1989). The passage selected, "Wang's story," a relatively neutral, narrative topic, contained 457 words. Its readability level was about 8th grade level as measured by the Flesch-Kincaid readability formula by

using computer program Grammatik IV (1988). The cloze test was created by deleting every 6th word for a total of 70 blanks. Two sentences were left intact: one was beginning of the passage and one at the end to provide a certain level of context. Siarone and Schoorl (1989) argue that a cloze test of about 75 items should be scored with a contextually acceptable method in order to maintain a satisfactory reliability (r>.8). Then the cloze test was scored by the author based on the contextually acceptable words method with the help of a native speaker of English who was working as a full time English language professor at Aichi University of Education where the present research was conducted by the author.

In order to examine the concurrent validity of the cloze test itself, the correlation between the TOEFL (Steinberg, 1987) and the cloze test was measured in a pilot study. Klein-Braley and Raatz (1984) propose the criteria to judge the quality of the C-Test (a modified version of cloze test). In their six C-Test construction axioms, they argue that a valid C-Test should correlate with a reliable discrete-point test at .5 or higher. Since the C-Test is a modified version of a cloze test, the author applied Klein-Braley and Raatz's idea for judging the concurrent validity of the cloze test in the present study. The author also decided to apply the cloze test as a criterion test measuring the validity of the JFSAT-English test if the cloze test showed a higher correlation coefficient than .5 with the a reliable discrete-point test (TOEFL).

In the pilot study, the participants were 100 second year students enrolled in general English classes at Aichi University of Education in Japan. The average age was 19 years and 4 months. The ratio between male and female was 1 to 1. All of them would have taken more than seven years of formal English courses prior to this study. They were majoring in Japanese language education and art education. The sample was thus homogeneous with regard to nationality, language background, educational level and age. This group of participants was selected as the second population similar to the one to be used in the main study. This is because the two groups were placed in the same course level and were taught by the same teacher with the same text based on the same syllabus. Unfortunately, however, there was no data available showing the no statistically significant difference between the two groups in English ability level.

Table 1

Table 1 Descriptive statistics (N=100)				
Test	Reliability (α)	Mean (M)	Full Score	SD
Cloze Test	0.840	33.450	70.000	7.815
TOEFL	0.781	31.720	100.000	8.128

The results indicated high reliability of the tests and moderate correlation coefficients between the TOEFL and the cloze test (r=.489, p<.01). The correlation coefficient corrected for attenuation by Henning's (1987) method is r=.604.   In this regard, the cloze test had a relatively high reliability coefficient (r=.840) and moderate correlation (r=.604) with a reliable discrete-point test such as TOEFL.

The final decision on the cloze test

The author made a final decision to employ the cloze test as an external criterion test for measuring participants' English in the present investigation. This is because the reliability of the cloze test exceeds the critical threshold level of .8 (r=.840) and the test correlated with the reliable discrete-point test, TOEFL, at higher than .5 (r=.604, p<.01). The correlation corrected for attenuation in the cloze test was more than .5.

The TOEFL listening comprehension test

The TOEFL listening comprehension test was used as a listening comprehension test for examining if there was a lack of correlation with the paper-pencil pronunciation test. The author did not conduct a study on the validity of the TOEFL listening comprehension test. The reason for this is that the test has been utilized in real testing session, and we can therefore conclude that the test might be reliable and valid enough for the purpose of the present investigation.

Scoring procedure for the other tests

After all the test except the cloze test were administered, the test papers were exchanged between students and scored under the author's direction. After the test papers were collected, they were reviewed by the author twice before the statistical calculations were performed.

Statistical software and alpha level for significance

All statistical analyses were performed by computer programs in Statistical Package for Social Sciences Windows 7.5 version (SPSS Inc., 1996) in the library room of the Department of English Language Education, Faculty of Education, Hiroshima University, Japan.

Alpha level

The sample (N=100) necessitated a conservative treatment of statistical analysis because such a small amount of data does not show the normal distributions which are necessary for parametric statistical analyses. Therefore, the alpha level for all statistical decisions was set at $\alpha=.01$.

Results
Study 1

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics for each of four tests are given in Table 2. The low mean in TOEFL listening comprehension test suggests that the test was rather difficult for the population who took them, with the result that there is not as much variance in the tests as would be ideal. The reliability coefficients of the cloze test (r=.853), slightly higher than in the pilot study, and the JFSAT-English test (r=.817) are high. The reliability coefficients of the TOEFL listening comprehension test (r=.398) and the pronunciation test (r=.208) are low.

Table 2   Descriptive statistics (N=100)

Test	Reliability (α)	Mean (M)	Full Score	SD
Cloze Test	.853	32.850	70.000	7.697
JFSAT	.817	119.031	200.000	8.013
TOEFL Listening	.398	13.060	50.000	3.484
Pronunciation Test	.208	16.700	40.000	2.355

Concurrent validation

Table 3 displays the correlation coefficients between the cloze test and the JFSAT-English test. The correlation coefficient was moderate (r=.462, p<.01).

Table 3   Correlation between Cloze Test and JFSAT (N=100)

Test	r	p
Cloze Test and JFSAT	.462	<.01

Table 4 shows that there was no significant correlation between the TOEFL listening comprehension test and the paper-pencil pronunciation test (r=-.078, n.s.).

Table 4   TOEFL Listening Comprehension Test and Paper-Pencil Pronunciation Test (N=100)

Test	r	p
TOEFL Listening and Pronunciation	-.078	n.s.

Study 2

Descriptive statistics

Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics of the five subtests in the JFSAT-English test.

Table 5 Descriptive statistics of the Five Subtests (N=100)

Test	Mean (M)	Full Score	SD
Pronunciation	8.897	16.000	1.275
Grammar	19.860	34.000	2.731
Spoken English	11.568	18.000	1.125
Written English	18.304	40.000	2.186
Reading Comprehension	60.402	92.000	12.110
Total	119.031	200.00	8.013

Internal correlation study

Table 6 shows the full correlation matrix for the five subtests in the JFSAT-English test.   Such a matrix is usually used to examine the construct validity of the test by internal correlation study.

Table 6 Correlation Matrix for the Five Subtests (N=100)

Test	1	2	3	4	5	Total(s)*
1. Pronunciation	---	---	---	---	---	.238 C3
2. Grammar	.280 C1	---	---	---	---	.564** C3
3. Spoken English	.136 C1	.437** C1	---	---	---	.493** C3
4. Written English	.159 C1	.522** C1	.395** C1	---	---	.543** C3
5. Reading Comprehension	.153 C1	.351** C1	.358** C1	.364** C1	---	.432** C3
6. Total	.392** C2	.782** C2	.600** C2	.729** C2	.746** C2	---

Notes: *Total score excluding the subtest which it is being correlated correlations
**$p<.01$

Alderson, Clapham and Wall (1995) employed internal correlation study in order to examine the construct validity of the college English placement test. The placement test consisted of four different 'components,' which are equivalent to the 'subtest' in the present study. They go on to explain the reasoning and the criteria each subtest needs to meet as follows.

"Since the reason for having different test components is that they all measure something different and therefore contribute to the overall picture of language ability attempted by the test, we should expect these correlations to be fairly low --- possibly in the order +.0 - +.5. If two components correlate very highly with each other, say +.9, we might wonder whether the two subtests are indeed testing different traits or skills, or whether they are testing essentially same thing. If the latter is the case, we might choose to drop one of the two. The correlations between each subtest and the whole test, on the other hand, might be expected, at least according to classical test theory, to be higher – possibly around +.7 or more – since the overall score is taken to be a more general measure of language ability than each individual component score. Obviously if the individual component score is partly between the test component and itself, which will artificially inflate the correlation. For this reason it is common in internal correlation studies to correlate the test components with the test total minus the component in question." (Alderson, Clapham and Wall, 1995, p. 184).

Reasoning for examining construct validity

This same reasoning used in Alderson, Clapham and Wall (1995) can be used here to examine the construct validity of the JFSAT-English test in the present investigation. In order to examine this, it is convenient to identify different types of correlation coefficients:

(1) The correlation coefficients between each pair of subtests. These correlation coefficients are labeled C1;

(2) The correlation coefficients between each subtest and the whole test.   These
   correlation coefficients are labeled C2; and
(3) The correlation coefficients between each subtest and the whole test minus the
   subtest.   These correlation coefficients are labeled C3.

Criteria

In order to establish that the subtest under consideration works as a valid subtest
and contributes to the total test score, the following criteria would need to be met:

Criterion 1: The correlation coefficients between each pair of subtests should be from .3
   to .5. That is $.3 < C1 < .5$.
Criterion 2: The correlation coefficients between each subtest and the whole test should
   be around .7 or more. That is $C2 \fallingdotseq .7$.

Criterion 3: The correlation coefficients between each subtest and the whole test should
   be higher than those between each subtest and the whole test minus the subtest. That
   is $C2 > C3$.

On the basis of the three criteria above, the construct validity of each subtest will
be examined.

First, looking at the paper-pencil pronunciation test (Pronunciation) :
Criterion 1: The C1 correlations (.280, .136, .159, .153) are all lower than .3. Therefore,
   the Criterion 1 was not met.
Criterion 2: The C2 correlation (.392) is rather lower than .7. Therefore, the criterion 2
   was not met.
Criterion 3: The C2 correlation (.392) is higher than C3 correlation (.238) indicating that
   the criterion 3 was met.

Second, looking at the grammar and usage test (Grammar):

Criterion 1: The C1 correlations (.136, .437, .522, 351) are all higher than .3 except the correlation coefficient with the paper-pencil pronunciation test (.136). Therefore, the Criterion 1 was not met.

Criterion 2: The C2 correlation (.782) is higher than .7. Therefore, the criterion 2 was met.

Criterion 3: The C2 correlation (.782) is higher than C3 correlation (.564) indicating that the criterion 3 was met.

Third, looking at the spoken English expression test (Spoken English):

Criterion 1: The C1 correlations (.136, .437, .395, .358) are all higher than .3 except the correlation coefficient with the paper-pencil pronunciation test (.136). Therefore, the Criterion 1 was not met.

Criterion 2: The C2 correlation (.600) is lower than .7. Therefore, the criterion 2 was not met.

Criterion 3: The C2 correlation (.600) is higher than C3 correlation (.493) indicating that the criterion 3 was met.

Fourth, looking at the sequencing test (Written English):

Criterion 1: The C1 correlations (.159, .522, .395, 358) are all higher than .3 except the correlation coefficient with the paper-pencil pronunciation test (.159). Therefore, the Criterion 1 was not met.

Criterion 2: The C2 correlation (.729) is higher than .7. Therefore, the criterion 2 was met.

Criterion 3: The C2 correlation (.729) is higher than C3 correlation (.543) indicating that the criterion 3 was met.

Finally, looking at the reading comprehension test (Reading Comprehension):

Criterion 1: The C1 correlations (.159, .351, .358, .364) are all higher than .3 except the correlation coefficient with the paper-pencil pronunciation test (.159). Therefore, the Criterion 1 was not met.

Criterion 2: The C2 correlation (.746) is higher than .7. Therefore, the criterion 2 was
        met.
Criterion 3: The C2 correlation (.746) is higher than C3 correlation (.432) indicating that
        the criterion 3 was met.

Discussion
        In this section, the original research questions are addressed.   Before we discuss
the results, however, other aspects must be considered:
(1) the effects of sample homogeneity on statistical results concerning reliability
        coefficients and correlation coefficients; and
(2)   the size of the sample (N=100).

(1) How high are the reliability and criterion validity of the JFSAT-English test?   Does
the JFSAT-English test measure student's English ability?

        The reliability coefficient of the cloze test was .853. This value was slightly
higher than that in the pre-test (r=.840). The result indicates that the cloze test has shown
a consistent relatively high reliability. The reliability coefficient of the JFSAT-English
test was also relatively high (r=.817). However, the reliability coefficient of the paper-
pencil pronunciation test (r=.208) and TOEFL listening comprehension test (r=.398) were
very low. Since the cloze test and the JFSAT-English test have shown relatively high
reliability coefficients, we correlated the two tests without correcting for attenuation in
the cloze test. The correlation coefficient between the tests was moderate (r=.462, r-
square=.213). This gives an idea that shared variance between the tests of 21.3 % and the
JFSAT-English test was a somewhat valid test of English ability.

(2) Is there no significant correlation between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and a
listening comprehension test?

        The lack of the correlation between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and the
TOEFL listening comprehension test may be due to the fact that the ability to distinguish

among segmental phonemes in the paper-pencil pronunciation test is completely different from the wide range of listening abilities which the TOEFL listening comprehension test tries to examine.   In this sense, the answer to the research question (2) seems to be 'Yes.'   However, there is a serious drawback with this study. The problem is the low reliability of the TOEFL listening comprehension test, a finding which calls for further research on the matter. Therefore, whether or not there is no significant correlation between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and the TOEFL listening comprehension test remains unclear.

(3) How high is the construct validity of the JFSAT-English test?

The present internal correlation study suggests that the correlation coefficients between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and other subtests ($r=.153$, n.s. to $.280$, n.s.) are too low to meet the three criteria. In addition, the correlation coefficient between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and the whole test minus itself was very low ($r=.238$, n.s.). These results show that the paper-pencil pronunciation test shows low construct validity. Though there was a lower correlation coefficient between the spoken English expression test and the whole test ($r=.600$) than criterion 2 ($r>.7$), the other correlations in the matrix met the criteria. Therefore, it is justifiable to say that only the paper-pronunciation test does not significantly contribute to the total test score, which means indeed that the test has low construct validity. Though the research question (2) whether there is a lack of significant correlation between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and a listening comprehension test has not been well answered because of the low reliability of both of the paper-pencil pronunciation test and the TOEFL listening comprehension test, internal correlation study clarified the low validity of the paper-pencil pronunciation test.

In order to estimate how little the paper-pencil pronunciation test contributes to the total test score of English test in the JFSAT, the author calculated the correlation coefficient between the whole test and the whole test minus the paper-pencil pronunciation test. The correlation coefficient was very high ($r=.998$, $p<.01$, r-square$=.996$), which means that without the paper-pencil pronunciation test, the other 4 subtests (Grammar, Spoken English, Written English and Reading Comprehension) can account 99.6% of the variance of the whole test.

Conclusion

Summary

The present study investigated the reliability and validity of the English test in a Japanese Nationwide Entrance Examination (the JFSAT-English test). Participants consisted of 100 Japanese university students learning English as a foreign language. The results of the first study revealed that the JFSAT-English test is, to some degree, an appropriate measure of the examinee's English ability in terms of reliability and validity. Second, there was no statistically significant correlation between the TOEFL Listening Comprehension Test and the paper-pencil pronunciation test. However, since both of the tests showed low reliability, this result should be considered with a certain amount of caution. The second study was an internal correlation study investigating the construct validity of the test. The results of the second study revealed that the correlations between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and the other subtests are very low, showing the low construct validity of the test.

Limitations and remaining issues

A few characteristics of the present study limit the generalizability of its results. First, the results can only be generalizable to Japanese learners of English who have studied English in a formal educational setting. However, selecting only one nationality is often one of the great strengths of this kind of empirical study. In many studies conducted by other researchers in the past, various language backgrounds, age and educational background were mixed together. As a result, the findings of those studies are often hard to interpret because they can be only generalized to the single situation in which the data happened to be collected. Second, the present study focused on the internal construct validity of the JFSAT-English test by calculating the correlation coefficients among the subtests. Therefore, though all the tests outside of the paper-pencil pronunciation test show somewhat high validity in the internal correlation study, the results do not guarantee that each subtest is really measuring what it is constructed to measure. For example, some people might question if the spoken English expression test can indirectly measure the examinee's English speaking ability. Therefore, future

research should conduct concurrent validation study on each of the subtests in order to know more about the problems with the quality of the questions in the JFSAT-English test. In the future, we should investigate again whether there is a lack of correlation between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and a listening comprehension test of any type. If we find that there is no correlation between the two tests, then we should investigate what kind of listening comprehension test should be included as a subtest in the JFSAT-English test. Perhaps one of the issues that we should consider might be the number of items in a listening comprehension test in order to make the test work as a subtest significantly contributing to the total test score.

The following two general questions are posed as a summary of this section in the hope that other researchers interested in this area will find these lines interesting enough to pursue in the future:

(1) Is there no significant correlation between the paper-pencil pronunciation test and a listening comprehension test?
(2) How high is the concurrent validity of each subtest of English test in the JFSAT?
(3) How many items should be included in the future listening comprehension test in the JFSAT-English test?

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Appendix 1: cloze test (adopted from Ishiguro, A and Tucker, G. 1989 with permission)

One day wang lost his way while he was gathering wool.   He wandered in the woods (01) hours, but could not find (02) path to lead him home.   (03) came and Wang was tired (04) very hungry.   When he passed (05) bug rock, he thought he (06) human voices.   He walked around (07) rock and found a cave.   (08) voices cam from the cave.   (09) was almost dusk, but when (10) entered the cave, he noticed (11) was light and comfortable inside.   (12) walked deeper into the cave (13) he came to a room at (14) end.   Light and fresh air (15) from the ceiling.

Two men (16) sitting before a chess board.   (17) were playing chess, chatting merrily.   (18) neither talked to Wang nor (19) looked at him, but went (20) on playing.   Now and then (21) drank from their cups which (22) held in their hands. Since (23) was so hungry and thirsty, (24) asked for a sip.   For (25) first time they looked at (26) and smiled, offering him the (27) kind of a cup.   Although (28) did not talk to him, (29) invited him to drink by gesture.   (30) drink was fragrant and (31) as sweet as honey.   Wang (32) had finished it all, (33) strangely enough, the cup was refilled (34) he noticed it.

Wang (35) no longer hungry nor thirsty (36) he drank from the cup.   He (37) sat down beside the two (38)and watched their chess game.   (39) two men continued playing chess, (40) chatting and laughing.   The game (41) so exciting that Wang became (42) in it.   It took some (43) before it was over.   Maybe (44) hour or more had passed, (45) thought.   He had spent too (46) time in the cave, and (47) good-bye to the chess (48) who gave him a bag (49) a souvenir.

After he came out of (50) cave, he could find his (51) home easily.   However, when (52) entered his home village and (53) some people on the road, (54) did not

know any of (55).　They were all strangers.　He (56) the place where his old (57) was, but there was nothing (58) a few decayed poles and (59).　He did not understand what (60) happened, and looked around for (61) neighbors' houses.　They were all (62) from what he used to (63).　The people living there were (64) strangers too. Being at a (65) for what to do, he (66) the bag that the chess (67) had given him. Out came (68) stream of smoke, and in (69) minute, his hair had turned (70) and he found himself an old man.　What does this story remind you of?

Test Analysis of College Students' Communicative Competence in English

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Abstract：

While College English Tests（CET）in China have promoted the college English teaching, they have also led to the test-oriented teaching in colleges and hindered the development of students' communicative competence. To examine the validity of CET-4, experimental tests were carried out to the sampled students one year after they took CET-4 in December, 2002. The control class was examined with the original paper of CET-4 2002, while the treatment class was tested with a specially designed performance-test paper in which the multiple-choice questions were all changed into the subjective ones. The test scores were processed with the statistical analysis system SPSS. The results showed that although there was no significant difference between the two classes in their CET-4 scores, there was significant difference between them in their experimental test scores. The scores of the treatment class were significantly lower than those of the control class, which indicates that CET cannot objectively reflect students' communicative competence, and thus its validity is low. To eliminate the negative washback effect of CET, suggestions are put forward that CET be devised as a criterion-referenced test, frequency of the test be reduced, subjective questions be increased, and commercialization of the test be avoided.

Key words: College English Test, communicative competence, test analysis

l. Introduction of China's College English Test

Communicative competence refers to the ability to exchange information in a foreign language with the native speakers of the language. The College English Teaching Syllabus (for non-English majors) issued by China's Educational Department claims that the purpose of college English teaching is *to train students to have strong reading competence and fair competences in listening, speaking, writing and translation, so that they will able to communicate in English*. The Syllabus divides the basic college English teaching into two periods including six bands. Each band corresponds to one semester. The first period lasts two years from band one to band four, and the second period lasts one year from band five to band six.

In order to assess the fulfillment of the Syllabus in China's college English teaching, a standardized College English Test (CET) system for non-English majors, supported by the National Education Department, has been carried out in Chinese colleges and universities since 1987. The system consists of six bands corresponding to *the Syllabus*. The second-year students who have finished four semesters' study are required to pass CET-4, and the third-year students who have finished six semesters' study are expected to pass CET-6.

CET scores have now been generally accepted throughout the nation as the standard evaluation of students' English level. Meanwhile, CET's washback—the effects of testing on teaching and learning—has become one of the most controversial issues in China's college English teaching. On the one hand, CET gives colleges nationwide a uniform standard of comparison on the quality of their English teaching, and thus strongly attracts the attention of college leaders to lay emphasis on English teaching, which in turn has greatly promoted China's college English teaching. On the other hand, the test causes both teachers and students to value test results rather than language practice, and the overflow of multiple-choice questions in this large-scale test encourages both teachers and students to work more at the skills of test and guesswork than at the skills of practical communication. Thus it is common to find some students with high CET scores are quite poor in English speaking and writing. Therefore, in China's present reform of college English teaching, the controversial focus is on whether the washback effect of CET has hindered students' development in practical English and how to improve students' communicative competence in English.

Problems of CET

CET is basically established on the test theories of structuralism (Liu, Runqing, 2003: 131), which divides language into discrete points and tests them in the form of multiple-choice questions. Its advantages are the convenience for machine grading, objectiveness, and wide coverage of language knowledge. However, *discrete-point test views language ability as a discrete system* (Li, Jiong-ying 2002), and thus divides language into separate language points as grammar, vocabulary and so on, and tests them separately. But language in communication is in a synthetic form since phonetics,

grammar and vocabulary, etc. are integrated as a whole. Therefore, *by focusing on testing students' receptive ability while neglecting their productive ability, the multiple-choice test cannot reflect students' communicative competence objectively* (Han, Bao-cheng et al. 2004: 18), and thus its validity is doubtful.

CET-4 is designed as a criterion-related norm-reference test, namely, the score of an examinee is determined by the comparison with the scores of the norm-reference group. *The standard norm group of CET-4 is made up of approximately ten thousand undergraduates from China's six key universities: Beijing University , Tsinghua University, Shanghai Jiaotong University, Fudan University, Chinese Science and Technology University, and Xi'an Jiaotong University* (Yang Hui-zhong, et al. 2001: 66). It is doubtful to what extent such a norm-reference group can be representative in such a big country as China where the higher education is so unevenly developed. Professor Yang Hui-zhong claimed that *the purpose of CET-4 is to judge whether examinees have attained the standard required by The College English Teaching Syllabus* (2001: 67). According to Professor Liu Runqing(2003: 132), "*The standard of the Syllabus should be viewed as a measurement of students' achievement; therefore the test measuring the fulfillment of The Syllabus should be of criterion-reference.*"

As a test for measuring teaching results, *CET should be an achievement test, but in reality it is a kind of proficiency test. Although it also refers to the Syllabus, it seldom takes teaching contents into consideration* (Liu, Runqing, 1999: 222). This causes the separation of tests from teaching, which, in turn, causes students to value tests more than regular class performance. Many students think that so long as they can pass the test it doesn't matter whether they attend the regular classes or not, which results in students' high rate of absence from classes in some colleges.

CET is mainly composed of multiple-choice questions. *It has been proved by evidence that students who take multiple-choice tests can significantly increase their scores "artificially"* (Alderson et al., 2000:45). This encourages both teachers and students to work over test skills and countermeasures in preparing for the test, which interferes regular classroom teaching, leads to test-oriented teaching, and consequently affects the students' systematic mastery of the fundamental knowledge and integrate

skills of English, and hinders students' development of communicative competence (Han, Baocheng, 2004; Liu, Runqing & Dai, Manchun, 2003).

III. Purpose of the Study

In recent years, standardized objective English tests, consisting primarily of multiple-choice and matching items, have been generally criticized as inappropriate, invalid measures of students' communicative competencies (Han, Baocheng, 2004; Liu, Runqing & Dai, Manchun, 2003; Lynch, 2003; Li, Jiongying. 2002). Such criticisms have initiated and sustained a movement toward authentic performance-based test. As Lynch (2003) observes, *the advantage of performance-based testing resides in its potential to engender and sustain positive washback on the teaching and learning process.*

Therefore, the objective of this study was to examine the validity of CET-4 test by comparing its results with that of a performance-based test, to determine objectiveness of CET-4 in reflecting students' communicative competence and to ascertain the washback effect of CET on college English teaching.

Population

The population of the study consisted of undergraduates from four classes of Grade 2001 in Capital University of Medical Sciences, who had taken the CET-4 in December 2002. Their CET-4 scores were from 60 to 76, which represented the average English level of the grade. The 62 chosen participants were divided by equidistance sampling into two classes—the treatment class and the control class, 31 students each. The significance test on the difference of CET-4 between the two classes was performed by using SPSS for Windows and the results are as follows.

Table 1: Comparison of Mean and Std. Deviation of CET-4 between the Two Classes

Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	31	69.0645	4.6543	.8359
Treatment	31	67.6129	4.4548	.8001

Table 2: Significance Test on the Difference of CET-4 between the Two Classes

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances t-test for Equality of Means								
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
.000	.997	1.254	60	.215	1.4516	1.1571	-.8630	3.7662

Test for Equality of Variances： F=0.000 P=0.997 >0.05
t=1.254 p = 0.125 >0.05 No significant difference between the means.

It can be seen from Table 1 that both the means and the standard deviations of the two classes are very close. From the first two items of Table 2, it can be seen that the probability of significance P is equal to 0.997, which is greater than 0.05. That means there is no significant difference between two deviations. From the two-tailed t-test, it can be seen that the P value is 0.215, which is greater than 0.05. So it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the two classes in their mean scores. Therefore in terms of CET-4 scores, the English levels of the two classes appeared to be the same.

(4) Development of Testing Materials

According to modern language test theories, in designing a test, the characteristics of the task and the situation of the test should be consistent with those of the task and situation of language application, so as to increase the test's authenticity and thereby its construct validity (Han Bao-cheng, et al. 2004: 18). For the convenience of comparison, we designed a performance-based test paper on the basis of a CET-4 paper. We used the test paper of CET-4 of December, 2002 as the base and changed multiple-choice questions into performance questions without altering the contents of the original paper so that the two papers may keep the similar level. Students were required to answer the questions in writing and translation rather than answering multiple-choice questions, by which guesswork was eliminated and the students' communicative competence could be reflected.

As to the part of reading comprehension, the original passages were kept, but the multiple-choice questions were changed into short answer questions and sentence completion questions which required students to find out answers similar to the original multiple-choice questions, but to answer the questions in Chinese. This prevented the students from copying the sentences from the text without understanding them, and thus their real ability in reading comprehension could be reflected.

Likewise, the original multiple-choice questions of vocabulary and structure were changed into sentence completion questions without altering the original sentences. The students were required to fill in the blanks with appropriate words or expressions. The first letter of the key words or Chinese equivalent was provided as a clue. The purpose of this change was to test their performance in grammar and spelling.

As for the cloze test, original text was kept, but the multiple-choice questions were changed into blank-filling questions and at the same time the initial letter and the number of letters of the word to fill in were given as clues. In this way, the students' ability in comprehension, judgment and spelling could be checked.

As for the composition, the original three-paragraph argumentum writing was changed into a practical writing. The students were required to write a letter of application for a job based on an outline to test their practical writing skills.

It was difficult to redesign the CET-4 listening test into a performance listening test paper. In order to increase the structure validity of the listening test, we specially chose some British IELTS listening exercises that had been examined by an English expert of our university to be on the similar level in vocabulary and structure with the CET-4 listening test. These exercises, which included sketch identification, blank filling, multiple-choice and short-answer questions, formed the listening part of the performance test.

(5)   Methods and Instruments

One year after the participants took CET-4 in Dec. 2002, they were given the experimental tests in Dec. 2003. The control class was tested again with the unchanged CET-4 test paper of Dec. 2002, while the treatment class was tested with the performance-test paper in which the objective questions had been changed into subjective

ones. The experiment was carried out as students' final examination of the semester so that the students would review lessons before testing and would take the test seriously. The tests for both classes proceeded under strict regulations of CET in order to ensure the reliability of the tests.

After the tests one teacher was requested to grade the papers of the control class according to the criterion of CET-4 and the other teacher to grade the papers of the treatment class with the corresponding standards with CET-4. Double-blind method was used throughout the experiment, namely, neither the students nor the grading teachers knew the real purpose of the tests, thus the objectivity of the tests and the evaluation could be guaranteed.

Null hypotheses of the study were developed as follows:

1. There would be no significant difference between the CET-4 scores and the CET-4 retest scores of the control class.

2. There would be no significant difference between the CET-4 scores and the performance test scores of the treatment class.

3. There would be no significant difference between the CET-4 retest scores of the control class and the performance test scores of the treatment class.

4. There would be no significant difference in the construct validity between the CET-4 paper and the performance test paper.

After the paper grading, the data were analyzed with the standardized statistical analysis system SPSS for Windows for comparison.

VII.   Results

1. Comparison between CET-4 and the Retest of the Control Class

The mean scores and the standard divisions of the CET-4 and the retest of the control class are shown in Table 3, and the results of the significance test in the difference between the two tests are shown in Table 4. It can be seen from Table 4 that t is equal to 4.339, and probability P value equals 0.000, far less than 0.01, which indicates that there is a remarkable difference between the results of CET-4 in 2002 and those of the retest in 2003. From Table 3, it can be seen that the mean score of the retest in 2003 is much lower than that of CET-4 in 2002.   The standard deviation of the retest is higher

than that of CET-4, which indicates a higher rate of dispersion between the student's scores than that of CET-4.

Table 3: Comparison between CET-4 in 02 and the Retest in 03 of the Control Class

	N	Mean score	Standard Deviation
CET-4 result	31	69.0645	4.6543
Retest result	31	62.5484	9.3678

Table 4: Significance Test on the Difference between the Results of the Two Tests

Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
			Lower	Upper			
6.5161	8.3621	1.5019	3.4489	9.5834	4.339	30	.000

t=4.339   *P<<0.01*

2. Comparison between CET-4 and the Performance Test of the Treatment Class

Table 6 shows that *t* value equals 12.349, and probability P value equals 0.000, far less than 0.01, which indicates a significant difference between the result of CET-4 and that of the performance test of the treatment class. Table 5 demonstrates that the mean score of the performance test is much lower than that of CET-4. The standard deviation of the performance test is higher than that of CET-4, which shows a widened gap between the student's scores.

Table 5: Comparison between CET-4 and the Performance Test of the Treatment Class

	N	Mean score	Standard Deviation
CET-4 in 2002	31	67.6129	4.4548
Performance Test in 2003	31	51.4677	7.9874

Table 6: Significance Test on the Difference between the Results of the Two Tests

Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
			Lower	Upper			
16.1452	7.2792	1.3074	13.4751	18.8152	12.349	30	.000

t=12.349   *P<<0.01*

3. Comparison between the Retest of the Control Class and the Performance Test of the Treatment Class

An independent sample test was used to find out the difference between the retest of the control class and the performance test of the treatment class. It can be seen from Table 7 that *t* is equal to 5.0006, and probability P equals 0.000, far less than 0.01, which indicates that there is a significant difference between results of the performance test of the treatment class and those of the CET-4 retest of the control class, although there was no significant difference between the two classes in their CET-4 scores (See Table 1 & 2).

Table 7: Significance Test on the Difference of the Experimental Tests between the Two Classes

Class	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Treatment Class	31	51.4677**	7.9874
Control Class	31	62.5484**	9.3678

**t*=5.0006   df=60   P=0.000<<0.01

4. Comparison of Subtests in the Experimental Tests between the Two Classes

In terms of the mean-score comparison of subtests between the treatment class and the control class in Table 8, it can be seen that the mean scores of the treatment class are lower than those of the control class in listening, reading, vocabulary and cloze, with a significant decrease in reading and cloze and with the most dramatic drop in vocabulary.

Table 8: Comparison of Subtests in the Experimental Tests between the Two Classes

	Listening	Reading	Vocabulary	Cloze	Writing
Full Mark for Each Item	20	40	15	10	15
Means of Control Class	12.0645	26.9032	8.5323	6.7903	8.2258
Means of Treatment Class	11.4839	22.3387	4.9032	4.3704	8.9355

Since the multiple-choice questions were changed into written answer questions in reading comprehension, it was found in paper grading that many students were only confined to superficial or general comprehension of the text. It was especially difficult for them to understand the implied meaning, their translations were inaccurate, and their choice of words and expressions was inappropriate.

The contents of the vocabulary and cloze test were from the original paper of CET-4, but the multiple-choice questions were changed into blank filling with the appropriate words and expressions. In paper grading, we found that many students were unable to spell the words correctly even if the number of letters, or initials, or even Chinese equivalents were given as clues.

5. Comparison of the Construct Validity between the CET-4 and the Performance Test

Construct validity concerns the extent to which performance on tests is consistent with predictions on the basis of a theory of abilities. It is recognized by the measurement profession as central to the appropriate interpretation of test scores. *In the design of a test, the consistency of the test behavior and the actual usage of the language should be taken into consideration so as to increase the authenticity of the test. The more authentic the test mission, the more accurate the deduction on testees' language ability according to the test scores, and thus the higher the level of construct validity of the test.* (Han Baocheng et al. 2004: 18).

In doing construct validity research, one way is to correlate each subtest with other subtests and with the total test. *Since the reason for having different test components is that they all measure something different and therefore contribute to the overall picture of the language ability attempted by the test, we should expect these correlations to be fairly low. The correlations between each subtest and the whole test, on the other hand, might be expected, at least according to classical test theory, to be higher since the overall score is taken to be a more general measure of language ability than each individual component score* (Alderson, et al. 2000: 184). In order to evaluate to the construct validity of the test papers, we made a correlation analysis on the experimental test scores of both classes. The results of the analysis are as follows.

Table9: Internal Correlations of the CET-4 Retest of the Control Class

	Listening	Reading	Vocabulary	Cloze	Writing	Total
Listening	1					
Reading	0.372*	1				
Vocabulary	0.411*	0.242	1			
Cloze	0.664**	0.126	0.361*	1		

Writing	0.048	0.268	0.049	-0.001	1	
Total	0.753**	0.831**	0.560**	0.515**	0.354	1

* P<0.05   ** P<0.01

Note: The single star * means the correlation is significant. The double stars ** mean the correlation is highly significant.

From the matrix in Table 9, it can be seen that although there is a highly significant correlation between the total score and the individual component scores of listening, reading, vocabulary and cloze in the CET-4 retest, there is no significant correlation between the total score and the score of writing. This indicates that the writing score has little effect on the total score, which is not normal. On the other hand, there is highly significant correlation between two subtests, namely listening and cloze, which means that they both tested the similar ability without much distinction. Furthermore, the negative correlation appears between cloze and writing, which indicates that the two subtests tested completely different abilities. This is unreasonable because the different language skills are naturally related to each other. These results indicate that the test paper of CET-4 of Dec, 2002 has an insufficient degree of differentiation, and thus low construct validity.

Table 10: Internal Correlations of the Performance Test of the Treatment Class

	Listening	Reading	Vocabulary	Cloze	Writing	Total
Listening	1					
Reading	0.090	1				
Vocabulary	0.089	0.377*	1			
Cloze	0.349	0.136	0.332	1		
Writing	0.340	0.047	0.167	0.395*	1	
Total	0.550**	0.729**	0.619**	0.628**	0.464**	1

* P<0.05   ** P<0.01

From the matrix in Table 10, it can be seen that on the one hand, there is a highly significant correlation between the total score and all the five individual component scores; on the other hand, there is a slight but not significant correlation between each component scores. There is only significant correlation between reading and vocabulary, and that between cloze and writing, which can be considered as normal, as is known to all a large vocabulary contributes a lot to reading, and the comprehensive ability of cloze

contributes to writing. The results indicate that compared with CET-4, the performance test has a higher correlation between the total score and the component scores while it still keeps a better degree of differentiation between the individual component scores, and thus a better construct validity.

Discussion

Since our experiment was carried out in the samples of one grade in one university, the following conclusions are subject to the conditions and limitations of this study.

Our first hypothesis that there would be no significant difference between the CET-4 scores and the CET-4 retest scores of the control class was rejected. The participants did not stop studying English after their CET-4 test in 2002, still having 2-4 hours of required English course per week for each semester in 2003. Therefore their normal English level should not be lower than that of one year ago. However, in repeating the same test, their scores were even significantly lower than those of one year ago. This suggests that CET-4 has failed in producing similar results in repetition and thus its reliability is questionable.

Our second hypothesis that there would be no significant difference between the CET-4 scores and the performance test scores of the treatment class was also rejected. The results show that although the contents of the two test papers were almost the same, once the ways in answering the test questions were changed, namely from objective questions into subjective ones, the students' scores significantly dropped. This indicates that CET-4 mainly tested students' receptive ability rather than their productive ability. It can be concluded that CET cannot objectively reflects students' communicative competence and thus its validity is low.

Our third hypothesis that there would be no significant difference between the CET-4 retest scores of the control class and the performance test scores of the treatment class was also rejected. The results show that the control class did much better in the CET-4 retest than the treatment class in the performance test. This is an indication of the negative washback effect of CET which induces the students to work more at developing their receptive skills than their productive ones with the overflow of multiple-choice questions. This consequence, in turn, has affected students' language

accuracy and obstructed the improvement in their practical communicative competence.

Our fourth hypothesis that there would be no significant difference in the construct validity between the CET-4 paper and the performance test paper was also rejected. The performance test paper presents a better construct validity than that of CET-4 2002. This strongly suggests that the participants' test behavior in CET-4 is not consistent with their actual usage of English and thus the authenticity of the test is also questionable.

IX.   Suggestions on the Reform of CET in China

In summary, our study indicates that CET-4 scores, with a questionable reliability and insufficient validity, can not objectively reflect the student's normal English level, and its negative washback effect has hindered student's development in their communicative competence. According to a nationwide survey on the assessment of CET made by Professor Liu, Renqing and others, *more than 90% of college teachers think such a national unity test as CET cannot objectively reflect students' communicative competence in English* (2003: 128). Although our research was conducted on a small scale, its result is consistent with the opinion of most university EFL teachers in China. In view of the above problems, we put forward the following suggestions on the reform of CET.

1. The original purpose of CET is to check the fulfillment of the *College English Syllabus*. Therefore it should be designed as a criterion-referenced test but not a norm-referenced test. As long as students come up to the required standards of *the Syllabus*, they should be allowed to pass the examination. The passing rate should not be determined according to their relative position in a norm-reference group. In this way the college English could be redirected from the test-oriented teaching to the Syllabus-oriented teaching.

2. As a teaching test, CET is named according to semesters, therefore, it should be held once a year according to the normal teaching schedule. The present biannual tests have caused both teachers and students to prepare one test after another without a

breathing spell. As a result, the regular teaching is interrupted and the purpose for enhancing students' communicative competence in English cannot be carried out. Therefore, we suggest that CET be held annually so as to leave a stable period between two tests for both teachers and students to keep their concentration on their normal teaching and study instead of getting busy with CET all the time.

3. The main reason for the overflow of multiple-choice questions in CET is their convenience for machine grading. If this convenience is to be kept at the sacrifice of the test validity, which in turn misleads the college English teaching, it breaches the original purpose of the test. Therefore, we suggest that objective items be reduced while subjective ones increased in order to evaluate students' real English performance. Only by improving the structure validity of CET can college English teaching be redirected to the right course of enhancing students' communicative competence and the negative washback effect of CET be reduced.

4. Originally CET is a means of assessing and promoting college English teaching but now it inclines to become commercialized with the increasing numbers of social testees. The large numbers of social testees bring great pressures on colleges and universities to arrange CET twice a year. Since many social testees are not really qualified for CET and their real purpose is to obtain CET certificates, the cheating rate in CET is on the rise. Therefore, we suggest that CET remain to be a test for assessing the college English teaching quality. Only in this way can we clearly set the function of CET as a means for developing college students' real communicative competence.

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Putting Students' Differences in Perspectives:
An Introduction to the Individual Developing Model

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Abstract

The individualized program aims to teach according to students' needs and abilities. However, the notion that aims to create one lesson plan for each student causes drawbacks from teachers. In the generalized curriculum system, teachers often struggle in deciding when and where to treat students as special individuals. This paper introduces the Individual Developing Model which can assist teachers to discover and develop students' individual differences in the generalized curriculum settings without having to design individual lesson plan for every student. This model comprises three stages – the Discovery Stage, Differentiation Stage and Developing Stage. From discovering to developing students' differences, this paper outlines a series of methods and activities which can be applied to general classroom settings.

1.0 Introduction

Since the 1960s, there have already been suggestions for individualized programs. Cronback (1967, cited by Bolvin, 1991:189) has proposed to attend to students' differences though individualized lesson objectives with varied instructions and resources. In language teaching, present programs such as student-centered learning, self-instruction learning (Dickinson, 1987) and communicative language teaching (CLT) are among the approaches that support student needs' analysis and personalization. Individualized program, according to Altman's definition (Altman, 1977:76-77, quoted by Tudor, 1996) is as below:

"[It]…is one in which the structure of the program – i.e. presentation and composition of content, role definition of teacher and learner, system of evaluation – is allowed to be flexible in an effort to accommodate, to the extent possible, the interests, needs and abilities of individual learners."

The core of the program is thus to teach according to individual student's "interests, needs and abilities". Individualized program has created awareness among teachers so that to treat every student as special individual inside and outside the class. Aside from academic achievement, teachers are becoming more ready to accept other capabilities as part of students' specialties. These capabilities range from vocational skills to talents in all aspects of live (arts, music, etc.).

Despite this positive change of attitudes among teachers, there are still drawbacks towards the individualized program. One of the reasons that causes drawbacks is the notion of designing individual lesson plan for every student (Bolvin, 1991:189). Such notion has added burdens as well as pressure to teachers' responsibilities. The situations become more complicated in countries in which the population is high. The large number of students in each class causes the designing of individual lesson plan a burden to teachers.

Other than that, the generalized curriculum, which targets at assumed groups of learners, has not set aside special instructions for individualized program. Finnochiaro and Brumfit (1983) are of the view that generalization of language planning is a must at the planning level. This has carried much truth because curriculum planning is not the matter of planning for an individual but for the whole nation. Since this is the scenario, the discovery of individual differences depends largely on the teachers in actual classroom practices. This is because educational practitioners especially the teachers are the ones who interact most with the students. This makes them the most suitable candidates in discovering students' individual differences.

In light of these problems, this paper proposes a model that can assist teachers to carry out the individualized program in the classroom. This model is called the Individual Developing Model. There are three stages in his model, namely the Discovery Stage, Differentiation Stage and Developing Stage.

The advantages of using the Individual Developing Model are:

a) It helps teachers to work along the generalized curriculum and at the same time not burdening teachers with individual lesson plan.

b) It explains how teachers can use information about students to help students to self-discover their specialties.

c) It represents a methodology that explains the relativity of students' self-discovery and teachers' dominancy (that is, it hypothesizes that the development of students' self-discovery reduced teachers' dominancy in teaching and learning).

Before we look at how the Individual Development Model works, we need to examine the kind of students' information that teachers need as basic input for the model. In the next section we outline some of the differences that teachers can discover from each student.

2.0 Individual Differences

The differences of every student provide the necessary information for a teacher. In our model, these differences form the bases from which changes can take place. These changes include task instructions, groupings and material selections. In this section, we outline four aspects of individual differences – aptitudes, motivation, personalities and learning styles and strategies.

Aptitudes

Caroll defines aptitude as the "capability of learning a task" (1981, cited by Ellis, 1994:494). This capability is an additional advantage in language learning but it does not guarantee one's achievement (Ellis, 1994). Nevertheless, to be able to discover learners' aptitude (or lack of it) helps to explain their success (or lack of it) in language learning (Williams and Burdens, 1997).

Examples of language aptitudes are memory for new vocabulary, the ability to memorize new sounds and to understand how words function grammatically (Lightbown and Spada, 1993:37). These capabilities are observable in the classroom. Other than that,

aptitudes in study skills, leadership and organization skills can also materialize through working in groups, joining school associations and organizing outdoor activities. In teaching and learning, students' aptitudes provide hints of which teachers can use in selecting activities to develop students' capabilities. One example of activity is A-Word-A-Day which takes only a few minutes of the lesson. This activity helps to develop students with aptitude in learning new vocabulary and at the same time acts as an enrichment activity to the rest of the students.

Motivation

Other than aptitude, students also show differences in their learning motivation. Williams and Burden (1997:94) define motivation as "a state of temporary or prolonged goal-oriented behavior which individuals actively choose to engage in". This is to see motivation as being long-termed and short-termed motivation. Another way of ategorizing motivation is too see it as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Deci (1975:23, quoted by Brown, 1993:155) defines intrinsic motivation as the learners' willingness "to engage in the activities for their own sake". This kind of motivation will bring about "internally rewarding consequences, namely feelings or competence and self determination".

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, refers to behaviors encouraged by external factors such as rewards, praises and encouragement. Maslow (1970, cited by Brown 1993:156) places intrinsic motivation as being long-termed and more "superior" than extrinsic motivation. This is because intrinsic motivation is usually more lasting than extrinsic motivation. In teaching and learning, to be able to generate motivation is not the end of a teacher's task. Students need encouragement and guidance to find and retain a long-termed motivation, which is usually developed from students' interests and desires.

Aside from that, Gardner (1985) has also categorized motivation into two main social dimensions - the integrative motivation and the instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation is associated with the learners' intention of blending with the cultures of the native-speakers. Comparatively, instrumental motivation is related to the

view that to be competence in a language provides economical and practical advantages. These advantages include better career prospects and chances of promotion.

Personalities

The third type of differences is personalities. According to Ely's model of language proficiency development (Ely, 1986, cited by Skehan, 1989:108), "language class sociability" and "language class risk-taking" are among the personality traits that contribute to classroom participation (which then leads to language proficiency). Language class sociability refers to "gregariousness, people orientation and fear of isolation" whereas risk-taking is impulsivity or having "the need for excitement and change" (Eysenck, 1965, quoted by Skehan, 1989:100). These two types of personalities belong to the extroversion category. Ellis (1994) has hypothesized that this type of learners is more likely to perform better in interpersonal skills. In the language classroom, they tend to respond better to activities which demand more spontaneous speaking skills.

Introversion, on the contrary, refers to personality trait that prefers secured tasks and "avoids excitement" (Eysenck and Chan, 1982:154, quoted by Ellis, 1994:520). These 'secured tasks' include traditional grammar practice and choral reading. Ellis' hypothesis (1994) is that the introverted learners are more likely to succeed academically in language learning.

Despite these hypotheses (regarding the characteristics of the different personality types), we suggest teachers to depend upon their own evaluation in observing learners' behaviors.

Learning Styles and Strategies

Lastly, students also differ from their learning styles and strategies. Brown (1994:104) defines style as "a term that refers to consistent and rather enduring tendencies or preference within an individual". Each learner practises certain learning styles consciously or unconsciously. Among a group of learners, some learn better with pictures and diagrams (visual learners) and some absorb knowledge faster by participation (kinesthetic learners). Knowing the differences in learning styles, teachers

can adjust their explanation when monitoring learning in small groups.

Learners' learning styles affect their learning strategies. Brown (1994:104) sees learner strategies as the "special methods of approaching a problem or task" and every strategy as a "battle plan" that deals with a particular problem. For instance, mind-mapping (representation of ideas in diagram) is one of the memory strategies in Oxford's taxonomy which is preferred by visual learners (Oxford, 1990). On the other hand, reading aloud is more suitable for auditory learners (those who learn better by hearing or listening). Understanding students' learning strategies helps teachers in choosing suitable activities for different learners.

3.0 The Individual Developing Model

The Individual Developing Model is a teaching and learning model that aims to develop students' differences through real classroom tasks. This model contains three stages:

a) Discovery Stage

b) Differentiation Stage

c) Developing Stage

Diagram 1: The Individual Developing Model
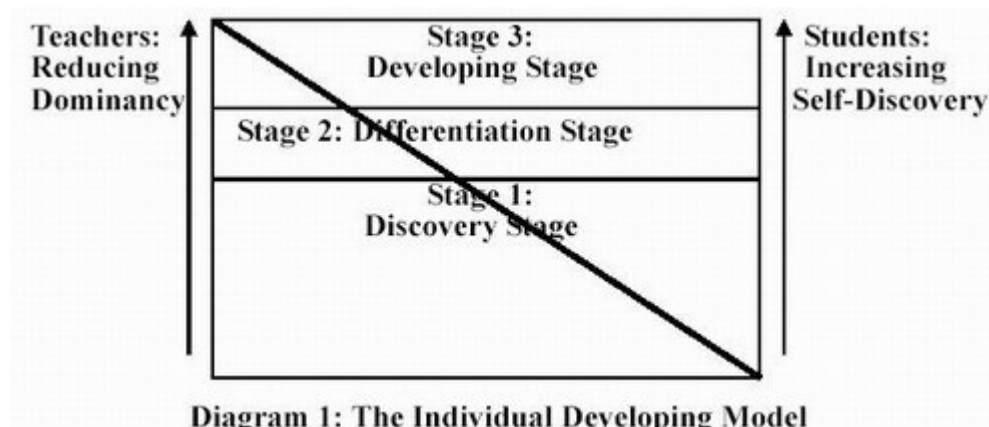
This model uses students' differences as the basic input of knowledge for teachers. The discovery of differences occurs at the Discovery Stage (Stage 1). At this stage, teachers' dominancy is at the strongest. This is because students are yet to find out their capabilities and learning goals. Therefore, teachers hold the responsibility in helping students to find out their specialties.

At the Differentiation Stage (Stage 2), teachers devise lessons to suit students' interests, personality and capabilities. At this stage too, teachers continue to recognize the differences in each student. More inputs about students can be obtained while carrying out activities in the class. While teachers are in the process of discovering students' differences, students get to know more about themselves too. This model suggests that the increase of students' self-discovery causes reduction in teachers' dominancy. This is because students are becoming clearer of their interests, capabilities and learning motivation. Thus, they can make decision on matters such as topics to focus on, division of time for learning and organization of activities.

At the highest level (Developing Stage), teachers are working towards learners' training. At this stage, students are aware of their wants and needs. They gradually learn to make decision towards what to choose for their goals. This is the stage in which teachers' dominancy is at the minimum. The development from Stage 1 to 3 varies between individuals. Some students attain self-discovery faster than the others. Hence, the Developing Stage aims to instill a self-directed learning attitude into the students so that they can continue to self-discover even after they have proceeded to another level of life.

In the next section, we will look how this model applies to classroom teaching.

4.0 Applications in the Classroom

Stage 1: Discovery Stage

At the discovery stage, teachers first find out about students' individual differences. We suggest five methods for this stage.

Observation

Observation is the simplest way to find out about students' personality and learning strategies. Through students' interaction with one another, the way they speak, the topics they discuss and their responses towards others' comments, teachers can

predict students' personality types. For example, an extrovert tends to be more sociable than an introvert. An introvert usually displays shyness, quietness and attentiveness in class.

Other than that, learning strategies can be observed through students' note-taking, revising techniques and memorizing skills. For instance, one who must read aloud in the memorization stage tends to be an auditory learner. Upon recognizing students' differences, teachers can make short notes about them. For classes in which seating positions are fixed, teachers can use the below method in marking students' differences:
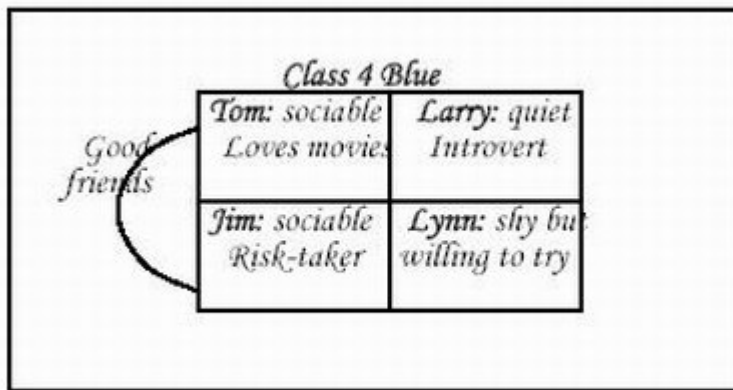
Diagram 2: Records of Students' Differences

The recording of students' individual differences is important because these inputs provide clues for lesson planning at the second stage.

Questionnaires

The second method that we suggest is using questionnaires. The use of questionnaires helps "to get language learners to self-report their attitudes or personal characteristics" (Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991:35). Questionnaires can also be used to find out students' learning motivation. The below shows an example of the question asked in finding out students' learning motivation:

Rate the following answers from 1 to 5 (1- most important reason and 5 – least important reason):

1. Why do you want to learn English?

* To find better job in the future.

* To be able to communicate with foreigners.

* To want to study in overseas.

* To want to score well in examinations.

* _____ ask(s) me to learn English. (Please state who)

The data gathered from questionnaires can be tabulated for references of teachers. In identifying individual differences, teachers may not want to use anonymous identity in the questionnaires. Unless the questions require personal comments from students regarding a certain issue (of which students are afraid to speak out of), anonymous identity can be avoided.

Assessments

Though traditional, assessment is a way to find out about students' readiness in learning a language. Assessment helps to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in a particular area. In some cases, students' aptitudes (especially the capability in constructing grammatical structures) are made apparent in assessment. Nevertheless, aptitudes such as talents in arts and music may not be immediately identified in language classroom. These aptitudes often materialize while carrying out activities inside or outside the class.

Information Feedback

Information feedback is in a way similar to questionnaires. However, they differ in that information feedback can appear in the form of expressing thoughts and expressing opinions. This method can be used to identify students' personality as well as their capability to reason. For instance, teachers can ask students for their opinions after viewing a videotape show on family violence. Through observation of students' emotions such as anger, aggression or fears, teachers learn more about students' personality.

Teachers can also find out about students' maturity of thoughts through information feedback. This method can also be used at the Differentiation Stage to continue to discover about students' differences.

Psychology Tests

Other than that, psychology test such as personality tests can provide guidelines for teachers to identify personality types. However, teachers have to bear in mind that psychology tests are not always accurate and teachers should not rely too much on the tests' results.

Stage 2: Differentiation Stage

As shown in Diagram 1, students' self-discovery does not end after Stage 1. It progresses and is in continuous development from Stage 1 to 3. Therefore, teachers can discover more about students' differences while carrying out activities in Stage 2. Teachers' knowledge of the students are renewed and refreshed every time new differences are found. In this section, we look at how the information obtained in Stage 1 helps differentiation of students' needs at Stage 2.

Gradation of Tasks

Once teachers have found out about students' differences, teachers can devise activities according to students' needs. The first differentiation method that teachers can use is gradation of tasks. Gradation of tasks refers to the use of tasks graded from categories such as easy, average to difficult, depending on the language proficiency of the students. The use of graded tasks benefits not only the lower achievers but also those with special capabilities.

Below is an example of graded tasks to teach the vocabulary terms 'generation', 'generation gap', 'pop' and 'traditional'. The terms and their meanings are taken from Unit Four 'Three Generations' of the Taiwanese textbook Senior High School English Book 1. (1999). Tai Nan: Nan-I. Pages 53 to 66:

Difficulty Levels and Examples of Tasks

Easy

*After you have listened to the passage, **match** the meaning to its term in the following list (without referring to your textbook):*

a) generation   1. differences which divide two generations
b) generation gap   2. about old customs and beliefs
c) pop   3. age groups
d) traditional   4. modern and popular

Average

*After you have listened to the passage, **guess** the meanings of the following terms (without referring to your textbook):*

a) generation _____
b) generation gap _____
c) pop _____
d) traditional _____

Difficult

*After you have listened to the passage, **write out** the meanings of the following terms. After that, **make a sentence** to show how each term is used (without referring to your textbook):*

a) generation _____
     Example:
b) generation gap _____
     Example:
c) pop _____
     Example:
d) traditional _____
     Example:

Table 1: An Example of Task Gradation

The easier task differs from the more complicated task in terms of the cues given for each term, the length of time for completion and the cognitive demands of each task. To be able to teach according to students' needs is the aim of Stage 2. The use of graded tasks allows students to learn at different paces. The use of more challenging tasks for the advanced students can avoid the feelings of boredom and demotivation in learning.

Varieties of Teaching Aids

The second differentiation method makes use of variable teaching aids. Teaching aid is an important part of pedagogy. The choice of teaching aid affects students in the learning process. For example, the use of a Web diagram such as the following helps visual learners to summarize the vocabulary learnt under a particular topic.
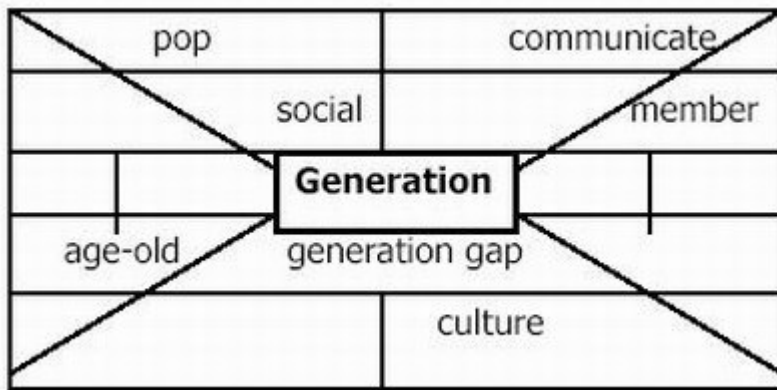
Diagram 3: An Example of a Web Diagram

(The vocabulary terms above are taken from Unit Four 'Three Generations' of the Taiwanese textbook Senior High School English Book 1. (1999). Tai Nan: Nan-I. Pages 53 to 66.)

In order to attend to students with different learning style and strategies, teachers can vary class activities by using different teaching aids. For auditory learners, the use of radio programs in English classes accelerates teaching and learning. In schools that are equipped with computer laboratories, radio programs can be replaced by CD-ROM. There are many types of teaching CD-ROM on the market that can assist students to practice speaking and listening skills.

Other suggestions of teaching aids (and the types of students they cater for) are listed in the table below:

Types of Teaching Aids	Individual Differences	Types of Topics/Skills/ Grammatical Expressions
Maps, charts and diagrams	Visual learners	Directions, comparison of data
Paintings and drawings	Visual learners, artistic students	Descriptions, persuasive expressions (selling of items)
Action games	Kinesthetic learners, extroverts	Descriptions, different grammatical topics
Banking forms, subscription forms, order forms and application forms	Instrumentally motivated learners	Vocabulary (*signature, serial number, account number, quantity, etc.*)
Crosswords puzzles	Introvert students (sometimes can be used in competition for extrovert learners as well)	Vocabulary

Table 2: Examples of Teaching Aids for Different Learners

The suggestions above are not exhaustive and neither they are absolute. The actual designing of lessons still has to depend upon particular groups of learners. Teachers should try out different teaching techniques so that there are chances for every student to develop individually.

Homogenous and Mixed-ability Groupings

Another way of catering for students' needs is through groupings. Grouping is one of the commonest ways of organizing students in the classroom. There are many types of groupings, namely random groupings, groupings according to seating positions and groupings according to social cliques. In this section, we focus mainly on homogenous and mixed-ability groupings.

Green et al (1996:137) are of the view that "group members should be homogeneous in terms of both linguistic ability and personality type". This helps to encourage "substantial and coherent contribution" in the learning process. In some schools in Britain, students are grouped differently for different subjects. As a result, students have to change classrooms (either to the higher or lower grades classes) depending on their capability in a particular subject. In this paper, we suggest students to be grouped according to the objectives of every lesson – homogenous at some lessons and mixed-ability at others.

For tasks such as drama presentations, it is unfair to group the introverts into a group and the extroverts into another. In this case, a mixed-ability grouping is more suitable. Nevertheless, in project work such as field research, homogenous groupings help students to enjoy being each other's company. However, there are also cases when students with the same personality type that cannot work together. Therefore, teachers hold the responsibility of being observers as well as decision-makers in the classroom.

In term of personal study groups, students with the same learning style can be grouped together. For instance, visual learners who prefer notes in the diagrams or mind-mapping format can exchange notes with one another. This helps student to build up learning skills

as well as cooperative learning. Furthermore, to categorize students into groups can also avoid the trouble of designing individual lesson plan for each student.

Journal Writing

The next differentiation method is journal writing. The type of journal that we suggest here does not refer to the compiled articles that are published for academic purposes. Journals in the classroom refer to students' reflections towards a particular issue or literary work. This type of journal is usually used in Literature class for students to express their thoughts and opinions. It is not a private document but its contents can be shared between students and teachers as a way to communicate and exchange ideas.

Below is an example of a journal entry:

Wednesday, 12 June
The poem: The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost

Today we discussed this poem in the class. I was enlightened by the poet's decision in choosing the road that nobody has used. In real life, very often, I feel too risky to try out something that is totally new to me.
Though I am interested in dancing, I don't think I can dance on the stage in front of the audience. It's a new path to me…

From this example, we can notice the writer's personality – that this student is not a risk-taker type. Through reading students' journal, teachers obtain information about students' interests and needs. From the journal above, teachers can investigate whether that particular student has an aptitude in dancing. A deeper understanding of students' differences helps to direct teachers in developing these differences either inside or outside the classroom.

Other ways that teachers can encourage students to express themselves are through discussion on poems, dramas and societal issues. Through expressing thoughts and opinions, students develop their own identities, which is what we aim for in Stage 3.

Stage 3: Developing Stage

Stage 3 is the stage in which students have slowly started to appreciate their own differences. They will also learn to respect others' differences. At this stage, students' self-discovery is at the maximum, which brings about minimizing of teachers' instructions and dominancy.

At Stage 3, we suggest two ways to help teachers to further develop students' differences. The main purpose of this stage is to instill confidence into the students so that they continue to self-develop even after they have left school.

Autonomous Learning

The first way that we suggest for developing students' differences is through autonomous learning. Autonomous learners are those who can self-direct and develop own commitments in learning without waiting for instructions from others. These students show their own organization toward learning, revising and doing library research.

In training learners to become autonomous learners, teachers need to instill a self-directed attitude into the learners. Teachers need to inform students why is autonomy beneficial to them. Reducing students' dependency on teachers is the first step in autonomous learners' training.

To start autonomous learning in the classroom, we suggest teachers to give more chances for students to make decision. Teachers can start from small matters such as allowing students to make notes by using their own styles, letting students choose a topic for discussion and even encouraging self- and peer- corrections in exercises. Other than that, teachers can bring students to the self-access centers which are available in most libraries.

Students learn how to use radios, televisions and other materials for self-learning. At this stage, teachers become the facilitators who keep monitoring students' progress. Factors such as students' age and levels of maturity provide hints for teachers the degree of autonomy they can impose upon the students. Once students have adopted an autonomous learning style, they can bring with them the same attitudes in facing challenges in life such as challenges in learning new skills at work place. Autonomy also aims to produce students who know how to handle new knowledge by adjusting to their own learning styles.

Learning Contract

The second way that we can use to develop students' differences is via learning contracts. The learning contracts that we suggest in this paper are different from those that teachers 'make' students to produce in order to achieve certain goals in language learning. The difference in our proposal is that we opt for more freedom for the students in making the contracts. Here, we suggest two types of contracts:

a) Self-motivated Contract

Self-motivated contract is a contract for the students themselves in which they set their own goals in learning. This contract need not be shown to any one. It is a contract that students can keep for their own reference. The overall purpose is to trust students in goal-settings. The types of conditions in the contracts can be skills-developing or examination-driven.

Since we have discussed autonomous learning, this is a step to further pursuit learner autonomy in learning. Nevertheless, teachers have to be aware that this type of contract is more suitable for matured learners. For younger learners, teachers can consider setting more specific condition such as 'I must finish five books by the end of this month'.

b) Contracts with Others

'Others' can be peers, parents or anybody as long as the person is whom the students trust. The aim of this contract is to develop a 'mentoring' relationship between the learners and someone they trust. 'Mentoring' relationship is a kind of supportive relationship between two or more individuals in terms of problem-solving, academic building and being each other's company. At Stage 3, our model entrusts upon the learners to be dependent in setting learning goals. This brings about the gradual reduction of teachers' dominancy from Stage 1 to 3. The methods and activities suggested for the Individual Developing Model is summarized as below:

Suggested Methods and Activities in the Individual Developing Model

Stage 1: Discovery Stage
* Observation

* Questionnaires

* Assessments

* Information Feedback

Stage 2: Differentiation Stage
* Gradation of Tasks

* Varieties of Teaching Aids

* Homogeneous and Mixed-ability Groupings

* Journal Writing

Stage 3: Developing Stage
Autonomous Learners

Learning Contract

Table 3: Suggested Methods and Activities for the Individual Developing Model

4.0 Conclusion

The examples of methods and activities listed in this paper are not exhaustive and neither are the individual differences in section 2.0. Nevertheless, they provide an overview of the ways in which teachers can attend to individual students' needs in a general curriculum setting. Our suggestion of the Individual Developing Model distinguishes students according to individual similarities and differences. This helps to reduce teachers' burden especially toward the notion of designing single lesson plan for every student in the class. The activities suggested in this paper are practical for actual classroom use. Teachers only need to put more thoughts and attention to each student in order to maximize every potential in every student.

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Article 8.

The Native Speaker: An Achievable Model?

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Abstract:

In this more mobile and globalized world, the concept of what it means to be a native speaker of a language is becoming ever more difficult to define, especially in regards to English.   In recent developments in second language acquisition and language teaching, this concept has been the focus of attention for numerous scholars (e.g. Davies, 1991; Medgyes, 1992; Phillipson, 1992) to get a better understanding of this concept, and, perhaps, to reevaluate and revise the "native   speaker   model"   in   the   field   of language teaching.   In this article, the definition of the native speaker is explored based on the works of various scholars who have investigated this concept.   Based on the findings of what it takes to be a native speaker, the issue of whether the native speaker model is the appropriate model in language teaching is discussed.

Introduction

The concept of the native speaker is one that is understood and self-explanatory until the notion is explored or thought about (Ellis, 1993). There are those who would argue that it is a unitary concept, hence the question of what it means to be a native speaker is pointless as "everyone is a Native Speaker of the particular language states that the person has "grown" in his/her mind/brain. In the real world, that is all there is to say" (Chomsky, 1965, quoted in Paikeday, 1985, p. 58). However, the quest for a better understanding of the concept of the native speaker, and, perhaps, reevaluation, is not pointless and has been critically discussed by numerous scholars in recent times (e.g., Davies, 1991; Medgyes, 1992; Phillipson, 1992) in the field of language teaching. As the English language and the mobility of the human race become more and more accessible, the concept and perception of the native speaker is being challenged. In this paper, I attempt to explore and systemize a more cohesive definition of the native speaker based on the collective works of various scholars in the field of language teaching, particularly English. The question of what the native speaker actually knows is, then, examined. Based on the internalized knowledge that a native speaker has of his or her language, the abilities of the native speaker is presented. Upon presenting the concept of the native speaker, the issue of whether it is possible for a nonnative speaker to acquire membership into the "native speakerdom" (Nayar, 1994) is addressed, briefly. At last, the question of whether the native speaker is the appropriate model and goal of language learning and teaching is discussed.

What is a Native Speaker?

Is there a systematic way of defining or characterizing what a native speaker is? Or is this a question that is so circular that it needs no attention? In recent developments in the field of language teaching, this question seems to be of particular importance and necessity to resolve the issue of what a native speaker is, and whether he or she is the goal that learners should strive to achieve. However, this puzzle seems to be elusive since it is unclear as to what a native speaker is and knows based solely on being a native speaker of a language (Davies, 1991; Myhill, 2003; Paikeday, 1985). In this section of

this paper, I will attempt to make some sense of this elusive enigma based on recent investigations and studies by different scholars in the fields of Second Language Acquisition and language teaching.

The first account of the use of the native speaker, according to Davies (1991), seems to have been referenced by Bloomfield (1933) who states, "The first language a human being learns to speak is his native language; he is a native speaker of this language" (p. 43). However, this definition seems to be too restricting. In fact, the first learned language can be replaced by a language that is acquired later (although may not be completely forgotten) through the more frequent and fluent use of the later-acquired language where the first language is "no longer useful, no longer generative or creative and therefore no longer 'first'" (Davies, 1991, p. 16), as in the case of children who are transplanted, either through migration or adoption, at an early age. In the field of theoretical linguistics, the native speaker is the authority of the grammar of his or her native language (Chomsky, 1965) who "knows what the language is […] and what the language isn't […]" (Davies, 1991, p. 1). According to this logic, a native speaker is an individual who is infallible and has perfect command of his or her language. This may not absolutely be the case, as Nayar (1994) argues that native speakers are not "ipso facto knowledgeable, correct and infallible in their competence" (p. 4). He further contends that the notion that the native speaker "has the power to err without a blemish in his competence" based purely on the fact that the individual is perceived as a native speaker needs to be challenged and reevaluated. So far, the two explanations presented by Bloomfield and Chomsky do not adequately resolve this complex puzzle.

From an etymological perspective, the word "native" suggests that an individual is a "[native speaker] of a language by virtue of place or country of birth" (Davies, 1991, p. ix). This implies that the individual acquired the language from birth (Davies, 1991; Paikeday, 1985; Phillipson, 1992). However, as stated above, this is inadequate in determining whether an individual is a native speaker of a language, or not, due to the fact that individuals can be resettled to other places in childhood, as in the case of children who immigrate or are adopted in early childhood. Additionally, being born in a place does not guarantee that the person will be a native speaker of the native area because the language that the individual speaks at home may not coincide with the

language in the native area; and children who are adopted in early childhood may not develop in the same linguistic environment of his or her birthplace.

Some may state that the only bona fide native speaker is a monolingual speaker of a language; being a monoglot is the only attribute that absolutely guarantees membership owing to the fact that the individual does not have any other language to be a native of. However, this assumption is not completely factual, as many native speakers of a language do, in fact, speak other languages besides their own; and monoglots may be the exception rather than the norm (Maum, 2002).   So, where does that leave us?   Being a monoglot (which is rare) and being born in a particular place does not adequately facilitate the quest in defining the native speaker.   To get a clearer picture of what a native speaker is, I have isolated six defining features of a native speaker that numerous scholars in the field of Second Language Acquisition and language teaching support and agree with.

1. The individual acquired the language in early childhood (Davies, 1991; McArthur, 1992; Phillipson, 1992) and maintains the use of the language (Kubota, 2004; McArthur, 1992),
2. the individual has intuitive knowledge of the language (Davies, 1991; Stern, 1983),
3. the individual is able to produce fluent, spontaneous discourse (Davies, 1991; Maum, 2002; Medgyes, 1992),
4. the individual is communicatively competent (Davies, 1991; Liu, 1999; Medgyes, 1992), able to communicate within different social settings (Stern, 1983),
5. the individual identifies with or is identified by a language community (Davies, 1991; Johnson & Johnson, 1998; Nayar, 1998)
6. the individual does not have a foreign accent (Coulmas, 1981; Medgyes, 1992; Scovel, 1969, 1988).

Other features of the native speaker include race (Liu, 1999; Kubota, 2004); the capacity to write creatively (Davies, 1991); knowledge to differentiate between their own speech and the standard form of the language (Davies, 1991; Kubota, 2004); and the

"capacity to interpret and translate into the L1 of which s/he is a native speaker" (Davies, 1991, p. 149). These four other features that have been presented are debatable and dubious in many ways. The race (or ethnicity) of an individual, I believe, is not a determining factor since, as noted above, in the case of a child who is adopted by individuals who differ from the child's ethnic background can surely transplant him or her to a place where he or she is not a native inhabitant of. Therefore, an ethnically Chinese child, at an early age, can be adopted by a family who is not Chinese (and does not speak the child's first language) who relocates the child to another country where the local language is not the child's first language. The child will mature and develop, perhaps, being no longer a native speaker Chinese, but rather his first language— Chinese—will most likely be substituted with the language of his new environment. As a result, the later-acquired language will, in all probability, become his native or first language. Furthermore, in countries like the United States, individuals who are not ethnically of English decent do, in fact, speak English as their first and native language, as in the many cases of descendents of non-British immigrants who have lived in the U.S. for several generations. Additionally, in China, although 91.8% of the people are of Han Chinese background (CIA, 2003), not all 91.8% speak the same language. The people of China who are ethnically Han Chinese speak languages such as Mandarin, Cantonese, and others, although some may consider these dialects or variants of Mandarin.

Davies (1991) stated that a native speaker has the capacity to write creatively in his or her language. This feature is not completely accurate. We can only suppose this feature to be factual if we assume that all native speakers are highly proficient and creative in writing in their languages through a great number of years of formal schooling, and, most of all, from a talent for expressing themselves creatively in written language. We, also, have to account for proficiency level differences among literate members of a language community, not to mention those individuals who are not literate in their language. Moreover, there are languages that are preliterate (Florez & Terrill, 2003) where there are no written forms of the languages. Therefore, the notion that native speakers are creative writers would only be accurate, if all languages have writing

systems, and all native speakers of those languages were highly proficient and creative individuals such as writers and poets.

The last two features that Davies suggests of a native speaker are debatable as well. Cook (1999) indicates that "many native speakers are unaware how their speech differs from the status form, as shown, for example, in the growing use of nonstandard *between you and I* for *between you and me* even in professional speakers such as news readers" (p. 186). Hence, the claim that native speakers can differentiate their speech and that of the standard variety is not as obvious as Davies asserts. Moreover, Cook challenges Davies' claim that native speakers have the capacity to interpret and translate from another language to their own. This capacity, according to Cook, is only reserved for those individuals who have a language other than the language that they are natives of, and not necessarily by all of them.

Among the six essential features of the native speaker that have been laid out above, the most incontrovertible factor in defining the native speaker is that the individual acquired the language in childhood and sustains the use of the language. According to Cook (1999), an individual is not a native speaker of a language unless the individual acquired it in childhood. Furthermore, an individual who did not acquire the language in childhood will most likely maintain a recognizable foreign accent in his or her speech (Scovel, 1969, 1988). Therefore, all other features besides the one that I have mentioned are secondary; a matter of competence and performance of the individual (that is, how well the individual uses his or her language). The most poignant summation of what it means to be a native speaker of a language is offered by Kourtizin (2000):

> English is the language of my heart, the one in which I can easily express love for my children; in which I know instinctively how to coo to a baby; in which I can sing lullabies, tell stories, recite nursery rhymes, talk baby talk. In Japanese, there is an artificiality about my love; I cannot express it naturally or easily. The emotions I feel do not translate well into the Japanese language, and those which I have seen expressed by Japanese mothers do not seem sufficiently intimate when I mouth them (p. 324).

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Keeping the above ideas about what it is to be a native speaker in mind, I will present the knowledge and abilities that a native speaker of a language possesses.

What Does a Native Speaker Know?

In exploring the definition of a native speaker, the notion that a native speaker has intuitive knowledge of the language he or she is a native speaker of, and has linguistic as well as communicative competence (Hymes, 1971) have been offered. What does that actually mean? What is it that a native speaker knows that a nonnative speaker does not that distinguishes the two? In this section of this paper, I will present what the native speaker actually knows and can perform that differentiates him or her from a nonnative speaker. Based on findings and studies by scholars in the fields of Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Second Language Acquisition, and English Language Teaching, the knowledge of a native speaker has been cataloged. Native speakers have internalized knowledge of:

1. appropriate use of idiomatic expressions (Coulmas, 1981; Medgyes, 1992, 1994; Phillipson, 1996),
2. correctness of language form (Coulmas, 1981; Davies, 1991; Phillipson, 1996),
3. natural pronunciation (Coulmas, 1981; Medgyes, 1992, 1994),
4. cultural context (Medgyes, 1992, 1994; Phillipson, 1996) including "response cries" (Goffman, 1978, cited in Coulmas, 1981), swear words, and interjections,
5. above average sized vocabulary, collocations and other phraseological items (Coulmas, 1981; Medgyes, 1992, 1994),
6. metaphors (Coulmas, 1981),
7. frozen syntax, such as binomials or bi-verbials (Coulmas, 1981),
8. nonverbal cultural features (Coulmas, 1981; Davies, 1991).

Additionally, native speakers of a language have pragmatic and strategic competence of their language. They are able to attend to pragmatic conventions of the language, to not only accomplish communication goals but pay heed to interpersonal

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relationships with other interlocutors simultaneously, depending on different sociocultural contexts (Kasper, 1997). They have the internalized strategic competence to use different verbal and nonverbal communication skills to repair breakdowns in conversational exchanges (Canale & Swain, 1980). Native speakers avoid avoidance (Davies, 1991); that is, they shun from giving up on comprehension or production. However, avoidance is a strategy commonly found in communication acts of nonnative speakers. With the automatized knowledge that native speakers have, what is it that they are able to perform? Native speakers possess the ability to manifest and perform:

1. spontaneous, fluent discourse (Davies, 1991; Maum, 2002; Medgyes, 1992),
2. circumlocutions (Davies, 1991; Halliday, 1978),
3. hesitations (Brown, 2001; Davies, 1991; Halliday, 1978),
4. predictions of what the interlocutor will say (Davies, 1991; Halliday, 1978),
5. clarifications of message through repetition in other forms (Davies, 1991; Medgyes, 1992, 1994).

Additionally, native speakers have other verbal as well as nonverbal communication skills that enable them to communicate effortlessly, in most instances, with other participants in communication exchanges, within appropriate sociocultural contexts.

Conclusion

The question as to whether a nonnative speaker can become a native speaker has been a concern in the field of language teaching. Based on what has been presented, we can conclude that it is impossible for any learner of a language, after the critical period (Scovel, 1988), to become a native speaker unless he or she is born again. It is impossible due to the fact that in order to be considered a native speaker of a language, an individual must satisfy the one most salient criterion—acquire the language in early childhood and maintain the use of that language. If a nonnative speaker cannot become a native speaker based on this one definitive element, then can a nonnative speaker, after the critical period, attain all of the other elements discussed above? According to

Phillipson (1996), a nonnative speaker, through effective training, can acquire most of the other elements that define the concept of a native speaker. However, Medgyes (1992) points out that many aspects of linguistic competence do pose tremendous challenges for nonnative speakers. Among the aspects of linguistic competence, accent seems to be a hurdle that is most difficult, if not impossible, to overcome (Scovel, 1969, 1988). Coulmas (1981) asserts that the ability to produce natural pronunciation and perfect grammar are other areas of linguistic competence which are extremely difficult for nonnative speakers. Furthermore, target cultural competence (Liang, 2003) seems to pose another challenge as the exposure to this element is not substantial for nonnative speakers. However, as mentioned above, most of the elements that a native speaker knows and can perform can, through effective learning and teaching principles and approaches, be learned and acquired by nonnative speakers except, perhaps, accent. Therefore, instead of focusing on the elements that is out of the control of language learners and language teachers, such as the definitive element of what a native speaker is and accent, teachers as well as learners should focus on the elements that are achievable.

If the native speaker model is not achievable in language learning, perhaps, it should be reevaluated and revised to set forth models that are achievable by learners. Perhaps, it is time to shift our focus from 'who you are' to 'what you know' (Rampton, 1990). Alternative terms can be employed, instead, in the field of language teaching (Cook, 1999). Such alternative terms have been explored by Paikeday (1985) who suggest "proficient user of the language;" Rampton (1990) proposes "language expert;" Cook (1991) puts forward "multicompetent speaker;" and I offer "competent language user (CLU)." The purpose of using alternative terms in place of the native speaker is to shift not only the attention away from 'who you are,' but to focus the attention on what we are actually attempting to accomplish in language teaching—communicative competence. We should attempt to set the goals for our learners to more attainable goals; not goals which are nearly impossible, if the most irrefutable definition of a native speaker is that he or she acquired the language in childhood and continues to use it. Now, should the label 'native speaker' be removed from our mental as well as written lexicon for good? No, the label will not and should not go away (Cook, 1999). However, as stated above, it is time to revisit this label and, perhaps, use alternative terms

in the field of language teaching to eliminate the native speaker-nonnative speaker dichotomy which perpetuates exclusion, rather than inclusion of all individuals who are users of a language; to permit all users access into the membership of "competent language userdom." Additionally, by introducing and maintaining alternative labels in the field of language teaching, we, as educators, are setting a goal for the learners—to become a competent language user of the target language—that is achievable. After all, as Davies (1996) aptly inquires, what is it that we are trying to achieve in language teaching, the native speaker or proficiency?

Acknowledgement

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Reframing English Language Education in Japan

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Abstract

This article explores how English Education in Japan should be planned and performed from the sociocultural perspective and is based on the belief that mediation plays a significant role for human development and learning.   This paper supports the idea that (with the consideration of sociocultural theory) teaching should not only focus on the development of linguistic knowledge but also help to foster students' abilities to learn and think independently as their awareness of identity, culture, and society develop and expand in formal classroom settings.

Key Words: Sociocultural; theory, Zone of Proximal development, English education curriculum

Sociocultural thought and language teaching

Sociocultural approaches to learning and development were first organized and applied by L. S. Vygotsky in Russia in the 1920s and 1930s. They are based on the concept that learning can develop effectively when learners use their minds and available tools while engaged in activities.   Language is, of course, one of the major tools, but other things like gesture can be included as well.   According to Wertsch (1985), the sociocultural perspective encompasses social interaction as contingent upon language and gesture which are appropriated by the individual to form the instrumental tools for thinking and problem solving.

There are four essential points related to sociocultural theory: mediation, thinking and speaking, zone of proximal development (ZPD), and interaction.

Mediation

Lantolf (2000) addresses that "the most fundamental concept of sociocultural theory is that the human mind is mediated" (p.1). Mediation takes place as long as human beings have an opportunity to consider what they are doing or what they have just learned. This permits us to connect and extend our knowledge and skills for further learning which may affect our beliefs, views of the world, identity, and cultural and social awareness.

Thinking and Speaking

Vygotsky viewed the initial function of speech as a mediator (Minick, 1997). In the process of speaking, they check whether their words or sentences are appropriate in each situation or not, whether their speaking is what they want to tell or not, how much they understand what they want to tell or what they have just listened to or learned, what their interlocutor' reaction (e.g., facial expression, verbal response) is, and so on.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

In addition, Vygotsky emphasized the essential role of zone of proximal development (ZPD) in learning. He defined it as the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with peers (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). According to the concept of ZPD, learners can move into their next level with their peers' or teachers' assistance while using language as the primary tool during this activity.

Interaction

In the ZPD, we notice that it is indispensable for learners to interact with others because the ZPD needs at least more than two people to actively develop. Vygotsky claimed that speech is the most widely used and important means employed by humans to organize social interaction, to regulate others, and to regulate oneself (Wertsch, 1981, p.24). With effective interaction, especially through speaking with their peers or teachers, learners naturally develop and extend their linguistic knowledge.

The Curriculum of English Education for Lower Secondary Schools (Grades 7-9) in Japan

In recent years the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) has been emphasizing a renewed vision of English language education. However, if the vision proposed by MEXT is to be realized then we administrators, teachers, and teacher-educators in Japan may need to approach English language teaching from a different perspective that incorporates more opportunities for authentic language use during communicative, goal-oriented activities in smaller classrooms.

It is worth stating that sociocultural theory, per se, is not a theory of second language acquisition or second language learning. But, it is a theory of general human development, interaction, and learning where (as previously stated) we use language to mediate the world around us. This, in turn, assists in second language learning.

We now move on to describe past English Education in Japan and examine what (MEXT) emphasizes today and the purpose of English Education. The focus here is on lower secondary schools, junior high schools, for 7th to 9th grade students.

Traditional English Education

In the past, teaching styles were very teacher-centered. Arguably, the traditional purpose of English Education in Japan has as only passing entrance examinations. The emphasis to learn English was on grammar, reading, and writing skills that dominate the most part of the entrance examinations. The purpose of English curriculum in Japan was to train students to read and write English, relying on grammatical analysis and translation to and from Japanese as the primary methods. To achieve this, students practiced a lot of drills and repetitions so that they could get accustomed to grammar that was also the key to translate analytically to and from Japanese in reading and writing. Dorfman also reported that students had 105 classes per year, and they were supposed to learn approximately 350 words each year.

English education, in the above framework, is teacher-centered. As Wray (1999) describes, there were almost no opportunities for students to discuss, provide their opinions, or do group problem solving. One of the reasons for this instruction was due to the large number of students in one class. There were about forty or more students per class. Therefore, it was easy for teachers to organize a class with teacher-centered style and "lecture-style" (Fukuzawa, 1996, p.317).

As for teacher quality, a high level of English proficient was not necessarily required. Teachers needed to have basic grammar knowledge of English, but they were not required to have skillful conversation abilities. This is because, as previously mentioned, English Education focused on more grammar, reading, and writing skills that did not require conversational skills.

In order for English language education in Japan to become revitalized and use traditional thought as a foundation rather than a goal we believe that sociocultural theory helps us to reframe the activity of language use and teaching in Japanese classrooms as well as the general curriculum.

Improvement of the Curriculum of English Education

The curriculum council started to reconsider the curriculum and implemented the new course of study from 1998 to 2002. The council realized it was necessary for children to catch up with globalization and English plays an important role as the common international language. According to Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT, 2003a), the curriculum council especially realized that it was essential for children to acquire communication abilities in English to live in the twenty-first century. Although this wasn't a drastic change from their previous assertions, it is the first time that we see MEXT making such a concerted and concentrated effort in the field of English language education.

MEXT (1998) states that general purpose of education is "to help children develop their own identity and faculties from early childhood to adolescence." It also states "school's primary role is to motivate children to learn and teach them how to learn" (MEXT, 1998). In the course of study for lower secondary school made by MEXT, the overall objects of foreign languages (mainly English) are "to develop students' basic practical communication abilities such as listening and speaking, depending the understanding of language and culture, and fostering a positive attitude toward communication through foreign languages" (MEXT, 2003b). In consideration of these overall objectives for foreign languages, there are several issues that MEXT points out to improve English Education today.

It is obvious that students need to acquire basic skills of writing, reading, listening, and speaking. However, because MEXT stresses the essential role of

communication ability, speaking and listening abilities are more highlighted. We should notice that MEXT now focuses on the actual use of English in which students will need to have when they go outside the classroom to interact with people in English, not on only grammar skill like traditional teaching style. If we are focusing on the actual use of English rather than its linguistic properties then we begin to see how sociocultural theory addresses the stated objectives of MEXT.

Moreover, MEXT (1998) stresses that through education, teachers have to help children develop ability to learn and think independently. As a result, teachers no longer have to focus on grammar and translation skills, but they need to provide useful activities for students to have opportunities to learn how to develop independently so that they can apply it to other occasions and to think about what they have just learned so that they can extend their belief, view of the world, awareness of identity as well as social and cultural awareness.

Furthermore, MEXT indicates that teachers need to deepen students' understanding from a wider perspective, enhance their awareness of being Japanese living in a global community, and cultivate a spirit of international cooperation (MEXT, 2003b). Language teachers have the responsibility to teach the English language, but they also have to foster students' self and cultural awareness through well-balanced teaching. Language teaching no longer entails just teaching a language, but it also encompasses how we address and foster our students' potential to develop as a global citizen within a local context.

MEXT not only addresses enhancing students' self and cultural awareness, but also the strengthening the motivation for English learning (MEXT, 2003a). With higher motivation, students can develop their language knowledge and hopefully they can find their own purpose for learning English in their communities or the world.

Reframing English Language Teaching in Japan

First, since there are too many students per class and teachers cannot pay attention to each individual, MEXT now tries to "implement the 20 students per class system" (MEXT, 2001). In a small number of class structure, it is much easier for teachers and students to interact with each other. This will help schools avoid 100 %

teacher-centered instruction and create more opportunities for language use during goal-oriented, classroom activities.

Second, MEXT addresses that "making use of assistant language teachers (ALTs)" whose native language is English should positively be adopted (MEXT, 2003a). MEXT has been hiring ALTs and reports that approximately 8,400 ALTs worked at public schools between 2001 and 2002.   With ALTs, students have opportunities to use the actual English with native speakers of English that can cause them to have higher motivation to learn English.   Also, ALTs can introduce the actual English and their cultures by cooperating with Japanese English teachers in classes and may help to motivate students who see language as more than grammar-oriented instruction.

Third, MEXT would like to upgrade the teaching abilities of English teachers (MEXT, 2003a).   For example, MEXT (2002) offers domestic training for 2,000 teachers per year and overseas trainings approximately 150 people including short- and long-term.   It also establishes the targets for teachers to have: 550 points of paper TOEFL, 730 points of TOEIC.   In addition, Kawamura (2004) states that MEXT would like to introduce a teacher certificate renewal system. We believe that this a crucial step in revitalizing English language education in Japan, but we also warn against creating instructors that fit only one mold. Language proficiency is crucial for all language educators, but we need not loose focus of the human aspects of education as well.

Fourth, MEXT encourages schools to connect with their local communities.   For example, MEXT suggests that schools invite people who have to do with English from their local communities to introduce different perspective to students.   It also encourages students "to participate in community services and various programs" (MEXT, 2001).

More importantly, MEXT emphasizes the improvement of English language ability with Japanese language ability.   This concept is necessary for students because fostering students' abilities to express themselves appropriately and understand accurately in Japanese as well as enhance their communication abilities in Japanese play important roles for them to cultivate communication abilities in English. The Japanese language is their basis of all intellectual activities.   Thus, teachers have to consider the

role of students' first language and the impact of their "first culture" on learning English as well.

English Education in Japan

As MEXT tries to reform English Education, there are some changes in English classes these days. For example, since the materials made by MEXT have been improved to focus on more communicative abilities, students now have opportunities to learn better English conversational skills.

There are some improvements due to the efforts of MEXT. However, English Education would benefit from a sociocultural perspective for several reasons. That is to say, there are several challenges ahead before a true sociocultural perspective can be fully implemented in Japan.

First of all, grammar focused teaching is still popular. At the beginning of each unit, English teachers first start to teach grammar and then teach the content of the textbook. The second reason is that students still do a lot of drills, repetitions, and memorization of idioms and vocabulary. It is clear that in those processes, there is no critical thinking that fosters students' self and cultural awareness, and that students have a hard time to apply what they have learned to other situations, especially outside the classroom.

The third reason is that teacher-centered instruction still dominates. We are advocating "less teaching" by the teachers. In fact, if we return to a key of sociocultural thought, meaningful interaction, this can accomplished by engaging students in activities. This is supported by Ohta (1995) who found that teacher-fronted instruction provided a narrower interaction potential for students' learning than peer activities.

The fourth reason is that the actual main purpose of learning English for students is still to pass entrance examinations, as opposed to the purposes of English Education by MEXT. Even though the content of the entrance examinations has been improved to include more communicative skills, students still need good grammar and analytical skills. This also caused students to lose their learning motivation and not to enjoy the process of learning English itself.

Lastly, most English teachers do not really understand the real purposes of English Education and the content of the new course of study. This last point is the driving force behind this article and is elaborated on in our final discussion.

Discussion: Linking MEXT and Sociocultural thought

By comparing the proposals of English Education by MEXT with actual English teaching, we see that the former suggests good education curriculum to foster students' English language skills, cultural and self- awareness, as well as critical thinking that shapes their view of the world, belief, learning experiences, etc. This reminds us of sociocultural theory that emphasizes mediation, thinking and speaking, ZPD, and interaction.

In order to help teachers and schools reach the goals established by MEXT then we must address five major issues.

First of all, English teachers should be aware of purposes of English teaching by MEXT and communicate with their colleagues to develop their teaching approaches toward the ideal goals of English teaching. They are the ones who can actually transfer what MEXT has proposed to the classrooms. Their awareness of purposes of English teaching should be enhanced. A lot of trainings and discussions and introducing the sample teaching or handbook (just to get the ideas for effective teaching, not necessarily for copying) should be introduced to teachers, parents, and administrators.

Second, teachers must teach students how to learn and think independently so that they can extend their abilities later. It is important for learners to have their autonomy. Teachers have to provide students with opportunities to think and with different methods of learning (e.g., use of dictionary, summary writing, presentation, group discussion, pair work, problem solving, etc).

Third, it is essential for language learners to become motivated. By providing different topics and activities within the proposed framework students feel as if they have a choice in what they want to learn, and as Davies (2002) points out, that learner choice is key to successful language learning in a formal classroom environment. For example, in thematic learning, learners can choose more specific topics related to a particular theme. If teachers focus on more content and progress of students' learning rather than the surface (linguistic) results, students begin to feel more comfortable and get motivated.

Fourth, teachers have to be aware that it is important for them to promote learners' awareness of who they are, what they believe, and how they view the world. Language learning should encourage them to establish their identity, their own view of the world. This helps students feel proud of themselves.   Journal writing is one of good activities for this since through interaction with peers or teachers, learners have opportunities to think about themselves, their opinions about things or topics they have learned.

Last, the cultural perspective should be emphasized for English teaching.   As MEXT (2003b) stresses, one of purposes of English Education is "to foster students' awareness of being Japanese citizens living in a global community."   In the textbooks made by MEXT, there are many things that can facilitate students' cultural awareness. However, the problem is that teachers do not focus on them.   Facilitating cultural awareness is essential, for it also means to reflect students' culture and themselves. To be a global person and have wider view of the world, culture has to play be an integral role of the language classroom.

Sociocultural theory plays an important role in learning because it views learning as mediation.   It points out that learners should mediate what know as well as how they learned during interaction with other people.   Sociocultural theory frames learning effectively because it does not focus on only learning linguistic skills, but also on the way learners learn and the process they shape their identities, perspective, social and cultural awareness.

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ENGLISH IN THE WORKPLACE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE COMMUNICATION NEEDS OF TOURISM AND BANKING PERSONNEL

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Abstract

This paper is an exploratory study of the use of English by tourism and banking personnel. It attempts to examine the communication needs of the personnel in the workplace by shedding light on their perceptions of needs, wants and lacks. Also it attempts to explore the workers' attitudes toward English and the use of English in the workplace. The sample consists of thirty senior personnel who are equally distributed by type of work. The data was collected by means of a questionnaire, interviews, and analysis of authentic workplace texts. The results of this study have shown that the workers' perceptions of their needs, wants and lacks are greatly affected by their attitudes toward English. The findings presented here bear on orientations toward the importance of studying ESP as a means of communication in relation to the group of workers using it and the workplace in which it is used.

Keywords: Business English,   Business communication, English for Special Purposes

1. Introduction

During the past 20 years, the explosion in business and communications technology has revolutionized the field of English language teaching, and has radically shifted the attention of course designers from teaching English for Academic purposes to teaching English for more specialized purposes. In the last few years, first (L1) and second (L2) language acquisition research into language teaching have led to an increased interest in investigating the most effective ways of improving the ability of workers in using English for specific purposes in the workplace (Li So-mui and Mead, 2000; Louhiala-Salminen 1996). Several recent studies of ESP have provided evidence of the importance of teaching English for specific purposes (Li So-mui and Mead, 2000; Edwards, 2000; Lohiala-Salinen, 1996; Huchinson and Waters, 1987). For example, it has been observed that the type of language used by each worker is influenced by the

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worker's working instrument (see for example, Pogner, 2003; Zak and Dudley-Evans, 1986), by his aims and professional constraints, as well as by his specialization and the type of duties assigned to him, and by the texts the worker produces and deals with (e.g., Edwards, 2000; Macintosh, 1990). These educational studies have been developing in tandem with a recognition that learning English for specific purposes play important roles in workers' and administrators' success in their fields of work and business environments.

Over the last few years, many researchers have offered a number of books and articles bringing out new insights and approaches from different theoretical perspectives. For instance, an important survey was conducted in Finland in 1998 by the National Board of Education on the language and communication skills in the fields of industry and business. It studied language/communication needs of industry and business employees and was aimed at showing how language teaching could best equip students with the skills required in professional life. The survey has revealed that compared with engineers, employees in production jobs, installation and repair workers do not need to use foreign languages as much as the members of the other group. However it is clear that they have to read instructions, socialise and travel. They rarely get involved with writing formal papers, giving presentations or negotiating. The study thus has shown that the need for oral communication overrides written skills (reading and writing) in the first group, while the discrepancy in the second is smaller (Reported in Viel 2002:1).

Similar studies have been carried out in other European and Asian countries (see Perrin, 2003; Ponger, 2003; Edwards, 2000; Le So-Mui and Mead, 2000). In his study on writing and interacting in the discourse community of engineers, Pogner (2003:865) has concluded that writing in the discourse community of engineers cannot be isolated from its contexts, from the chains of communication of which it is a part, or from the interaction between the writers (consultants) or readers (Clients). On this issue, Pogner also adds:

> Text production and revision by consultant engineers are not only cognetive problem-solving and communication processes …..but also means of negotiation proessional standards and roles; defining strategic functions of texts and genres; establishing, maintaining or changing the text's and interaction's context by helping the

readers/users of the text carry out their own complex technological and business tasks.

In like manner, in a study which took place in a specialised business context involving senior German bankers, Edwards (2000) has observed that there is a correlational relationship between the place of work and the effective needs of workers in terms of   language skills practiced, terminology used, and syllabus design and materials preparation for the workers.

1.1. Rationale for the Study

This work arose from a long-standing association between the on-going process of research in the field of teaching/learning English for Specific purposes in General, and our study plan towards a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Department of English for Applied studies at Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST)[1]. More specifically, it developed from an attempt to revise our study plan continuously based on the results of other studies on ESP along with an authentic analysis of learners' perceptions of needs, wants and lacks in the workplace. The rationale behind choosing these two areas of work (banking and tourism) for the purpose of investigation is because they are two of the most important fields in which English is used extensively.

So, for a better understanding of the day-to-day activities and the 'real world' needs of these workers, an empirical investigation was carried out so as to see whether the type of material and skills being taught to our students suit their needs or not. Another aim of this study is to see whether there is a need to modify our objectives or to update our programs in light of the results of this investigation.

Given the importance of the learner's attitude in the process of learning any foreign language, we find it essential to examine the senior workers' attitude toward English in general, and English for specific purposes in particular. So this study will concern itself partially with studying language use, attitudes, and the workers' perceptions of ESP in light of their abilities and 'real world' need.

1.2. Data and Methodology

The design of this investigation is based on the work of Hutchinson and Waters (1987), and Dudley-Evans and Jo ST John (1998), in which they define needs in terms of "target needs (i.e. what the learner needs to do in the target situation) and Learning needs (i.e. what the learner needs to do in order to learn)." The main concern of this investigation will be an analysis of the target needs of the subjects in these two workplaces. However, as all the subjects of this study are university graduates no attempt will be made here to investigate their learning needs. To understand the undergraduates' preferred ways of learning, it is highly recommended that such investigation to be conducted at the University of Science and Technology in Irbid city-Jordan, where several ESP courses are taught to the university students. The target needs, the focus of this work, are further broken down into the necessities, wants and lacks of the workers. For more clarification of these three elements an attempt will be made here to examine the workers' attitudes toward English in general and English for specific purposes in particular. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), and Dudley-Evans and Jo ST John (1998), the best methodology for studying the target needs of any particular group of workers/students is to use such methods as Questionnaires, follow-up interviews, collection of authentic workplace texts, and visits to the workplace.

The corpus of this study was collected with the assistance of three ESP students enrolled in the Department of English for Applied Studies at Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) by means of a questionnaire and interviews. Some of the interviews were conducted by me. The present research is based on data collected from thirty respondents in leading positions (executives) in twelve different institutions: banks and travel agencies. The participants in the survey were expert professionals occupying important and influential positions, all of whom are Arabic-English balanced bilinguals capable of using English for different purposes. Fifteen of them work in the field of tourism and the other fifteen in the field of banking. The sample is composed of twenty-two males and only eight females. The unbalanced distribution of the sample by sex is due to the fact that the chances of females in Jordanian society in occupying senior positions, like managers or directors, are smaller than those of males. All of respondents are supposed to have studied English as a foreign language for eight to ten

years and their education for the university degree (B.A., M.Sc.) was English medium. Also it is worth noting that all those executives have worked for duration of five to twenty years in their respective fields of work.

The linguistic questionnaire utilized in this research was largely influenced by those used in previous works on needs analysis, language use, function and attitudes (e.g., Huthinson and Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans and Jo ST John, 1998; Louhiala-Salminon, 1996; Li So-mui and Mead, 2000; Perrin, 2003; Alm, 2003; among others). However, the questionnaire was modified in a way so as to better serve the purposes of this study with these particular workplaces. The questionnaire was designed to elicit different types of data on the workers' target needs, wants, lacks, use of English in the workplace for different purposes, and attitudes. One section of the questionnaire is designed to elicit some attitudinal data toward the use of both English and Arabic in general, and English for specific purposes, in particular.

Additionally, the assistances were asked beforehand to note down any additional information they might get from the subjects, whether in direct or an indirect way. By so doing, they were quite able to provide us with some extra information of great value on both language use and attitude. To verify the truthfulness of some of the collected data, the respondents were asked to provide us with authentic workplace texts and correspondence. In this way, we were able to check on such matters as the type of English being used, the most common channel(s) of communication, and the extent of English usage.

2. Results and Discussion

The results of this study are reported and discussed under five main headings:

1. Workers' needs and use

2. Workers' wants

3. Workers' lacks (self-assessment)

4. Workers' attitudes

2.1.Workers' Needs and Actual Use

The responses below were given by the personnel in answer to the following question: What I need English for? To answer this question each subject was asked to say

whether he/she needs English for any of the purposes shown in table 1 below. Also, based on their answers we ranked their needs in priority as shown in the table.

Item	Banking	Tourism
1.For communication	72%	94%
2. For a job	44%	76%
3. For improving my performance in the Language	65%	85%
4. For traveling abroad	24%	69%
5. For studying in the language	06%	9%
6. For promotion purposes	02%	15%
7. For reading English material (books, newspapers.. etc.)	__	23%
8. For watching English TV programs	__	02%
9. To be more fluent in the language	26%	51%

Table1: Workers' needs by type of job

From Tables 1, and 2 we observe that for both groups of workers English is needed for certain purposes much more often than others. For example, in both groups the personnel have reported that English is needed much for communication, improving their proficiency in the language and travel. However, the percentage scores shown in tables 1 and 2 indicate that the two groups of officials are distinct from one another by their needs for and use of English. For instance, while the travel agency workers see English needed for communication, job, improving their performance 94%, 76%, and 85% of the time respectively, the other group of workers sees it needed 72%, 44% and 65% of the time respectively.

Item	Only Arabic % T B		Mostly Arabic % T B		Arabic & English % T B		Only English % T B		Mostly English % T B		No Answer % T B		Total % T B	
1. For correspondence	0	0	20	50	47	50	27	0	6	0	0	0	100	100
2. For filing & documentation	7	33	7	50	53	17	13	0	20	0	0	0	100	100
3. For communication with other colleagu	60	67	20	27	13	6	7	0	0	0	0	0	100	100

es														
4. For dealing in public relations	13	17	7	17	60	50	0	16	13	0	7	0	100	100

T= Tourism

B= Banking   Table 2. Response percentages: Language use in the workplace by type of work

Also, the results of data analysis, as seen in Tables 2 above, show that both languages, Arabic and English, are used by the executives for a wide range of activities, though Arabic appears to be used much more often than English. However, the use of Arabic, in general, appears to take place mostly when talking to colleagues in the workplace. This could be due to the fact that all workers are Jordanians, who may find it easier to communicate in Arabic.

2.2.Worker's Wants

In asking the workers about their wants (What kind of English training courses do you like to be enrolled in?) they reported the answers indicated in table 4 below.   A closer examination of Table 4 below reveals that the assertion that the workers are quite aware of their wants is a valid one. For example, the great majority of both groups of workers believe that increasing their corpus of specialized lexical items and technical terms, improving writing, speaking and listening skills should be given more attention and emphasis in designing any training courses for them. These results appear to be in line with those arrived at in other sections of the paper, where the workers were found to be in need for more practice to improve their abilities in speaking, writing and listening. Comparing the percentage scores of the two working groups across their wants, we notice that they are still differentiated from one another by their responses to the included items.

For example, only 54% of the banking sector workers want to increase their corpus of specialized lexical items and technical terms in comparison to 84% of the travel agency workers want that. And out of 94% of the travel agency workers who wanted to improve their speaking skill, only 73% of the banking workers wanted that. The same also is true with regard to item three, where more than 78% of the travel agency workers wanted to improve their writing skill, only 49% of the banking workers wanted to do that.

Item	Banking %	Tourism %
1. To increase my corpus of specialized lexical items and technical terms	54	84
2. To learn grammar	02	06
3. To improve writing skills	49	78
4. To improve reading skills	37	17
5. To improve listening skills	23	29
6. To improve speaking skills	73	94
7. To get information	07	14
8. To improve my ability in using the internet	__	09

Table 3: workers' wants by type of work

To explain this, one must take into consideration the effect of activities being carried out in the workplace which also seem to interact with language proficiency in influencing the type of wants being specified by the workers. Generally speaking, all evidence suggest that the travel agency workers, due to a wealth of factors discussed below, are more proficient in English than their banking counterparts. This is because they are heavier user of the language than their banking workers, and having more positive orientation toward the language. Thus it is highly likely that these elements put

together are the factors most responsible for the type of wants being identified by each group and also for the distinction existed between the two working groups in their responses to the questionnaire.

2.3. Workers' lacks

Worker's lacks are reflected in their assessment of their profeciency in the different language skills on a five grade scale as shown below as well as in their actual use of the various skills in the workplace. Table 4 below reveals that, as expected, the travel agency workers were more likely to assess their proficiency in the various skills as more proficient in all four skills than the banking workers.

Language skills	Excellent %		V. Good %		Good %		Satisfactory %		Weak %	
	T	B	T	B	T	B	T	B	T	B
Speaking	9	2	35	22	44	32	10	34	2	10
Reading	21	13	39	29	31	30	09	20	--	8
Writing	19	12	30	33	38	40	13	15	--	--
Listening	14	8	32	22	40	42	12	20	2	8

Table 4. Response percentages: Language proficiency (self-assessment) by type of work

Comparing the percentage scores of the two working groups across their perceived proficiency in the four language skills (see Table 8), it becomes clear that the two groups of workers appear to be differentiated by their proficiencies in all language skills, although the greatest distinction between them seems to exist mostly in their proficiency in speaking and listening. Even though the type of work has obviously influenced the two groups of workers, the banking workers, no doubt due to their limited use of the language, appear to be lagging behind, showing lower percentages in their assessment of their proficiency in all four language skills.

Also in asking the question of (What kind of skill do you use most often?) their responses, as shown in Table 5 below revealed that not all skills are equally used by the workers. Workers' responses to this question have shown that writing and speaking are the skills used most often in the workplace, though to varying degrees.

Item	Almost always % T — B		Mostly used % T — B		Rarely used % T — B		Not at all % T — B	
Reading	61	49	25	25	14	26	0	0
Writing	80	37	6	20	14	43	0	0
Speaking	61	33	33	14	6	53	0	0
Listening	63	36	28	33	9	31	0	0

Table 5. Response percentages: skills used in the workplace by type of work

From table 5 it is also evident that the type of work, as said previously, plays a significant role in determining the amount and degree of use made by the workers. While the travel agency workers show a strong tendency toward using all three skills more frequently, the banks' workers, on the other hand, appear to be less efficient, tending to use these skills less frequently. This could be due to the fact that English serves a variety of functions in the industry of tourism. For example, interpersonal communication skills including, handling telephone inquiries, examining destination guides, making on-line-ticketing, and on-line-hotel reservations, composing appropriate and accurate e-mail messages and faxes, dealing with tourists and co-workers in various situations, all are

carried out in English. Therefore, their chances to improve their language skills would be much bigger than those of their banking counterparts, particularly the skills of writing and speaking which are most frequently and widely used by them in the domain of work. However, comparing to the travel agency workers, the banking workers are less frequently users of the language in the workplace and as such they have smaller chances to improve their language. The general impression of the use of English in banking is then that, for various reasons- limited proficiency of the personnel being a major characteristic.

These results appear to be a genuine reflection of what the two working groups have internalized about their abilities and lacks. They are not only aware of their competence in the language, but they are also able to make some judgments about their proficiency in it and the extent to which they use each skill as well. Thus, we are in a position to claim that the two working groups are still to be in need for more training in the language so as to improve their ability in speaking, writing and listening. This could be due in part to the fact that these three skills are still not given the amount of attention which they deserve, whether at the level of school or university education. Or it could be that even if they were given a considerable amount of attention, people realize they want more after they have had experience in the workplace.

2. 4. Language Attitude

The notion that workers' attitude toward the use of a particular foreign language is one of the determinants of achievement and use of the language in workplace has been stressed and discussed in several previous works (See, for example, Gardner and Lambert 1972; Gardner 1985; Al-Khatib and Farghal, 1996; among others). The great majority of previous studies have made use of the concepts of integrativeness and instrumentality which were originally introduced by Gardner and Lambert (1972). An attempt will be made in this section to highlight the attitudes of the concerned workers toward English in relation to these two notions. Unlike previous works on language attitudes, in this particular study we will attempt to explore the workers attitudes indirectly. That is to say, by asking the respondents some questions that don't make the

respondent feel that his/her orientation is being tested. So the items included in the questionnaire are designed to elicit such information on the attractiveness of language, the usefulness of language, the importance of language in facilitating the process of communication, and on to what extent the use of the language may form a threat to their native tongue and so on. The items included in the questionnaire can roughly be divided into two types: those related to instrumental orientation (i.e., using English as a means to achieve a particular goal), and those related to testing the workers' attitudes toward English as a source of threat and danger to their native tongue.

As said previously, building on previous work on language attitudes (see Gardner 1985; Al-Khatib and Farghal 1996), and based on a number of theoretical observations such as the many dealings carried out everyday in the language, it is hypothesized that in both fields of work, tourism and banking, ESP is intended to serve, among other things, the following functions: the function of effectiveness, facilitating the process of communication both in the workplace and with the outside world, prestige, modernization, among other purposes. It is also hypothesized that the concerned workers have a rather positive attitude toward English as an effective means of communication. Finally, it is hypothesized that using English is motivated and enhanced by instrumental rather than integrative factors.

Questions	Arabic	English	Both languages
			%
			T
	%	*%*	B
	T	T	
	B	B	

Item				
1. What language is more attractive?	20	17 / 27	0	33 / 83
2. What language is more useful to you in the workplace?	20	83 / 67	17	13 / 0
3. What language do you express yourself in better and more effectively?	93	100 / 0	0 / 7	0
4. What language do you conduct your work in more quickly?	33	66 / 20	17 / 47	17
5. What language do you prefer to use in your institution?	33	50 / 33	17 / 34	33

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Doubtful		Disagree	
	%	TB	%	TB	%	TB	%	TB
6. It is important to use English in our institution.	47	17	13	66	33	0	7	17
7. Arabic is the only language that should be used in our institution.	0	17	7	17	13	0	80	66
8. Using English								

indicates prestige and civilization	73	37	7	27	12	10	08	26
9. Using English facilitates communication with international institutions and the outside world.	80	66	13	0	0	28	7	6
10.. Using English takes place at the expense of Arabic.	0	0	0	34	13	0	87	66
11. Using English in our institution indicates cultural colonization.	7	0	20	16	7	34	66	50
12. Using English poses a threat to Arabic.	0	0	13	58	33	17	54	25

Table 6. Response percentages: Language Attitude toward Arabic and English by type of work

The first impression that one gets having compared the Tourism workers' responses with those of the bank workers, see Table 6 above, is that there is a clear-cut differences between the attitudes of the first group in relation to the attitudes of the second. Put it differently, Table 6 shows that there is a significant difference in the responses of the travel agency workers compared to the bank workers' responses. The results of this study suggest that the tourism workers express more favorable attitudes toward English and using English in the workplace than their bank counterparts. The responses of the tourism workers almost to all 12 questions and items indicate that they have stronger attitudes toward using English than the bank workers.

In view of the notions of integrativeness and instrumentality suggested by Gardner and Lambert (1972) and Gardner's (1985), two fundamental types of attitudes toward English and Arabic are demonstrated in the respondents' answers to the questionnaire items. The first type shows that the majority of the tourism sector respondents agree that English is valuable as a means of communication, and more useful language than Arabic in the work place (item 1). In items 5, 6, 7, and 8 the overwhelming majority of the respondents agree that it is important for them to use English as a means of communication in the workplace, and use Arabic as an important symbol of their identity. The same attitude can also be demonstrated in their answers to item 5 in which they claim that there is no harm of using English and Arabic, side by side, in the workplace on equal bases.

The relatively high percentage of positive attitudes by the tourism sector workers may be explained by the values of English (i.e. English is the language of tourism and openness to the outside world), which are perhaps linked to its importance as a lingua franca used widely in different parts of the world. This fact can clearly be manifested in their responses to item 9, in which 93% of them agreed that using English does facilitate communication with international institutions and the outside world, whereas only 66% of the banking workers have agreed on that.

All in all, these findings show that the attitudes of the tourism sector workers, and to an extent the banking sector workers toward English are both instrumental and integrative, but more instrumental than integrative. This view can be supported by the respondents' answers to item 3 (i.e., What language do you express yourself in better and more effectively?) in which the great majority of them (93% and 100%) have reported that they can express themselves much better in Arabic than in English. So these results reveal that the respondents are quite aware of the importance of using English in the workplace as an instrument to facilitate the process of communication with international institutions and the outside world. Thus, we are in a position to claim that these results do support hypothesis 2 that is, that both groups of workers would exhibit both integrative and instrumental attitudes toward the use of English, but the instrumental would be stronger.

The lower percentages scored by the banking workers, compared to those scored by the travel agency workers, could be due to the fact that the bank workers tend to use texts of the type called 'template texts' much more often than the travel agency workers. By template texts we mean those texts whose macro structure is set in advance, and where the text producer, so to say enters new data into pre-existing gaps, as when filling a draft form, a cheque, or an income-tax return (see Enkvist, 1987). Therefore their use of English and the varied skills of the language would be affected accordingly.

3. Conclusions and Implications

This multi-faceted study was conducted for the purpose of achieving a better understanding of the communication demands placed upon Jordanian travel agency and bank senior officials. The rationale behind this study was to identify the workers' needs, wants, lacks of and attitude toward English for the purpose of including in our curriculum what is needed by our students and excluding what deemed to be less important to them. This is because, as Kavaliauskiene and Daiva (2003) put it, "keeping learner needs in mind, teacher can use textbooks and supplement additional information from the Internet and other media sources, thus creating updated and interesting for students materials."

The sample comprised 30 executives who were evenly distributed by type of work. The workers in these two workplaces demonstrated a great desire to use English extensively for the purpose of communication, though to varying degrees. Also, it has been observed that the type of work plays a significant role with regard to evaluating and using English by the workers, as the travel agency executives appeared to be more aware of the importance of English as a means of communication than their banking counterparts. This could be because the most common reasons for communicating for travel agency workers were offering destination guides, writing and sending email messages and faxes in the language, making on-line ticketing, browsing the internet, making on-line-hotel booking, arranging for car rentals, cruises, etc. An examination of a huge a

number of authentic documents in both places of work, we conclude that more than 90% of documentation in the travel agencies is conducted in English, whereas only 60% of the in-bank work is conducted in the language. In addition, in-office interaction in both places of work is conducted mostly in both languages, though both types of workers use Arabic much more often than English.

Three main conclusions, then, can be drawn from this research. First, travel agency workers are heavier users of English than their banking counterparts and this is clearly manifested through their uses of the four language skills; Reading (49%, 61%), writing (37%, 80%), speaking (33%, 61%), and listening (36%, 63%) by the banking and travel agency workers respectively. Second, asking about their needs the great majority of the respondents prefer getting information themselves, improving listening skills and sharpening their ability in speaking.

Third, in responding to a considerable number of questions on language attitude the executives in both workplaces showed a great deal of desire to employ the language as an instrument for achieving multi-purpose activities, though the desire on the part of the tourism sector workers is much greater than that among the banking executives, as they (the tourism executives) appeared to be much more concerned with improving language skills and competence for the future usage.

This detailed study into the use of English in the workplace by two types of workers recommends that course designers and the developers of teaching and learning materials should provide more specifically focused English courses to learners in their respect fields of work. The study also helps us establish realistic measures for treatment which would be incorporated in the design of a particular type of courses and textbooks to ESP students in the Department of English for Applied Studies at JUST.

The implications of this research for language teachers and for the administration in large institutions such as banks, travel agencies among other workplaces is to find the ways of motivating workers to lifelong learning, to negotiate with them on their priorities for various skills to be sharpened, to incorporate activities that trainees prefer, and to design courses that suit the needs of the concerned groups of learners.

Footnotes

1. For more information on the Department of English for Applied Studies at Jordan University of Science and Technology see the University Website: (http://www.just.edu.jo).

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In the Case of
L2 Learning -v-Legal Awareness & Responsibility

Author

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Abstract:

The TEFL profession affects over a billion people worldwide with Asia being the focus. Unlike other professional areas of study, TEFL does not have a controlling body. L2 teaching and learning is based on the premise that anyone can teach and publish anything and carry neither responsibility nor legal liability. The author argues that given the EFL profession's responsibility, legal and moral, it must introduce regulation, rules, and laws.

Key words

Culture in L2, Non regulated TEFL profession, Changing EFL theories, TEFL court

The Court.

Law has many divisions. From Corporate to Civil, from Family to Environment to name a few.. There is not an area of society that Law has not invented an area of study for. Undoubtedly, as Davidson (2001) says, EFL must at some stage become an area of Legal Theory and Legal training. Lawyers 'moving in' on the sacred field of education - the specialized area of education that caries various names - EFL - TEFL - TESOL etc.,

But really the Social Science of EFL is also a field of 'law' - and it has zigzagged unregulated and uncontrollably for decades. The industry consists of the professional academic, the trained teacher, the untrained novice and the countless publishers. (Arguably there are the trained yet grossly negligent educators who should not be teaching - however - unlike other professions that set high standards to eliminate these persons, the TEFL profession allows the negligent to multiply and sadly teach students

who suffer through the teachers incompetence. No doubt he law will catch up to this category, as argued by Davidson, (2001), but that is many decades away.)

There are millions of students learning English as an L2 - with conflicting guidelines - and no arbiter to set direction. The bilingual L.A. cop strongly tells his Korean American ESL accused, "You have the right to remain silent - anything you say may be used against in a court of law. You are entitled to an attorney. Do you understand?"

The rules are crystal clear - the recipient understands. But in the EFL industry, this is not the case. No laws appear. And thus the following applies to teachers; "You have the right to speak and teach, but anything you say may be at odds to other theories, tested and untested, tried and untried; you also have the right to write and publish with the intention of disseminating information to those learning a second language, and those words can, where necessary, be vague, misleading and where necessary, wrong. Do you understand these rights?

And so the EFL/TEFL profession proceeds down the wrong path. Davidson (2001) was the first to realize the dilemma the EFL profession was facing, "Both the teaching of English and the practice of law have one thing in common. They both concentrate on 'words.'" Clearly he was referring to a situation where a major industry acted outside the law, yet involved principles that the Law had set rules, precedents and guidelines for.

Respected jurist Lord Denning (UK High Court) indirectly touched upon the dilemma within the TEFL profession by highlighting the legal situation with the English language, "When I say a word it means exactly what I want it to mean." But this quote he borrowed from Dodgson's children "Alice in Wonderland." "Down, down, down. Would the fall never come to an end! `I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. `I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think--' (for, you see, Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the schoolroom, and though this was not a very good opportunity for showing off her knowledge, as there was no one to listen to her, still it was good practice to say it over) `--yes, that's about the right distance--but then I wonder

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what Latitude or Longitude I've got to?' (Alice had no idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but thought they were nice grand words to say)" Carrol L 1865.

But unlike Alice who ventured down the rabbit hole not knowing how far it went, the TEFL profession needs to be shown how far it goes. As Morpheus says to Neo, "After this there is no turning back. You take the blue pill - the story ends and you wake up in bed and believe what you want to believe. You take the red pill, you stay in Wonderland, and I'll show you how deep the rabbit hole goes." (The Matrix)

The Red Pill.

But whilst the Law has a judge and juries to consider the arguments of opposing counsel, the TEFL profession only has advocates. At the end of a court case, a decision, a definitive decision is pronounced. Yet the TEFL profession, responsible for the L2 of more than a billion people, has only tangential theories, many conflicting. It is time to change this unsatisfactory position. The future is impacting on the masses now.

TEFL theories have been interpreted and reinterpreted and critiqued and revamped by the many. Methods, approaches, and applications - invented, reinvented, revised, renewed, abandoned, and resurrected for another try. The debates are intense - in the second millennium we argue about Culture - is it an intrinsic part of L2 learning (Robertson et al 2003) or is this a side show to be given due weight (Dash, 2003.) Is L2 age old history and tradition relevant and does it impact on the second millennium learning's (Robertson, 2003), or are these philosophical niceties to complex for serious consideration? Theories that were once were in vogue have fallen from favor, only to be resurrected in similar form. Chew notes the pendulum swing in Singapore (2004).

Teachers across the globe teach and study TEFL methodology. But there is no accrediting authority to say which Course is acceptable and which is clearly not. Chin (2005) notes the problems of untrained teachers teaching in Korean universities. Li (2005) reports a surprisingly low rate of qualified teaching in China, Yet is this merely a matter of teachers not teaching correctly, or is this a higher problem that embellishes the lack of guidelines from a top down authority?

EFL - The Future: A further quantum leap.

The social science subject of teaching English has made remarkable progress in the last three decades. The lead pioneer of the industry is Stephen Krashen with his principles that emanated from the 1980s. Following suit, Rod Ellis, Paul Nation, Scott Thornbury and David Nunan, inter alia have lead the way with critical theories, insights and principles. Across the globe SLA educators grapple with new and old reemerging theories that suggest new paths that lead to that ultimate goal of SLA ease. TEFL as a profession is supplying thousands of new teachers across the globe monthly as ESL and EFL countries scramble to teach their students to communicate in English.

Business drives economies, but SLA educators drive the places of learning and schools that produce the entities that will in turn drive the economies.

Across the globe we try and test theories, we change direction after 6 or seven years, we simply print new books free from academic rigor as new emerging thoughts interfere with our previous plans - the communicative approach changing direction to allow for the theories of culture as a significant marker in any L2 learning (Robertson 2002, Dash 2003). As we introduce a new concept, the SLA community changes direction to accommodate that theory or rationale. Few theories can be rejected, especially with the power of persuasive advertising, and so the direction and focus of SLA changes. MRI provides a glimpse into the brain and possible rationales for SLA behavior. But from LAD to 2005, where are we? According to Harpaz (2001) 'After several decades of research, it is clear that there isn't a theory that can explain all human languages'. But is this a defeatist attitude?

Psycholinguistics both advances and at times competes with SLA theorists -
While initial forays into Psycholinguistics were largely philosophical ventures, due mainly to an ardent lack of cohesive data on how the human brain functioned, modern biology and neuroscience have spawned a number of disciplines, neurolinguistics and psycholinguistics remaining the two most popular.

It analyses the processes that make it possible to form a correct sentence out of vocabulary and grammatical structures. Psycholinguistics also study the factors that

account for de-codification, i.e., the psychological structures that allow us to understand utterances, words, sentences, texts etc.

One field of research (possibly the dominant field) deals with the central question, 'How do people learn a second language?' According to Chomsky's widely debated theory, humans have an innate Universal Grammar (i.e., an abstract concept containing the grammatical rules of all world languages). Other crude theories show that even monkeys and birds can be taught to utter words that resemble languages, which seem, at times, to support the rote learning system so endemic in Korea and China.

The debates and research advance across the globe. Research building upon research, research nullifying research, and research theories still waiting to be tested. (Robertson, 2002)

The Emergent behavior process of SLA & Educators.

Emergent behavior is behavior that occurs in a group but is not programmed into any member of that group. Emergent behavior can occur in any population.

Most people watching a flock of birds or a school of fish assumed there was a leader, and that all the other animals followed the leader. …But birds and fish have no leaders. Their groups weren't organized that way. Careful study of flocking behavior …showed that, in fact, there was no leader. Birds and fish responded to a few simple stimuli among themselves, and the result was coordinated behaviour. But nobody was controlling it. Nobody was leading it. Nobody was directing it. (P172)

Is this theory applicable to SLA? Some say so - others argue it is distinguishable? It may well be but that spawns a separate debate. Suffice to say that SLA educators and others search for the holy grail that explains second language acquisition, whether it be a fragment of a gene, a series of electronic impulses within the brain, a critical period process or window of opportunity time frame, motivational factors, or a combination of all in some degree of arrangement controlled by external factors loosely defined as Culture. The emergent behavior that drives us to understand SLA is growing in intensity. Industries have grown around this behavior and billions of dollars are invested and spent annually by those teaching, and by those learning.

The Quantum Leap: The Negative Effects

Across the globe SLA educators teach (in differing levels of complexity):-

-English speaking skills

-phonetics

-reading

-writing

-test preparation (TOEIC, TOEFL, Cambridge, Michigan, TEPS, PALSO, etc)

-cultural awareness of the target language

-vocabulary acquisition skills

-English for the multitude of special purposes, (ESP).

But what if the technology in teaching enabled the first two (arguably the dominant two) to happen without learning? The results would revolutionize the TEFL industry. Tens of thousands of native speakers (skilled or unskilled) would not be needed. Publishers would struggle to sell books as spoken English would be automatic. Language schools would lose their dominant rationale for existing. English as a Global Language would strengthen its control. ESL would replace EFL. Business would change overnight. Economies would be revolutionized. Bilingualism would become a part of every human's daily life. Ultimately the destruction of native languages would occur. A global English speaking L1 lingua franca would exist. Cultures would change.

The demise of a Social Science that employs millions? The political scientist would posit a world devoid of war? A criminologist would posit a world of complex crime? A global CEO would posit world domination of business using English only? The Vatican may see an attack on religious fundamentals? But clearly this is science fiction and a thing of the unknown future. The results of an English global lingua franca are too unimaginable to envisage. But the future is here - now. And even now a new direction is emerging - one that replaces native speakers with non native speakers - the proponents are gathering in numbers, (Phan Le Ha, 2005) - conversely the native speakers argue forcibly (Lee, J. 2005), that the native speaker has a fixed and vital place teaching English in a foreign land. But this debate will become ugly!

The Court of TEFL.

It is time to introduce a World TEFL Court. It is time that theories are put to task. Theories that lead to changes in the TEFL profession that impact across the globe need to be argued before the World TEFL court. An open court where the jury is a global profession. Proponents for and against - the plaintiff and the defendant - the judges - 9 Learned TEFL Practitioners appointed to hear over the arguments. It is time that a changing world order had laws. Such as 'AI' (artificial intelligence) and Cloning are revolutionizing the world, yet under the eye of the jurists and politicians, we, the Linguists, the TEFL teaching profession, are susceptibly changing world orders.

A TEFL court to lay down the law -and lay down the guidelines is needed.

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