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From the Editor

Welcome to the 2016 *Osaka JALT Journal*!

I n this, our third volume of the *Osaka JALT Journal,* we are pleased to offer a wide range of articles related to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. Whether you are a student, teacher, researcher, or administrator, we are sure that the topics discussed will provide you with stimulating food for thought.

This volume of the journal opens with *'Social and Academic Impacts of Studying Abroad'* by Sean Gay, which paradigmatically utilizes a transcendental phenomenological approach to researching study-abroad experiences to reveal how academia seems to be falling short in adequately preparing students for the social and academic issues that students can expect to encounter when they study abroad—a paper that anyone involved in study abroad will not want to miss. In *'Topic Selection, Feedback, and Improving EFL Writing Fluency in Japanese High School Students'*, Philip Head's felicitous article not only makes a case for the explicit correction of student writing by teachers, but it also paradoxically proposes that if teachers retain control over free-writing topic selection, students will receive greater gains in writing proficiency. Tsui-Ping Cheng's compendiously written article, *'To Talk or Not to Talk: A Qualitative Analysis of Japanese EFL Students' Communication Choices',* is a must read for anyone interested in understanding more about the variables that lead to student willingness or unwillingness to communicate in English. The next article, *'Classroom Factors that Influence Students' Perceived Capacity to Speak in English'* by Simon Humphries also poignantly examines factors that bolster or detract from students' efforts to actively communicate in English in a manner befitting narrative inquiry. Gilbert

Dizon's informative paper, *'Online Streaming in the L2 Classroom: Japanese Students' Opinions Towards Netflix and Subtitles',* provides excellent insights for teachers on how to use video to improve listening skills and vocabulary acquisition. **'Foreign Language Anxiety in Community English Conversation Classes in Japan'** by Paul Mathieson will be of interest to all teachers who want to reduce foreign language learner anxiety. Paul's research is bound to resonate well with anyone struggling to motivate demotivated or amotivated students. Michael Herke's article, *'Toward Film Analysis in the Foreign Language Classroom',* provides insights on how to incorporate some frameworks from film studies into pedagogy so that teachers can improve the didactical value of a movie class. Finally, this volume ends with **'Using Role-Playing and Reflective Journals to Foster Motivation and Develop Language Learning Strategies'** by Junko Omotedani, whose research makes a sensible argument for incorporating reflective journals into practice and challenges us to rethink our pedagogies.

On behalf of the editorial team and the Osaka JALT officers, I would like to thank all of the contributors who have made this volume possible. We are delighted that you have chosen *Osaka JALT Journal* as the forum for presenting your research. Your efforts are the impetus for change in our field, and it is your work that helps advance pedagogy one article at a time.

Ryan Smithers

Social and Academic Impacts of Studying Abroad

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Abstract

Study-abroad experiences are often researched in terms of cultural competency and linguistic development, which is limiting because it ignores a broad range of experiences related to the study-abroad experience. In contrast, this study used a transcendental phenomenological approach to examine the subjects' general academic and social development experiences in the context of involvement in study abroad. The primary source of data was semi-open interviews with individuals that were publicly recruited. The participants had studied abroad and ranged in age from 19 to 43. Data analysis revealed the themes of changes in relationships, support networks, outsider, and liberation. These themes suggested that broader preparation programs and improvements in student support might be advantageous or necessary. This information can lead to improvements in the understanding of both the social and academic issues that students can expect to encounter when they study abroad. This information could also improve programs designed to prepare students for studying abroad.

Keywords: study abroad, phenomenology, academic development, social development, empowerment

Foreign language educators often address studying abroad from a linguistic perspective (eg. Hernández, 2016, Tsung, & Hooper, 2016, and Yang, 2016). Students, however, do not experience studying abroad in this theoretical vacuum. Studying abroad is a phenomenon that can strongly affect academic and social development beyond the field of linguistics. To address this gap in the literature, I utilized transcendental phenomenology to allow students to define their experiences in a manner that leads to a broader understanding of the experience. This might better prepare students for the experience and improve the social, academic, and linguistic outcomes.

The Study of Studying Abroad

Studying abroad often goes beyond being a simple academic experience to being a life-changing experience. While linguistic fluency and cultural understanding are often the stated goals of studying abroad, the actual experience is much more complex (Wilkinson, 1998b) and can be a factor in intellectual and personal growth (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004), developing the whole student rather than only the individual's linguistic and cultural competencies.

Studying abroad, however, cannot guarantee positive growth. While exposure to another culture can lead to cultural competency, difficulties can often lead to stereotyping rather than empathy (Wilkinson, 1998b). In addition, some researchers have noted that a weaker link to one's own language or ethnic group might improve the ability to develop transcultural competence (Wilkinson, 1998a), which could be linked to the broader concept of cultural transcendentalism (Gay, 2012).

The reason that cultural transcendentalism is a better concept for addressing this aspect of language acquisition is because it isolates a key factor—the ability to step outside one's own culture—rather than focus on one possible precursor, a weak link to one's own language or linguistic identity. Cultural transcendentalism also does not conflict with using their culture as a socio-psychological foundation to promote stability within a foreign culture (Wilkinson, 1998a).

Cultural transcendentalism can also be linked to self-motivation, which plays a large role in the success of students studying abroad (Chirkov, Vansteenkiste, Tao, & Lynch, 2007). The desire to become involved in another culture and language can be a powerful tool, but support is also necessary. There are two types of support programs: pre-departure and in-program support. Pre-departure programs are general counseling

meetings designed to prepare the students for studying abroad. In-program support programs have counselors at the host institution that specialize in mental health issues related to studying abroad. The availability and quality of pre-departure preparation and in-program support programs during the stay might be factors in the experiences of students studying abroad (Wilkinson, 1998a). The preparation and support must also reflect that the students are more than just language immersion students; students that study abroad are studying a broad range of subjects and developing academically and socially.

Theoretical Framework

Examining study abroad experiences as a complete academic and social experience adopts aspects from several fields and requires a broad range of theories to formulate a foundation and explain the phenomenon. Empowerment theory, the idea that control and critical thinking are fundamental to personal development, addresses issues of social development. Cognitive engagement theory offers a system for understanding how cognitive load can promote academic development. Finally, utilitarian ethics are used for addressing the valuation of experiences. Utilitarian ethics is the strongest theory of ethics currently in use and can be utilized to evaluate the ethical repercussions of a broad range of actions (Mulgan 2015).

Empowerment

Often used as a catch-phrase, empowerment is the idea that, through critical understanding, one can take action (Freire, 1973), enabling individuals to promote change through critical reflection and personal control. Personal control is an important aspect of

empowerment (Chang, Liu, & Yen, 2008). This is not only a transfer of responsibility, but a transfer of the physical and psychological tools necessary to act. However, for actions to be meaningful, the individual must first comprehend the impact of the actions. This requires the development of the critical faculty (Freire, 1973). In terms of personal growth through studying abroad, empowerment concerns the development of both the critical faculty and the socio-psychological tools necessary to act on one's own behalf.

Cognitive Content Engagement

Cognitive content engagement theory creates a framework for predicting learning outcomes based on engagement and processing (McLaughlin et al., 2005). The broader concept is that, to improve learning outcomes, students must be able to connect with what they are learning. This theory, therefore, suggests that studying abroad might improve academic performance in language, history, and philosophy courses related to the host country, but not in other courses.

Utilitarianism

In order to assess value, it is important to have a strong foundation in ethics. Utilitarianism, the concept of doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people (Mill, 1863), allows assessment of a broad range of situations and is a philosophically sound system. As a philosophically-sound system, it can withstand scrutiny from both rational and empirical perspectives (Mulgan, 2015). By measuring actions based on the "greatest good" concept, rather than principles that require numerous corollaries and exceptions, utilitarianism offers a solid foundation for assessing any situation. Furthermore, in the case of complex situations, such as studying abroad, the goal is to choose the best path

with the greatest benefit. Other ethical systems do not allow for a nuanced understanding of the choices.

Transcendental Phenomenology

For qualitative social research, the constructivist framework is often used. This is because the actual reality is often less important than the perceived reality when dealing with social or psychological issues. In fact, the constructivist framework is the norm in qualitative social research (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). The constructivist framework underlies the transcendental phenomenological research methodology. When examining complex phenomenon, it is sometimes useful to examine the phenomenon through the eyes of the participants to get at a larger truth (Bloor & Wood, 2006; Moustakas, 1994). Transcendental phenomenology differs from this by focusing on the participants' analyses of the effect of the event. This focus on the participants suppresses researcher bias while allowing generalizable concepts to be derived (Miller & Salkind, 2002). Furthermore, transcendental phenomenology offers a solid foundation for developing an instrument and guiding analysis for best understanding the impact of studying abroad on students.

Methodology

This research was focused on understanding the student experience in the context of involvement in studying abroad by answering two research questions. How do students perceive the impact of involvement in studying abroad on their academic performance? How does identity development occur in the context of experience in studying abroad?

Participants

Seven subjects participated in the study: three males and four females between the ages of 21 and 43 years. Five of the subjects were Japanese, one was Canadian, and one was American. The subjects attended five different universities in Canada, the United States, and Japan. The subjects studied abroad at seven different universities in Canada, the United States, Singapore, Japan, and Germany for periods of three weeks to two years. This sample size is within Polkinghorne's (1989, as cited in Creswell, 2007) guidelines of between five and 25 subjects for phenomenological research. Because of the smaller sample size it is important to seek significant depth and context from each participant. However, the variety within the sample allows for a broader range of experiences and gives greater salience to the similarities in their experiences.

Instrument

The author developed a semi-open interview instrument for this study, similar to the one employed by De Soir et al. (2012). The interview process began with a checklist review of aspects of informed consent: the purpose of the interview, the use of the data, the possibility of publishing the data, the right to refuse to answer questions, and the right to end the interview at any time. This was followed by four sets of questions. The first question set concerned the background of the participant's experience. The second question set related to how they experienced the phenomenon. The third question set concerned the academic impact. The fourth and final question set concerned the social impact. Each question set contained one initial question with guidelines for follow-up questions and prompts if further information was necessary. After the interviews concluded, permission to use the data was again obtained.

In order to ensure content validity, the author examined the instrument and personally answered the questions. The questions were then discussed with colleagues to assess possible problems. Finally, a small pilot study was conducted to assess validity. These procedures are in line with the recommendations of Maxwell (2013).

Results

Analysis began by reading the data (Maxwell, 2013). A conceptual framework was used to identify the initial coding; conceptual frameworks are helpful in determining the coding to be used (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The initial themes were: positive, negative, academic, and identity. During the analysis, the themes became more specific: changes in relationships, support networks, outsider, and liberation. The data was entered in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and the themes coded using separate spreadsheets. The selected themes directly addressed the research question, and outlier data was reexamined and noted in the results.

Analysis

The study was designed to allow the participants to analyze their own experience. The initial questions elicited a broad range of responses about these experiences that the participants then analyzed. The themes that emerged from the analyses were used to refine or eliminate the initial themes, resulting in four final themes: changes in relationships, support networks, outsider, and liberation.

Changes in Relationships

Moving physically away from one's support network leads to changes in the relationships

that had developed. Three participants reported the ending of a relationship just prior to, during, or upon returning from the study-abroad experience. The individual whose relationship ended upon returning from the study-abroad experience stated that opportunities had been lost by not breaking up prior to going abroad. The other two no longer held strong feelings about their break-ups. One participant maintained a relationship throughout a three-week study-abroad experience.

Friendships also develop while studying abroad. All of the subjects stated that they developed relationships with others who were studying abroad, someone from either their own or another country. Only those who had spent at least one academic year abroad felt that they had developed friendships or deeper relationships with members of the host country.

Support Networks

The development of relationships with members of the same study-abroad group was connected to either the concept of a "shared experience" or a "support network" that allowed them to achieve perceived psychological stability. The study-abroad experience is stressful. Part of that stress is due to the lack of a social network to mitigate the stress. While studying abroad, participants developed an ad hoc social network. Those staying for longer periods tended to report that certain members of their ad hoc social networks continued to be friends. The ad hoc social networks initially were almost exclusively composed of other students that were studying abroad. Three of those in one- or two-academic year study abroad programs eventually included individuals from the host nation in their social network, but the social network still tended to consist primarily of other study abroad students. One participant of a one academic year study abroad program

did not include any residents from the host nation in their social network. The lack of a social network, particularly near the beginning of the study abroad experience, was often associated with negative aspects of the experience, such as feelings of homesickness.

Outsider

All of the participants described feelings of being an outsider—not being a part of the host culture—while studying abroad. Five of the participants also described feelings of being an outsider upon their return. All of the participants, however, expressed a desire to go abroad again. One participant said that the experience led to an embrace of being an outsider and to see outsider status from a purely positive perspective.

Liberation

The participant that elevated outsider status did so because the participant linked it to liberation. All of the participants felt that they were freer in the host country than in their country of origin. The sense of liberation had positive aspects, although two participants felt the liberation could also have negative aspects, such as the lack of guidance.

The sense of liberation occurred no matter which country the participants visited and seemed to be a function of studying abroad status rather than the culture of the host country. This sense of liberation was often linked with statements regarding the positive aspects of the study abroad experience. This suggests that the sense of liberation is an important factor in the development of a positive study abroad experience. On the other hand, liberation was also tied to negative aspects of outsider status.

Implications

A pre-study literature review revealed surprisingly little literature on the academic impacts of studying abroad. Furthermore, almost no literature existed on the impact of studying abroad on academic topics other than language and intercultural skills. This shows a failure of the research community to address the impacts of a phenomenon that is promoted in most institutions of higher education.

This study examined the study abroad experience from a broader perspective; students are not simply studying language and culture when they are abroad, they are also developing academically and socio-psychologically. Student needs must be addressed more broadly in pre-departure and in-program support programs. Pre-departure programs tend to focus on hurdles to language learning and occasionally with issues of homesickness. This limitation of scope is problematic in that it does not address the broader academic and social issues that students will have to be concerned about while studying abroad. The development of a positive balance between study and social endeavors, the development of positive coping mechanisms, and an understanding of minority issues in the adopted culture would be beneficial additions to pre-departure programs. Support programs are often limited or non-existent, and specialized counselors are important in providing support while abroad.

Those that had participated in pre-departure programs did not feel that the programs prepared them for the foreign academic environment they were entering. The student that went from Japan to Germany felt almost completely unprepared for the academic culture in the host country. Furthermore, three participants had been warned about the "trap" of associating with other students studying abroad. It is commonly held that associating with other exchange students limits the value of the experience, forcing

students to choose between entering the "trap" and forming a support network and trying to develop without a socio-psychological foundation. As only one participant developed a social network comprised solely of members from the host country, and only one participant reported a social network that was about half members of the host country and half members who were also studying abroad, the reality is that interaction with other students who are studying abroad appears to meet a socio-psychological need. The shared experience of studying abroad allows a stronger association that helps in the development of a support network. Encouraging students to avoid other students who are studying abroad may have a negative impact on the development of a social network, and thus their overall social development.

The participants generally felt that they had positive experiences with study abroad. Some of the experiences were stressful or regrettable, but the participants generally felt that their overall experience was positive, and they were motivated to study abroad again if the opportunity arose. This might be, in part, the reflective nature of their circumstances, as none of the participants were interviewed during the study abroad period. It might also have been the result of sampling. Either way, despite a lack of sufficient pre-departure support, the generally positive experiences, suggests that studying abroad can strongly and positively affect both academic and personal development.

Limitations

While the sample size was within the range recommended by Polkinghorne (as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 61), it is still small. None of the participants had an overall negative study abroad experience. While this study interviewed participants after the study abroad

experience, there might also be value in interviewing students immediately following study abroad or even during the experience. Furthermore, this study sought to find emergent themes that could give depth to the experiences of students that had studied abroad. Further quantitative research about measurable academic and social outcomes, as well as studies aimed at finding the generalizability of these aspects of the experience could strengthen the understanding of studying abroad as a complete experience.

Conclusion

Studying abroad is a complex and life-changing phenomenon. Currently, there is much support for studying abroad among educators, but little research into how studying abroad affects students. What little research does exist focuses only on two aspects of the phenomenon: linguistic knowledge and intercultural understanding. This can lead to a push against engagement with other students studying abroad. Based on the experiences of the participants in this study, this type of interaction should not be opposed.

The participants in this study felt that the preparation they had received before leaving was insufficient. The author hopes that the findings of this study will lead to a better understanding of the social and academic issues that students face when they study abroad and subsequently improve the programs that prepare students for studying abroad as well as support them while they are abroad.

The main reason for undertaking this study was to examine a gap in the literature. This study provides several avenues for further study on the subject of studying abroad. Both researchers and students would benefit from additional research to examine the broader phenomenon.

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Topic Selection, Feedback, and Improving EFL Writing Fluency in Japanese High School Students

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Abstract

Many studies (e.g., Bonzo, 2008) have examined the effect of topic selection (teacher selected (TS) versus student selected (SS) topics) on writing fluency. However, previous research (e.g., Dickinson, 2014) has focused on university students over the course of a single semester, with results showing higher fluency for SS topics than TS topics. To determine if these results are applicable in a pre-university level context, this study examines the writing fluency of 54 first-year (grade 10) Japanese high school students completing weekly timed free writing activities over the course of a year. Unlike previous research, no significant difference was detected between the fluency scores for TS and SS topics after one semester, but at the end of the year, TS topic writing had a statistically significant higher fluency score than SS topic writing. Also, the average fluency score increased between the first and third semesters and there was no significant difference in fluency scores when students knew that their spelling and grammar would be corrected by the teacher.

Keywords: writing, fluency, topic selection, free writing

Writing is an important skill, but in most language classes, there often is not enough time given to fluency development (Nation, 2007). Furthermore, when writing is performed in class, it often involves producing a series of single sentences to practice a specific grammar point, rather than communicating student thoughts (Homstad & Thorson, 2000). Thus, students are less likely to fully utilize and explore their language abilities and more likely to produce the minimum required while avoiding making mistakes (Hyland, 2009, as cited in Dickinson,

2013).

Nation (2007) states that for fluency development, activities should involve familiar language, focus on conveying or receiving meaning, contain pressure to perform more quickly than normal, and feature a large amount of output and input. Thus free writing, where students are encouraged to write as much as possible within a specified time without being graded on grammatical accuracy, is a useful way to increase written fluency while giving students the opportunity to express themselves and use English to communicate freely.

This paper presents the quantitative results of a year-long study based on a previous study by Bonzo (2008) that examined the effect of writing topic selection on student writing fluency. Specifically, Bonzo demonstrated that writing fluency was significantly higher among American university students studying German when they wrote on self-selected (SS) topics rather than teacher selected (TS) topics. This study replicates Bonzo's (2008) study on a demographic that does not appear to have been studied yet—Japanese high school English as a foreign language (EFL) learners—and goes further by examining the effect of explicit teacher feedback on L2 writing fluency (a topic unexplored by Bonzo (2008)) in this context.

Literature Review

Measuring Writing Fluency

One of the pedagogical goals of practicing free writing in addition to grammar-oriented writing is to increase writing fluency. Brumfit (1984, as cited in Cohen, 2013) states that fluency involves speed and continuousness of language use. Thus, an activity such as free writing, that focuses on producing as much continuous output as possible within a

set time, lends itself to measuring fluency. The question of how to measure written fluency quantitatively is challenging, as ease of language use can be subjective. However, as fluent speakers can be expected to quickly retrieve the words that they need, it should be possible to quantify written fluency by accounting for the number and types of words students write in a set period. Writing that contains a higher ratio of unique words to total words indicates greater fluency. However, if this simple ratio is used to calculate fluency, then a student who wrote a single word (resulting in a one-to-one ratio) could receive a higher fluency score than someone who had written several sentences in the same amount of time. To deal with this problem, Carroll (1967) proposed measuring lexical complexity by dividing the total number of unique words by the square root of two times the total number of words, which takes into account both the ratio of unique to total words and the length of writing.

$$\text{Carroll's lexical complexity} = \frac{\text{(total number of unique words)}}{\sqrt{2 \text{ x (total number of words)}}}$$

The Effect of Topic Selection on Writing Fluency

A study by Bonzo (2008), examining American university students studying German, found a significant increase in writing fluency when students were allowed to choose their own free-writing topic instead of writing on an assigned topic. This study has been replicated by numerous researchers (for example, Cohen, 2013; Dickinson, 2014; Ferreira, 2013; Grogan & Lucas, 2012; Leblanc & Fujieda, 2012; Rettig-Miki & Sholdt, 2014), all of whom (with the exception of Rettig-Miki & Sholdt, 2014) also found a higher fluency score among EFL university students when the students selected their own topics. Several reasons for the difference in fluency scores have been proposed. Bonzo (2008) suggests

that allowing students to choose topics results in more engagement, while Dickinson (2014) suggests that learners will choose topics that they are familiar with and so have more ready access to appropriate vocabulary.

However, little research has been done to see if this is also the case in a Japanese high school setting. Furthermore, the aforementioned studies took place over a limited time period of one semester or less. Dickinson (2014) raises the issue that, due to short time period of previous studies, the effect of continuous free writing on the development of writing fluency is unclear.

The Effect of Corrective Feedback on Writing Fluency

Bonzo (2008) and its replication studies mentioned in the previous section, all avoided corrective teacher feedback. This decision was based on research by Semke (1984), who found that (among American university students studying German) corrective feedback from teachers did not result in an increase in accuracy in student writing or competency in the language, and that students who received only content-related comments showed greater progress than those who received correction. Semke also raised concerns regarding the amount of time required for correction as well as the possible negative effects on student attitudes. However, Ferreira (2013) questions whether Semke's findings are relevant in a Japanese context where the grammar and translation method is still commonly used. Furthermore, both Dickinson (2014) and Ferreira (2013) mention the need for further research regarding the use of corrective feedback (rather than only content-based) on writing fluency in a Japanese context.

Reasearch Questions

This study sought to address gaps in the literature related to a narrow focus on university-level students within a short time period by having first-year Japanese high school students engage in free-writing activities over the course of a year, and compare: 1) the fluency scores for both teacher- and student-selected topics during the first and final semesters; 2) the changes in fluency scores between the first and third semesters; and 3) in what ways anticipation of grammar and spelling feedback influences student writing fluency.

Methods

Description of the Study Participants

Two first-year (grade 10) high school classes were selected for this investigation (see Table 1 for details of the class demographics). These two first-year classes were chosen because the students were specializing in English communication and therefore had

Table 1

Study Participant Demographics

	Number of Students	Number of Students that Gave Permission for Inclusion of Their Data in the Study	Number of Students whose Data was Used in the Final Analysis
Male	18	17	9
Female	52	51	45
Total	70	68	54

additional English classes, allowing time for the introduction of new activities such as free writing. In addition, both classes had identical entrance requirements, which meant that the students were expected to have similar abilities and motivation regarding English. The two classes had different Japanese non-native English speaker teachers (NNEST), but shared the same native English speaking assistant language teacher (ALT). All students were required to do the writing project, but student fluency scores were not included in the study without their explicit written consent. In addition, permission to conduct the project was obtained from the school.

Writing Conditions and Analysis

At the beginning of the first semester (S1) students were introduced to free writing and told that they should try to write as much as possible within a ten-minute free writing period. In order to encourage students to write freely, they were also told that the writing would not be graded and that grammar and spelling would not be checked. Students were allowed to use dictionaries (paper or electronic) and textbooks as resources. The teachers were also available as a resource for unknown words, but no grammar help was given. During the writing time, the teachers would circulate among the students and encourage them to write, but no writing suggestions were given. Generally speaking, students in Class One preferred to work silently and individually, whereas students in Class Two were more likely to talk to the teachers and each other during the writing assignment, often helping each other when necessary. After ten minutes, the writing activity was halted and the papers collected. The students' writing was then transcribed (including spelling mistakes and other errors) using a computer word processing application.

The total number of words and unique words were counted using an online Text

Content Analysis Tool from UsingEnglish.com (http://www.usingenglish.com/resources /text-statistics.php). Care was taken to make sure that spelling was consistent (i.e., if the same word was spelled two different ways it would be changed to a single spelling before being entered into the analyzer). Words written in Japanese were not counted. However, Japanese words written in roman characters were included if they didn't have a clear English equivalent. For example, *omuraisu* would be retained because the common translation "omelet" does not adequately represent what *omuraisu* is, whereas *neko* would not be accepted because "cat" is a direct equivalent. Proper nouns, such as the names of Japanese people and places, were also counted. For the student-selected topic writing, if a student wrote a title, those words were included in the analysis. Contractions were counted as one word.

While Carroll's (1967) lexical complexity calculation can differentiate long and short writing as well as the ratio of unique to total words, this calculation can give inaccurate results if someone simply writes a long list of unique words without using grammar to link the words together. Subsequently, one student whose samples contained a list of words rather than proper sentences was eliminated from the project. In addition, students who did not complete all the assignment were removed from the project. The total number of students whose data was included in the final statistical analysis was 54 (Table 1).

Differences between this Replication Study and the Original Study
The Bonzo (2008) study that this project replicated had four groups forming two counterbalanced pairs, where one group writing on a teacher-selected (TS) topic is matched with another group writing on a student-selected (SS) topic, in order to control

for the effect of the order in which the students wrote on each type of topic. However, this study consisted of two groups forming one counterbalanced pair because only two classes at this school had an extra English period each week, thus affording the teachers more class time to devote to practicing writing. Also, instead of writing about four TS topics followed by four SS topics (or vice versa for the counterbalanced group) as in the Bonzo study, it was decided to alternate between SS and TS writing topics (Table 2). The reasoning behind this decision was to reduce the possibility that any difference in fluency observed was a result of increased comfort and familiarity with writing over time, and not because of topic selection. Also, at the end of the first semester (April to July), the students' writing papers were returned with teacher comments relating to the content (typically one or two sentences).

In the second semester (September to December), students continued to engage in free writing activities but they were given a choice of using the TS topic or an SS topic. Also in the second semester, the type and number of words were not recorded and the papers were returned to the students with teacher comments within one week. In the third and final semester (January to March), students were again alternatively assigned TS or SS topics, and their writing was transcribed and analyzed. Also, during the third semester, in addition to content-related teacher comments, one half of the students in each class were told that their spelling and grammar would be checked. (After completing one TS and one SS assignment, the other half of the students had their writing corrected while the first half only received comments about content). The decision to correct the writing in the third semester was a result of student feedback requesting explicit correction. Spelling and grammar mistakes were crossed out in red pen and the corrections were explicitly written above the mistake.

Table 2

Writing Topics

Assignment Number	Class 1 Topic	Class 2 Topic
1 (first semester)[a]	SS	Life after graduation
2 (first semester)[a]	Life after graduation	SS
3 (first semester)[a]	SS	My friends
4 (first semester)[a]	My friends	SS
5 (first semester)[a]	SS	Free time
6 (first semester)[a]	Free time	SS
7 (second semester)	Summer vacation or SS	Summer vacation or SS
8 (second semester)	Favorite season or SS	Favorite season or SS
9 (second semester)	Culture festival or SS	Culture festival or SS
10 (second semester)	Sports festival or SS	Sports festival or SS
11 (second semester)	Family or SS	Family or SS
12 (second semester)	Food or SS	Food or SS
13 (second semester)	Music or SS	Music or SS
14 (second semester)	Cellphones or SS	Cellphones or SS
15 (second semester)	Pets or SS	Pets or SS
16 (second semester)	Christmas or SS	(not completed)
17 (third semester)[a]	New Year's holiday	SS
19 (third semester)[a]	SS	New Year's holiday
20 (third semester)[a]	Junior high school	SS
21 (third semester)[a]	SS	Junior high school
22 (third semester)	First year of high school or SS	First year of high school or SS

Note. This is a modified version of a table that first appeared as an appendix in Head (2016).

[a]Student writing was typed and the number of unique and total words was recorded

Results

Comparison of Teacher-Selected and Student-Selected Topics

A correlated samples t-test (Table 3) was performed and revealed no statistically

significant difference between the mean lexical complexity scores of the teacher

selected (TS) and student selected (SS) topics in the first semester. During the third

semester however, TS scores were significantly higher.

Table 3

The Effect of Topic Selection on Writing Fluency

Semester	TS Mean Lexical Complexity	SS Mean Lexical Complexity	TS-SS Mean Lexical Complexity	*t* (df)	*p*-value (two-tailed)
First	2.687 (0.69)	2.722 (0.61)	-0.035	-0.64 (53)	0.525
Third	3.131 (0.61)	2.984 (0.72)	0.148	2.57 (53)	0.013

Table 4

Changes in Written Fluency Over Time

First Semester Mean Lexical Complexity	Third Semester Mean Lexical Complexity	First Semester – Third Semester Mean Lexical Complexity	*t* (df)	*p*-value (two-tailed)
2.704 (0.57)	3.058 (0.63)	-0.353	-7.32 (53)	<.0001

Changes in Fluency over Time

Another correlated samples t-test was performed to look for significant differences in the mean lexical complexity of all writing (both TS and SS) in the first and third semesters. As shown in Table 4, the mean lexical complexity of the students' writing was significantly higher in the third semester than in the first semester. This indicates that writing fluency increased over the course of the year.

The Effect of Correction on Fluency

While each student had half of their compositions corrected during the third semester, a correlated samples *t*-test showed no significant difference in the mean lexical complexity score between the uncorrected and corrected student writing (Table 5).

Table 5

The Effect of Correction on Writing Fluency

Third Semester Corrected Writing Mean Lexical Density	Third Semester Uncorrected Writing Mean Lexical Density	Third Semester Corrected – Uncorrected Writing Mean Lexical Density	*t* (df)	*p*-value (two-tailed)
3.050 (0.69)	3.097 (0.67)	-0.047	-0.91 (53)	0.367

Discussion

The Effect of Topic Selection on Writing Fluency

This study found no statistically significant differences in writing fluency between TS and SS assignments in the first semester, but significantly higher fluency scores (mean difference (TS-SS)=0.148, *t*(53)=2.57, p=0.013) when students wrote about TS topics in the third semester (Table 3). This result is in line with Rettig-Miki and Sholdt (2014) who found a mean difference (TS-SS) of 0.064 (*t*(51)=2.048, p=0.046). However, these results contradict those of several other studies (Cohen, 2013; Dickinson, 2014; Ferreira, 2013; Grogan & Lucas, 2012; Leblanc & Fujieda, 2012) which observed significantly higher fluency scores for SS topics. This result is surprising because it has been previously suggested by Leblanc and Fujieda, (2012, referencing Ong & Zhang, 2010) that students

choose topics with which they are already familiar, thereby reducing the cognitive demands on themselves. In addition, Bonzo (2008) suggests that students are more motivated to write about SS topics, which results in more fluent writing.

There are some factors that may explain the difference between this study and previous studies. The most important factor may be that students have difficulty selecting a topic, with several students commenting that this took a long time (Head, 2016). Thus, students may waste valuable time during the ten-minute activity if they cannot think of a topic quickly, resulting in less written output and a lower fluency score. Rettig-Miki and Sholdt (2014) also identified student difficulty in deciding a topic as a factor, along with students choosing more difficult topics that required more time using a dictionary. Therefore, in contexts other than a short, timed-writing activity, students might write more fluently if they are allowed to choose their own topics.

Age factors also may play a role in this difference. For example, the American students in the Bonzo (2008), the other studies done in Japanese contexts involved university students rather than high school students. University students likely have had more life experiences than first year high school students and thus have a wider array of personal experiences to draw upon for their writing. Japanese university students also will have had at least three more years of formal English instruction and likely will have more complex vocabulary and grammar readily available to them than the first year high school students in this study.

In light of these findings, a balanced approach to topic selection should be adopted (as advocated by Bonyani, 2014), where students can choose their own topics, but teachers can also help less self-regulated or knowledgeable students by assigning appropriate topics.

Changes in Writing Fluency over Time

In terms of the benefits of free writing, this study shows that writing fluency scores were significantly higher at the end of the school year than at the beginning (Table 4). One limitation of the study is the lack of a control group to which the results could be compared. Thus, while both classes saw a significant improvement in writing fluency, it cannot be claimed that this was due exclusively to the use of free writing in the classes. However, the fact that the students improved over the course of the year indicates that the effect of free writing practice on fluency is a promising area for future research.

The Effect of Correction on Writing Fluency

The lack of a significant difference in the fluency scores in the third semester between assignments that did or did not receive grammar and spelling feedback (Table 5) indicates that corrective feedback had no negative effect on writing fluency. This contradicts one of the key assumptions of previous studies such as Bonzo (2008), that students would write less fluently if they knew they would be corrected because they would be more careful not to make errors. However, this result is likely due to the fact that the students were aware that, while their writing would be corrected, it would not be graded. Thus, correction would be seen as an opportunity for improving future writing, rather than an anxiety-producing evaluation. Whether this result would be observed in a situation where the writing was graded is an area for future research.

Conclusion

This study sought to replicate studies of writing fluency among university students by examining the effect of topic selection on the writing fluency among Japanese high school

EFL students. The result of this year-long investigation was that students wrote more fluently during timed free-writing activities when the writing topic was assigned by the teacher. This result differed from that of the original Bonzo (2008) study that this study replicated, possibly due to age differences between the participants in the two studies. In addition, the writing fluency of the Japanese high school students increased over the year. Finally, there was no difference in writing fluency between writing that was and was not corrected by the teacher, although this may be due to the fact that spelling and grammar were not graded.

Based on these results, the use of timed free writing can be recommended as a useful classroom activity in a Japanese high school setting, although these students may benefit from more guidance during the assignment, in the form of writing topic suggestions from the teacher, compared to university level students. In addition, the use of explicit correction of student writing (in combination with content-based teacher feedback) does not appear to negatively affect student fluency scores in a context where writing accuracy is not graded. Thus teachers should be encouraged to correct student writing in order to allow students to identify and learn from their errors, without fear of discouraging students from exploring their use of English.

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To Talk or Not to Talk: A Qualitative Analysis of Japanese EFL Students' Communication Choices

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Abstract

Why do some students choose to speak up and others remain silent in a foreign language classroom? This question often perplexes language teachers. In order to understand students' communication choices, this study investigates classroom situations in which Japanese EFL students chose to initiate or avoid communication in English when given the choice. Students were invited to contribute self-reflections on their communication choices through focused essays. A total of 273 student essays were submitted. Of these, 138 entries addressed conditions in which the students were the readiest to communicate; and 135 entries considered situations in which the students felt averse to speaking in English. A qualitative analysis of these essays revealed that interlocutor participation, topic familiarity and interest, attitudes towards the task, and self-confidence are the most decisive factors influencing the students' willingness to communicate in English. The findings contribute to a better understanding of learners' communication choices in the EFL classroom and provide insights into effective pedagogical approaches that could generate or increase learners' willingness to use English in class.

Keywords: willingness to communicate, focused essay technique, L2 classroom interaction, L2 communication

Language learners often perceive speaking in a target language as the most anxiety-provoking activity of learning a second language (L2; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Despite the frustration and anxiety experienced by language learners with L2 speaking, their participation in L2 communication is crucial to their language development because "learners have to talk in order to learn" (Skehan, 1989, p. 48). From a pedagogical perspective, a primary concern of L2 teaching is how to reduce

language anxiety so as to increase L2 communication in class. The decision to talk or not to talk in an L2 is, as MacIntyre (2007) proposes, an act of volition, involving a dynamic interplay of the learning context with the psychology of the individual learner. The result of this volitional process is a common classroom phenomenon in which some students choose to participate while others will remain quiet when given the opportunity. The divergent communication choices among students have a direct effect on the degree of their willingness to seek out L2 communication opportunities (Kang, 2005) and subsequently on the degree of their language learning success (Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004).

Therefore, in an EFL context where foreign language learners are surrounded by their own native language and typically receive target language input only in the classroom (Oxford & Shearin, 1994), language learners' volitional choice to initiate or avoid L2 communication within the classroom becomes a critical factor in their language learning success. Knowing how this choice is made in a classroom setting could help language educators understand why some EFL learners, even those who have studied English for several years, are reluctant to speak despite the opportunity and ability to do so. Additionally, having a conscious awareness of the factors contributing to students' willingness to communicate can help language educators develop pedagogical practices and create classroom environments that promote student participation in L2 communication.

In order to understand EFL learners' communication choices, this study used a focused essay technique to investigate classroom situations in which Japanese university students choose to initiate or avoid communication in English when given the choice. The results not only advance our comprehension of the thought process behind students'

communication choices, but could help language educators and classroom researchers better understand the conditions under which students would be willing or unwilling to speak in a classroom setting.

Literature Review

The concept of willingness to communicate (WTC) is originally defined in first language (L1) development and reconceptualized in L2 communication. As MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) noted, "WTC represents the intention to speak or remain silent that can be considered the most immediate determinant of L2 use" (p. 150). Thus, WTC not only plays a critical role in language development and instruction, but is paramount to L2 research. The possible factors that contribute to the variation of WTC between learners must therefore be understood.

Willingness to Communicate

The concept of WTC was initially conceptualized by McCroskey and Baer (1985) in an L1 context as an individual's tendency to initiate communication when free to do so. WTC in the L1 is seen as a trait-like predisposition, which remains stable over time and across situations. MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998), however, propose that WTC in an L2 should be treated as a situational variable and redefined it as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using [an] L2" (p. 547). They argued that WTC in an L2 works in a dynamic system and changes according to the situation presented, as it interacts with other linguistic, communicative, and psychological factors unique to each individual L2 learner. Furthering this argument, Kang (2005) describes a multilayered situational WTC construct, in which WTC in an L2

can dynamically emerge and fluctuate moment-to-moment in an interactional context under the joint effect of three psychological conditions: security, excitement, and responsibility. Each of these conditions can alter in relation to other situational variables, such as topic, interlocutors, and conversational context.

The significance of WTC in an L2 stems from the pivotal role of interaction in L2 development from both cognitive-interactionist (Long, 1996; Swain, 1996) and sociocultural perspectives (Vygotsky, 1978). Research has shown that the frequency of participation in L2 interactions and WTC are closely related (Clément, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Given the benefits of engaging learners in meaningful interactions, L2 communication is considered not only a means to facilitate L2 learning, but also an important goal in itself. Learners with higher WTC are also found to be more active, more autonomous in classrooms, more willing to attempt new communication tasks (MacIntyre, Babin, & Clément, 1999) and increase L2 communication for authentic purposes both inside and outside the classroom (Kang, 2005). If the ultimate goal of language instruction is to produce learners that are willing to use their L2 for authentic communication, researchers have argued that establishing WTC in learners should be the primary goal of language educators and should be enhanced through pedagogical intervention (Kang, 2005; MacIntyre et al., 1998; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2003).

WTC in an L2

Due to its dynamic nature, WTC in an L2 has the potential to rise and fall across situations. Following this situational view, previous research has identified several situational variables that could influence WTC in an L2, such as learning context (Baker &

MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre et al., 2003), conversational context (Kang, 2005), social support from friends (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001), teacher support and feedback (MacIntyre, Burns, & Jessome, 2011; Zarrinabadi, 2014), interactions with interlocutor(s) (Cao, 2011; Cao & Philp, 2006; Eddy-U, 2015; Kang, 2005; Yu, 2015), learner attitude towards speaking activities (de Saint Léger & Storch, 2009), group size (Cao, 2011; Cao & Philp, 2006; Kang, 2005), and topic interest and familiarity (Kang, 2005). The research on the relationships between L2 WTC and its variables has illuminated the complex process involved in the communication choices that L2 learners must make on a regular basis.

In L2 classroom contexts, research has examined individual and environmental influences on learners' WTC (Cao, 2011; Peng, 2012; Peng & Woodrow, 2010), reported learner predictions, expectations, or perceptions of their WTC in class (Bernales, 2016; de Saint Léger & Storch, 2009), discussed the role of teachers in learners' WTC (Zarrinabadi, 2014), and compared learners' self-reported WTC with their actual WTC behavior in class (Cao & Philp, 2006; Yu, 2015). Cao and Philp (2006), for example, found four main factors perceived by learners to influence their WTC behavior in class: the group size, self-confidence, familiarity with interlocutor(s), and interlocutor participation. More recently, Cao (2011) explored how various environmental (e.g., topic, task type, interlocutor), individual (e.g., personality, self-confidence), and linguistic (e.g., language proficiency, use of L1) factors coordinate closely to promote or debilitate learners' WTC in class.

The pedagogical value of L2 WTC research is well put by MacIntyre et al. (1998): "By considering why a person is willing to talk at one time and not another, we can appreciate the important factors influencing classroom communication and 'real world'

contact" (p. 558). One consensus shared within this line of research is that there is no one single variable that can be credited with being solely responsible for the fluctuation of learners' WTC in class. To maximize learner participation in L2 communication, language teachers should focus on reducing these restraining WTC forces while trying to promote facilitating WTC forces in class (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Kang, 2005). The present study contributes to this line of inquiry by examining the restraining and facilitating WTC forces in a Japanese EFL context.

Research Questions

This study used a qualitative methodology to examine classroom situations in which the participating Japanese university students chose to initiate or avoid communicating in English when free to choose to do so. The students were invited to write about their communication choices through focused essays. The classroom situations described by the students were limited to spoken L2 interactions. The following three questions were addressed in this study:

1. In what classroom situations did the students feel the most willing to communicate in English?

2. In what classroom situations did the students feel the least willing to communicate in English?

3. What did the students perceive to be the most important factors that influenced their WTC in class?

Methodology

Participants

The participants were 46 first-year undergraduate students majoring in commerce and management at a university in Tokyo, comprising of 44 Japanese students and two exchange students (one Chinese and one Korean). The participating students scored between 520 and 540 on the paper-based TOFEL test. All the 46 participants (34 males and 12 females) were enrolled in each of three mandatory English courses: one business English course and two skills-based English courses (listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills). The business English course was taught in English and had an English-only policy in class. Conversely, the skills-based courses were taught in either English or Japanese, depending on each instructor's preferences. Nevertheless, the students had regular interactions in English with classmates and teachers in at least one of the English courses they were enrolled in. In fact, the majority of them (29 out of 46) had at least two English courses in which they had opportunities to use English with classmates and teachers. Most of the students (39 out of 46) had no interactions in English outside the classroom. Those that had interactions in English outside the classroom reported using English with their foreign friends on Facebook, roommates at their international dormitory, or exchange students at extracurricular activities.

Data Collection

The participating students first completed a questionnaire at the beginning of the study. The questionnaire asked about the students' demographic information, linguistic background, English course selection, and frequency of communication in English both inside and outside the classroom. Using the focused essay technique, the students were

then asked to complete a journal that identified three classroom situations in which they were most willing to communicate in English and three classroom situations in which they were least willing to communicate in English.

The focused essay technique (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991) is a qualitative method that "provides a window into the thought processes of the students" (MacIntyre et al., 2011, p. 82). A focused essay on L2 WTC usually asks respondents to write about when they feel most willing (positive experiences) and least willing (negative experiences) to speak in their L2 (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; MacIntyre et al., 2011; Zarrinabadi, 2014). Although the focused essay is subject to the limitations imposed by respondents' selective memory, it was chosen for this study because it allows for rich descriptions of how the respondents view their experiences in L2 communication.

Students were instructed to write six one-page essays using A4 paper; three essays were devoted to discussing their most willing situations and the other three their least willing situations. For each situation, students were instructed to describe who they were talking with, what they talked about, in which class the conversation took place, and how they felt about the experience. All these questions were presented in English. An oral explanation of the questions was also provided to ensure a clear understanding among the students. The students had a period of six weeks to complete their focused essays in English and were instructed to be as specific and explicit as possible in their answers. Following the submission of the essays, the author conducted an interview with each student to clarify any unclear points written in the essays.

Analyses

Once all the hand-written essays were collected, they were collated verbatim into one of

two electronic documents: "most willing" and "least willing" situations. All identifying information was then removed and an identification number was given to each student. Following the analysis procedure employed by Tse (2000) and Zarrinabadi (2014), the essays were coded using open and axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Open coding was used to identify and explore the major categories contained in the essays. At this stage, the important parts of the essays were highlighted and summary labels were added to each essay entry using Microsoft Word comments. This step worked to break down the data into manageable pieces, note similarities and differences between the essays, identify recurrent categories, and discard unrelated and unnecessary information in the essays. Axial coding was then performed to organize and group the summary labels in terms of their relevance and specificity. For example, interlocutor's opinion and interlocutor's use of L1 were categorized under the category of interlocutor participation. This procedure functioned to reveal relationships between major categories and subordinate ones. Each essay and its summary label were also reread to ensure that the categories captured the nature of the texts.

Results and Discussion

A total of 138 entries were received discussing situations in which the students were most willing to communicate and 135 entries examined situations in which the students were least willing to communicate. The overwhelming majority of entries focused on peer interactions (255 entries), rather than student-teacher interactions (18 entries). The analysis identified four main factors that increased or decreased the students' WTC in English: interlocutor participation, topic familiarity and interest, attitudes towards the task, and self-confidence. Three lesser factors were also identified to influence their WTC:

familiarity with interlocutor(s), teacher feedback and support, and preparation for the task. Tables 1 and 2 provide a summary of the main factors and their frequency in the entries from the greatest to the least.

Table 1

Willingness to communicate (WTC) entries

Factor	Number of entries
Interlocutor participation	49
Topic interest and familiarity	44
Attitudes towards the task	34
Self-confidence	15
Familiarity with interlocutor(s)	8
Teacher feedback and support	5
Preparation for the task	2

Table 2

Unwillingness to communicate (unWTC) entries

Factor	Number of entries
Topic interest and familiarity	50
Interlocutor participation	35
Self-confidence	36
Attitudes towards the task	16
Teacher feedback and support	8
Familiarity with interlocutor(s)	4
Preparation for the task	1

Notably, the four factors discussed below are not exhaustive but are meant to capture the major themes discussed in the student essays. To illustrate the factors from the students' perspectives, direct quotes from the students are presented as written without

any editing.

Interlocutor Participation

Interlocutor participation was perceived as a vital factor in both WTC (49 entries) and unWTC essays (35 entries). The degree to which the interlocutor was attentive and participated actively influenced the speaker's WTC. As one student commented, "everyone spoke English delightfully and I also thought so. I'd like to explain and propose more in discussion" (ID: 8). In addition to oral participation, interlocutors' active listening served to facilitate WTC in the L2. One respondent wrote about how her partner's engagement in their discussion stimulated her desire to talk more even though the topic (future career) was difficult for her to discuss. She reported:

> *WTC: I tried to talk about jobs for commerce students, but it was too difficult to express technical words. However, a person who I talked with listened to my talk and tried to understand what I wanted to say, so I could continue to discuss the topic until the end without giving up.* (ID: 21)

In contrast, a lack of interlocutor participation, such as minimal responses and a reliance on L1, could radically restrain the students' willingness to use the L2. One student described her frustration with a group discussion and wrote, "I think everyone should join the conversation positively" (ID: 7). Another student expressed similar sentiments: "they looked cold and they didn't seem to be interested in my talk. It was a terrible experience" (ID: 25). Even when the topic was interesting, minimal responses from an interlocutor exerted a negative influence on the students' WTC. One respondent noted, "I think the topic was easy to discuss and I wanted to talk a lot. However, the member who I talked with was not willing to talk, so I can't continue the conversation" (ID: 18). The students also expressed a loss of impetus to speak in English when their interlocutor reverted to

Japanese and refused to participate in English. One student wrote, "I tried to talk about advertisement with him in English, but he continued to talk in Japanese, so I lost my motivation" (ID: 27). Another student noted, "one of them was sophomore and reluctant to speak English. He just answered 'I think so too' and 'yes/no.' I tried to make him speak something in English but he always looked sleepy" (ID: 20).

Focusing on task motivation in dyadic interaction, Dörnyei (2002) found that the interlocutor constitutes an important factor in shaping the speaker's task attitude and performance in an interaction. Dörnyei's findings indicated that the language output of a speaker with a low task attitude would improve if the speaker was paired up with a more motivated peer. Therefore, Dörnyei (2002) suggested that task motivation was "co-constructed" by the task participants as the interlocutor's effects worked as a "pulling force" that could either pull up or down the speaker (pp. 152–153). Likewise, the essay entries in this study revealed that interlocutor participation was critical to changes in the students' WTC levels.

Topic Familiarity and Interest

Another equally influencing factor in WTC was topic familiarity and interest, as highlighted in 44 entries in the WTC essays and 50 entries in the unWTC essays. Kang (2005) found that familiar topics create a sense of security in learners while unfamiliar topics cause insecurity and thus restrict learners' attempts to communicate in their L2. One student wrote about how he felt willing to talk with his teacher because of his knowledge of the topic under discussion. He reported, "I know stealth marketing in Japan so I told him and he got it soon. I was satisfied because I could describe something in English successfully" (ID: 41). In contrast, the lack of topic knowledge tended to reduce

one's linguistic self-confidence and thus inhibit L2 communication (Cao, 2011, Cao & Philp, 2006; Kang, 2005; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Zarrinabadi, 2014). One respondent noted, "I have never used online matching service, so I didn't know what to say" (ID: 32). Another respondent felt the same way when discussing a "sports riot" because he had "never been to sports stadium and never seen sports violence on TV" (ID: 41). Referring to a discussion on "bike rentals in London," one participant wrote, "I think a conversation doesn't become lively if we don't feel familiar with it" (ID: 11).

Kang (2005) suggested that interest in a topic helps foster participants' feeling of excitement and thus is vital to the emergence of situational WTC. A respondent in this study emphasized the role of topic interest in her WTC: "I watched eight movies at that time so this topic was so interesting to me and I wanted to keep talking to share my favorite movies" (ID: 6). Another respondent expressed his excitement when discussing his favorite author's book and commented: "I never would have guessed I could talk about the author and his book deeply, especially in English! If I recall, my English was terrible. However, it was great fun to say what I wanted to say freely" (ID: 17). On the other hand, a lack of topic interest was likely to take a toll on L2 participation. As one student noted on a discussion of environmental problems, "it was the topic which we talked so much in the junior and high school. Therefore, there is no new idea, no new logic, and no interesting things" (ID: 31). Consistent with Kang's (2005) findings, the essay entries in this study also highlighted the need to select topics that learners have a background knowledge of and interest in so as to boost their WTC.

Attitudes towards the Task

The students' attitudes towards the task at hand were also found to affect their WTC (34

entries) or unWTC (16 entries). The discrepancy in the number of entries about the effect of attitude suggests that positive attitudes towards learning tasks worked as a strong driving force to generate WTC. Dörnyei and Kormos (2000) found that students' attitudes towards L2 tasks are one of the most important motivating variables affecting task engagement. Considering learning tasks as an environmental variable in WTC, Peng (2012) observed that "when [a] meaningful interaction was provided, high WTC was likely to be aroused" (p. 208). Many students in this study showed enhanced WTC when the task was challenging, relevant, or practical. One participant described a task where he had to practice telephone expressions (e.g., greeting, asking for clarification, giving listener responses, closing, etc.) by calling his classmate in class. He noted:

> WTC: I felt difficult to make a phone call because I can't see the receiver's facial expressions. However, I learned how to make clear what the receiver says so it was a meaningful experience. This skill must be necessary in the future so I was lucky to practice it beforehand. (ID: 44)

Similarly, another respondent commented on a word-guessing game where he had to describe a word to his partner without using the word itself. He wrote, "the game was very practical for me to develop speaking skills…what is important at this game is it gave me much information and I felt the need to study English words" (ID: 23). Another student attributed his WTC to the practicality of the task (business conference role play) and noted, "through this activity, I could know how I should perform in an international meeting…I think this experience will be useful for me in the future" (ID: 15). Tasks that gave the students opportunities to experiment with language expressions or maximize English use also helped to improve their WTC. One student felt willing to practice discussion skills and reported, "I was able to use the skills like 'follow-up questions' fully to make conversations more interactive…I was also able to summarize the talk more

easily than before" (ID: 23). Another student reflected on how the English-only policy actually forced her to be more engaging in discussion. She wrote, "if we had used Japanese to discuss, we would have not discussed so deeply. By using English, we tried to listen carefully and could focus on each other's ideas" (ID: 6).

Kang (2005) suggested, "topics that were perceived to be useful and important for the participants appeared to create responsibility to talk, ask, and know about them" (p. 285). Responsibility, a felt need to deliver or understand a message, was proposed by Kang (2005) to be a psychological condition beneficial to creating WTC in learners. The students in this study seemed to feel obligated to engage in the assigned task when they perceived the task to be relevant and beneficial.

In contrast, it could be assumed that the students might not have felt the need to communicate when the task was not challenging, relevant, or practical. Indeed, one student felt unwilling to speak in English because he was asked to just read passages from a textbook and answer comprehension questions. He explained, "I felt sleepy because what we did was the same as what we did in the high school" (ID: 35). Another student commented, "it was so boring for me because we were only reading prepared scripts in pairs all the times in class. I also felt it didn't grow my ability to communicate in English" (ID: 9).

However, when the task was perceived to be too challenging, the students would withdraw from L2 communication. In other words, the lower the expectancy of success in the task, the lower the individual's task motivation (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998). One student wrote about a situation in which she struggled with the task and commented, "I was disappointed that we were forced to ask some questions but I had so many things I couldn't understand and I had no idea what I should ask" (ID: 6). Another student felt

reluctant to talk in the same telephone exercise task mentioned above, reporting, "to talk with the person on the cell phone is difficult because I cannot see his face" (ID: 42). The comments from both WTC and unWTC entries showed that the students were both willing *and* unwilling to engage themselves in challenging tasks, indicating a lack of consensus in WTC. This state of ambivalence of "experiencing both reasons to approach and reasons to avoid speaking in the L2" (MacIntyre et al., 2011, p. 93) is also evident in the tension between self-confidence and WTC.

Self-Confidence

Self-confidence, a combination of self-perceived confidence and a lack of anxiety, has been identified as an individual variable that affects WTC in varying degrees (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre et al., 2002, 2003; Peng, 2012; Yashima, 2002). Within the essay entries were comments indicative of how the students' WTC was enhanced or reduced according to the perceived confidence of an interlocutor as illustrated below:

> *WTC: Opponent team's members were good at speaking English and very aggressive, so we should try to speak fluently to keep up with them. (ID: 33)*

> *unWTC: One of my classmates who has lived abroad spoke English very fluently. However, I couldn't speak well and felt miserable in discussion. (ID: 8)*

> *unWTC: She was better than me at English. She spoke English rapidly and I couldn't understand her, but she didn't notice that. (ID: 11)*

> *unWTC: The international student is very good at speaking English. He read the sentence smoothly. On the contrary, I had trouble reading it and telling my opinion. In such situation, I felt nervous and hesitant to tell my opinion in English. (ID: 37)*

These entries indicated that, depending on the speaker, conversing with a peer of higher English proficiency could either motivate or provoke anxiety in the students. The same is

true when the students felt that they lacked sufficient linguistic resources to communicate competently in English. The following comments illustrate how their lack of self-confidence could lead to both higher and lower WTC.

> *WTC: I felt that I wanted to discuss more, but because of my lack of vocabulary, I couldn't. That motivated me to speak English more! (ID: 8)*

> *unWTC: I wanted to criticize the hero of the movie, but the circumstances were too complicated to describe. I felt irritated that I couldn't explain it fully in English. (ID: 2)*

> *unWTC: I wanted to say what I thought, but I couldn't find any words to express that. (ID: 16)*

Consistent with the findings in Baker and MacIntyre (2000), the student entries showed that a negative experience in the L2 could restrain WTC, but it might also propel the students towards more active communication if they rose to the challenge. The students' ambivalent responses towards communication highlight the conflicting choices—to talk or not to talk—that language learners face in their everyday L2 classrooms lives.

It is worth noting that low self-confidence appeared to have a greater role in restraining (36 unWTC entries) than facilitating (15 WTC entries) WTC in the L2. Research by Baker and MacIntyre (2000) and MacIntyre et al. (2002) suggested that among French non-immersion students, self-perceived competence has a stronger influence on WTC, whereas anxiety is a better predictor of WTC in immersion students. Compared with those in immersion contexts, learners in non-immersion contexts have fewer chances to use their L2 in authentic communication, which consequently results in lower self-perceived competence and lower frequency of communication in the L2 (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). These findings are confirmed by studies conducted in EFL

contexts in which L2 input is relatively low and where L2 linguistic confidence has a strong influence on WTC (Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Yashima, 2002; Yashima et al., 2004). Likewise, research on student reticence has also identified having a lack of confidence in spoken English as a leading cause of low participation in classroom situations (Bao, 2014; Cheng, 2000; Harumi, 2011; Liu & Littlewood, 1997; Tsui, 1996). Based on the interviews with L2 learners, Bernales (2016) found that student reticence was closely related to their linguistic confidence in the L2 and therefore not "completely voluntary but forced, in part, by the situational context" (p. 9). Bernales then reminded us not to take student reticence as a definite indication of their unwillingness to participate in classroom discussions.

Conclusion

This study reports on a qualitative analysis of classroom situations in which Japanese EFL students chose to initiate or avoid L2 communication. The students' WTC and unWTC essay entries indicated that interlocutor participation, topic familiarity and interest, attitudes towards the task, and self-confidence were the most significant factors in determining their communication choices. The analysis of the essay entries indicates that the interlocutor plays a decisive role in encouraging or discouraging the speaker's L2 participation, providing clear evidence of motivational co-construction in L2 interactions (Dörnyei, 2002). This finding suggests that demonstrating one's engagement in interactions can mutually enhance WTC. From a pedagogical standpoint, it is therefore necessary to increase learners' awareness of the dynamic nature of L2 interactions as well as the consequences of showing less than full engagement in peer activities (e.g., speaker's withdrawal from talking, inhibiting L2 development, etc.). As Yashima (2012)

concludes, "WTC can only be enhanced and developed through social processes and communicating with others. It takes two to tango. Yet each person needs to be willing to dance" (pp. 132–133).

The analysis of this study further suggests that speaking about topics of familiarity and interest can greatly stimulate students' desire to communicate in their L2. For this reason, topics that L2 learners have a background knowledge of and interest in should be offered in order to generate WTC (Kang, 2005; Zarrinabadi, 2014). As Kang (2005) recommends, this could be done by identifying student interests through surveys or allowing students to choose their own topics for discussion. These pedagogical practices contribute to promoting high levels of security and excitement in classroom discussions.

Additionally, tasks perceived to be productive for improving the L2 were reported to facilitate greater WTC. The students' attitudes towards L2 tasks appeared to have a greater facilitating than restraining force in WTC. In other words, the effect of positive task attitudes on WTC surpasses that of negative task attitudes on unWTC. To maximize the facilitation of WTC and enhance task engagement, language teachers should implement tasks that are challenging (but not unmanageable), relevant, and practical.

By contrast, self-confidence was found to function more as a restraining than a facilitating force. That is, one's perception of one's own linguistic competence exerts a more decisive effect on unWTC than WTC. Given the high correlation between perceived competence and the frequency of L2 communication (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Yashima et al., 2004), increasing the frequency of L2 communication inside the classroom should be an effective way to boost learners' self-confidence and WTC. Such pedagogical efforts are especially needed in an EFL context where the amount of authentic L2 use is limited. In addition, these efforts are essential to preparing L2 learners for the "world out

there" because "the more learners communicate inside the classroom, the greater the probability of learners communicating outside the classroom" (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 220).

Finally, the analysis also found that the same factors that can increase WTC in L2 classroom situations for some students can also decrease WTC in others (MacIntyre et al., 2011). The students' comments on their task attitudes and self-confidence provide confirmation that WTC and unWTC are "two separate but interacting dimensions" (MacIntyre et al., 2011, p. 93), resulting in the ebb and flow of WTC in learners. To encourage learners to move from unwillingness to a state of willingness to communicate relies on "subtle differences in the communication context" (p. 94). Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the factors that cause such minor discrepancies in L2 interactions, such as interlocutor effect, topic choice, and task attitudes, so that they are better able to create a supportive and nurturing classroom environment where a L2 learner's self-confidence and WTC are bound to grow.

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Classroom Factors that Influence Students' Perceived Capacity to Speak in English[1]

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Abstract

Learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) can develop appropriate communication skills by speaking the target language in the classroom (Goh & Burns, 2012). To this end, the Japanese government has tried to implement communicative language teaching (CLT) policies with an emphasis on using English as the medium for learning. However, the results have been mixed, often resulting in failure (Humphries & Burns, 2015). Despite numerous CLT policies, classes continue to be conducted in Japanese, and the students' reticence to speak English is one factor blamed for this phenomenon (King, 2013). The complex factors that influence students' capacity to speak (CTS) in English in the classroom were examined by collecting data from 104 English Department undergraduates using the "narrative frames" approach (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008). Students were asked to write in Japanese about the situations that increased and decreased their CTS in high school classrooms. Based on the findings, the author discusses the following classroom strategies: (a) a supportive classroom culture; (b) a framework of rules; (c) a variety of activities; and (d) showing empathy and flexibility in meeting students' needs.

Keywords: capacity to speak (CTS); narrative frames; classroom strategies

S ince the late 1980s, the Japanese education ministry (MEXT) has introduced various policies in an attempt to develop students' communicative competence. To improve speaking competence, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) programme hires thousands of Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) from overseas to

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team-teach in schools (Kikuchi, 2009). From April 2013, a policy came into effect for Japanese high schools stating that, in principle, classes should be taught in English (Tahira, 2012). Despite these reforms, teachers continue to use the *yakudoku* style of teaching in which classes are teacher-led, highly structured, focused on recurring language structures and, conducted for the most part in Japanese (Humphries & Burns, 2015). Scholars have suggested various causes for this phenomenon: (a) high stakes university entrance examinations that focus on reading comprehension, lexico-grammatical knowledge and translation skills (Kikuchi, 2006); (b) strong institutional cultural norms that discourage divergence from existing practices (Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004); (c) teachers' lack of confidence in their own communicative proficiency (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008) and the proficiency of their students (Humphries, 2014); (d) fear of losing control of the class (Humphries, 2014; Sakui, 2007); (e) teacher-training that is too theoretical (Kizuka, 2006) and fails to address local problems (Humphries & Burns, 2015); and (f) government-mandated materials that rely heavily on low output, highly structured exercises (Humphries, 2013).

Although teachers are responsible for deciding how classes should be conducted, student participation—or lack of it—strongly influences classroom interaction. In one study where teachers attempted to use English with Japanese students, the students resisted by replying in Japanese, using silence or extended pauses, uttering single English words, and/or speaking using *katakana* (Japanese pronunciation used for foreign loan words) (Humphries & Stroupe, 2014). Moreover, the media have reported that Japanese high school students have low motivation and low achievement scores and are reluctant to take speaking tests ("Disappointing levels of English," 2015).

The literature highlights five causes of student reluctance to speak English in the classroom. The first is low motivation: teacher behaviour, *yakudoku* (Japanese-style grammar-translation), university entrance examinations, vocabulary memorisation, and textbooks may demotivate students (Kikuchi, 2009). Second, paradoxically, students may prefer these traditional non-communicative practices, which are viewed as serious preparation for examinations (Sakui, 2004). Third, cultural classroom norms of teacher-led communication are developed in other subjects, which makes it more difficult for students to change roles and participate actively (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Sakui, 2007). Fourth, many students may be hypersensitive to how they appear in front of their peers—if they make mistakes, they may be ridiculed and if they volunteer correct answers they may appear conceited—which means it is easier to stay silent (King, 2013). Fifth, students might face linguistic problems in English. For example, they may not understand questions or they may struggle to articulate their thoughts (Harumi, 2011).

Although there has been research in Japan into students' willingness to communicate (WTC), it has tended to focus on abstract variables such as "international posture", which is "a tendency to relate oneself to the international community" (Yashima, 2009, p. 145). However, many Japanese students study English as a compulsory subject without an immediate need to use it outside the classroom. Research is needed into what classroom situations facilitate and inhibit Japanese students from speaking English. To fill this gap, this study explored students' capacity to speak (CTS), which refers to their perception of their abilities to speak under various classroom situations by asking the following two questions:

1. What classroom situations facilitate student CTS in English and why?

2. What classroom situations inhibit student CTS in English and why?

Methodology

Research Design

For collecting data, this study used the narrative frames approach (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008). A narrative frame is a template comprising sentence starters and transitions that contains gaps for respondents to complete with their own experiences or opinions. These frames "provide guidance and support in terms of both the structure and content of what is to be written" (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008, p. 376). Therefore, frames give flexibility and support to the respondents, while also guiding them toward providing responses that meet the research aims. Narrative frames are culturally appropriate in the Japanese context, because they are more open-ended than questionnaires and participants have "more freedom to divulge information than might have been the case in potentially face-threatening interviews" (Nguyen & Bygate, 2012, p. 57).

Participants

A link for an anonymous voluntary online questionnaire was shared on the information system with all first year undergraduate students (approximately 300) during their first semester in the English Department of a prestigious private university. Responses were received from 104 students who had entered the university from regular high schools (for consistency, responses from students who had entered the university from international schools, which have many returnees, were rejected). They completed at least one of the following two statements in Japanese about their high school days:

1. When [classroom situation], I could speak English well, because [reason]

2. When [classroom situation], I could not speak English well because [reason]

The data were translated independently by a bilingual Japanese person and then analysed using a memo-writing grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Results

Situations that Increased Student CTS in English

The students' comments about situations that increased their CTS fell into six categories: (a) pair and group work; (b) positive supportive environment; (c) teacher's language; (d) preparation time; (e) simplicity versus effort; and (f) forced to speak (Table 1). See Humphries, Burns, and Tanaka (2015) for the full description of these themes and extracts from the students' answers.

Table 1

Situations that Increased Student CTS in English

Classroom situation	Number of statements	Data sample
Pair and group work	21	"When I spoke in a small group because I wasn't nervous"
Positive supportive environment	9	"When students were enjoying debates and discussions, I could join in the class positively"
Teacher's language	16	"When teachers were willing to use English, I started to think in English automatically"
Preparation time	12	"When I prepared for a presentation because I knew what I was going to say"
Simplicity versus effort	14 vs 10*	"When I read out from the textbook because I knew what to read"
Forced to speak	13	"When I was nominated because I had no choice"

*Simplicity (14 statements); Effort (10 statements)

Situations that Decreased Student CTS in English

In general, situations that decreased the students' CTS formed five themes: (a) speaking to the whole class; (b) influence of peers; (c) influence of the teacher; (d) complex thoughts and language; and (e) lack of preparation time (Table 2). See Humphries et al. (2015) for more detail.

Table 2

Situations that Decreased Student CTS in English

Classroom situation	Number of statements	Data sample
Speaking to the whole class	20	"When the teacher picked me in the class to answer. I felt shy for others to hear what I say in English"
Influence of peers	21	"When no one spoke out, it was difficult to speak out"
Influence of the teacher	12	"When teachers didn't speak English in the class and didn't expect students to speak English. Thinking in English is more difficult than thinking in Japanese, so I tend to choose the easier way"
Complex thoughts and language	15	"When I had a discussion with my friends, it was difficult to translate what I thought about in Japanese into English"
Lack of preparation time	11	"When I thought that I had to answer quickly, I forgot the words that I knew and made grammatical mistakes"

Discussion and Pedagogical Implications

Four factors emerge from the findings that can influence students' CTS either negatively or positively: (a) use of English and level of support offered by the teacher and classmates; (b) rules and framework for speaking; (c) the activity's cognitive load and level of spontaneity; and (d) the affective state of the student. Based on these factors, teachers can

use four major strategies to try to increase their students' CTS.

First, develop a supportive classroom culture. Lightbown (2014), drawing upon the work of McGroarty (1989), advises the use of cooperative learning rather than "whole class 'competitive' instruction" (p. 61) that is dominated by teacher-centred activities. Cooperative activities aid the development of social skills and "engage students in a greater variety of language features and language use, requiring both input and output and multiplying opportunities for students to use language meaningfully" (Lightbown, 2014, p. 61). She notes the risk of learners reverting to the L1 during such group- and pair-work activities, but explains that they can be successful when the tasks are well planned and organised according to the students' language abilities. Edge and Garton (2009) suggest some useful strategies for stimulating discussions in small groups, such as (a) providing fictionalised topics containing problems to solve, (b) supplying useful phrases for helping students take their turn, and (c) using role plays where students must circulate to find a partner who has the information that they need.

Second, set a framework of rules. As noted by King (2013), "[in Japan], to not orally participate in one's foreign language class is deemed, by both students and teachers alike, to be normal behaviour" (p. 339). Harumi (2011) suggests negotiating the teaching and learning styles. In this study, students noted the benefits that can arise from special immersion-style classes and the danger of taking the easy/lazy route when classmates begin to use the mother tongue. If students accept that they should use English and they understand its benefits, then they can monitor and encourage each other to follow rules that they help to create. Moreover, frequent speaking assessments can help to motivate reluctant learners and identify areas of improvement irrespective of ability level (Talandis & Stout, 2015)

Third, introduce a variety of activities. Many students favoured discussions and other activities that encourage creative language production, but other respondents favoured simple structured activities such as recitation from the textbook or repetition after the teacher. Some students disliked speaking in front of the whole class, but others preferred presentations and speeches because they had time to prepare what to say. Drawing upon a wide range of second language acquisition research, Lightbown and Spada (2013) stress the need for balanced instruction. They advise "form-focused instruction and corrective feedback provided within the context of communicative and content-based programmes" rather than the "exclusive emphasis on comprehension, fluency or accuracy alone" (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, pp. 196-197). Edge and Garton (2009) advise varying the interaction patterns in the classroom (e.g., teacher to whole class, teacher to individual, and student to student). They recommend group work followed by a report-back stage to the whole class, because it focuses the group members to keep on-task, encourages them to reflect on what they have done and gives students the time to plan what to say and receive guidance from their peers about how to say it. Moreover, Boon (2010) notes how traditional seating in rows facing the blackboard can impede speaking, and he suggests creative ways for teachers to add variety to their use of classroom space.

Fourth, show empathy and flexibility regarding student needs. Students in this study indicated that their CTS increased or decreased due to affective factors such as their desire to communicate or their levels of anxiety in front of the teacher and peers. Harumi (2011) notes the need for a balanced step-by-step approach to build the confidence of learners. Citing the work of Gray and Leather (1999), she calls for a combination of safety and challenge. Teachers must be patient with reticent students and give them time and

support to develop their language before asking students to speak while their classmates listen.

Conclusion and Future Directions

This research focused on the retrospective opinions of first-year undergraduate English majors from a prestigious private university. It can be assumed that many of these students should be more motivated to speak English than the majority who study the language as a compulsory high school subject. While the findings are not generalizable, they provide some insight into the situations that can encourage and discourage learners speaking English in the classroom. Empirical research from a wider student population, including students still at high school, is necessary to gain a stronger understanding of the complex factors influencing student CTS.

Note

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Online Video Streaming in the L2 Classroom: Japanese Students' Opinions Towards Netflix and Subtitles

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Abstract

This study looked into Japanese students' opinions of the use of Netflix and subtitles in the L2 classroom. A total of nine university students in a communicative English class participated in the study. The learners viewed three American TV shows over the course of six weeks. Students viewed each show an equal number of times using different subtitling: L1 subtitles, L2 subtitles, and no subtitles. Afterward, a questionnaire was administered to assess the learners' views of Netflix and subtitles. According to the results of the survey, the students had favorable views of the online streaming site to improve listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition in the L2, particularly when it came to learning authentic language. In addition, L2 subtitles were favored over subtitles in the students' native language or no subtitles, suggesting that the learners did not want to rely on their L1, but also did not have the proficiency needed to view the video without subtitles. Based on these findings, the author supports to the use of Netflix in the L2 classroom.

Keywords: video, listening comprehension, vocabulary learning, EFL

The rise of online video streaming websites has made it possible for teachers to incorporate authentic video, i.e., movies and TV shows, into the EFL classroom without the need to rent or purchase the physical media. These on-demand video services such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime offer an extensive number of titles. While Hulu has been available in Japan since 2011, it was not until the latter half of 2015 that the most popular Internet streaming service, Netflix, was

introduced into the Japanese market. According to a report by Sandvine (2015), an Internet service tracking firm, Netflix accounts for approximately 37% of all Internet traffic in North America during peak hours. This is more than YouTube, Amazon Prime, Hulu, and iTunes combined. Despite the explosive growth of on-demand video sites, few studies have looked into students' views towards them as a way to improve L2 listening skills and vocabulary. This study aims to fill this gap in the literature, while also investigating Japanese students' opinions towards subtitles when watching English videos.

Background

Authentic Video in the EFL Classroom

As King (2002) points out, the previous language learning experiences of many EFL learners are "primarily textbook-oriented and test-driven" (p. 510), with an emphasis on grammatical accuracy rather than communication with others. In direct contrast, authentic materials contextualize language learning for L2 students. According to Shrum and Glisa (2015), empirical research on the use of authentic oral text has reinforced the positive influence it can have on listeners. For instance, in a study involving about 500 students at Chinese universities, Qiang, Hai, and Wolff (2007) found that using movies in the EFL classroom could help students (p. 42):

1) improve their pronunciation and intonation;

2) pick up idiomatic use of words and phrases;

3) assimilate English sentence structure; and

4) become acquainted with the target culture.

Lin and Siyanova (2014) also found that watching authentic video exposed the students to meaningful, everyday speech in a contextualized environment. Their study detailed the

online video streaming habits of two EFL learners in Hong Kong and expounded upon the implications. They found that program selection, subtitles, and narrow viewing, i.e., selecting movies from the same genre, were key to maximizing the potential benefits of authentic video. Tuncay (2014) also looked at the use of films in the EFL classroom. He surveyed a total of 100 L2 English students at a Turkish university and found that they had positive perceptions toward the activity. Specifically, most of them agreed that watching English movies helped improve their: (1) knowledge of the target culture; (2) understanding of authentic language; (3) vocabulary and authentic expressions; and (4) listening skills. In a comparison study of classes which used video and those that did not, Williams and Lutes (2007) found that video could improve perceptions of an English class among 120 Japanese university students. In an additional study on authentic video in the L2 classroom, Wang (2012) found that adult ESL learners in Taiwan had favorable views towards the use of American TV dramas. Namely, the students thought the activity was fun as well as a good way to improve their English vocabulary.

The Use of Subtitles with L2 Learners

On-screen textual aids come in two forms: closed captions and subtitles. Closed captions are specifically designed for those who are hearing impaired; thus, they contain all audio information, including sound effects and music. On the other hand, subtitles are intended for those who can hear but would also like additional textual input in the L1 or L2. As a result, only the spoken dialogue or a L2 translation of the dialogue is displayed on screen. Despite these differences, there does not appear to be any difference between these textual aids in terms of the effects they have on L2 learners. Therefore, in order to maintain consistency and to avoid any confusion between the two terms, captions will be hereafter

referred to as subtitles.

The use of subtitles has been found to have a positive effect on L2 learners' listening comprehension. A study by Markham (1989) found that subtitles enhanced the listening skills of a group of 76 university EFL learners in the US, regardless of their proficiency level. Huang and Eskey (1999) also looked at the use of subtitles to improve listening comprehension. Their study involved 30 intermediate ESL students in the US who were divided into two groups: a subtitle group and a traditional TV (no subtitles) group. Huang and Eskey (1999) found that the subtitle group performed significantly better than the group with no subtitles, further demonstrating the positive effect that textual aids have on L2 learners' listening skills. Similarly, in a more recent study, Rokni and Ataee (2014) found that English subtitles improved listening comprehension more effectively than no subtitles among 45 intermediate ESL students in Iran. In the context of Japan, Yoshino, Kano, and Akahori (2000) discovered that English subtitles had a greater positive effect on 136 university and junior college students' listening comprehension skills compared with Japanese subtitles or no subtitles at all. Bianchi and Ciabattoni (2008) found similar results among 107 Italian adult ESL learners when it came to beginner and advanced students. Interestingly, however, intermediate students in their study performed better with no textual aids than English subtitles in one of the two movies shown. According to the authors, this may be due to the inherent differences between the films with respect to genre as well as the cognitive effort required to understand the dialogue.

On the other hand, there does not seem to be a clear consensus as to whether subtitles have a significant impact on L2 vocabulary learning. This is likely due to the fact that much less research has been done in this area (Perez, Peters, Clarebout, & Desmet, 2014). In terms of positive findings, Markham (1999) examined the effect that subtitles had on

listening word recognition among 118 advanced EFL students at an American university. The results of his study revealed that subtitles had a significant effect on the students' ability to recognize words. Zarei (2009) found that English subtitles had a positive impact on vocabulary recognition and recall among 97 university ESL students in Iran when compared with L1 subtitles and reversed subtitles, i.e., L1 dialogue with English subtitles. In yet another study, Winke, Gass, and Sydorenko (2010) found that subtitles enhanced vocabulary learning among L2 Spanish students compared with viewing video without them. Bianchi and Ciabattoni (2008), however, discovered that both L2 English and L1 subtitles had little effect on vocabulary enhancement with beginner, intermediate, and advanced ESL learners in Italy. Yuksel and Tanriverdi (2009) found similar results in their study of subtitles involving 120 intermediate EFL learners at a university in Turkey. While both the subtitle group and the non-subtitle group improved on a vocabulary post-test, there was no statistical difference between the groups' improvement. A study by Perez et al. (2014) of L2 French learners in Belgium resulted in mixed findings when it came to vocabulary enhancement. Although subtitling helped improve form recognition and clip association with the target vocabulary, it did not influence recall.

In regards to learners' views, Perez et al. (2014) found that L2 French students viewed textual context or subtitling as helpful when learning unknown words. Winke et al. (2010) also investigated students' perceptions of subtitles. A total of 150 L2 learners of Spanish, Russian, Arabic, and Chinese studying at an American university participated. Based on the researchers' interviews with the participants, five themes were identified (pp. 77-78):

1) Learners have a need for multiple input modalities.

2) Subtitles reinforce and confirm what is taken in aurally.

3) Subtitles affect learners' attention to the input.

4) Subtitles aid with the decompositions and/or analysis of language.

5) Subtitles are sometimes viewed as crutches.

It is important to note that while subtitles are generally viewed as being positive for students in terms of the comprehension of video (Baltova, 1999; Huang & Eskey, 1999), others, such as King (2002) and Yoshino et al. (2000), believe that they have the potential to inhibit L2 learning, as demonstrated by the fifth theme listed above. Zanón (2006) expounded on this issue by stating two drawbacks of using subtitles in the L2 classroom: 1) Learners might pay too much attention to reading the text on screen and as a result, might not remember the dialogue; and 2) students might feel insecure without subtitles if they are used to viewing video with them.

In short, incorporating video in conjunction with L1/L2 subtitles in the foreign language classroom seems to be an effective way to improve students' listening comprehension skills while also exposing students to authentic input in the target language. However, little is known about learners' views towards online video streaming, particularly in the context of Japan. In fact, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, L2 students' opinions of Netflix have yet to be studied in any country. Therefore, the primary aims of this study are to investigate Japanese students' views of Netflix in relation to improving L2 listening comprehension and vocabulary, as well as understand their preferences when it comes to the use of subtitles.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in the present study:

1) What are the opinions of Japanese students towards the use of Netflix in the foreign language classroom?

2) Did the students prefer L1 subtitles, L2 subtitles, or no subtitles when viewing Netflix?

Methodology

Participants

The participants consisted of nine second- and third-year students at a university in Japan, accounting for all of the learners involved in the study. All of the students were a part of the Faculty of Foreign Studies and were enrolled in a communicative English course taught by the researcher. The class met three times a week during the fall semester of 2015, and the students had an intermediate level of English proficiency according to their TOEIC exam scores in the previous academic year.

The researcher decided to use video via Netflix with the participants for three reasons. First, the aforementioned literature makes it clear that incorporating video provides many benefits for L2 learners (Lin & Siyanova, 2014; Qiang et al., 2007; Shrum & Glisa, 2015; Williams & Lutes, 2007). Additionally, as King (2002) noted, the listening activities provided by textbooks are not sufficient for L2 students, "Fragment audio recordings accompanying textbooks designed for EFL learners hardly prepare learners for full-length listening in advanced studies" (p. 513). Therefore, watching TV shows through the site afforded the students a more authentic means of learning English. Moreover, Netflix was chosen as the designated tool over other streaming sites because of the number and quality of the titles which are currently available. While the site does not explicitly state the exact number of TV shows and films users can view, Netflix is generally considered the most

robust online video streaming service (Digital Trends, 2015).

Procedure

The study lasted six consecutive weeks, with the learners viewing TV shows via Netflix twice a week. A list of programs was first chosen by the researcher based on popularity and availability on Netflix. Afterward, students selected through class voting the three shows they wanted to watch: *Arrow*, *The Big Bang Theory*, and *The 100*. The TV programs were shown in the aforementioned order using L1 subtitles (*Arrow*), L2 subtitles (*The Big Bang Theory*), and no subtitles (*The 100*). Each program was viewed four times in class for approximately 20 minutes per viewing; thus, the first two episodes of *Arrow* and *The 100* were shown while the first four episodes of *The Big Bang Theory* were viewed by the students. Prior to each showing, the researcher viewed the episode and created a worksheet for the students to complete in class. The worksheets usually consisted of key vocabulary items the students had to listen for, as well as short answer responses, cloze questions, and/or questions which encouraged note taking based on the main ideas of the episode (see Appendix A for a worksheet example).

Each viewing followed the same procedure. The episodes were projected onto a large screen in class. Students also had the option of viewing the TV shows on their in-class PC's which allowed for easier reading of the subtitles. After completion of each episode or 20-minute segment of an episode, students worked on the worksheets in groups and the answers were discussed as a class. Finally, the learners discussed in groups a theme or question based on what was viewed with the researcher acting as a facilitator.

Research Instrument and Administration

A seven-item questionnaire made up of closed- and open-ended questions was created to investigate the students' opinions of Netflix and subtitles (Appendix B). The survey was intentionally kept short to promote maximum participation. After the six-week study ended, the questionnaire was administered via www.surveymonkey.com and posted on the class Facebook group site. Completion of the survey was voluntary and was done outside of class so as to not interfere with in-class time. In addition, students were informed that their responses would remain anonymous and that non-participation would not affect their grades.

Results and Discussion

Research Question One

All nine of the students in the present study completed the questionnaire. Figure 1 illustrates their opinions of Netflix as a tool to improve English vocabulary and listening comprehension. In terms of vocabulary, 55.5% (n=5) of the learners either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, indicating a moderate level of agreement towards the statement. Regarding listening comprehension, the students had highly positive perceptions, with 89.9% (n=8) of the learners stating some form of agreement. These findings reinforce previous research of students' opinions towards video in the L2 classroom (Lin & Siyanova, 2014; Perez et al., 2014; Tuncay, 2014; Williams & Lutes, 2007).

In response to the open-ended question "What is your opinion on using Netflix in the foreign language classroom?" one reoccurring theme was identified; the usefulness of the Internet streaming service to develop L2 skills. The following comments reflect this

theme:

"I think using Netflix improved my English listening skills…"

"The Netflix has a lot of movies so I could learn to speak and listen to English on various genres when I see movies."

"I think this is a good way to learn a foreign language. Especially for advanced, intermediate level people. Because we can learn natural speaking. But for beginners, I don't think this is a good method. They need more vocabulary, idioms knowledge, listening skills etc. Otherwise, they can't learn anything at all."

"It is one of best ways to learn English because there are many slang, or the word I don't know. Also it is a chance to listen to daily conversation. It makes my listening skills better."
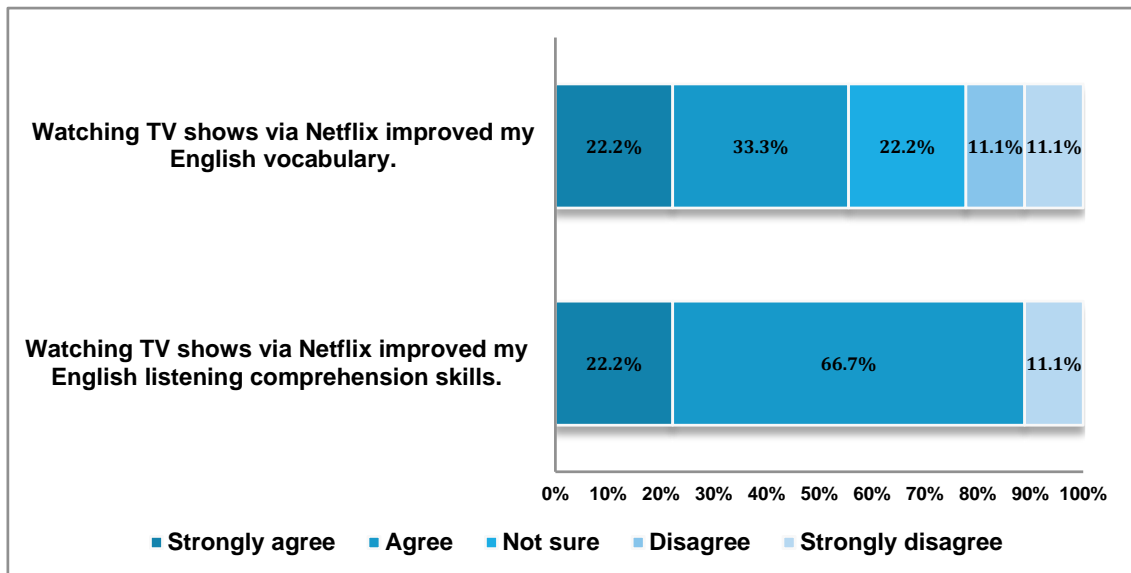

Figure 1. Students' level of agreement towards the statements about Netflix.

These comments support previous research on the use of video as a meaningful way to study an L2 (Lin & Siyanova, 2014; Qiang, Hai, & Wolff, 2007; Shrum & Glisa, 2015;

Tuncay, 2014), particularly when it comes to learning authentic language, e.g., slang. As Lieb (2009) notes, most EFL textbooks neglect authentic speech in favor of formal, overly polished language; thus, watching video through Netflix allowed the students in this study to learn slang which they would likely not have studied through a typical textbook.

Another interesting finding based on the students' written feedback is that two of them recommended viewing each episode or episode segment twice:

"I also think if I watch the movie twice: first is English subtitles and second is Japanese subtitles, I can improve my listening skills and I can know the English meaning, too. So I think my speaking skill improve, too. I hope I can watch the movie twice in the next lesson."

"I think it is good way! But we should watch the movies or TV shows twice. First, we watch that no subtitles, and then we watch that with subtitles. Then we can understand the stories better!"

This preference for viewing videos twice was also found in the study by Perez et al. (2014). L2 students, especially those who are not advanced learners, might not be able to fully grasp a video from just one viewing. Therefore, multiple viewings might be necessary along with L1 and L2 subtitles as suggested by one of the students.

Research Question Two

Figure 2 below shows the learners preferences for subtitles when viewing the TV shows. Seven of the learners preferred English subtitles while two preferred L1 subtitles. One potential explanation is that the learners did not want to use L1 subtitles as a crutch in order to comprehend the English dialogue, which corresponds with one of the possible drawbacks of subtitles (King, 2002). Another reason might be due to the fact that L1

subtitles do not perfectly correspond with L2 audio information (Yoshino et al., 2000); consequently, students might need to translate between the two languages, which is
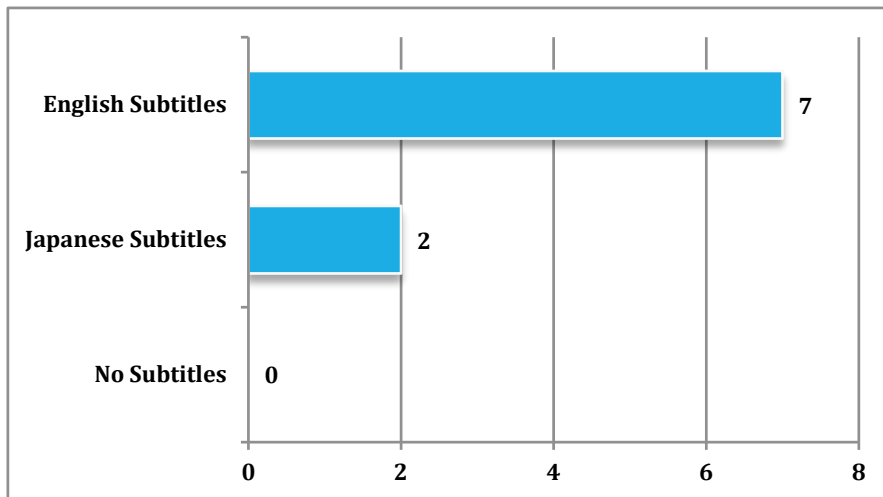
Figure 2. Students' subtitle preferences.

another cognitive burden on the learners. L1 subtitles, however, completely match what is spoken and, as a result, new vocabulary is reinforced as textual information. None of the learners chose the option of no subtitles. This is most likely due to the proficiency of the students as intermediate EFL learners who still need scaffolding, especially when viewing long videos.

Conclusion

To sum up, this study looked at Japanese EFL students' views of Netflix in relation to improving listening skills and vocabulary acquisition. Based on the results of the questionnaire, the learners in the study had moderately favorable views of Netflix to improve vocabulary, but highly positive attitudes towards the use of the site to improve L2 listening comprehension. Moreover, the students' written feedback indicated that they

viewed the online streaming service as helpful to the development of their English skills, namely, as a means to learn authentic language. In addition, this study examined whether the learners preferred L1 subtitles, L2 subtitles, or no subtitles at all. L1 English subtitles were favored by a majority of the participants, suggesting that the students did not want to rely on their native language to understand the videos. Based on these findings, the author strongly supports the use of authentic video via Netflix in the EFL classroom. Textbook audio often does not reflect real-life use of the target language. Therefore, learners might struggle to use the L2 outside of the classroom, especially when conversing with native speakers. Accordingly, teachers should incorporate as much authentic video as they can, whether it is from an online streaming site or simply from a DVD in order to fill L2 learners' need for contextualized input.

The primary limitation of this study is its size. This small scale study of only nine participants allowed for limited generalizations of the findings. Thus, a future study could explore the benefits of authentic video and Internet streaming with a larger number of students taken from a random sample. In addition, based on the comments of two of the participants regarding multiple viewings, it might be interesting to discover if other learners prefer watching the same videos two or more times, or if fatigue or disinterest would set in due to the average length of TV episodes. Another avenue of research is to compare students' views of Netflix to learn English with other on-demand video sites such Hulu, Amazon Prime, or YouTube.

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Appendix A

Example of in-class worksheet for *The Big Bang Theory*

The Big Bang Theory: Episode 1

1. *Circle the words or phrases below that you hear during the episode.*

no way   jerk   sucks   hit on

sup   get lost   sweet   idiot

2. *Write down as many facts or details as you can about the main characters below.*

Sheldon:

Leonard:

Penny:

Howard:

Raj:

Appendix B

Netflix Survey

Please answer each question/statement as honestly as possible. Your responses will remain anonymous and they will not affect your grade in any way. Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

1.   Please read each statement and choose the answer that best matches your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
Watching TV shows via Netflix improved my English listening comprehension skills.	○	○	○	○	○
Watching TV shows via Netflix improved my English vocabulary.	○	○	○	○	○
Watching TV shows with no subtitles improved my English listening comprehension skills.	○	○	○	○	○
Watching TV shows with Japanese subtitles improved my English listening comprehension skills	○	○	○	○	○
Watching TV shows with English subtitles improved my English listening comprehension skills	○	○	○	○	○

2. **Did you prefer to watch TV shows with no subtitles, Japanese subtitles, or English subtitles?**

   ○   No subtitles

   ○   Japanese subtitles

   ○   English subtitles

3. **What is your opinion on using Netflix in the foreign language classroom?**

Foreign Language Anxiety in Community English Conversation Classes in Japan

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Abstract

Despite the prevalence of community-based English language learning groups in Japan, little (if any) research has addressed how foreign language anxiety (FLA) affects such groups. Indeed, almost all FLA research both within Japan and overseas has focused on formal learning environments. Accordingly, this paper set out to establish how FLA affects a group of adult EFL learners in a non-formal community conversation class in Japan (n=24), and to what extent FLA-reducing strategies can be employed in this learning environment. Previous FLA research in East Asian EFL contexts has pointed to high levels of anxiety in oral communicative tasks (Kimura, Nakata, & Okumura 2001; Tsui, 1996), which make up a large proportion of the in-class activities in the non-formal community class under consideration here. The quantitative data from this study revealed that FLA affects this group of learners to a low-to-moderate extent, but as with many other FLA studies in East Asian contexts, aspects of in-class speaking exhibited the highest levels of FLA. Follow-up learner interviews also revealed problems with vocabulary to be a source of FLA. However, both the quantitative and qualitative data revealed that the generally positive and supportive learning environment contributed to the finding that negative evaluation by peers or teachers was not a key FLA factor for this group of learners. Nevertheless, some strategies which could potentially reduce FLA within this community language class were identified, including positive self-talk and student language journals.

Keywords: foreign language anxiety, anxiety behaviours, anxiety-reducing strategies, English conversation class, non-formal learning

The role that anxiety plays in second language acquisition has received increasing attention in the past thirty years, as researchers and teachers have come to acknowledge that it is one of the key variables which affects second

language learning and performance (Horwitz, 2013). Indeed, much like other situation-specific anxieties such as public speaking anxiety, foreign language anxiety (FLA) is now regarded as an anxiety construct which is unique to the foreign language classroom and foreign language learning process (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Horwitz, 2001, 2010; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986).

Yet despite the large body of work which has looked at the issue of FLA in a variety of contexts (see Horwitz, 2010 for a useful overview), most studies conducted in EFL learning environments have focused on formal learning contexts – particularly secondary or tertiary educational settings. This paucity of FLA research in relation to non-formal learning contexts prompted the writer to consider the role that FLA plays in relation to a group of adult learners who are members of a non-formal community English conversation class in Osaka, Japan. Such non-formal English language learning groups are an important part of the English language learning landscape in Japan. And yet until Kubota's (2011) seminal study, little (if any) academic attention had been directed at such language learning groups.[1]

In terms of the influence of FLA on the group which is the subject of this study, my initial view was that, given the fact that the learners joined the group voluntarily, their anxiety levels ought perhaps to be low or moderate, but not high. Nevertheless, during my seven years' teaching this group, I have observed numerous classroom behaviours which I believe are indicative of FLA, particularly in relation to in-class speaking activities. Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions:

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[1] Kubota's study was a qualitative study relating to a group of Japanese adults studying English conversation in a private language school and two other groups of Japanese adults studying English conversation in two voluntary community groups.

(1) To what extent is FLA evident in DEC classes?

(2) What strategies can be employed to avoid/reduce FLA in DEC classes?

In the following section, I review the extensive FLA literature from both Japan and abroad. In particular, I examine how FLA is conceptualised and measured in the literature, as well as what strategies can be (and have been) employed to address and reduce FLA. From there, I move on to the methodological aspects of this study, which will include a brief outline of the make-up of the group which is the subject of this study, as well as the manner in which the data were collected and collated. The results gleaned from the quantitative and qualitative data will then be presented and discussed, before I address the implications of this study's findings in the final part of this paper.

A Review of Foreign Language Anxiety Research

Defining and Measuring Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign language anxiety is now widely regarded as a specific type of anxiety that arises from the demands of learning and using a second language. Building on Scovel's (1978) criticisms of early FLA studies, Horwitz et al. (1986) distinguished FLA from other more general forms of anxiety, such as public speaking and performance anxiety. They posited that FLA is associated with performing in the target language, and they define FLA as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (1986, p. 128).

Horwitz et al. (1986) noted that there are three situational manifestations of FLA: communication apprehension (including speaking in front of the class or in groups, or even listening to a spoken message); fear of negative evaluation (not only evaluation by

teachers, but also evaluation by classmates); and finally test anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986, pp. 127-128). At this point it is perhaps useful to also distinguish between 'state' L2 anxiety – that is, the (usually) transitory anxiety that arises in particular L2-use situations or settings – and 'trait' L2 anxiety, which refers to the development over time of a more fixed fear of using the L2. In this regard, Oxford (1998, p. 60) notes that although many language learners' language anxiety will likely dissipate with the passage of time, "repeated occurrences cause students to associate anxiety with language performance", and in that scenario their language anxiety becomes embedded.

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) which Horwitz et al. (1986) developed for their study of foreign language anxiety at the University of Texas is widely regarded as the yardstick for measuring FLA (1986, pp. 129-130). Reviews of the studies that have adopted the FLCAS or a modified FLCAS equivalent overwhelmingly confirm the negative correlation between FLA and L2 performance (Dornyei, 2005; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre, 2007; Oxford, 1998).

Identifying Foreign Language Anxiety in the Foreign Language Classroom

Having addressed the underlying concepts of FLA, I now look at some of the manifestations of FLA. This will help to provide some focus for my reflections about the nature of FLA in the community language group that is the subject of this paper, which will be dealt with later.

Characteristics of FLA are exhibited in a variety of ways; some are readily identifiable, while others are a little trickier to isolate. However, many of the behaviours associated with FLA are the same or similar to those characteristics found in more general (or state) anxiety. Gardner and MacIntyre note that, as with other forms of anxiety, FLA

"is characterised by derogatory self-related cognitions (e.g., 'I can't do this'), feelings of apprehension, and physiological responses such as increased heart rate" (1993, p. 5).

In her influential work on FLA in classroom environments, Young (1991) identifies physical behaviours (such as fidgeting), disassociative behaviours (such as lack of eye contact) and finally "image protection behaviour" (such as false indications of understanding or agreement) (pp. 429-430). Other examples of physical FLA behaviours are stammering and muscle tension; and more general signs of FLA include poor class attendance, procrastination, perfectionism and over-competitiveness (Gregersen, 2009; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Horwitz et al., 1986; Oxford, 1998; Young, 1991).

Of course, not only are these behaviours and characteristics often difficult to clearly identify, but they might not necessarily be indicative of FLA. For example, there may be myriad reasons for an L2 student's absence from class, or failure to submit assignments on time (problems in their personal life, work commitments, and the like). Also, some behaviours, including lack of eye contact or silence, might be affected by other factors, such as innate introversion – which Dewaele (2002, pp. 239-240) correlates with FLA – or may even be reflective of the particular culture of the L2 learner. Indeed, Oxford comments that "behaviors vary across cultures, and what might seem like anxious behavior in one culture might be normal behavior in another culture" (1998, p. 66).

Foreign Language Anxiety and the Asian Learner

Numerous FLA studies have been undertaken in Asia across a variety of learning contexts, particularly after the development of the FLCAS by Horwitz and her colleagues. However, some researchers have raised concerns about the general applicability of the FLCAS in Asia, and note that the specific cultural (as well as learning) environment is a key factor

in assessing FLA in any particular setting (Kim, 2009; Liu & Huang, 2011; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Mak, 2011). In her study of FLA in Hong Kong high schools, Tsui noted that "The problem of getting students to respond is particularly acute with Asian students, who are generally considered to be more reserved and reticent than their Western counterparts" (1996, p. 145).

This perceived reticence towards class participation – particularly speaking activities – is shown by the results of some of the FLA studies in Asian learning contexts (Kim, 2009; Kimura et al., 2001; Liu, 2006; Liu & Huang, 2011; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). Indeed, in a study of Korean university students, it was demonstrated that students had significantly higher levels of anxiety in conversation classes as compared with reading classes (Kim, 2009). Similarly, Liu's (2006) study of FLA in non-English major Chinese university students found that students at a range of proficiency levels exhibited FLA, and that their anxiety was most acute when students engaged in spoken interaction with the teacher, or were asked by the teacher to speak in front of their peers. In contrast, the learners' anxiety levels in Liu's study were at their lowest during pair work (2006, pp. 311-312).

In the Japanese context, as with most other Asian FLA studies, the research has focused on FLA in formal educational settings – particularly high schools and universities (Kimura et al., 2001; Matsuda & Gobel, 2001, 2004). In their study of predominantly high school and university students, Kimura et al. (2001) noted the similarities between the students in their study and those in Tsui's (1996) study of Hong Kong students. They highlighted that Japanese L2 learners, like their Chinese counterparts, seldom take the initiative in classroom interactions and are often wary of being seen to be "showing off" by answering questions in class (Kimura et al., 2001, p. 62). In their study of L2 reading

anxiety in a group of Japanese university students, Matsuda and Gobel (2004, p. 32) argued that the approaches and attitudes of teachers often have a profound effect on FLA in L2 classrooms in Japan. Similarly, Kondo and Yang's (2003) study of Japanese university students concluded that fear of negative evaluation – particularly by peers – and fear of speaking in class were also key factors in their students' FLA levels.

Methodology

Participants

The group which is the subject of this study is a non-formal community English conversation class known as the Daito English Club (DEC). The group has been in existence for 20 years, and classes are held twice monthly in a community learning centre. Learners are divided into two groups ('A' and 'B' groups) based upon their English abilities and experience using English. There are two native-English speaker teachers – one from the United Kingdom, and one from New Zealand (the writer). The classes are structured around a 'weak' communicative approach to English language learning, whereby students are given opportunities to use and enhance their English speaking skills in individual and small group settings (Howatt, 1984). Students are usually asked to undertake set homework tasks prior to lessons, and then come to class ready to share their views, discuss the set tasks and participate in pair and group activities related to the lesson topic.

A total of 24 DEC members out of a possible pool of around 35 members[2]

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[2] The total membership of DEC tends to fluctuate, as new members join and existing members quit periodically.

participated in this study. The participants' age range is from 43 to 80 years of age, with most aged between 50 – 65 years (the average age of the participants is 62 years old). Many of the participants and also a number of DEC members who did not participate in this study have been involved in DEC for many years. At least five of the participants in this study have been members for five years or more.

Research Materials

The research component to this paper involved the use of a modified version of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) FLCAS questionnaire containing 29 items (Modified FLCAS), and also a qualitative element in the form of semi-structured learner interviews and teacher observations. As Dornyei (2007) highlights, such qualitative data can add depth and context to the findings produced by quantitative instruments.

The Modified FLCAS (see Appendix A) incorporates five Likert responses to items: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. As there is no testing component involved in DEC classes, I removed the three items from Horwitz et al.'s (1986) FLCAS that directly relate to 'test anxiety' (items 8, 10, and 21 in the Horwitz et al. FLCAS). Accordingly, the Modified FLCAS comprises 29 items relating to the communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation aspects of FLA.

The Modified FLCAS was administered at the end of a DEC class, and DEC students' FLA levels were measured by totaling their responses to each item[3] and then dividing each student's total by 29 (the number of items in the Modified FLCAS). Using the

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[3] Items 2, 5, 9, 12, 16, 19, 24, and 28 in the Modified FLCAS are negatively-worded, so the answers for each of these items were reverse-scored.

approach recommended by Horwitz (2013), students were classified as being high anxiety learners (if their average score for each FLCAS item was four or higher), or moderate anxiety learners (if their average score for each FLCAS item was three or higher), or low anxiety learners (if their average score for each FLCAS item was lower than three).

Following this classification process, I selected six participants (two each from the high anxiety, moderate anxiety, and low anxiety thresholds) to take part in semi-structured interviews in order to triangulate data obtained from the Modified FLCAS and in order to glean more information about DEC learners' understanding of the extent and impact of FLA in DEC classes. The interviews were recorded, and were conducted face-to-face in Japanese in order to ensure accuracy of the learners' understanding of the questions, and also to ensure that they experienced minimal anxiety throughout the interview process.

Results and Discussion

Reliability and Comparability of the Modified FLCAS

Given that the Modified FLCAS is an adapted version of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) original FLCAS, it is important to test its reliability. The internal reliability of the Modified FLCAS was measured using the Cronbach alpha coefficient, yielding an overall internal consistency of 0.89. The mean for this study was 76.3, with a median score of 73.5, a standard deviation of 15.1 and multimodalities (56, 73, and 87). Table 1 shows how the figures in this study compared with those of other studies in various Asian EFL learning contexts that looked at FLA, particularly in relation to oral target language production. The results of the comparative analysis in Table 1 show that both the mean FLCAS score and the mean anxiety rating for this study were lower than those of the other studies. This

is perhaps unsurprising, because this study began with the assumption that FLA ought to be relatively low among DEC learners, given the voluntary nature of membership in DEC, the relative familiarity among DEC members, and the absence of formal testing in DEC.

Table 1

Comparative FLCAS Scores from Asian EFL Contexts

Study	Context	Language	Sample	Mean	SD	Cronbach
Current	Community English group (Japan)	English	24	76.3 (2.6)*	15.1	0.89
Trang et al. (2013)	University students (Vietnam)	English	419	108.26 (3.3)	19.78	0.93
Kamarulzaman et al. (2013)	High school students (Malaysia)	English	119	96.02 (2.9)	13	0.82
Liu & Huang (2011)	University students (China)	English	980	99.79 (2.7)	18.72	0.92
Yamashiro & McLaughlin (2001)	University students (Japan)	English	220	94.81 (3.0)	20.74	0.83

* Given the variation in the total number of items in the FLCAS used in some studies, the mean FLCAS score is perhaps not an ideal comparative guideline. However, all of the studies used a five-point rating system for each item. Accordingly, I have also included the mean anxiety rating for each study (shown in brackets) on a scale of 1 – 5 (1 - 2.4 = low anxiety, 2.5 - 3.4 = moderate anxiety, and > 3.5 = high anxiety).

Interestingly, all of the Asian FLA studies in Table 1 recorded mean anxiety ratings

within the moderate anxiety threshold (as I have defined it in this study – see Table 1). Liu and Huang's (2011) study yielded results that were closest to those found in the present study. They attributed the general lack of FLA in their learner population to a number of factors. These included the length of time their learners had already spent studying English (six years or more), as well as instrumental motivating factors related to the perceived importance of English in relation to career paths within China (2011, pp. 4-5).

The Extent and Nature of FLA in DEC Classes

Assessing the overall Modified FLCAS scores for each of the participants in this study and placing them within one of the three anxiety thresholds that I identified earlier – mean anxiety ratings between 2 - 2.4 (Low Anxiety Threshold), mean anxiety ratings between 2.5 – 3.4 (Moderate Anxiety Threshold), and mean anxiety ratings of 3.5 or over (High Anxiety Threshold) – reveals that the majority (14 out of 24, or 58%) of the participants in this study fall within the Moderate Anxiety Threshold (see Figure 1 below). Combined with those learners who fall within the Low Anxiety Threshold (8 out of 24, or 33%),
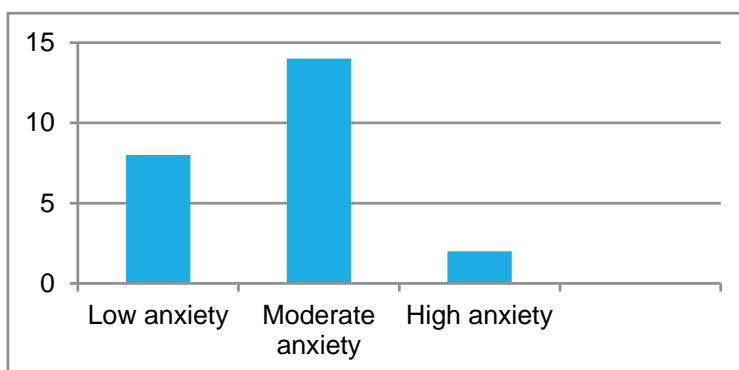
Figure 1. Breakdown of participants' overall anxiety levels.

these figures suggest that the answer to the first research question is that FLA is evident in DEC to a low-to-moderate extent. This is borne out by the mean anxiety ratings for the majority of the items in the Modified FLCAS (see Table 2), where 26 out of the 29 items rated within the low or moderate anxiety thresholds.

Table 2

Mean Rating for Modified FLCAS Items

Item	Question wording	Factor	Mean
16*	I feel confident when I speak English in class.	A**	3.8
9*	I don't understand why people get so upset over English class.	A	3.6
24*	When I'm on my way to class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	A	3.5
20	I always feel that the other class members speak English better than I do.	B	3.2
2*	I don't worry about making mistakes in English.	B	3.2
1	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English.	A	3.2
12*	I would not be nervous speaking English with native-speakers.	A	3.0
19*	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for class.	A	3.0
29	I get nervous when my teachers ask questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	A	3.0
28*	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English.	A	3.0
10	In class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	A	2.9
13	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	B	2.8
5*	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English classes.	A	2.7
8	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in class.	A	2.6

Table 2 (Continued)

Mean Rating for Modified FLCAS Items

Item	Question wording	Factor	Mean
21	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other class members.	B	2.6
25	I get nervous when I don't understand every word my teachers say.	A	2.5
11	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in class.	A	2.5
23	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English in class.	A	2.5
7	I keep thinking that other students are better at English than I am.	B	2.4
26	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak English.	A	2.4
18	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in class.	A	2.3
14	Even if I am well prepared for class, I feel anxious about it.	A	2.2
22	Class moves so quickly that I worry about getting left behind.	B	2.2
4	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.	A	2.1
3	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on to speak in class.	A	2.0
6	During class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the lesson topic.	A	2.0
27	I am afraid that the other class members will laugh at me when I speak English.	B	2.0
15	I often feel like not going to class.	A	1.7
17	I am afraid that my teachers are ready to correct every mistake I make.	B	1.7

* These questions are negatively-worded (and thus reverse-scored) questions.

** A = Communication apprehension ; B = Fear of negative evaluation

Communication Apprehension

In terms of the specific manifestations of FLA identified by Horwitz et al. (1986) which are relevant to this study[4] (communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation), the results of the Modified FLCAS seem to indicate that the former is more prevalent than the latter in DEC classes. The item with the highest mean anxiety rating of 3.8 ("I feel confident when I speak English in class") directly reflects communication apprehension (see item 16 in Table 2). Other communication apprehension-related items, such as "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English" (item 1), and "I get nervous when teachers ask questions which I haven't prepared in advance" (item 29), produced mean anxiety ratings which fell within the Moderate Anxiety Threshold (ratings of 3.2 and 3.0 respectively). However, a number of items dealing with communication apprehension sat within the Low Anxiety Threshold. Thus, items such as "It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English" (item 4, with a mean anxiety rating of 2.1), and "I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on to speak in class" (item 3, with a mean anxiety rating of 2.0) indicated that some aspects of communicating in English (particularly related to interaction with DEC teachers) are less anxiety-provoking for DEC learners.

Data from the semi-structured interviews also shed some light upon the nature of communication apprehension in DEC classes. In response to the interview questions "What aspect of DEC class makes you most anxious?", and "Are there any other aspects of DEC class that make you anxious?", the two high anxiety learners (Kimiko[5] and Tsurara), as well as both moderate anxiety learners (Ichiro and Hana), used either or both

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[4] Test anxiety is not relevant in the DEC context as there is no testing in DEC.
[5] I have not used the interviewees' real names.

of the expressions "*kotoba ga tarinai*" ("I have an insufficient vocabulary") and "*kotoba ga wakaranai*" ("I don't understand certain words") when describing the main causes of their in-class communication anxiety. This was similar to the findings of Gregersen et al.'s (2014) study, where it was noted that vocabulary retrieval problems lay at the heart of much of the language anxiety of learners in that study (2014, p. 582).

Fear of Negative Evaluation

The results from the Modified FLCAS, backed up by my own observations of in-class interaction, indicate that fear of negative evaluation does not seem to exert a significant influence in DEC classes. The item "I am afraid that my teachers are ready to correct every mistake I make" (item 17) recorded the equal-lowest mean anxiety rating (1.7), which is comfortably within the Low Anxiety Threshold. Furthermore, item 27 ("I am afraid that the other class members will laugh at me when I speak English") and item 7 ("I keep thinking that other students are better at English than I am") each fell within the Low Anxiety Threshold, with mean anxiety ratings of 2.0 and 2.4 respectively.

I believe that a key factor in the relative lack of anxiety related to fear of negative evaluation is the positive classroom atmosphere at DEC, and the positive attitudes towards English study that this creates. Indeed, the equal-lowest-ranked item on the Modified FLCAS was item 15 ("I often feel like not going to class"), with a mean anxiety rating of 1.7 (see Table 2). This finding is backed up by the data from the semi-structured interviews. Both of the low anxiety learners (Reia and Jiro) and also both high anxiety learners (Kimiko and Tsurara) used the expression "*tanoshii*" ("fun/enjoyable") when they were asked to describe how they felt about the classroom atmosphere at DEC.

Nevertheless, the moderate-to-high mean anxiety ratings for some of the

communication apprehension items (particularly relating to speaking – see items 1, 10, 12, 16, 28, and 29 in Table 2) suggest that some consideration ought to be given to reducing this kind of FLA in DEC classes. Accordingly, I now look at ways that this can be achieved, drawing upon the literature, my own teaching experience at DEC, and also the data from the semi-structured interviews.

Dealing with FLA in the DEC Classroom

Numerous stress-reducing strategies are identified in the FLA literature which may be worth implementing in DEC classes. Both Oxford (1998) and Young (1991, 1999) highlight the importance of 'self-talk' in reducing FLA. Self-talk requires students to say positive things about themselves, and to urge themselves to relax when faced with an otherwise FLA-inducing situation. In my view, such positive self-talk should be encouraged at DEC, especially given the regular occurrence of negative self-talk such as apologising behaviour in relation to perceived poor target language production. However, in order to avoid self-consciousness about talking aloud to oneself in class, it might be best to introduce positive self-talk in pair work or small group work. Indeed, as Kimura et al. (2001) concur, peer support within the small group environment is a useful strategy for reducing FLA in Japanese classrooms.

Addressing FLA issues directly in class has also received some attention in the FLA literature (Foss & Reitzel, 1988; Oxford, 1998; Phillips, 1992; Young, 1991, 1999). One such strategy is encouraging students to write down what aspects of L2 use make them anxious, and then having the students share their ideas with the rest of the class. Foss and Reitzel (1988, p. 445) suggest that this enables students to "realize that they are not alone in their fears" and can help students feel more at ease speaking in the L2.

Yet while such strategies may be useful in some contexts, they may also lead to further anxiety, as some students may not be comfortable sharing their feelings about FLA in front of the class or even in small groups, even if the students know each other fairly well (as is largely the case in DEC). Perhaps a more suitable method for DEC students would be keeping a language journal (Foss & Reitzel, 1988; Horwitz et al., 1986; Young, 1991). In addition to helping students reflect upon what they learn, language journals can also allow students to keep a record of anxiety episodes in the classroom. This could avoid exacerbating FLA in the DEC classroom by not forcing the students to speak about their anxiety in front of others.

One final point in relation to addressing FLA in DEC classes relates to issues that came out of the learner interviews. I noted earlier that both high anxiety learners (Kimiko and Tsurara) and also both moderate anxiety learners (Ichiro and Hana) pointed to difficulties understanding certain English words and phrases that are used in class (particularly by the teachers) and also their perceived insufficient vocabulary as the principal causes of their FLA in DEC classes. This is something that DEC teachers ought to consider when preparing for DEC classes. Such measures as making greater use of vocabulary lists for the class topic, which could also be built into in-class vocabulary exercises, could be a simple means of reducing FLA. Also, both Ichiro (one of the moderate anxiety learners) and Reia (one of the low anxiety learners) suggested that more extensive use of realia and other learner support resources might help reduce FLA.

Implications and Concluding Remarks

The results of this study indicate that although FLA appears to exhibit a low-to-moderate influence on DEC classes (with an overall average anxiety rating of 2.6, which is at the

lower end of the Moderate Anxiety Threshold), certain aspects of classroom interaction are more affected by FLA than others. As with numerous other FLA studies in Asian EFL contexts (Kim, 2009; Kimura et al., 2001; Liu, 2006), the Modified FLCAS results indicated that FLA is most prominent in relation to in-class speaking activities at DEC. However, the supportive, positive approaches adopted by DEC teachers, as well as the collegial attitudes of DEC learners, seem to be key factors behind the relative lack of anxiety caused by fear of negative evaluation. These findings were largely corroborated in the results of the semi-structured interviews, with the low anxiety and moderate anxiety learners all noting some frustration at their perceived lack of vocabulary depth in terms of both speaking and listening. Also significant was the fact that both of the low anxiety learners and both of the high anxiety learners described the DEC classroom atmosphere as enjoyable, and none of the interviewees highlighted fear of negative peer or teacher evaluation as sources of FLA in DEC.

Yet despite having worked hard to establish a relatively casual and friendly environment at DEC, DEC teachers can do more to tackle FLA in DEC classes. Encouraging positive self-talk amongst students, particularly in small group settings, and having students keep journals to keep track of anxiety-provoking classroom situations will no doubt be a step in the right direction. Likewise, providing more meaning support in class such as through more extensive use of realia and vocabulary lists would be likely to help ease DEC learners' in-class anxiety.

Finally, as was pointed out earlier, it is important to note that there has been little, if any, research on FLA in non-formal settings, including community language classes such as DEC. Yet, as this paper has shown, FLA is at least to some extent evident in these less formal classroom environments. Indeed, as Oxford states, "language anxiety ranks

high among factors influencing language learning, regardless of whether the setting is informal or formal" (1998, p. 59).

Clearly FLA is an affective factor which has a potentially negative impact on L2 learners in a number of learning contexts – both formal and non-formal. Accordingly, given the lack of research on the impact of FLA in non-formal L2 learning contexts, I consider that this is an area which ought to be the subject of future research, particularly given the popularity and importance of non-formal community-based classes in Japan.

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Appendix A

Modified Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale Questionnaire

1	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English.	1 2 3 4 5
2	I don't worry about making mistakes in English.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on to speak in class.	1 2 3 4 5
4	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.	1 2 3 4 5
5	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English classes.	1 2 3 4 5
6	During class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the lesson topic.	1 2 3 4 5
7	I keep thinking that other students are better at English than I am.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in class.	1 2 3 4 5
9	I don't understand why people get so upset over English class.	1 2 3 4 5
10	In class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	1 2 3 4 5
11	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in class.	1 2 3 4 5
12	I would not be nervous speaking English with native-speakers.	1 2 3 4 5
13	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	1 2 3 4 5
14	Even if I am well prepared for class, I feel anxious about it.	1 2 3 4 5
15	I often feel like not going to class.	1 2 3 4 5
16	I feel confident when I speak English in class.	1 2 3 4 5
17	I am afraid that my teachers are ready to correct every mistake I make.	1 2 3 4 5
18	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in class.	1 2 3 4 5
19	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for class.	1 2 3 4 5

20	I always feel that the other class members speak English better than I do.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other class members.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Class moves so quickly that I worry about getting left behind.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English in class.	1	2	3	4	5
24	When I'm on my way to class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	1	2	3	4	5
25	I get nervous when I don't understand every word my teachers say.	1	2	3	4	5
26	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak English.	1	2	3	4	5
27	I am afraid that the other class members will laugh at me when I speak English.	1	2	3	4	5
28	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English.	1	2	3	4	5
29	I get nervous when my teachers ask questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	1	2	3	4	5

Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

DEC group: _____

Length of time in DEC: _____ years _____ months

Toward Film Analysis in the Foreign Language Classroom

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Abstract
Students and teachers enjoy using movies as a language learning resource. While movies contain many modes of meaning, including but not limited to moving images, cultural codes, gesture, music, editing, acting, sound and dialogue, textbooks for learners that feature movies focus almost exclusively on listening and plot comprehension despite the fact that much of the information in a movie is communicated through the aforementioned non-linguistic channels. Although many of us may be unaware of exactly how and why these non-linguistic elements contribute to the movie overall, this does not inhibit our ability to understand and enjoy it. This paper presents some foundational concepts and basic analytical approaches from film studies and suggests that by using them along with traditional linguistic analysis, students and teachers can come to a fuller understanding of how meaning is made in movies, and enrich movie watching both in the classroom and at home.

Keywords: English in films, visual literacy, text analysis.

L earning to read and listen in a foreign language is time consuming and difficult. The tangled code fusing the text and the message can seem impenetrable and the less familiar the language, the more concentration and knowledge is required to understand it. Movies, on the other hand, envelop us immediately and seamlessly in their world. Our years of movie-watching experiences lead us to expect the movie to explain itself in terms we can readily understand, and those expectations are almost always rewarded. Movies can be the perfect escape from a difficult foreign language lesson. We sit safe in the dark, watching comfortably, while

experiencing vicariously the thrill of all the emotions displayed on screen. While both movies and written texts narrate events, clearly we do not 'read' movies in the same way. How exactly do movies work their magic?

Although we watch under a spell of suspended disbelief, it is worth remembering that movies are commercial products in a multibillion-dollar industry, each one created by teams of hundreds if not thousands of experts (The Numbers, n.d.). Movies are designed with one primary purpose in mind; to cajole us into handing over our money. And hand it over we do; the movie industry is enormously successful. The most recent installment in the Star Wars series has surpassed two *billion* US dollars in box office sales, a figure that does not include any of the associated merchandise or licensing that seems to be on display in every public space (Mendelson, 2016). Indeed, it is hard *not* to resist such an attractively designed product. It is not even necessary to understand the dialogue to grasp the story. That fact, combined with viewer tendency to identify with the emotions the characters go through on the screen, makes it easy for non-native speakers to enjoy a couple of hours in a foreign language environment and feel a sense of achievement at the end. It is no surprise that teachers and students alike feel that movies have an important role to play in foreign language learning. Is there a way to make sure we are active viewers who make the most of what a movie can offer? Is there a set of best practices for using movies in the foreign language classroom? What might the advantages be over more traditional approaches? And how exactly do movies instantly transport us so effortlessly to other worlds? These are some of the questions that this paper will address.

Catharsis & Learning

In Western tradition, the debate over the use of representational arts or 'poetry' in

education goes back at least as far as Plato and Aristotle. In classical Greece, poetry occupied the place in society that is currently served by TV, the Internet, newspapers and radio combined (Janko, 1987). Poetry shaped public opinion and was in turn influenced by what people believed, and given its central importance it should come as no surprise that it was not without controversy. In *The Republic*, Plato claimed that poetry was a corrupting influence because it inflamed the passions to the detriment of reason. According to Bloom (1968), Plato opined that people are attracted to poetry because it appeals to "the lower part of the soul, the part concerned with the emotions" (p. xii). For Plato, philosophy was the best tool to build the foundation for the Utopian society he envisioned. However, his most famous student, Aristotle, disagreed, as recorded in both *Poetics* and *Ethics*, countering that the representational arts did not corrupt society, they benefited it.

Aristotle recognized the emotions as an important part of a person's decision making process, and rather than ignore or repress them, it was important to shape the emotions to respond correctly. In *Ethics* (1999) he contends that people should feel the right emotion towards the correct subject, at the right time, in the proper amount, etc. In life there are things about which we should be angry, terrified, or afraid, and experiencing them through poetry and learning how to feel and act appropriately towards them was in Aristotle's view the right road to virtue. Courage, for example, is the golden mean between weakness and foolishness, which are both errors in relation to it. Thus, for Aristotle (1987), poetry had an instructive and moral purpose: it helped form virtuous character, the basis of a just society. According to some critics, Aristotle held that poetry aroused the emotions and through the plot and narrative led them to eventual catharsis. This cathartic experience is what continues to rivet us to the stories we follow on screens

today, and what draws our students to Hollywood movies as well. Janko (1987) describes Aristotle's emotional regulatory process:

> Taking tragedy as an example, the cathartic process works as follows. By representing pitiable, terrifying and other painful events, tragedy arouses pity, terror and other painful emotions in the audience, for each according to his own emotional capacity, and so stimulates these emotions as to relieve them by giving them moderate and harmless exercise, thereby bringing the audience nearer to the mean in their emotional responses, and so nearer to virtue in their characters; and with this relief comes pleasure. (p. xx)

As stated earlier, one of the main reasons people watch movies is for the pleasure they induce. Teachers need to be aware of and prepared for the emotional arousal in movies we use in the classroom. A heightened emotional state may make academic analysis difficult if not impossible for our students, and it certainly goes against the spirit in which we generally watch movies: to escape reality. This theory of catharsis is not without controversy, but it could answer the question as to why movies are so compelling: the arousal and catharsis of emotion. We do in a way feel 'cleansed' when we leave a theatre after seeing the wicked punished, suffering rewarded, or a hero achieve victory. This might also be the reason so many people find traditional textbooks dry and lifeless: there is no emotional payoff. If we become Aristotelean teachers, perhaps we could exploit the cathartic process in movies to support learning in our classrooms. The Platonics, however, would counsel us not to let our emotions get carried away. Is there a middle ground? How can we find the best parts of movies, or what do movies do best and how do they achieve it? How can we make sense of the artistic decisions that go into these spectacular works? One starting point would be to look at the rule and conventions that govern the art of

movie making.

Texts & Codes

Although grammar and vocabulary are necessary to understand the linguistic features of a text, we know that is not the whole story to comprehension. Depending on the text genre, knowledge of other systems is required as well. The Latin root of text means tissue or weave and the word connotes an object made up of many smaller constituents. For the purposes of this paper, a text is collection of meaning-bearing signs (e.g., words, images, music) composed into a structure that conveys a message and allows for interpretation (Chandler, 2007; Kuhn & Westwell, 2012). Texts are always situated in culture, representative of a specific time, place, and set of values. Critic Stanley Fish (1994) posits that language comprehension is mediated through the norms or codes of the community that we belong to. Without those common contexts and experiences, parts of the text will be unavailable to us. It is no different with movies, which are also texts. Viewers and movies are not interacting in isolation, but are already part of a vast network of meanings and potential meanings:

> [C]ultural compatibility between author/filmmaker and reader/viewer is a key determinant for the successful communication of meaning to audiences whose competence or "code literacy" is rooted in the cultural and societal contexts of production. Conversely, in cases in which such circumstances of compatibility are lacking - for instance, in reading a four-hundred-year-old text, or *viewing a foreign film - many significances may be lost, rendering communication partial and meaning incomprehensible or ambiguous*." (Emphasis mine; Zauderer, 2015, p. 195)

The textbooks currently on the market make no mention of this "code literacy" and this paper is meant to address this gap. According to Zauderer (2015), these codes are the principal means of analysis to determine how textual meaning is made. Sikov (2010), writing specifically on film codes, calls them "widely used and accepted devices" (p. 145). The point is not that movie are totally incomprehensible without perfect literacy, but rather to highlight the need to inform our movie classes with at least some of these codes in order to reinforce the linguistic emphasis. Specifically, what do these codes look like? According to Chandler (2008), codes fall into one of three categories:

- *Social codes:* each culture has its own behavioral, physical, and linguistic codes. Examples might include bowing in Japan or appropriate registers that recognize different social relationships in many languages.

- *Textual or representational codes:* pictorial, literary or filmic texts are all governed by codes that include codes of genre and style. Film is regulated by codes over lighting, color, acting, camera position, and editing among others.

- *Interpretive codes:* these codes dictate how a viewer or interpreter recognizes the connection between textual and social codes.

Although our students may have varying degrees of access to the linguistic mode in a movie, it seems obvious that they have sufficient procedural knowledge of the film codes defined above to understand and enjoy Hollywood movies effortlessly. If we exploit this knowledge of film conventions, there is opportunity for language learning. Our task as teachers is not so much teaching movie knowledge as well as English, but rather enabling students to encode existing film knowledge into the L2, to transform a message from one kind of symbolic system (visual) to another (written).

Despite current textbooks' focus on listening activities, not all meaningful input in a

film is auditory. In fact, in many scenes a large amount of information is communicated without spoken language. It is well to remember that silent film flourished worldwide for thirty years until the development of synchronized sound. Due to the extensiveness of visual information in film it is important to understand how this non-linguistic information can support, distort, supersede or challenge the spoken message. Listening researchers also recognize the importance of non-verbal communication in listening comprehension. Rost (2002) claims that this repertoire of visual information should be regarded as a 'co-text' that for the receiver is semantically indivisible for the purposes of comprehension. He says these extra-linguistics signals fall into two categories, exophoric and kinesic. Exophora are things present and talked about in a text, like an actor holding up and describing a photograph. Kinesic signals are body movements, including gestures, eye and head movements, eye contact, lip and chin movements, directional gazes, and other guide signals using the body (p. 37). Actors use these extra-linguistic signals to augment or contradict the dialogue in a scene. In addition, the camera can supply another layer of meaning through its point of view and movement. Meaning in movies is not achieved solely or even mainly through dialogue. To make matters more complex, filmmakers can put out contradictory messages in different modes for artistic effect. In other words, what the characters say and what they do can be different.

Current Textbooks

Teachers and material makers try to combine the two, an approach that may offer the thrill of the movie with a result that is not much different from the traditional textbook. A survey of nine movie textbooks currently on the Japanese market shows that aside from using clips from movies, most of the activities ask students to listen, fill in the blanks, translate,

read short passages on culture and check basic comprehension of the plot (see Appendix for a representative list of textbooks currently on the market). As rote language practice that may be fine, but this linguistic approach leaves out many of the meaning-making devices filmmakers employ. In fact, nearly everything present in a film is geared to set up viewer expectations and rewards. The introduction of different ways of thinking about the meaning in films does produce a challenge to the settled notions of language in movie textbooks and in other corners of the language teaching field, but the approach outlined in this paper is not about displacement of one method for another, but rather about inclusion, about widening our notions of what make movies enjoyable and meaningful and worthy of attention beyond what the actors say.

Film Analysis

How can we begin to break up a film into more manageable pieces? Although movies flow by our eyes in a seemingly uninterrupted stream, this is an illusion played on us by our brains. Movies are typically made up of a series of still images that are projected at a rate of 24 frames per second. If you are working with a movie on a computer, a first step in analysis would be to take a screenshot from a meaningful scene and examine its mise-en-scène. Mise-en-scène is a term adopted by film from stage drama. It means 'putting on the stage' and refers to everything that the camera sees. Elements of mise-en-scène include (Monaco, 2009; Sikov, 2010):

1. Set design

2. Lighting (e.g., high key, low key)

3. Space (i.e., the relative distance between objects)

4. Costuming

5. Acting (i.e., the placement and movement of actors, also known as blocking)

In a well-made film, everything is functional. Every identifiable element contributes to moving the story forward. The curious film student will seek to identify and describe these elements and consider their dramatic effect. The point is not to obsess over all of the hundreds or thousands of artistic decisions that go into a film, but to recognize at least some of them and think about how they support the narrative.

Below are four stills taken from the opening of the 1990 movie *Edward Scissorhands*. *Edward Scissorhands* is a modern twist on the fairytale, featuring a man-made boy who was left incomplete because his creator died before finishing him, leaving him with scissors instead of hands. He has lived alone in a castle outside of town, pure and unsullied by society when he is taken in by a kindly woman. Although he is initially welcomed by the townspeople as an oddity, he gradually becomes alienated because he

Figure 1. Establishing shots from the opening scene of *Edward Scissorhands*.

cannot conform to their expectations of him.

I chose to use this movie in class for a number of reasons. It has a relatively simple structure, transparent plot and clear, easy to understand conventions. The lead actor is Johnny Depp who is well known by Japanese university students, mostly from his role as Captain Jack Sparrow in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* series. Finally, because Edward, the main character, has hardly any dialogue in the film, and instead relies on Charlie Chaplinesque movements and gestures to communicate to viewers. This last point is particularly important when considering lower level students.

The images occur in the film left to right, top to bottom. These are establishing shots at the beginning of one of the first scenes in the movie. Several things stand out. The streets are spotless, the yards devoid of any unique items that would identify the inhabitants. The houses themselves are pastel colored, not bright or earthy, lending a surreal air to the scene. By the quality of light and the long shadows, it appears to be very early in the morning. In three of the four stills above, there are solitary homemakers engaged in yard maintenance: one is watering the grass; another is mowing the lawn; a third is repairing the roof. Although these images flash by us in a few seconds of screen time, if we stop and think about the elements I have described, what questions can we ask? Why are the neighbors so motivated to work on their homes and gardens first thing in the morning? Why do they work alone? Why are the houses all pastels? And, finally, is this a realistic community or some kind of unreal place? On what basis could we make our answer?

The shots are connected in a montage sequence. When a filmmaker chooses to repeat similar content in consecutive shots, it is known as intellectual montage (Monaco, 2009; Sikov, 2010). The shots are setting the scene, filling in necessary background

information that is meant to illuminate what follows rather than showing connected action to move the plot forward. The filmmaker is drawing our attention to these items through repetition. Another way to determine the meaning of these elements, to find out what code or convention they are following, is to draw on a simple but powerful framework from structural linguistics in Figure 2. The syntagmatic axis represents elements present in the text: this AND this AND this, etc. The paradigmatic axis represents possible elements
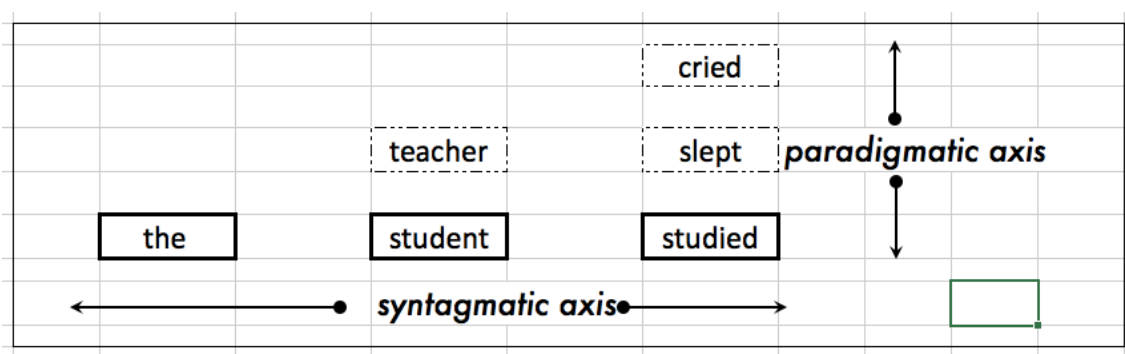
Figure 2. The paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes for text analysis.

outside the text: this OR this OR this, etc. In the case of our screenshots, we can perform a commutation test and substitute elements outside the film that could have been selected. For example, what would the dramatic effect be if the houses were all the same color, or another color scheme entirely was used?

Although the idea of using concepts from film studies in a second language classroom may be daunting, I think these activities show that it is within the capabilities of even lower level students. Linguistically, what is the difference between describing a neighborhood in a movie or one's own neighborhood?

Mise-en-shot

The next analytical framework we will use to uncover meaning in film is also taken from stage drama. Mise-en-shot refers to how a scene is filmed. It includes:

1. Camera position (e.g., high angle, eye level)

2. Camera movement (e.g., tracking, panning, tilting)

3. Camera distance (e.g., close up, medium close up)

4. Shot duration (e.g., how long a shot lasts for)

5. Shot frequency (e.g., how often shots change)

6. Coloring effects

Figure 3. Emotional intimacy though camera movement.

The above stills from *Edward Scissorhands* in Figure 3 show the moment Edward is about to confess his romantic feelings for Kim but is ultimately unable to. As the camera moves from medium to close up the dialogue stops and music begins. The sense of intimacy is heightened via the film codes of mise-en-shot and mise-en-scène. The shots in the scene alternate between Edward and Kim, moving from medium shots to close ups, gradually removing everything from the frame but the actor's face. Through the filmic code of the eye match edit, the viewer gets the impression that Edward and Kim are gazing into each other's eyes when that is impossible as Edward is on a television program and Kim is in her living room watching him on TV. Kim further communicates the intensity through the dramatic gesture of averting her gaze by lowering her eyes. Of significance to the premise of this paper, the emotional center of the scene has no dialogue; all of the information is communicated through film code. We 'know' of Edward's love for Kim not by what he says, but through the careful shot selection, editing and direction of the filmmaker. A listening comprehension approach would have nothing to say about this important scene.

Conclusion

Movies offer teachers and students great learning potential and enjoyment, but without planning informed by film studies, a movie class can either become a traditional listening comprehension exercise or an afternoon at the cinema. Current movie textbooks focus on linguistic comprehension, and largely ignore the many other ways that movies communicate meaning to viewers. By slowing down the viewing process, both literally and figuratively, and introducing some frameworks from film analysis, teachers and students can both gain a greater understanding of the conventions that govern how movies are made and understood, as well as practice some of the communicative language skills

used in more traditional classroom activities.

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Appendix

EFL Movie Textbooks

English Grammar in Focus: Expanded Edition. MacMillan Language House, 2010.

Golden Age of Hollywood. MacMillan Language House, 2013.

Integrated Skills Through Movies. Asahi Press, 2004.

Movie Time. Nan'un-do, 2012.

Notting Hill. Shohakusha, 2007.

Roman Holiday. Shining and Natural English, 2009.

Step Up With Movie English. Kinseido, 2010.

The Devil Wears Prada. Shohakusha, 2010.

The Poetry of Film. Kinseido, 2005.

Using Role-Playing and Reflective Journals to Foster Motivation and Develop Language Learning Strategies

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Abstract

This paper reports the results of an action research project that investigates the use of role-playing and reflective journals to raise Japanese university EFL students' motivation and develop their language learning strategies. The author conducted the project in four compulsory English classes (N = 94). The participants conducted self-analyses using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL; Oxford, 1990), engaged in self- and peer evaluations on role-play preparations and performances, and they kept self-reflection journals. The journals were implemented to encourage students to develop metacognitive skills, by providing them with opportunities to plan for their learning, monitor their progress or review their accomplishments, and direct future learning. The results indicate the effectiveness of role-playing and reflective journals to not only to facilitate greater use of language learning strategies and enhance intrinsic motivation, but also to enhance autonomy, competence and relatedness (Reeve et al., 2008).

Keywords: intrinsic motivation, language learning strategies, role-playing, reflection, self/peer-evaluation

Motivation plays a vital role in propelling learners to successfully learn a foreign language, however, learners also need to know how to use and practice appropriate learning strategies to keep motivated. While motivation works as a driving force when a learner tries to employ and practice learning strategies, the sense of achievement gained with the successful use of learning strategies can fuel learner motivation (Ito, 2009). Consequently, successful learners are aware of

their own thinking, learning processes and strategies, and are able to regulate themselves to meet their goals (Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, & Robbins, 1999). Therefore, it is important for teachers to motivate students to develop and practice new learning strategies so that their strategy usage can in turn result in self-motivated learning.

The author conducted an action research project on four classes of Japanese university EFL students to determine how role-playing activities—activities that challenge students to act as if they were using the language in a real situation—and opportunities for students to develop metacognition by having them plan for their learning, monitor their progress, review their accomplishments, and direct future learning could improve student motivation.

This paper begins with a review of the literature. Specifically, it looks at self-determination theory (STD; Deci & Ryan, 1985), language learning strategies, and roll playing as a teaching method. Following this, this paper discusses the effectiveness of the action research project the author conducted for the aforementioned classes and investigates the differences between the groups which wrote in a reflection journal in every class and the group which wrote in it only three times during the semester.

Literature Review

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (STD; Deci & Ryan, 1985) is one of the most comprehensive and empirically supported theories of motivation available today (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). SDT is comprised of mini theories. Among the mini theories, cognitive evaluation theory, organismic integration theory, and basic psychological needs theory are the most salient parts of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Cognitive evaluation theory explains how external consequences, such as the social environment, affect intrinsic motivation—motivation that is driven by an enjoyment, pleasure, or interest in the activity itself (Deci & Ryan, 1985). On the contrary, extrinsic motivation involves doing an activity to attain a reward or to avoid a punishment. When people's autonomy is supported and competence is raised by social environmental factors, intrinsic motivation is enhanced. In contrast, intrinsic motivation is undermined due to incompetence or pressure conveyed by those factors, and a lack of autonomy. (Reeve, Ryan, Deci & Jang, 2008).

Organismic integration theory (OIT) investigates the degree of how much the motivation has or has not been internalized and has been integrated into the self (Deci & Ryan, 1985). OIT specifies extrinsic motivation into four types of regulation: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). External regulation is a function of explicit external contingencies and there is no self-determination. Introjected regulation is partially internalized contingencies, typically using self-worth or threats of guilt. Identified regulation occurs in identifying with the value of activity and accepting personal responsibility for its regulation. Integrated regulation is the identification that has been fully integrated with other aspects of one's self and becomes a part of one's true self (Reeve et al., 2008).

Basic psychological needs theory focuses on three basic innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness (Reeve et al., 2008). Autonomy is the sense of experiencing oneself as the origin of one's action. When autonomous, one feels volitional and psychologically free and is willing to engage in activity. Competence is a sense of accomplishment and efficaciousness in one's interactions with others. Relatedness is the feeling of being close to and connected to others (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Reeve et al., 2008).

Satisfaction of these psychological needs facilitates learning, well-being and development, and leads people to be motivated and productive (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

These three mini theories, cognitive evaluation theory, organismic integration theory, and basic psychological needs theory collectively identify the underlying source of students' autonomous self-regulation and the importance of social influence for intrinsic motivation (Reeve et al., 2008).

Language Learning Strategies

Research into language learning strategies started in the 1970s investigating what strategies good language learners used (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975). O'Malley and Chamot (1990) define language learning strategies as "the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information" (p. 1). Oxford (1990) defines learning strategies as "specific actions taken by learners to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations" (p. 8). Appropriate use of learning strategies assists language learners in improving their language proficiency (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Learning strategies can be taught and acquired through training. However, learners are not likely to accept learning strategies new to them unless they fully understand why the strategies are beneficial for their learning and how the strategies are acquired with less effort (MacIntyre & Noels, 1996).

According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), learning strategies consist of three categories: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and social/affective strategies. Brown (as cited in O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) defines metacognitive strategies as "higher order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring, or evaluating the

success of a learning activity" and cognitive strategies as the "strategies [that] operate directly on incoming information manipulating it in ways that enhance learning" (p. 44). Social/affective strategies are defined as "strategies [that] represent a broad grouping that involves either interaction with another person or ideational control over affect" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 45). Oxford (1990) divides learning strategies into two major classes: direct and indirect strategies. The first major class, direct strategies, is composed of "memory strategies for remembering and retrieving new information, cognitive strategies for understanding and producing the language, and compensation strategies for using the language despite knowledge gaps" (Oxford, 1990, p. 14). The second major strategy class, indirect strategies, "is made up of metacognitive strategies for coordinating the learning process, affective strategies for regulating emotions, and social strategies for learning with others" (Oxford, 1990, p. 15). Based on this model, Oxford (1990) developed the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL).

One of the goals of the research on language learning strategies is to promote autonomy in learning (Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1987; 1991). According to Reeve et al. (2008), being autonomous is "the regulation of behavior when people's interests and values are the reason for acting" (p. 224), which constitutes self-regulation, and self-regulation has assumed increasing importance in academic studying (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2008). Zimmerman (1986) defines self-regulated learners as those who are metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning—learners who "personally initiate and direct their own efforts to acquire knowledge and skills rather than relying on teachers, parents, or other agents of instruction" (Zimmerman, 1989, p. 329). Three important elements of self-regulated learning are students' self-regulated strategies, self-efficacy perceptions of performance

skill, and commitment to academic goals (Zimmerman, 1989).

Ito (2009) categorizes learning strategies into the ones focusing more on cognitive aspects of learning strategies and the ones focusing more on motivational aspects. He categorizes the aforementioned learning strategy models by Oxford (1990), O'Malley and Chamot (1990), and self-regulated learning by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986, 1988, 1990) as the strategy models with more emphasis on motivation. Motivation plays an important role when a learner tries to employ and practice learning strategies in the learning processes, and the sense of achievement gained with the use of learning strategies can fuel learner motivation; therefore, learning strategies and motivation are regarded as complementary elements and need to be considered comprehensively (Ito, 2009).

The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

SILL has been the most frequently used instrument in the L2 field for assessing language learning strategy use during the past decade and it is used extensively to collect large amounts of data from foreign language learners (Chamot, 2004). Hsiao and Oxford (2002) collected the data from 517 college EFL students and find that SILL is consistent with learners' strategy use. Oxford and Nyikos (1989) examined internal consistency reliability using Cronbach's alpha (.96) and the content validity (.95). While SILL has been widely used, there also have been criticisms against it. LoCastro (1994) questioned whether SILL is transferable across learning environments and different sociocultural settings. Tseng, Dörnyei, and Schmidt (2006) criticize SILL for its rating scales. SILL items all involve five-point rating scales based on frequencies of strategy use. This indicates that a learner using as many different strategies as possible achieves a high score on SILL. Therefore, it is not the quality but largely the quantity that matters. In Yamamori et al. (2003), Oxford

and her colleagues mention the importance of quality in strategy use as well. Despite the criticisms, SILL has been employed in many educational settings for its usability to comprehend what language learning strategies learners know, use, and do not use. Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) states that "many students discover a great deal about themselves from taking a strategy scale, especially one like SILL that is self-scoring and that provides immediate learner feedback" (p. 2). Therefore, research conducted using SILL gives learners opportunities to be more aware of language learning strategies (Ozeki, 2010).

Role-playing

According to Brown (1994), "role-play minimally involves (a) giving a role to one or more members of a group and (b) assigning an objective or purpose that participants must accomplish" (p. 183). Role-playing is an effective method to practice language, encourages creativity, and promotes motivation and interpersonal relations among participants (Tompkins, 1998). Hadley (2001) mentions that "role-plays have been long suggested as a technique that can be enjoyable and entertaining" (p. 252), and "can be used effectively at virtually any proficiency level" (p. 253). In addition, role-playing can help learners overcome fears and inhibitions, as they have to behave in a natural atmosphere (Richards, 1985). These indicate that role-playing can enhance students' autonomy, relatedness, competence, and foster intrinsic motivation.

Action Research Project

Participants

The author conducted an action research project in four compulsory English classes (classes A, B, C, & D) of second-year university students who were not English majors

during the spring semester in 2014. The streaming system was employed for the classes and the students belonged to the lower level classes (A2-B1 level of CEFR-J). Classes A, B, C, D had 28 students, 25 students, 20 students, and 21 students respectively. Students attended required English classes once a week for 90 minutes for fourteen weeks. All of these classes focused on language output, especially on speaking, with all classes using the same textbook: *Homestay Adventure* (Macmillan Language House), and following the same curriculum.   Activities conducted in those classes included self-analysis using SILL, making a dialog, collaborating with other students, and performing a role-play using the dialog they made in front of the class four times during the semester. In addition, they employed self and peer evaluations on the performance and its preparation procedures, and they kept self-reflection journals. Group 1, classes A and B, wrote their reflections in every class, while group 2, classes C and D, only wrote their reflections three times during the semester. Other than that, all the classes had the same activities. Before the start of this study, permission from the students was obtained through a consent form after an explanation about the study and informing them that they could refuse to participate without penalty.

Reflection Journal

The purpose of the action research project is to enhance students' intrinsic motivation and increase the frequency in use of language learning strategies. Previous research by the author (Omotedani, 2014) shows that students increased the frequency of using language learning strategies when keeping a reflection journal and setting a goal at the beginning of every class.   As mentioned in the introduction, the intension of this action research project was to encourage students to use metacognitive approaches, provide students

opportunities to plan for their learning, monitor their progress or review their accomplishments, and direct future learning. Accordingly, two reflective journal groupings were created. In one group comprised of two classes (n = 53), students set their own goals and recorded them in their respective reflection journals at the beginning of every class. The purpose of this activity was to have them monitor their process of learning during class time. The students were asked to decide their goals for the day. In performing this task, they were advised to make their goals as clear and concrete as possible, to make them cognitively more attainable and increase the potential for a sense of fulfillment. In addition, students kept the records of the results of quizzes conducted during the class. A second group, also comprised of two classes (n = 41) required students to give self-reflections only three times during the semester. They set their goals at the beginning of the semester, gave reflections and set goals after first half of the semester, and gave final reflections at the end of the semester. The section provided for each reflection entry in the journals had space enough for students to write six to seven sentences. The author advised the students to set their goals and write their reflections regarding "how" and "why" in addition to "what". Both models of reflection journals had sections to record pre and post results of SILL as well as students' experiences regarding English study and their image of their future-selves having a good command of English.

Completion of the SILL

At the beginning and end of the semester, students completed 50 items of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) Version 7.0, which was developed by Oxford (1990). All of those 50 items are about strategies that are good for language learning, so this activity—students' reading through SILL and reflecting on learning strategies—is

considered language learning strategy training. SILL is composed of six parts, each focusing on different language learning strategies. Three of them are direct strategies: memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. The other three are indirect strategies: metacognitive, affective, and social strategies.

SILL was developed in 1990 and some expressions of the questionnaire are not realistic to the students in this study. In addition, there is a criticism against SILL for its lack of transferability across learning environments and different sociocultural settings (LoCastro, 1994). Therefore, the author modified some of the expressions. Cognitive strategy number fifteen: 'I read for pleasure in English', was changed to 'I read for pleasure in English, check Web-pages and social media in English.' Cognitive strategy number seventeen: 'I write notes, messages, letters or reports in English', was modified to include 'write e-mail'. Because the term 'rhymes' used in memory strategy number five is not familiar to Japanese EFL students, the term was substituted to 'pun', which is a common memory strategy used in Japan.

A five-point Likert Scale: always or almost always true of me = 5, generally true of me = 4, somewhat true of me = 3, generally not true of me = 2, never or almost never true of me = 1, was used to answer the items. The students themselves made a graph in their respective reflection journals using their averages for each part of the SILL, which showed the kinds of strategies they used in learning English. After that, they wrote their comments on the results of the SILL. At the end of the semester, the students repeated the same procedure on the SILL. They compared the results by themselves, and wrote down their comments in their reflection journals.

Classroom Activities

At the end of each unit of the textbook, the author implemented cooperative practice of pairing two or three students together. Each pair or trio wrote a dialog freely using some expressions they learned in the unit. After practicing the dialog, each pair performed a role-play using the dialog they made in front of the class. They were advised to make a dialog with a natural flow of conversation and pay attention to non-verbal communication strategies; such as gestures, eye contacts, facial expressions, and so on, as well as accuracy in using the language, including pronunciation, sentence structure, grammar and vocabulary. After the performance, students gave themselves feedback on things that they tried hard on, improved, or would like to work on the next time. They also gave feedback to their partner(s) regarding the points that they learned from their partner(s) through the preparation phase and the presentation phase, and the points that they appreciated during this activity. In addition, the students were asked to evaluate the other pairs and trios on the good points of their performance and the points that would make their performance much better when improved. The students had this kind of activity four times with different members during the semester.

This action research project aimed to enhance their autonomy by having them make a dialog freely by themselves, cherish relatedness through working on the task with other students, build competence and self-efficacy through the accomplishment of the challenge of making their own dialog and performing in front of the other students, and through receiving positive feedback from their peers. It also provided opportunities to exercise learning strategies. Examples include memory strategies such as remembering the dialog they made, compensation strategies such as using the language despite knowledge gaps, social strategies such as learning with others, affective strategies such as regulating

emotions in performing in front of the class, and metacognitive strategies such as monitoring and reflecting their own learning processes and outcomes.

The Study

Research Questions

The purposes of this study are to investigate the effects of this action research project on students regarding the enhancement of their intrinsic motivation and frequency in the use of language learning strategies. The following are the main research questions addressed in this study:

1. Do writing a self-reflection journal every class and writing one three times a semester both enhance students' intrinsic motivation?

2. Do both types of reflections increase the frequency of students' use of language learning strategies?

Survey Instruments

In order to assess the effectiveness of the action research project, quantitative approaches using two sets of scales were employed. One of them is the scale developed by Tanaka and Hiromori (2007), which was used to measure motivational changes in the students. The scale, based on Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), assesses learners' motivation, as well as three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The scale to assess motivation contains four subscales such as intrinsic motivation, and three types of extrinsic motivation: identified regulation, introjected regulation, and external regulation. Each subscale has five items, resulting in 20 items total. The scale to assess three basic psychological needs is comprised of three subscales

that are autonomy, competence, and relatedness with four items each, 12 items in total. Therefore, the scale by Tanaka and Hiromori (2007) has 32 items altogether, and all of these items are rated on a seven-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha of the subscales is as follows: intrinsic motivation (.840), identified regulation (.908), introjected regulation (.828), external regulation (.700), autonomy (.865), competence (.893), and relatedness (.913).

The other scale that was employed for this research to assess the frequency in use of learning strategies is the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) Version 7.0, developed by Oxford (1990). There are 50 items in total, rated on a five-point Likert scale. The SILL has, as mentioned in a previous section of this paper, six subscales and the Cronbach's alpha of the subscales is as follows: memory strategies (.768), cognitive strategies (.786), compensation strategies (.796), metacognitive strategies (.858), social strategies (.784), and affective strategies (.784).

Survey Procedure

During the first week and the final week of class, the students in classes A, B, C, and D completed a motivational survey using the scale by Tanaka and Hiromori (2007) as well as the SILL. Group 1 (classes A & B: reflection in every class) had 53 students registered but the number of the students who completed both the pre & post motivational survey, and both the pre & post SILL was 44 students. In the case of Group 2 (classes C & D: reflection three times), 41 students were registered, but 36 students completed both the pre & post motivational survey and both the pre & post SILL. The number changed due to student absences on the day the surveys were conducted, and incompletion or inappropriate completion of the survey (i.e., all the items are marked as 5, etc.).

Results and Discussion

Statistical Analysis

After gathering the pre and the post data from the motivational survey and the SILL, repeated measurements of analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted that examined the effect of frequency of reflection and pre & post results of motivational surveys and the SILL using SPSS 21.0. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the pre and post scores of motivational survey and the SILL of group 1 and group 2.

Significant main effect of the pre and the post results within participants was observed in external regulation, $F(1,78) = 5.08$, $p = .027$, $\eta^2_p = .06$, identified regulation, $F(1,78) = 6.06$, $p = .016$, $\eta^2_p = .07$, intrinsic motivation, $F(1,78) = 10.39$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .12$, autonomy, $F(1,78) = 91.25$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .54$, competence, $F(1,78) = 104.92$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .57$, relatedness, $F(1,78) = 52.12$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .40$, memory strategy, $F(1,78) = 22.14$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .22$, cognitive strategy, $F(1,78) = 17.50$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .18$, metacognitive strategy, $F(1,78) = 37.49$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .33$, affective strategy, $F(1,78) = 18.13$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .19$, social strategy, $F(1,78) = 9.47$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .11$, and strategy total, $F(1,78) = 28.98$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .27$. Interaction effect within participants was significant in relatedness, $F(1,78) = 2.52$, $p = .019$, $\eta^2_p = .07$ (see Table 2).

Interaction effect on frequency of reflection between participants was significant in external regulation, $F(1,78) = 7.39$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .09$, identified regulation, $F(1,78) = 12.77$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .14$, intrinsic motivation, $F(1,78) = 6.72$, $p=.011$, $\eta^2_p = .08$, compensation strategy, $F(1,78) = 9.42$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2_p = .11$, social strategy, $F(1,78) = 5.31$, $p = .024$, $\eta^2_p = .06$, and strategy total, $F(1,78) = 4.94$, $p = .029$, $\eta^2_p = .06$ (see Table 3). Therefore, the author carried out the procedure for simple main effects.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of the Pre and Post Scores of Motivational survey and SILL

Group 1: Reflection every class (N=44) Group 2: Reflection three times (N=36)		Pre		Post		Mean Difference
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	Post-Pre
External	Group 1	4.54	0.92	4.85	0.87	0.31
	Group 2	4.02	1.15	4.22	1.34	0.19
Introjected	Group 1	5.10	1.10	5.31	1.00	0.21
	Group 2	4.79	1.39	4.62	1.47	-0.18
Identified	Group 1	5.04	1.16	5.49	1.15	0.45
	Group 2	4.23	1.42	4.44	1.51	0.22
Intrinsic	Group 1	5.35	1.01	5.58	0.84	0.24
	Group 2	4.68	1.17	5.10	1.03	0.42
Autonomy	Group 1	4.69	0.93	5.84	0.80	1.14
	Group 2	4.94	1.03	5.97	0.90	1.03
Competence	Group 1	4.55	0.93	5.78	0.99	1.23
	Group 2	4.56	1.07	5.70	0.95	1.15
Relatedness	Group 1	5.15	1.07	6.16	0.85	1.01
	Group 2	5.24	0.97	5.74	1.19	0.51
Memory strategy	Group 1	2.77	0.60	3.05	0.48	0.28
	Group 2	2.68	0.56	2.96	0.50	0.28
Cognitive strategy	Group 1	2.55	0.51	2.78	0.50	0.23
	Group 2	2.36	0.51	2.58	0.61	0.22
Compensation strategy	Group 1	3.10	0.57	3.31	0.63	0.20
	Group 2	2.77	0.69	2.85	0.75	0.07
Metacognitive strategy	Group 1	2.32	0.68	2.74	0.68	0.42
	Group 2	2.12	0.64	2.40	0.66	0.27
Affective strategy	Group 1	2.06	0.60	2.36	0.73	0.30
	Group 2	1.91	0.59	2.19	0.75	0.28
Social strategy	Group 1	2.79	0.66	3.04	0.69	0.25
	Group 2	2.50	0.60	2.72	0.77	0.22
Strategy total	Group 1	2.58	0.49	2.87	0.50	0.28
	Group 2	2.39	0.44	2.62	0.54	0.23

Table 2

Mixed Design of Repeated Measurement of ANOVA: Within Participants

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p	η^2_p
Within Participants						
External	1, 78	2.51	2.51	5.08*	.027	.06
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.13	0.13	0.26	.609	<.01
Introjected	1, 78	0.01	0.01	0.02	.879	<.01
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	1.49	1.49	3.33	.072	.04
Identified	1, 78	4.34	4.34	6.06*	.016	.07
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.52	0.52	0.72	.397	.01
Intrinsic	1, 78	4.22	4.22	10.39**	.002	.19
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.32	0.32	0.79	.376	.01
Autonomy	1, 78	46.91	46.91	91.25**	<.001	.53
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.11	0.11	0.22	.639	<.01
Competence	1, 78	55.75	55.75	104.92**	<.001	.57
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.07	0.07	0.12	.726	<.01
Relatedness	1, 78	22.82	22.82	52.12**	<.001	.40
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	2.52	2.52	5.75*	.019	.07
Memory	1, 78	3.08	3.08	22.14**	<.001	.22
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	6.31	6.31	0.00	.983	<.01
Cognitive	1, 78	1.99	1.99	17.50**	<.001	.18
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.00	0.00	0.01	.91	<.01
Compensation	1, 78	0.77	0.77	3.69	.058	.05
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.17	0.17	0.81	.371	.01
Metacognitive	1, 78	4.80	4.80	37.49**	<.001	.33
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.21	0.21	1.67	.200	.02
Affective	1, 78	3.34	3.34	18.13**	<.001	.19
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.98	0.98	1.37	.246	.02
Social	1, 78	2.21	2.21	9.47**	.003	.11
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.01	0.01	0.03	.857	<.01
Strategy total	1, 78	2.59	2.59	28.98**	<.001	.27
x Group 1, 2	1, 78	0.03	0.03	0.30	.583	<.01

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01

Table 3

Mixed Design of Repeated Measurement of ANOVA: Between Participants

	df	SS	MS	F	p	η^2_p
Between Participants						
External	1, 78	13.14	13.14	7.39**	.008	.09
Introjected	1, 78	9.84	9.84	3.76	.056	.05
Identified	1, 78	34.07	34.07	12.77**	.001	.14
Intrinsic	1, 78	12.96	12.96	6.72*	.011	.08
Autonomy	1, 78	1.44	1.44	1.24	.268	.02
Competence	1, 78	0.05	0.05	0.03	.847	.00
Relatedness	1, 78	1.06	1.06	0.65	.424	.01
Memory	1, 78	0.33	0.33	0.76	.387	.01
Cognitive	1, 78	1.56	1.56	3.43	.068	.04
Compensation	1, 78	6.16	6.16	9.42**	.003	.11
Metacognitive	1, 78	2.80	2.80	3.72	.057	.05
Affective	1, 78	0.98	0.98	1.37	.246	.02
Social	1, 78	3.72	3.72	5.31*	.024	.06
Strategy total	1, 78	1.97	1.97	4.94*	.029	.06

Note. *$p<.05$, **$p<.01$

Simple main effects analysis of reflection frequency indicated that the both pre and the post results of external regulation, identified regulation, intrinsic motivation, compensation strategy, and social strategy were significantly different: $F (1,78) = 5.327$, $p = .027$, $\eta^2_p = .06$ (external regulation, pre survey), $F (1,78) = 7.94$, $p = .013$, $\eta^2_p = .08$ (external regulation, post survey), $F (1,78) = 8.00$, $p = .006$, $\eta^2_p = .09$ (identified regulation, pre survey), $F (1,78) = 12.31$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2_p = .14$ (identified regulation, post survey), $F (1,78) = 7.94$, $p = .013$, $\eta^2_p = .08$ (intrinsic motivation, pre survey), $F (1,78) = 3.975$, $p = .050$, $\eta^2_p = .05$ (intrinsic motivation, post survey), $F (1,78) = 5.481$, $p = .022$, $\eta^2_p = .07$ (compensation strategy, pre survey), $F (1,78) = 8.89$, $p = .004$, $\eta^2_p = .10$ (compensation strategy, post survey), $F (1,78) = 4.18$, $p = .044$, $\eta^2_p = .05$ (social strategy, pre survey),

and F (1,78) = 3.85, p = .053, η^2_p = .05 (social strategy, post survey). The results of reflection frequency of strategy total were not significantly different on the pre survey: F (1,78) = 3.51, p = .065, η^2_p = .04, but significantly different on the post survey: F (1,78) = 4.56, p = .036, η^2_p = .06.

Simple main effects analysis of the pre and the post results showed that the result of intrinsic motivation was significantly different in group 2: F (1,78) = 7.69, p = .007, η^2_p = .09 but not in group 1: F (1,78) = 3.02, p = .086, η^2_p = .04. However, significant difference was observed in group 1 for the pre and the post results of external regulation: F (1,78) = 4.25, p = .043, η^2_p = .05, identified regulation: F (1,78) = 6.10, p = .016, η^2_p = .07, compensation strategy: F (1,78) = 4.42, p = .039, η^2_p = .05 and was not observed in group 2 for the pre and the post results of external regulation: F (1,78) = 1.38, p = .244, η^2_p = .02, identified regulation: F (1,78) = 1.18, p = .281, η^2_p = .02, compensation strategy : F (1,78) = 0.47 p = .493, η^2_p = .01. Regarding the pre and the post results of social strategy, simple main effect of group 1 was significantly different: F (1,78) = 5.90, p = .017, η^2_p = .07 and that of group 2 was marginally significant: F (1,78) = 3.81, p = .054, η^2_p = .05. Simple main effect of the pre and the post results of strategy total shows significant difference in both group 1: F (1,78) = 19.57, p < .000, η^2_p = .20 and group 2: F (1,78) = 10.61, p = .002, η^2_p = .12.

Discussion

The first research question is whether this action research project conducted in this study enhanced intrinsic motivation. Main effect within participants was observed in all three basic psychological needs: autonomy, F (1,78) = 91.25, p < .01, η^2 = .54, competence, F (1,78) = 104.92, p < .01, η^2 = .57, relatedness, F (1,78) = 52.12, p < .01, η^2 = .40. Previous

studies (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Tanaka & Hiromori, 2007) suggest that intrinsic motivation is enhanced when three basic psychological needs are satisfied. However, significant difference of simple main effect of the pre and the post results of intrinsic motivation was observed only in group 2 ($p = .007$) which conducted reflection three times during the semester, while significant difference of simple main effect of the pre and the post results of external regulation was indicated in group 1 ($p = .043$) which carried out reflection in every class. One of the reasons that group 1 does not indicate a significant difference on intrinsic motivation could be from their higher intrinsic motivation ($M = 5.35$) from the beginning. As Table 1 indicates, the highest mean score of all subscales of the motivational survey is intrinsic motivation for group 1; on the other hand, the mean of intrinsic motivation of group 2 ($M = 4.68$) is eighth out of all the subscales of motivational survey. Therefore, the ceiling effect could be the reason why there is no significant difference in intrinsic motivation of group 1, even though significant differences are indicated in the three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Group 1 also shows statistically significant differences of simple main effect of the pre and the post results in identified regulation ($p = .016$) that has higher self-regulation than the other two types of extrinsic motivation. It can be concluded that the type of reflection in group 1, as well as group 2, had a positive effect on satisfying the students' basic psychological needs, and assisted them in identifying language learning with the value of the activity and accepting personal responsibility for its regulation. Nevertheless, it does not explain the cause of the significant difference of simple main effect of the pre and the post results in external regulation of group 1.

Group 1 was instructed to set their goal, write down their reflection and results of quizzes in every class by their teacher. This could have made the activities as explicit

external contingencies and resulted in the enhancement of external regulation of group 1. However, it might be a hasty conclusion to think that instruction of keeping reflections in every class would be ineffective to raise students' intrinsic motivation. Although significant difference in simple main effect of group 1 was found on external regulation, the post survey of external regulation (M = 4.85) of group 1 is still lower than the mean score of the other subscales shown in group 1 for the motivational survey. While it is necessary to bear in mind that teacher-centered instruction could enhance extrinsic motivation, it is highly important to give careful consideration to how to give instructions; such as instruction with less pressure and more encouragement, providing more choices, and so forth. In addition, the author is convinced that long-term study on this matter would give us further educational implications.

The second research question is whether the action research project conducted in this study enhances frequency in the use of language learning strategies. Table 2 shows significant main effect within participants in memory strategy, F (1,78) = 22.14, p < .01, η^2 = .22, cognitive strategy, F (1,78) = 17.50, p < .01, η^2 = .18, metacognitive strategy, F (1,78) = 37.49, p < .01, η^2 = .33, affective strategy, F (1,78) = 18.13, p < .01, η^2 = .19, social strategy, F (1,78) = 9.47, p < .01, η^2 = .11, and strategy total, F (1,78) = 28.98, p < .01, η^2 = .27. Interaction effect between participants was significant in compensation strategy, F (1,78) = 9.42, p < .01, η^2 = .11, social strategy, F (1,78) = 5.31, p = .024, η^2 = .06, and strategy total, F (1,78) = 4.94, p = .029, η^2 = .06 (see Table 3). Simple main effects analysis of the pre and the post results showed that significant difference was observed in group 1 for compensation strategy (p = .039) and was not observed in group 2 for compensation strategy (p = .493).

These results show that both group 1 and group 2 increased the frequency in their

use of language learning strategies after this action research project. However, it can be stated that the action research project implemented for group 1 is more effective in terms of enhancing frequency in the use of compensation strategy. Students in group 1 were given more opportunities to pay attention to their learning processes and its outcome by setting a goal and keeping a record of their reflection in every class. It is assumed that this procedure also assisted them in using language learning strategies to meet their goals, remembering the learning strategies which they thought were effective, such as compensation strategy, and encouraging them to utilize those learning strategies again in class.

Conclusion

This study served as an attempt to enhance students' intrinsic motivation and frequency in the use of language learning strategies with the implementation of the action research project. The same activities, such as self-analysis using SILL, role-play projects, and self/peer evaluation, was introduced to both group 1 and group 2, except that the former kept their reflections in every class, while the latter wrote their reflections three times during the semester.

This action research project had a positive effect on three basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985) of both groups. Role-play projects and self/peer-to-peer evaluations were implemented in order to enhance their autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This activity was repeated four times during the semester, which could have helped students build up their self-efficacy as well as their competence. Some students commented in their self-evaluations with the following: "I was able to speak in front of class better than the first time", "I am used to doing role-play", and "This time I was able to enjoy doing

role-paly with my partner." Moreover, during the preparation for the role-play project, students seemed to have more concentration and found pleasure in making their own dialog and, in some students' cases, trying to include jokes. Many of the feedback comments to their partner(s) were about appreciation to their peers and were focused on their peers' behaviors, attitude, and skills that they would like to adopt. For example, some wrote, "I'm very grateful that my partner took the initiative in making a dialog and shared many ideas", "During the role-play, my partner smiled at me, which made me less nervous and we did role-play with eye-contact", and "My partner's pronunciation is really good, so I tried to speak with good pronunciation, too." The author believes that the statistically significant differences in autonomy, competence, and relatedness support that those students' comments resulted from the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs.

Regarding intrinsic motivation and language learning strategy use, group 1 and group 2 showed different results. Simple main effect of the pre and the post results indicated significant difference in intrinsic motivation in group 2 but indicated significant difference on external regulation in group 1. It can be concluded that the action research project in group 2—giving reflection three times during the semester—is the type of reflection activity that is more effective. In contrast, the results of the SILL show that the action research project in group 1 was able to facilitate more use of language learning strategies than the action research project in group 1, although significant main effect of the pre and the post results was observed in learning strategies except compensation strategy. Considering these results, the author suggests that both ways of reflection be implemented utilizing each advantage. For instance, when teaching a one-year course, the action research project of group 2 can be implemented in order to train students weekly to pay attention to the language learning strategies they use during the first semester, and

the action research project of group 1 can be introduced aiming to foster intrinsic motivation with less teacher-centered activities.

As to the limitations and further research in this study, only quantitative approaches were employed in order to investigate the effects of this action research project. Adopting qualitative approaches, including analysis of students' feedback, their writings in reflection journals, and semi structured interviews, will help validate the results gained by quantitative data. Considering the criticisms against SILL for its rating system based on frequency, qualitative data might help reveal the awareness changes of students toward the use of learning strategies in more details. Furthermore, dividing the groups into upper and lower groups would provide implications that are more applicable to individual cases. For the current study, subdividing the participants into more groups results in an insufficient number of participants in each category. Therefore, larger scale research with more participants needs to be organized. In addition, the author is convinced that research from a long-term viewpoint will give us further implication on this study and plans to continue this study for future research.

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