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【Teaching Practice Report】

Using Flip in an English Presentation Class With Japanese University Students

Adam Roarty

Abstract

This paper details using the website and application, Flip, in an English presentation class with Japanese university students. It was believed the tool would assist students in preparing for their presentations and also help overcome feelings of anxiety about speaking in front of their peers. The week-to-week assignments are detailed as well as interventions to maximize student engagement with the application. The use of the tool is then reflected upon, and recommendations are made for its use in future English as foreign language classes with Japanese university students.

Keywords: flip, EFL speaking, presentation skills, technology assisted language learning

Introduction

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for technology in education has become useful and essential. One such tool that has grown in popularity is Flip (formerly Flipgrid). Flip is a website and downloadable application that can be used on a number of devices, including smartphones and computers. The main function is to record videos. This may therefore serve as a useful tool in foreign language learning as students can practice their speaking skills. In Japan, opportunities to practice English as a foreign language (EFL) are often restricted by a largely monocultural environment. This was further restricted by the closing of borders during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) had introduced reforms in EFL education shifting toward a more active, communicative approach, which focused on enhancing students' communication skills (MEXT, 2014). Central to these communication skills is enhancing speaking fluency and confidence. Anxiety has been shown to be prevalent in foreign language learners as noted by Horwitz et. al. (1986), "any performance in the L2 is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic" (p.128 as referenced in Ohata, 2005). In particular, Japanese EFL learners have been shown to be reticent to communicate and anxious about speaking English in front of their peers (King, 2013). A number of factors may influence this reticence to speak English, such as cultural norms, a lack of opportunities in school English classes as well as sensitivity to embarrassing themselves in front of their peers (Humphries, Burns & Tanaka, 2015). In this project, the application Flip was utilized in an English presentation class at a Japanese university, with the aim of lessening student anxiety about speaking English in front of their peers and assisting students in preparing for their in-class presentations.

Literature Review

The application Flip was used in this project as a number of previous studies have indicated positive results in utilizing this application to aid students' speaking skills. For example, McClure &

McAndrews (2016) found that Flip improved American university students' public speaking skills. Mango (2019) also showed that American students learning Arabic found Flip to be a valuable tool in improving their listening and speaking skills. In an EFL context, McLain (2018) reported that South Korean students felt more comfortable speaking English after a semester using Flip. In a study exploring student perceptions of Flip in online courses, Lowenthal & Moore (2021) found that students generally liked using the application, but some students commented that they did not feel comfortable recording themselves. In particular, students noted that they had self-confidence issues about being on camera, felt they had to look presentable, or felt they were "showing too much of oneself" (Lowenthal & Moore, 2021; p.31). However, it is reasonable to assume that students with these feelings of seeing themselves on camera would have self-confidence issues before speaking in front of their peers in class. Flip may therefore present a soft entrance to giving a presentation in class as students are exposed to the feelings of nervousness that they may inevitably experience during the presentation. Prior to using Flip with Japanese EFL first-year university students, Petersen, Townsend & Onak (2020) "assumed that many of the Japanese students would be shy about their peers watching their videos" (p.173) but "an unexpected result was the overwhelming student approval of videos being watched by other classmates, both as a whole class or in small group exercises" (p.173).

Flip, therefore, presented advantages both in being used as part of an online course and as a supplement to face-to-face classes. Due to the pandemic, it was not known if classes would be online or conducted face-to-face; therefore, it was decided to use Flip as a tool in an English presentation class with Japanese first-year university students. The tool offered flexibility in assisting both online or face-to-face classes and had the potential to make students less anxious about delivering presentations to their classmates either online over web-conferencing software such as Zoom or in person in a face-to-face class.

Background Information

Flip was integrated into a first-year English presentation class at a university in Tokyo, Japan from September 2021 to January 2022. The first 3 classes of the semester were online (conducted over Zoom), and the remaining 11 (total 14 classes) were conducted face-to-face on campus. The author was the instructor of six presentation classes, and Flip was used in all classes. The course was mandatory for all first-year students, and in these six classes, students majored in a range of subjects, including Law & Politics, Tourism, Community & Human Services, Economics, Sociology, and Business. Students varied in language abilities, with TOEIC scores ranging from 280 to 700. In terms of the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR), this equates to levels A2 to B1. The textbook, Present Yourself 2: Viewpoints 2nd Edition (Gershon, 2015) was used in the course.

Implementation of Flip and Assignments

Prior to the first class of the semester, a group was set up for each class on Flip. In the first class, students were given the link to join the group and were shown the various functions of the tool, including how to use the website and how to download the application. As this first class was online, the instructor's screen was shared and students were able to see the process of how to add a video.

The instructor recorded an example video for the first topic, a self-introduction, and students were assigned the task of adding their self-introduction as homework. In their study with Japanese first-year university students, Petersen, Townsend & Onak (2020) detailed that "students were prompted to self-evaluate their videos before uploading them and to re-record videos for the purpose of improving their English, content, accuracy, intonation and fluency" (p.173). Additionally, Alrabai (2015) found that a successful strategy for reducing speaking anxiety in EFL students was to give opportunities for self-talk before they talked in real situations in class. Students were therefore shown how to preview videos before uploading them to Flip and were encouraged to do this in order to self-evaluate their performance. Students were subsequently given homework assignments to record a video on Flip each week. Table 1 below shows the assignments for each week of the course.

Table 1
Weekly assignments on Flip

Class	Assignment
1	Self-Introduction
2	Choose first presentation topic
3	Opener and introduction of presentation
4	Practice first presentation
5	Feedback on first presentation
6	Choose second presentation topic
7	Practice stressing important words
8	Practice second presentation (with slides in background)
9	Feedback on second presentation (self/peers)
10	Feedback on second presentation (self/peers)
11	Choose final presentation topic
12	Practice final presentation (with slides in background)
13	Final presentation feedback
14	Course reflection

The tasks mainly concentrated on practicing presentations, reflecting on in-class presentations, and improving some specific presentation skills such as week three where students practiced making an interesting opener and introduction, week six where they practiced stress and intonation, and weeks eight and twelve where they practiced presenting with slides in the background. A function of Flip is that it allows students to set their screen as the backdrop, so students may view themselves with their presentation slides behind them, thus mimicking an in-class presentation where they would be standing in front of a screen showing presentation slides. These assignments built on in-class activities where students were introduced to and practiced various presentation skills such as controlling their voice, engaging an audience, making presentation slides, and using gestures.

Complementary Activities

In addition to activities designed to develop presentation skills, a number of activities were used in this course in an attempt to enhance the benefits of using Flip. These mainly centred on self-reflection, peer reflection, and strategy planning. It was believed that such activities would allow students to become better self-regulated learners and further improve their English speaking abilities and study skills.

Self-Reflection

Zimmerman's (2002) model of self-regulated learning includes three main phases: forethought, performance control, and self-reflection. It is important that learners become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses through reflective activities. Flip may aid learners in this regard. Firstly, Flip allows students to preview their video before uploading to the application. This enables students to self-evaluate their performance before peers or the instructor. Highly motivated students were likely to make use of this opportunity; however, students with lower motivation may not spend as much time previewing and perfecting their videos. Yet, if these learners are to improve and become more self-regulated learners, which may in turn increase their self-efficacy, it is important they engage in some self-reflection. To ensure some self-evaluation took place, even in students with lower self-motivation, students were given time in-class to reflect on their Flip videos. The following questions were displayed on the board for students to discuss:

1. What was good about your video?
2. What do you want to improve next time?

Unfortunately, it was noted that many students did not fully engage with these questions and offered only short answers such as "my video was good" and talked in very general terms. In order to realize the benefits of self-reflection, students were given more specific examples of what they could identify as a positive point or a point to improve. These were brainstormed with students and added as examples after the questions:

1. What was good about your video? (for example, speed, volume, pronunciation, changing tone, looking at the camera, using gestures, content etc.)
2. What do you want to improve? (for example, speak slower, louder, practice difficult words, change tone, look at the camera more, use more gestures, prepare more interesting answers etc.)

These examples offered students more opportunities to identify the specific points they were doing well or could improve. Self-reflection was also integrated into the Flip assignments, with students reflecting on their performance in the three in-class presentations (week 5, 9/10, and 13). As this self-reflection became a key component of the course, it is hoped that students were able to become more self-regulated learners as a result.

Peer-to-Peer Reflection

Petersen, Townsend & Onak (2020) noted that students were positive about their videos being watched by classmates, and this activity was also integrated into this course. Students were placed into groups of two or three students and asked to view their group members' videos and then reflect together by answering the following questions:

1. What was good about your group member's video?
2. What should they try to improve?

As in the self-reflection activity above, students were also given possible points to focus on, such as the speed, volume, pronunciation, changing tone, looking at the camera, using gestures, and content of the video. Flip's built-in speech recognition software offered a means for students to check the pronunciation by turning on the closed captions. Students were shown how to use this in class, but it was stressed that the auto-generated captions would not be perfect, particularly for proper nouns such as names or places. Yet, this tool offered students a useful gauge of whether their pronunciation

was problematic. Students could then identify difficult words and practice these to improve their pronunciation. In the peer-to-peer reflection, students were asked to identify any words they could not understand before turning on the closed captions. Then, they were asked to identify any words different from the captions. This peer-to-peer reflection gave students the feeling of being watched and evaluated, which was also done when they gave presentations in class. This activity also encouraged students to complete the homework assignments as they knew they would be used in the subsequent class.

Flip also allows for this peer-to-peer reflection to take place on the app as students can comment on other videos. From the first week, students were encouraged to comment on other videos to increase interaction opportunities with their classmates. However, few students did this. One reason was that many students waited until the day of the class to upload their videos. Having noted this, and to encourage more peer-to-peer reflection, the deadline for uploading videos was changed to three days before the next class from week seven. Students then had more time to watch other videos and add comments. Adding at least one comment to another video was assigned as a task from week seven. As in the reflective activity done in class, comments were initially often very shallow, such as "great" or "your video is nice", so in week nine students were asked to reflect on this task with the following questions:

1. What kind of comments have you received?
2. What did you think when you saw these comments?
3. What kind of comments would you like to receive?

Students reflected that they enjoyed getting positive feedback, but they would like to receive more specific comments so that they knew the praise was genuine. By reflecting on the comments they received and not the comments they had made, it was believed this activity would allow students to become more aware of how they could help classmates and subsequently how classmates could help them by giving more constructive feedback in their comments.

Strategy Planning

In order to further increase engagement with Flip, students were also asked to reflect on how they used this tool. It was hoped that students could then share some tips and troubleshoot any issues as well as encourage students to develop more successful task strategies. Task strategies such as time management and organizational strategies are another key component of Zimmerman's (2002) model of self-regulated learning. In week six, students were asked to reflect on their strategy for adding videos to Flip as well as the functions of the website or application that they had used and if they had experienced any difficulties using it. Students were then asked to plan the time they would add their next video. While students were also told to ask if they had any problems using the application, some may have been reluctant to do this, but by giving some lesson time to reflecting on how to use the tool, students were able to assist each other to become more competent users. In this lesson, students were also shown how they could add slides in the background of their videos as well as other ways they could do this, such as using PowerPoint and uploading the video. The task in week eight was to practice their presentation with the slides. At the start of lesson nine, students were asked to reflect on whether they had successfully done this and what strategy they had used. Through this task, some students were able to better understand different ways they could use Flip and its functions.

Recommendations

Based on the use of Flip in this English presentation class, it is believed the tool had a positive effect on students' English speaking skills. Firstly, it gave more opportunities outside class to actually speak English. Secondly, it allowed students to make use of various functions such as the in-built speak recognition software, which automatically adds closed captions to videos. Students could then check mispronounced words and improve their pronunciation. Additionally, students could practice presentations in an environment closer to actually giving a presentation in-class. By recording the presentation, students have the sensation of being watched, which adds an extra dimension compared to practicing alone. Students are also able to watch themselves and edit their performance before uploading the video, which can be highly useful in identifying issues such as speaking too quietly, speaking too fast, or not changing tone. Students appeared to value the use of Flip in the course as mentioned in their course reflection videos as the final assignment. This aligns with previous studies, which showed that foreign language learners including Japanese EFL students indicated Flip can be a useful tool in improving speaking skills (Petersen, Townsend & Onak, 2020; Lowenthal & Moore, 2020; Mango, 2019). In order to maximize the benefits of using Flip, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Allow students time to share task strategies
2. Reflect on videos in class
3. Stage assignments in two phases: adding video and watching other videos

Firstly, it is important to give students opportunities to share and troubleshoot any issues they may have when using the tool. Students may be reluctant to share any difficulties they have with their instructor, but further to that, students can explore the tool together and discover various ways to make the most of its many functions. Secondly, by watching videos in class and reflecting on them, students are encouraged to add their videos each week. and they may also realize the benefits of self-reflection, an important part of self-regulated learning. Peer-to-peer reflections can also give students another perspective on their performance and further encourage task engagement. Finally, students will have more opportunities for interaction and to receive constructive criticism from their peers if the Flip assignment has two stages, add their own video and comment on other videos. These recommendations will hopefully allow students to become more self-regulated learners, more digitally competent and improving their listening and speaking skills.

Conclusion

Flip may be a useful tool for EFL instructors. It allows more interaction opportunities for students whether they are studying online or doing classes in a traditional face-to-face environment. In particular, this may be beneficial to Japanese EFL students who have limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom. The various functions of the tool make it well-suited to an English presentation class, and it is believed that the students in this course benefited from its use. More research is needed to see how the strategies utilized in this course actually affected students' speaking abilities and self-regulated learning, but it would seem that integrating Flip into an EFL course could provide many benefits for students, particularly if integrated with various reflection activities in the course, which allow students to engage in the process of self-regulated learning to aid their progress.

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Toward Student Autonomy in the English Discussion Classroom: A Consideration of Non-Visible Timer Use in Discussions

Andrew Tyner

Abstract

In this paper, I reflect on a small but impactful change to my lesson practice, namely, that I no longer display a timer visible to students during either of the 12–20+ minute discussion portions of my English discussion lessons. My focus is largely on the effectiveness of this practice in remedying certain shortcomings observed while using a highly visible timer during discussions. I find that removing the timer from students' view apparently improves motivation and performance in the discussion (production) phase of the lesson. I explore relevant literature to better understand the effects observed, particularly in light of metacognition and student motivation, and conclude that the use of a non-visible timer during discussion (production) phases is of significant benefit. I finally suggest an avenue for additional research with regard to the effects I have informally observed, suggesting a connection to recent neurocognitive research.

Keywords: English discussion, student motivation, timing, metacognition

Introduction

In this paper, I shall focus on a small alteration to my classroom practice for English discussion class. Namely, while I carefully monitor the timing of all parts of the lesson, I no longer display a timer that is visible to students during the two production, or discussion, phases of the lesson. At my workplace, Rikkyo University, English discussion classes are 100-minute, once per week classes. Each class has, on average, ten students. The lessons present students with skills (i.e., asking for reasons, giving opinions, giving different points of view, etc.), provide for skill practice, and allow for production of skills during two extended discussion sections, each being multi-person and 12–20 or more minutes in length. Each discussion is punctuated by periods of feedback[1].

In all sections of the lesson, the expectations of what students should do are clear, through both verbal and written instructions. Students have a specific time limit[2] in most sections of the lesson. Commonly, students hurry, say, to practice a given language skill as many times as possible in a short period. However, in the longer discussions, the total time for which students are expected to speak is somewhat more flexible, with definite minimums, but with maximums defined more by available class time and student skill level. Though the actual speaking time in discussions for any given class may vary little from week to week, as both total class time and general lesson structure are more-or-less fixed, from the Spring 2022 semester, I have made one very small but impactful change to the way in which expectations are communicated regarding the multi-person discussions. I have stopped

1 I have written on this feedback in detail elsewhere. Tyner, A. (2020) Self and Group: Dynamics of Reflection in Student-to-Student Feedback. *New Directions in Teaching and Learning English Discussion* 8, 65-70. In short, feedback in this context consists of students self-assessing their discussion performance using a provided general framework, reporting that assessment to their discussion partners, and receiving brief instructor feedback to reinforce their assessments or direct their attention to any major deficits in skill use. The general intention is to foster students' self-awareness regarding language use so that they may be more self-sufficient, more autonomous in their process of improvement and growth as language users.

2 This limit is tracked using a timer visible to all students in the room.

tracking the discussion length with a timer visible to the students. Instead, I use a small stopwatch that is visible only to me. This change, while minor in many respects, bears further discussion as its effects have been both positive and significant.

In the past, prior to the start of the students' lengthier discussion, I would announce specifically how much time would be allotted for the discussion and, subsequently, track this time on a highly visible timer. In many cases, this had a markedly negative effect, specifically, that of continuing the discussions only to a point somewhat close to the end of the allotted time. If there were, for instance, only a minute or two left, students would often hesitate to venture into a new idea or area of consideration, thinking, perhaps, that there was not enough time to do so effectively. Other times, students might exhaust their initial ideas after only about half the time had elapsed and would then seem demotivated by what they may have perceived as an overwhelming amount of remaining discussion time.

In response to these issues, I continue to track the discussion times and ensure that they always meet the minimum lengths set forth in the class syllabus as before; however, I remind students only of the minimum discussion time, and I use a stopwatch that is generally only visible to me. This has the effect of virtually eliminating the first problem, encouraging students to continue sharing their ideas freely until we proceed to the next part of the lesson. The second problem, that of students being demotivated by what they may perceive as an overwhelming amount of remaining discussion time, has also, somewhat surprisingly, been much improved as well.

As encouraging as these observations may be, I must note a concern that I had prior to switching to a non-visible timer for discussions. I pose this concern as a question: Is it possible, or even more likely than in the past, that students' more freely structured discussions (at least in consideration of the fact that they are not actively working toward a definite ending of the discussion) may be interrupted? Yes. In my experience, when using a non-visible timer, the discussions often are interrupted, but they are interrupted as the students are actively engaged, as opposed to a beeping timer that signals merely the official end to a discussion that has more-or-less ended already. So, in so far as the period of meaningful engagement in discussion has been extended, I am comfortable with the resultant need to interrupt discussions that might otherwise continue indefinitely. Further, while it may be argued that ending a discussion is a discrete skill unto itself, I would counter that ending a discussion at the cost of not engaging as deeply or extensively in the discussion in the first place is not a reasonable exchange.

While I could speculate on the causes of the improvements noted above, the modification to my instructional methodology was not conducted in an experimental context. My observations of the effectiveness of the improvement are subjective and informal. Perhaps, by turning to relevant literature, we might explore some theoretical underpinning to the methodology I have employed and of the beneficial effects I have observed.

Discussion

The teacher's role in managing student discussion may have profound quantitative and qualitative effects on the resultant discussion. In quantitative terms, at least within the scope of our present discussion, I have already noted the limiting effect of a countdown timer. Qualitative differences may be subtler.

One qualitative difference of note is that of the role of the listener. As Lee highlights, "nonvocal conduct, rather than talk, plays a crucial role in the organization and regulation of coordinating

speakership." (p. 673) Citing Goodwin, Lee further notes that, "hearers, just like speakers, are co-participants in a temporally unfolding interactional event, actively displaying their participation through local projection." Even the silent listener is participating, and meaningfully so, as the "Organization and regulation of coordinating speakership" is an undeniably important component not only of a discussion but also of one's competence and ability in using any language. If students stop carrying out these tasks, silently or otherwise, because the end of the discussion is known to be only a minute or two away, they are no longer participating in the discussion as they otherwise might. They are no longer playing their role as a language user; they are no longer actively participating, vocally and non-vocally, in a genuine discussion. A meaningful silence becomes merely empty. Perhaps then, by encouraging the *active* continuation of both listener and speaker roles, the absence of a visible timer allows not only for lengthier periods of language production but also higher-quality discussion considering time spent by students meaningfully filling different roles in the discussion.

To explore this difference more thoroughly, we might consider the meaningful continuation of the discussion not simply as an end in itself but as a sign of student motivation. Indeed, this motivation is not limited to the listener even if it is in the listener's largely silent role that one might most easily observe a meaningful difference of the sort noted above after switching to the use of a non-visible timer. Kelen notes that while "language used in the classroom, measured in terms of the 'real' usage of native speakers…is one index of a classroom's level of motivation…motivation more broadly conceived is a better measure of the reality of the target language for…students" (p.233). In so far as students can use language to accomplish something, in our case communication within a discussion, English becomes more real, more meaningful to them. The longer they are engaged, both as active speakers and listeners, the more English becomes real to them, the more it becomes a genuine language, a vehicle for the receipt and expression of ideas. To carry this consideration of autonomy and ownership of language still further, one might consider how students conceptualize the parameters of a discussion as they carry it out.

Metacognition is an area much researched and discussed in relation to many types of instruction, including ESL. We shall define metacognition[3], in our restrictive case, as one being actively aware of and guided by a given task's parameters, requisite skills, and strategies for effective completion while one is engaged in the completion of said task. It is one thing to be aware that a language task must be completed and to, perhaps, react to the questions or prompts of others. It is very much another thing to work actively toward the completion of a discussion task while holding in mind the language skills to be used by both one's self and one's partners (so one may not only use said skills but cue their use in others), simultaneously being mindful of the requisite strategies to begin and maintain a discussion in which all members may actively participate, and successfully communicating one's ideas and responding to those of others.

Fostering metacognition within the L2 classroom can, in the words of Maftoon & Alamdari, "help teach... [students] how to regulate their own comprehension and learning" (p.2). Citing Anderson (2002), Maftoon & Alamdari note that students' metacognitive awareness "can not only guide them to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning process…but also…[enhance] the development of cognitive skills." (p.4) Further, they note the opinion from Wenden (1998) that "metacognitive awareness is regarded as the self-direction necessary for L2 performance and learning" (p.4). So, metacognition is, depending on one's viewpoint, either beneficial or requisite for learning in the language classroom. How then does this very large concept of metacognition tie-in with the use of a

3 Our definition of metacognition is a simplification of the concept in order to highlight its relevance to the discussion at hand. Metacognition, as it is more broadly studied, encompasses far more than task parameters.

non-visible timer? What is the connection?

In so far as students are managing all aspects of a discussion in the metacognitive sense noted above, metacognition is possible. However, in so far as a teacher, excess scaffolding, a timer, or other factor imposes artificial limits upon the task of discussion, the student loses the autonomy, the capacity for free decision making and self-management, that is requisite for the sort of metacognition discussed here.

In a somewhat more extreme but illustrative case, Maftoon & Alamdari (2020) note a study conducted by Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (p.5) in which students of French as a second language, in the control group or their experiment, were given a detailed lesson plan, including elements such as evaluating, problem solving, and planning, to aid in their completion of a listening task. The experimental group was given no lesson plan. The experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in the final measure of comprehension. Certainly, completing a listening task and being an active participant in a discussion are two different things, but the suggestion remains that providing a strict framework for task management is not only not always necessary, but may, indeed, be harmful rather than beneficial regarding student performance. We might acknowledge that a timer is perhaps not as restrictive as a detailed lesson plan, but to the extent that it influences decisions about time management in the manner discussed previously, it is a limiting factor. It is only through removal of as many such limiting factors as possible that a space for metacognition may be fostered. If students are cognizant of the criteria for successful completion of a task, it may indeed be that they could benefit from less 'help' in the task's completion.

Conclusion

While the theoretical underpinnings may be numerous and varied, and largely beyond the scope of our present considerations, the effectiveness of using a non-visible timer in the discussion section of an English discussion lesson is, I believe, clear. Far from being a discouragement, as a visible timer may sometimes be, an unseen timer acts as a tool for motivation. One might argue that the removal of the timer from the students' view removes some of the contrivance and artificiality of discussion in the context of a discussion class. Both speakers and listeners continue in their roles indefinitely (even if the limits of class time are definite). The idea that the timer or arbitrary time limit itself is the arbiter of the scale and scope of a discussion is at least mitigated through the use of a non-visible timer, and the concomitant drive in the presence of a visible timer to 'watch the clock,' is done away with entirely.

While the results of using a non-visible timer have been quite positive in my experience, my experiences have been, as I have noted, subjective, non-scientific. I have simply reflected on my teaching practices. Considering how a more thorough examination might be undertaken, an avenue of academic consideration somewhat beyond the scope of this paper occurs to me. Generally, it may be worth considering the neurocognitive effect of lesson design and delivery choices. More specifically, considering the small lesson design change focused upon in this paper, recent research into variability of what is called "the readiness potential" (Travers, et al., 2021) comes to mind. The readiness potential is a form of brain activity measurable by electroencephalogram that precedes an action (Travers, et al., 2021, p.14). Study of this readiness potential is of great interest in consideration of the neural processes that underly decision making. Citing Brass & Haggard (2008), Travers notes, "stronger… [brain][4] activation for free actions than cued actions." It may be that an action decided

4 I use "brain" as a simplification to make a point. The original notes "SMA activation" (Travers, et al., 2021, p.15). 'SMA' here

upon by oneself is what one might call, unscientifically, a more genuine choice. Further, Travers finds that readiness potential signals are stronger[5] if one learns through their own experience how long to wait in each circumstance before taking whatever action, in other words, if one learns to manage one's own timing and actions. The same source notes that this has the effect of actions becoming "less random, more preplanned" (p.21). This ties directly back in with the earlier notes on metacognition in that students who are more self-sufficient and self-aware in completing tasks improve more readily at completing those tasks. If we, in the language classroom, intend to equip students to engage, at least ultimately, in the unguided, unaided use of a language, providing circumstances more conducive to genuine decision-making regarding language must be considered invaluable. Regarding the readiness potential itself, its examination specifically with regard to language as opposed to discrete physical action seems an area open to further exploration both in the medical and academic fields.

Returning to our immediate scope of concern, if teachers wish to empower students to use a language, we must ultimately take a step back. We must, to take Kaur (2015) slightly out of original context, "give…[students] the space to experiment with language so that learners may develop a sense of ownership for their [use of the language]" (p.374). We must allow for genuine engagement with the roles of speaker and listener. We must trust in students' abilities to be cognizant not only of task parameters but also of themselves *as* speakers and listeners. Certainly, there is space for guidance. As I have noted, the periods of discussion in my class are punctuated by feedback. However, just as they may be 'on their own' in the future when called upon to use their English language ability, I try to let students be as autonomous as possible within the periods of discussions. Removing the timer from view during discussions is simply one more way to allow students this freedom.

refers to portions of the brain known as the Supplementary Motor Areas, "which…receive strong drive from the subcortical circuitry of the basal ganglia" (Travers, et al., 2021, p.14).

5 Specifically, "[readiness potential] amplitude increases as participants learn through experience how long to wait before acting…their actions become less random, more preplanned and more predictable" (Travers, et al., 2021, p.21).

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Practical Approaches to Reducing the Reliance on Scripts Among English Presentation Students

Andrew Warrick

Abstract

English Presentation was introduced as a new course at Rikkyo University in the fall of 2020 as a required course for all first-year students. The course aims to teach students the essential elements of giving a good presentation while also providing them opportunities to develop their English speaking skills. In the two previous years where I have taught English Presentation, I have noticed that students come to rely very heavily on scripts, which can cause various problems. Once this reliance on scripts develops, it becomes very difficult to supplant it. To address this issue, I took steps to eliminate my students' reliance on scripts from the outset of the fall 2022 semester. These included utilizing routine activities to reinforce understanding of presentation structure, preparatory discussions to generate ideas, and practice giving presentations without any preparation. Furthermore, I discussed some of the benefits of reducing reliance on scripts on the overall quality of student presentations.

Keywords: English presentations, class routines, discussions, practice

Introduction

When English Presentation was first introduced at Rikkyo University, it had the aim of teaching first-year students the three basic components of giving a presentation: structural organization, physical techniques, and the use of proper visual aids. Structural organization refers to the formatting of a presentation, such as ways to create a proper introduction and conclusion, elements to be included in the main body of the presentation, and the use of words and expressions to facilitate the transition from one section to another. Physical techniques encompass the use of posture and gestures, ways to maintain eye contact, and ways to correctly emphasize words. Lastly, the use of visual aids involved creating and explaining slides well. An aspect of the organization component includes creating outlines and note cards to use during a presentation so as not to read from a script. However, when English Presentation first began in the fall 2020 semester, it was entirely online due to measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The online nature of the course made it difficult for teachers to ensure students were not reading from scripts, as they could simply have their presentations on the screens in front of them as they spoke into their video cameras during online lessons. The fall 2021 semester began online as well, and while the number of COVID-19 cases in Tokyo eventually declined enough to allow for the return to teaching classes on campus, students had already become accustomed to relying on scripts during their presentations after several weeks of classes online. Once students develop the habit of relying on scripts, it is hard to wean them off it, even when they know it will negatively affect their grades. My previous experience teaching English Presentation has taught me that students, regardless of their English ability, are compelled to either write scripts for their presentations, and this reliance on scripts creates numerous problems for students.

Among students with lower English ability, script writing often leads to script reading, with students sometimes holding a written script up in front of their faces, even though this results in penalized scores on graded presentations for students. Having a script causes students to want to use

it, and reading from a script is not the same as giving a presentation and goes against the stated goals of the course. For students with higher English proficiency, scripts are often memorized, and what results is a carefully rehearsed speech and not the type of presentation that the course aims to help students develop proficiency in. In the beginning of the semester, when presentations are only a minute to two minutes long, students who make the effort are able to memorize their pre-written scripts well enough and perform them in front of others, but it is just a mere performance and not a presentation. Occasionally, students who stumble in their memorization are unable to continue without reattempting the same sentence again to find their place. However, as the course progresses and students are expected to give longer presentations, they begin to encounter problems using this approach, as it becomes increasingly difficult to memorize longer and longer scripts. At the same time, because they had reliably used this approach previously, it is not a strategy students abandon easily, despite the fact that it typically does not work. Therefore, regardless of English ability, the goals of English Presentation are often not met due to how students approach the course, placing more emphasis on simply completing the presentations rather than acquiring the skills to do presentations well. Toland et al. (2016) called presentations by English learners a "glorified reading or memorization exercise of text-heavy slides that fails to meet the intended objective of developing the learners' presentation skills." I believe part of this problem comes from the reliance on writing scripts, and so to overcome these issues, I tried to reduce my students' reliance on scripts for the fall 2022 semester.

Reducing Script Reliance

I used several strategies from the outset of the fall 2022 semester with my English Presentation classes to help my students create presentations without first creating a script. Some of the approaches I used included creating routine activities to reiterate and reinforce the cumulative understanding of how to organize a presentation, utilizing discussions to develop ideas prior to the planning stage, and asking students to give impromptu presentations.

Utilizing Routines

Habits and routines are important for the flow of a class throughout a semester. They help establish student expectations and familiarize them with activities that they can expect to do on a regular basis for each lesson. Class routines can save time, allowing teachers more time for instruction and creating a more organized and cooperative classroom environment (Colvin & Lazar, 1995). I used class routines to establish precedent with regard to course expectations and also foster the creation of positive habits and facilitate the internalization of presentation structure and skills. In order to establish effective routines that reinforce a proper presentation structure, it is important to teach students how to create a presentation from the outset. If this is done, then students can begin creating presentations with a proper introduction, body, and conclusion from the very first lesson, instead of fumbling with how to organize a presentation for a few lessons and the teacher later needing to correct any misconceptions. Proper structure and format was one of the first things I taught the students, deviating slightly from the order elements are introduced in the Ready to Present textbook. I did this so that students develop the habit of creating presentations with a proper introduction, body, and conclusion from the beginning, as previous years' experience of teaching this course have taught me that it becomes difficult to correct bad presentation organization habits once

they develop. Having students create well-organized presentations has reduced the amount of aimless sentences students had used in previous years I when taught the course, whereby students do not really have a main point to organize their presentations around, and so just keep adding sentences with no coherency or direction to their presentations until they have enough to reach the required time limit. To achieve this, I first spent more time teaching students how to brainstorm ideas and build a presentation from only the notes created through brainstorming by organizing them into sequential talking points. As a class, I did a few examples together with my students in the earlier lessons, showing how to narrow down their own suggestions during the brainstorming portion to choose a main idea, create an introduction around this idea, and then build the body of their presentation using their ideas before finishing with a conclusion. As I did these demonstrations, I carefully explained the essential components of an effective introduction and conclusion, thereafter asked students to offer ideas for these elements, such as a greeting, an attention grabber (quote, question, or fact), a topic sentence, and so on. Once students knew how to create and organize a presentation, I had them regularly use this approach of brainstorming ideas to use to build a presentation outline in each class. The time to prepare was kept short and deliberately insufficient for writing a full script, but enough to complete an outline and self-check it. I then asked students to give these quickly made presentations to a partner, practicing the cumulative total of presentation skills we had learned as a class each time. This routine of creating and giving a presentation every class likely helped students internalize the structure of a presentation, including the essential elements of an introduction and conclusion, and this allowed for them to create increasingly complex presentations without the need of writing a script. Creating these routines early in the semester helped students build strong habits regarding the amount of effort they would require, internalize the methodology for structuring a presentation early, and learn and practice essential skills for giving presentations.

Discussions as Preparation

To facilitate the brainstorming stage of presentation preparation, I had students discuss questions related to the theme of the upcoming presentation with their group members. For example, if I wanted students to make a presentation about an interesting personal story from which they learned a valuable lesson, I had them first ask each other in small groups a series of questions related to various experiences they may have had. These types of warm-up activities can help students build familiarity with the subject matter of a presentation and give students time to work out what they want to say and how they want to say it in English. Castillo (2007) also found that speaking in small groups like this promoted English oral production, as students found it enjoyable and spent more time speaking during class. The goal of these discussions was to give students the opportunity to develop ideas and the means of explaining them in English prior to giving a presentation on a related topic. Furthermore, as students are not given time to write completed scripts and can only create outlines, having a prior opportunity to get ideas from group members and practice explaining the desired content can allow students to feel more comfortable during their actual presentations, as they are not talking about anything for the first time. Pre-task activities like this increase confidence and reduce cognitive load for language students as they are not needing to think of vocabulary or content for the first time when the actual task begins (Tonkin, et al., 2019), making the actual target task, in this case a small presentation, much easier. Speaking activities like these done in preparation give students enough time to make answers and lower the amount of thinking that is required to be done

in the moment (Chin, 2015).

Impromptu Presentations

The final method I used to reduce my students' reliance on scripts during their presentations was to have them give short presentations about a single slide that I had prepared. Slightly similar to the PechaKucha presentations suggested by Paxton and Truxal (2019), I made slides with a single picture and the topic written above it and then randomly called on students to come to the front of the class and give a presentation on the topic of each slide. I selected topics the students would be very familiar with, such as famous sightseeing spots around Tokyo or popular chain restaurants. Students needed to present on these slides without any preparation for forty seconds, slowly increasing the time in subsequent classes.

This activity perhaps helped increase students' confidence and demonstrated that they could give a presentation without first creating a script. By routinely creating quick presentations in earlier classes, students understood how to build an introduction, body, and conclusion easily and were able to organize these impromptu presentations properly even though they had not been given time to prepare anything. This shows that they had internalized the structure of a presentation and the essential elements of each segment. I used these quick unprepared presentations to help students see that they could give a presentation on anything, as long as they knew it well, so it would be important for their future presentations to be familiar with their topics.

Benefits

Encouraging students to create their presentations without first writing a script first has had several benefits. By only creating presentation outlines in place of writing full scripts, the preparation time students spend to create their presentations is significantly reduced. In the previous semesters when I taught the course, students would waste a lot of class time slowly writing their scripts in class, and need to be constantly reminded to stay on task. When assigned as homework, many students would simply just not write the script, even when told it would affect their grade. This often caused problems in lesson planning because some students would complete their scripts in the time allotted while others would not, so rehearsal groups could not properly be formed since students within the same class would be at different stages of completion. By focusing on making outlines and not giving time to write scripts, this was less of a problem, and students could be ready to practice much more quickly. Now, the time students previously spent in class writing their own scripts and having classmates check them is now better used for practicing their presentations and the use of presentation skills we have learned, such as employing gestures and emphasizing key words. This has resulted in a meaningful improvement in the quality of presentations because the time spent making scripts is instead used for meaningful practice and getting feedback from classmates. Furthermore, since students lack scripts to rely on, they are not reading from a page or screen during their presentations, or being mentally distracted trying to recall something they had previously written. As a consequence, presenters are making eye contact a lot more. Pestano (2020) had noted that getting students to maintain eye contact properly during presentations was difficult, even when forbidding notes or other aids. This could have been the case because even without a script or notes to look at, students are trying excessively to recall their planned presentations and stick to the scripts they had written, but by not having a script, this problem can be significantly

reduced. I also noticed that my students were using gestures a lot more and speaking more emotively since they are not looking at a script, so their presentation delivery has become more expressive. Lastly, they are interacting with the audience more, asking and answering questions. Since students are not writing full scripts, they are also not translating words into English too difficult for their peers to understand, and this has led to presentations that are easier to follow for their classmates.

Another benefit of not writing scripts is a reduction in academic dishonesty. In previous years when I have taught English Presentation, there were always various ways academic dishonesty, to varying degrees, seemed to occur. There were two types of academic dishonesty that I have frequently encountered in the prior semesters when I have taught English Presentation, both of which occur during the script-writing phase of presentation preparation. The first is using translation software to convert something they had written in Japanese into English. This was often easily recognizable, as students would be reading from a script that contained English words that were both unknown to them and odd choices for the context, as well as alternating pronouns and even overly poor English syntax – all problems that frequently occur when translating from Japanese to English. The second form of common academic dishonesty I have noticed when teaching the course before is directly copying something word-for-word into their script without referencing it or even trying to pass it off as something they themselves had written. For example, I once had a student make a presentation on some recent piece of news, where the contents were copied in their entirety from an English news article. One reason academic dishonesty may take place is that students may not be aware of what constitutes academic dishonesty in some cases or may pay little heed to the explanations of academic dishonesty given at the beginning of the English Presentation course or in the syllabus. At the same time, academic dishonesty may happen because students lack the language skills and technical writing skills to avoid it (Teeter, 2015). However, in focusing more on creating presentations without writing scripts in the fall 2022 semester, these problems have been much less frequent. In fact, they typically only occur when students have used a script and have been, for example, very lazy about proofreading something produced through translation software, resulting in a presentation where a student may switch pronouns mid-sentence. Creating less reliance on scripts seems to therefore be an effective method of preventing academic dishonesty, whether unintentional or otherwise, since by only using outlines and point-form notes, students are not able to copy text from somewhere else.

Conclusion

The methods I used to reduce students' reliance on scripts seem to have been effective, but it would be interesting to do a formal study on their effectiveness. Ultimately, the goal was not to reduce students' use of scripts, because there is nothing inherently wrong with them, but rather reduce the negative effects scripts have on student presentations. These included poor eye contact, reading, trouble breaking the habit of memorization and the later problems this causes, poor use of presentation skills, and academic dishonesty. It would therefore be interesting to examine the extent to which class routines, pre-task activities, and impromptu presentations like those discussed in this paper can reduce these problems. These approaches were employed in an effort to better achieve the course objectives by placing the emphasis of the course on the delivery of an effective presentation more than the contents of a presentation, as students may inherently believe that the content is the most important aspect, and therefore having a carefully written script with impressive words and a lot of information is essential. Downplaying this and instead stressing how the presentation is given

may not be enough to alter student behavior, so it is important to create activities and structure the class in such a way that students are able to succeed in employing the presentation skills they learn.

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Using Learners' Video Recordings for Skills Development and Assessments

Devon Arthurson

Abstract

Using students' video recordings enables learners to develop their skills as well as gain more awareness of self- and peer assessments in foreign language learning settings. Furthermore, with online tools that not only video record but also allow for video sharing, there are numerous benefits for both students and teachers in comparison to speaking assessments done in real time. In particular, learners have the opportunity to practice their speaking tasks numerous times, review their performance, and select the ideal performance that they would like to submit for grading. When assessing, students can rewatch their own and others' performances numerous times, if necessary, with a decrease in the number of distractions that may occur with grading in the classroom. Learners can use their video recordings for self-assessment and use multiple recordings from previous dates to reflect on the development of their skills. In addition, video sharing can allow students to peer assess. An activity using learners' video recordings in English debate classes will be shared. A discussion and adaptations of the activity for skills development and learner-participatory assessments will also be explored.

Keywords: assessment, peer assessment, self assessment, video recordings, reflection journals

Introduction

In fall 2021, first-year students from three English debate classes were required to make videos on an online video-recording and video-sharing tool, *Flip* (Microsoft, 2022), as part of their homework. All three classes had TOEIC scores from 480 to 699, with two classes having in-person lessons and one class having online lessons. Students were also expected to compare their performance from a previous lesson with a more recent one to reflect on their performance as well as complete two reflection journals and two optional online surveys about viewing the videos and self- and peer feedback. In the debate class, during debate tests, The instructor would assess and provide feedback, and students would share feedback of the classmates' performances after the debates. The video-recording activity was created to help the students practice their debating skills, particularly arguments and summaries. The current article builds on research already presented in Arthurson (2022). By taking a more pedagogical focus on implementation of the activity, it is hoped that the article might be of use to other practitioners interested in conducting a similar task. Furthermore, based on the instructor's comments using the rubric for each video submitted by students, it was hoped that learners would become more familiar with performance expectations, enabling them to improve their own performances through self assessing and to better understand how to give feedback to their classmates when peer assessing.

Literature Review

Using student video recordings alongside self- and peer assessments has many advantages in the language learning classroom with regard to learners' increased usage of skills outside the classroom, more control of output, reduction of stress, and a greater ease in assessments. Students

can practice multiple times and determine which performance they decide to submit, giving them control of their output (King's College London, 2022). In contrast with real-time assessments, videos allow for multiple viewings for assessments of speaking tasks. For students, this can better allow for self- and peer assessments because if they are uncertain about how to grade, they can review the video again while confirming the scoring criteria. They can also watch the video again in case they think they may have missed or not understood something. Furthermore, having students view their own and peers' performances on their own computers or devices may reduce the number of distractions that can occur in the classroom.

In addition, many EFL students in countries where English is not the native language may have few chances of speaking English when not in class (Göktürk, 2016, p. 72). Having students make videos allows them to practice speaking skills wherever their chosen site of recording is and to use English, or any other foreign language under study that is not spoken by the majority of the population, multiple times. For grading, having student recorded videos lessens the stress that often comes with being tested in front of the instructor and classmates versus a testing setting determined by the students who use their devices (Sumardi, Adzima, & Wijaya, 2020, p.67). One point to note when using video recording of student performances is that some learners may not be comfortable with video and prefer only their audio be recorded (King's College London, 2022, para. 15).

Self- and peer assessments allow for students to have greater control over their learning, self-awareness, and reflection of their performances. By having students use grading rubrics in assessments, they can understand what is expected of them as they also use the rubric instead of only the instructor, resulting in more autonomy of their learning (Benson, 2011; Sebba et al., 2008, p. 1). Students can also understand more concretely how their skills have developed or need to be developed when using videos for self- and peer assessment (Qureshiet al., 2019; Sumardiet al., 2020; Tailab & Marsh, 2020). According to a study by Cotter & Hinkelman (2019), students using their own videos with student-led assessments, resulting in a better future output (p. 98). Students can also use their videos as reflection tools (Sumardiet al., 2020, p.67). Accordingly, students can put their performances into the context of how the past performances shape their future performances. By viewing their performances, the learners may also be more confident and potentially more motivated about the language under study (Göktürk, 2016, p. 87). If students have more responsibility over their learning by better understanding how they need to improve their skills, this could lead to a greater desire for life-long learning (Baleghizadeh & Masoun, 2013; Sebba et al., 2008, p. 5).

Christian, Hoskins, and Watanabe's (2010) study of Japanese university students' video recordings with self- and peer assessment tasks proved that such activities can be effective in improving learners' speaking skills and providing them with more awareness of their performances. Students would go to their instructors' offices to record their videos using webcams and view them there for the assessments (Christianson et al., 2010). However, changes in accessibility to technology now allow students to choose when and where to record their performances, as most students have access to a computer or device. Accordingly, using online tools to record and share videos seemed an ideal way to also help students to self- and peer assess in EFL classes.

Procedure

Video-making was part of the students' homework tasks, with eight videos to be recorded with a video-recording and -sharing tool, *Flip* (Microsoft, 2022), during fall 2021's 14-week semester. Students also used a debate textbook, *Up For Debate* (Mishima et al., 2021), with the same rubric that

the instructor used for assessments. The videos would be the basis for students' debate practice, review of instructor feedback based on the rubric, familiarization with the rubric, self-assessments, and peer assessment preparation. The steps students would follow for the activity will be outlined and then followed by a more detailed explanation for each step. The outline is below:

1. Write their argument to the assignment proposition and position for weeks 1 to 6 and the debate summary for weeks 10 and 11.
2. Record their argument on the online tool for weeks 1 to 6, 10, and 11.
3. Receive instructor feedback of the video based on the rubric via the private section comments of the online tool for weeks 1 to 6, 10, and 11.
4. Compare week 2's video with week 6's video and then write about that process in a reflection journal. See Appendix A. Then answer an online survey about self-assessing the debate skills. See Appendix B.
5. Compare week 6's video with week 11's video and then write about that process in a reflection journal. See Appendix C. Then answer an online survey about peer-assessing skills. See Appendix D.

Step 1

To prepare students for the video recording, part of the homework task included a prompt in a reflection journal requiring them to write an argument for the lesson's proposition and position, including the target language. This would enable the students to be ready for the recording, potentially lessening any anxiety, and to simulate what was required for the mid- and final-term debates, which also used written arguments.

Step 2

Using the prompt from the reflection journals, students used the video-recording and -sharing tool. Students were given up to five minutes of recording time. The prompt for weeks 1 to 6 was as follows:

> *Please use your Reflection Journal to help you. Use the proposition and position (affirmative/ negative) you were given in class. You can use your team's arguments and sources. Write your speech with three points, each with a source. Include the summary. Also use Appendix A "Useful Expressions for Debate Skills" on page 58.*

The prompt for weeks 10 and 11 was as follows:

> *Please use your Reflection Journal to help you. Use the summary your team made in the lesson. Remember to include your team's three points, the other team's points, the proposition, and your team's position. Also use Appendix A "Useful Expressions for Debate Skills" on page 58.*

Step 3

Before the next class, the instructor viewed the recordings and posted individual and private

comments to each student, using the rubric for the argument's organization and quality. An example of the feedback for the argument speech is as follows:

> *Argumentation's Organization: Good*
> *Argumentation's Quality: Supported all points using data and sources*
> *Summary: Restate the points again*

An example of the feedback for the final debate speech is as follows:

> *Well done! The summary had your team's proposition, position, three points, and the other team's three points.*

Students were expected to read their feedback before the next class. At the start of the class, the instructor gave general feedback about the videos and commented on particular students who had given good performances. During this time, students could also view their feedback.

Step 4

Students were once again assigned the reflection journals for week 6; however, the prompts were focused on the self-assessment process. See Appendix A. The survey questions were also included in the week 6 reflection journal to prepare students for the online survey. The link to the online survey was shared during week 6 and given time at the start of week 7's class. Students were asked to compare week 2's video with week 6 's video. Then they were asked to answer an optional online survey about the self-assessing debate skills such as the level of difficulty assessing their argument's strength. See Appendix B. Students were also asked if watching their videos assisted with assessment.

Step 5

This step followed a similar process to step 4, with a reflection journal for week 11 having prompts focusing on the peer-assessment process. See Appendix C. Furthermore, the second online survey's link was shared during week 11, and time was given at the start of week 12's class. See Appendix D. The videos to be compared were week 6's video and week 11's video. This survey's question focused on peer assessment.

Discussion

The activity was crafted to help the students develop their debate skills and assessment abilities. In general, most of the students completed the video activity. This means that they practiced their arguments at least once outside of the classroom, developing their debate skills. Furthermore, some students may have had multiple attempts at recording their arguments before posting their final submissions, resulting in more practice of their skills. On the whole, most students completed the videos, though as the semester progressed, the number decreased. The quality of the submissions was quite good, with students completing the requirements of the rubric.

The rubric was often referred to in the class, and the applicable parts were used as the

instructor's comments on the online tool to give individual feedback. Furthermore, the instructor had occasionally referenced those students demonstrating good performances in their videos at the start of the lesson in classes following the video homework task. It was expected that students could have a better understanding of the rubric based on this. Furthermore, it was hoped that the surveys and reflection journals would provide the instructor with more feedback about the effectiveness of the videos for self- and peer assessing. It did provide some information as some students felt that assessing was not difficult, yet many felt that they lacked the confidence to correctly assess.

It appeared that during the peer-feedback sessions after the mid- and final-term debates, the students were comfortable assessing their classmates using the rubric when presenting their feedback to the class. Through the surveys and reflection journals about assessments, many students felt using videos was a helpful tool in assessment. The reflection journals, Appendix A and C, were used to prepare students for the two surveys. The surveys, Appendix B and D, were used to get the students to compare their performances and elicit feedback for the instructor about how they viewed self- and peer assessments using the rubric. There were some issues about receiving duplicate and contradictory responses using the online surveys, in addition to getting students to submit both the surveys. It should be noted that students' consent was gained for the surveys as part of another research project, but the journals were not part of that project, so the instructor had no permission to share journals' contents. These surveys were optional tasks. Consequently, this resulted in 20% of students completing the homework tasks for the required videos to be previewed and correctly submitting both surveys. Nevertheless, a portion of the students' survey responses will be shared below, focusing on videos in relation to self- and peer assessment.

From Survey 1's Question 5, "Did watching the two videos help you to learn how to judge your performance?" Responses are with 7 answering agree, 5 answering not sure, and 1 answering disagree. The responses to the optional prompt are as follows:

Agree because comparing the two videos helped me learn how to judge because of the differences.
Agree because I saw obvious change[s] in two videos. Two videos have a big difference[s].

From Survey 2's Question 5, "Do you think watching your own video helps you to judge other students' performances?" Responses with 7 answering agree, 4 answering not sure, and 2 answering disagree. The response to the optional prompt is as follows:

Agree because I can find the difference.

There are limitations, such as with students not completing homework or reading their feedback or using the video-sharing component of the online tool. If students did not do their homework, they did not perform video recordings. Though students received written feedback on their videos, it is difficult to determine if the written feedback was read on the video-making and -sharing tool by the students and if they viewed their videos again to better understand the feedback. During the mid- and final-term test peer-feedback activities, students directly referenced the rubric in class, and at that time, the instructor also gave oral feedback on how well they assessed their peers. Students were required to take notes when judging, so they could give more accurate feedback, but the instructor did not check or give formal feedback on their notes. Doing this may have helped the learners gain more awareness into expectations about giving feedback, consequently helping them to gain more confidence. Furthermore, having students view their classmates' videos on the online tool would also

be helpful so that they might understand how their feedback compares with those of the instructors. This would give students more awareness of how to assess, especially during the mid- and final-term debates.

Adaptations

The activity was created for a debate class, but it could be adapted for any class that uses speaking skills such as presentation or discussion classes. Steps 1 to 3 would be most applicable for video recordings and assessment, as any speaking task could be assigned alongside the appropriate rubric. The benefits of using the video recordings such as awareness of skills, potential improvement of future output, and a source of reflection will still occur (Cotter & Hinkelman; 2019, p. 98; Qureshi et al., 2019; Sumardiet al., 2020; Tailab & Marsh, 2020). Steps 4 to 5 could be changed from a survey or reflection journal to pair or group discussions or even a student video recording for the instructor to gain more understanding of how students perceive assessing. Though these two steps could also be omitted, it is useful to know how students feel about the difficulty of assessing and the usefulness of video recordings so that appropriate support might be given by the instructor. Therefore, it is recommended that the journal prompts and survey questions from the appendices be shared with students and altered based on the students' needs.

For those instructors interested in having their students video record to aid in self- and peer assessments, they can model an ideal performance in a video. Showing it in the classroom could be more practical and beneficial than the aforementioned actions. This video could also be used as a discussion point that could aid learners in reflecting on their own performance regarding what they achieved and still need to achieve pertaining to their skills. Using students' recordings for others to peer-assess would also be useful. Students could compare their comments about their peer's performances with their instructor's to see how their assessing skills are. In addition, checking students' assessment notes of this practice activity would also be beneficial. Moreover, instead of surveys or reflection journals to gain students feedback about assessing, in-class discussion where the instructor would determine the areas of uncertainty based on students' comments and address these to the class could be more appropriate. Such modifications may give students more guidance in developing assessment skills.

Conclusion

Using students' video recordings with self- and peer assessments can be an activity for more concrete awareness of their skills usage, points of improvement for future performances, areas for growth, and even practices to develop life-long learning through more participation and control in their learning. The activity in the debate class required students to record a performing video on an online tool, most often presenting an argument and sometimes giving a summary of their debate. Students were then given private written feedback so that they could understand how they use the rubric when they self-assessed and peer-assessed. An area of concern was that many students were uncertain if they were assessing correctly, so in the future, it is important to give students more examples of how to assess using the video and the rubric. Other speaking classes may also benefit from this activity, which aids in students practicing speaking the foreign language outside the classroom, seeing how their skills are developing, and better understanding how to assess by using videos as a practice for real-time assessments.

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Appendices
Appendix A

Debate Class: Reflection Journal

After each class, you will write a reflection journal due for the day after the class before 23:59 as a Self-Study Task. Please use the following prompts to help you:

1. Do you think making videos helps you judge how you do in debate, for example:
   a. organization of arguments, b. quality of arguments, c. debate skills and d. Summaries? Why?

2. Do you feel confident about judging how well you do in a debate? Why?

3. Using your notes (and classmates), write as much as you can about the other team's argument, for example their points, sources, and data.

4. Use the proposition and position (affirmative/negative) you were given in class. You can use your team's arguments and sources. Write your speech with three points, each with a source and include the summary. Also use Appendix A "Useful Expressions for Debate Skills" on page 58.

5. Based on the proposition and position you were given at the end of class, find one point with source(s) and data to support your argument. You will share it with your team in Lesson 7.

6. *Optional*: If there is anything else that you would like to comment on about the class, feel free.

7. Include the word count.

**Remember to use page 8 and 9 of Becoming a Better Writer to format your journal correctly.*

REFLECTION JOURNAL GRADING INFORMATION: 3 POINTS		
Length 1 POINTS	**Understandability 1 POINT**	**Due date 1 POINTS**
Minimum length is written	Ideas could be understood	Submitted on time

Appendix B

Survey 1

First, record the Lesson 6 homework video on Flipgrid. Then, watch the Lesson 2 Flipgrid video. Next, watch the Lesson 6 video. Use the Debate Rubric information on pages 62 to 63 to help you complete the Lesson 6 Reflection Journal. After you have completed the journal, please answer these questions. You can complete this survey anytime after recording your video and submitting your journal for Lesson 6. Furthermore, at the beginning of Lesson 7's class, I will also give you time to complete the survey. If you need to use Japanese, you can.

1. To judge the organization of my arguments is

   A. easy B. so-so C. difficult

because (Optional):

2. To judge the strength of my arguments is:

   A. easy B. so-so C. difficult

because (Optional):

3. To judge the debate skills used in my arguments is:

   A. easy B. so-so C. difficult

because (Optional):

4. To judge my arguments' summaries is:

   A. easy B. so-so C. difficult

because (Optional):

5. Did watching the two videos help you to learn how to judge your performance?

   A. Agree. B. Not sure. C. Disagree.

Because (Optional):

6. Do you feel confident about judging your performance?

   A. Agree. B. Not sure C. Disagree

Because (Optional):

If you have other comments about judging Lesson 1 and 6's videos, please share them here:

Appendix C

Debate Class: Reflection Journal

After each class, you will write a reflection journal due for the day after the class before 23:59 as a Self-Study Task. Please use the following prompts to help you:

1. Do you think it is easy to judge how classmates do in debate, for example:

   a. organization and quality of arguments, b. cross-examination, c. rebuttals, and d. final summaries? Why or why not?

2. Do you think watching your own video helps you to judge other students' performance? Why or why not?

3. Do you think making videos helped your performance in debates? Why?

4. Would you like to record a video of your performance again? Why or why not?

5. Use the summary your team made in the lesson. Remember to include a. your team's three points, b. the other team's points, c. 1 or 2 rebuttals, d. the proposition, and e. your team's position in the summary. Also use Appendix A "Useful Expressions for Debate Skills" on page 58.

6. Based on the proposition and position you were given at the end of class, find one point with source(s) and data to support your argument. You will share it with your team in Lesson 12 to prepare for the final debate.

7. *Optional*: If there is anything else that you would like to comment on about the class, feel free.

8. Include the word count.

**Remember to use page 8 and 9 of Becoming a Better Writer to format your journal correctly.*

REFLECTION JOURNAL GRADING INFORMATION: 3 POINTS		
Length 1 POINTS	**Understandability 1 POINT**	**Due date 1 POINTS**
Minimum length is written	Ideas could be understand	Submitted on time

Appendix D

Survey 2

First, record the Lesson 11 homework video on Flipgrid. Then, watch the Lesson 6 homework video. Next, watch the Lesson 11 video. Use the Debate Rubric information on pages 62 to 63. You can complete this survey anytime after recording the Lesson 11 homework video. At the beginning of Lesson 12's class, I will also give you time to complete the survey. If you need to use Japanese, you can.

1. Is it easy to judge the organization of the arguments?

   A. Agree.　　B. Not sure　　C. Disagree

Because (Optional):

2. Is it easy to judge the strength of the arguments?

   A. Agree.　　B. Not sure　　C. Disagree

Because (Optional):

3. Is it easy to judge the debate skills used in the arguments?

   A. Agree.　　B. Not sure　　C. Disagree

Because (Optional):

4. Is it easy to judge the arguments' summaries?

   A. Agree.　　B. Not sure　　C. Disagree

Because (Optional):

5. Do you think watching your own video helps you to judge other students' performance?

   A. Agree.　　B. Not sure　　C. Disagree

6. Do you feel confident about judging your performance?

   A. Agree.　　B. Not sure　　C. Disagree

Because (Optional):

7. Do you think making videos helped your performance in debates?

A. Agree. B. Not sure C. Disagree

Because (Optional):

8. Would you like to record a video of your performance again? Why or why not?

Answer:

9. Feel free to share any other comments related to using videos to judge your performance.

Answer:

Examining the Unit 3 Goals of English Discussion Class

Heather Woodward

Abstract

Commencing Spring 2020, textbook writers of Rikkyo University's English Discussion Class (EDC) have divided the course into three units: 1) sharing and supporting opinions, 2) organizing a discussion, and 3) challenging and evaluating ideas. However, EDC students might need more assistance than that offered by Kita et al.'s (2022) "What's Your Opinion?" to achieve the third unit goal of challenging and evaluating ideas. In the EDC Handbook (2022), there also exists a lack of clarity regarding the relationship between the Unit 3 goals and the Unit 3 discussion skills. In this paper, I review the current textbook's explanations of the Unit 3 discussion skills, present alternative explanations, and thereafter, outline potential in-class activities. With these new explanations and activities, students might gain a better understanding of how to use the third unit's discussion skills for the purpose of challenging and evaluating ideas.

Keywords: EDC, Objectives, Challenging, Evaluating

Introduction

English discussion class (EDC) is a requirement for all first-year students at Rikkyo University. The course is designed to improve academic discussion skills, communication skills, and spoken fluency (Hurling, 2012). EDC textbook writers have divided EDC into three units: a) sharing and supporting opinions, b) organizing a discussion, and c) challenging and evaluating ideas. These units are further separated into discussion skills. Table 1 on the next page shows unit goals with discussion skills and examples.

The first unit goal of sharing and supporting opinions featured in Table 1 has three discussion skills: opinions, supporting opinions, and follow-up questions. Students demonstrate their competence of sharing and supporting opinions by asking for and giving opinions, reasons/examples, and follow-up questions in the discussion. The second unit goal of organizing a discussion has three discussion skills of connecting ideas, joining a discussion, and changing topics. Students demonstrate their ability to organize a discussion by using these skills during discussion. The last unit goal is challenging and evaluating ideas. The discussion skills are different viewpoints, balancing opinions, and sources of information. During the discussion, students show the extent to which they can challenge and evaluate ideas by using these three skills.

In the following sections, I discuss the problems with not providing definitions and examples for challenging and evaluating ideas, then examine the current textbook explanations. After, I provide new explanations with examples to mitigate these problems. Lastly, I present classroom activities that might help students gain a better understanding of the terms challenging and evaluating ideas.

Table 1

Unit Goals With Corresponding Discussion Skills and Examples From Kita et al. (2022)

Unit Goal	Lesson No.	Discussion Skill	Examples
	1	Introduction to English Discussion Class	
Sharing and Supporting Opinions	2	Opinions	In my opinion,… I think… What do you think?
	3	Supporting Opinions	One reason/example is… Why do you think so?
	4	Follow-up Questions	What…? Which…? How…? Do you…? Can you…?
	5	Test 1 on Sharing and Supporting Opinions	
Organizing a Discussion	6	Connecting Ideas	I agree/disagree. You said… What do you think of my idea?
	7	Joining a Discussion	Can I start? Can I say something? Would anyone like to ask a question?
	8	Changing Topics	What shall we discuss first/next? Is there anything more to add? So, we agree/disagree about…
	9	Test 2 on Organizing a Discussion	
Challenging and Evaluating Ideas	10	Different Viewpoints	From (X's) point of view… How about (X's) point of view?
	11	Balancing Opinions	One advantage/disadvantage of… What's one advantage/disadvantage?
	12	Sources of Information	According to… I read/heard/saw/learned… Where did you read/see/hear that?
	14	Test 3 on Challenging and Evaluating Ideas	

Note. Information from What's Your Opinion? 2nd Edition (Kita et al., 2022)

Challenging Ideas

Showing the relationship between the discussion skills and the unit goals can make the purpose and use apparent to students, which facilitates a greater likelihood that students use the skills appropriately. Without providing such clarity, students might not realize the unit goals. The last unit goal, challenging and evaluating ideas, comprises the following three discussion skills: different viewpoints, balancing opinions, and sources of information. Using the unit three discussion skills does not necessarily equate to fulfilling the goal of challenging ideas because students can use them for the purpose of supporting their own ideas. In the dialogue below, Aki uses viewpoints to support her own idea while Ryo uses it to challenge Aki's idea:

- Aki: I agree with you. From the point of view of doctors, they believe that English is important because if there is a tourist who gets injured and doesn't speak Japanese, then the doctor can still communicate with him.
- Ryo: However, from the point of view of ambulance drivers, English is not so important because paramedics are in the vehicle, and they are required to speak English.

Supporting ideas is important for the process of evaluation but challenging ideas using viewpoints requires searching for views of people who disagree with each other. Yet only the lowest-

proficiency students (i.e., Level 4) have "challenging and evaluating ideas" translated in their textbook.[1] The Unit 3 goals have been translated to *Takaku-tekina shiten to iken no hyōka* (多角的な視点と意見の評価), which means evaluating multifaceted opinions and perspectives. This lack of translation or definition of "challenging ideas" for other levels is problematic because highly proficient students might not be able to give a definition, even in their native language, of what it means. In the Collins Dictionary (2022), the writers define "challenging ideas" as questioning "truth, value, or authority." Providing a definition with examples to students of all EDC levels would be advantageous because they can judge for themselves whether they, or their classmates, are using Unit 3 discussion skills for the purpose of questioning.

Evaluating Ideas

Using Unit 3 discussion skills also does not necessarily equate to fulfilling the goal of evaluating ideas because students can use the discussion skills without weighing or judging the merits of the ideas. For example, discussing advantages and disadvantages does not necessarily mean that students are weighing advantages and disadvantages. Likewise, asking for sources of information during discussion does not mean that students are determining which source is most trustworthy. The step of students revisiting their initial opinions is necessary because the goal is to reassess information in light of discussion skill use. The 2022 Handbook does note that students should give their "opinion + assess" the ideas, but the goal of this paper is to be more specific than the current textbook and handbook on what assess means in terms of the Unit 3 discussion skills, and when also students should give their assessment during the discussion.

EDC students might struggle to provide a definition of evaluating on their own, so providing one can help them gain a better understanding of what they should be doing during the discussion. Evaluating can be defined as follows:

- "…the making of a judgement about the amount, number, or value of something after thinking about it carefully" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2022)
- "…the systematic determination and assessment of a subject's merit, worth, significance, using criteria governed by a set of standards" (Wikipedia Contributors, 2022)

The second definition includes the use of criteria as the means by which the evaluation is systematic, and doing so, more clearly differentiates it from simply giving opinions. Kita et al.'s (2022) textbook explanations do not define discussion skills in terms of making a judgment, and therefore, they do not provide a set of standards by which students can evaluate a belief. They also do not specify where exactly, within the discussion, students should be revisiting their initial opinions to make a judgement.

In addition to not defining the terms for Levels 1-3, the textbook writers do not relate the terms to each other so that students understand their connection. A high-quality evaluation requires the challenging of the "truth, value, or authority" of different beliefs of the same issue. Therefore, it might be important for students to know that they are to challenge ideas for the purpose of properly evaluating them.

1　The translation is on the table of contents section on pages 3-4 of Level 4 textbook (See Kita et al., 2022).

Textbook Explanations of Unit 3 Discussion Skills

Table 2 shows the textbook explanations of Unit 3's discussion skills from the EDC textbook, "What's Your Opinion?" (Kita et al., 2022):

Table 2

Unit 3 Textbook Explanations from Kita et al. (2022)

Goals of Challenging and Evaluating	Discussion Skills	Textbook Explanations
Different Viewpoints	Asking for Different Viewpoints	"…it helps you discuss different opinions on a topic."
	Giving Different Viewpoints	"…it helps you discuss more than just your own opinions."
Balancing Opinions	Asking Others to Balance Opinions	"…it helps everyone understand different sides of an idea or topic."
	Balancing Your Opinions	"…it helps you talk about the advantages and disadvantages of different ideas."
Sources of Information	Asking about Information	"…it helps you find out more about other people's opinions and where their information came from."
	Giving Information	"…it helps you support your opinions with evidence and facts from TV, the internet, books, magazines, newspapers, other people, and personal experiences."

Note. Information from What's Your Opinion? 2nd Edition (Kita et al., 2022)

These textbook explanations are not so clear insofar as how the discussion skills relate to challenging and evaluating ideas. For example, the explanation for giving different viewpoints is that "it helps you discuss more than just your own opinions." Even if students know the definitions of challenging and evaluating ideas, this explanation might still be difficult for students to understand how discussing more than just your own opinions relates to challenging and evaluating ideas. As there is no further explanation than the one presented in the textbook, students and instructors must determine for themselves how to use these skills to fulfill the goals of challenge and evaluate ideas.

The textbook writers provide dialogues of the discussion skills to contextualize their use, but there are no activities to help students identify when discussion skills are being used for the purpose of challenging and for the purpose of evaluating ideas. Explanations in the textbook and the handbook are also unclear regarding whether all of the Unit 3 discussion skills can be used for both challenging ideas and evaluating ideas. Therefore, instructors or students must also determine whether each skill presented in Unit 3 can be used for either challenging or evaluating, or for both. This point is important because the meaning of challenging ideas is different from evaluating ideas, and thus, the way that we would use the discussion skills changes. This problem is explained in more detail in the next section.

New Unit 3 Discussion Skill Explanations

To make the relationship between the discussion skills and the Unit 3 goal clearer than the previous textbook explanations, Table 3 below shows new explanations with examples for each. They are as follows:

Table 3

New Discussion Skill Explanations for Unit 3 Goals

Discussion Skills	Challenging ideas	Evaluating ideas
Viewpoints	To challenge ideas using viewpoints, ask for or give the opinions of people who disagree. Doing so uncovers potential weaknesses of the idea.	To evaluate ideas using viewpoints, after discussing the views of people who disagree with each other, decide whose viewpoint is the most convincing.
	Example: "You said that emergency service workers should speak English, but how about from an ambulance drivers' viewpoint? From their point of view, paramedics, who are also in the ambulance, must speak English so learning English is not necessary for drivers. What do you think about that?"	Example: "We discussed five viewpoints, and, in my opinion, the most convincing views are from emergency drivers and doctors. They think that emergency service workers do not need to speak English, so I agree with their opinion."
Balancing Opinions	To challenge ideas using balancing, ask for or give support for an opposing opinion. Doing so expresses doubt about the idea.	To evaluate ideas using balancing, determine whether the good points outweigh the bad points or vice versa.
	Example: "You said that all emergency service workers should speak English. Yet, what is a disadvantage of all emergency service workers speaking English?" Example: "You said that all emergency service workers should not speak English. However, one advantage is… What do you think about that?"	Example: "We discussed the advantages and disadvantages and found two advantages and three disadvantages. Even though there are some advantages, the disadvantages are more convincing, so all emergency service workers should speak English."
Sources of Information	To challenge using sources of information, ask where students have learned about idea. Doing so questions the idea's truthfulness.	To evaluate using sources of information, decide which source is the most trustworthy.
	Example: "You said that all emergency service workers should speak English, but how do you know about that?"	Example: "We discussed the sources of information and I think that the strongest sources of information are from NHK and BBC because those news organizations are more trustworthy than social media."

In Table 3, I separate challenging ideas from evaluating ideas because the different purposes change the way that the discussion skills are used. For example, when students use balancing opinions to challenge ideas, students ask for or give the opposite (e.g., if a student agrees with the idea, then students ask about its disadvantages and vice versa). When students use balancing opinions for the purpose of evaluation, they first weigh the advantages and disadvantages. Thereafter, they judge whether overall, there are more convincing advantages for the idea than disadvantages. The same idea holds true for viewpoints and sources. They are used differently depending on their purpose. Table 3 might help students understand the meaning of challenging and evaluating more than Table 2 because Table 3 explicitly connects the use of discussion skill to the unit goals. It also answers the question whether discussion skills can be used for both challenging ideas and evaluating ideas.

To help students with evaluating ideas, instructors can ask students to use the following prompts, which are based on the Unit 3 discussion skills, during the summary section of the discussion:

- In my opinion, the most important stakeholders and experts are… and so I agree with them

that...

- I believe that the advantages/disadvantages of… outweigh its disadvantages/advantages.
- I think that there are more reliable sources of information for the idea than against it.

For example, if students are discussing the idea that all emergency service workers should speak English, then after they use viewpoints, balance, and sources, they can revisit their initial opinion at the end of the discussion using the prompts above as a standard by which to evaluate ideas. One disadvantage of having students openly evaluate at the end of their discussion is that students do not cover as many topics as they do without evaluation because revisiting their initial beliefs is more time-consuming. Evaluating might also be too cognitively challenging for low-proficiency students because they must recall what other students have said. Therefore, they might need to take notes during the discussion and have more scaffolding for the summary section (See Appendix for an example worksheet for Unit 3 discussion). Lastly, the new explanations are divided into the categories of "challenging" and "evaluating," and not divided into the categories of "asking for" and "giving" as is the case with Units 1 and 2, so there is a lack of consistency. Instructors must decide whether the advantages of presenting these new explanations outweigh the disadvantages of presenting them.

Unit 3 Activities

In this section, I explain activities to help students use viewpoints, sources of information, and balancing to challenge and evaluate ideas.

Using Viewpoints to Challenge and Evaluate Ideas

On page 34 of the EDC Handbook (2022), writers recommend giving students time to think of various viewpoints before the discussion to decrease their cognitive load. I recommend this activity for the additional reason that instructors can ensure that students list relevant viewpoints of stakeholders or experts. If not, students make a mistake of using any viewpoints. They might often ask, regardless of the topic, "How about from the viewpoint of university students?" The problem with this is, typically, stakeholders and experts have more convincing views than outsiders or laypersons, so for the purpose of fulfilling the goal of evaluating ideas, students can spend time researching ideas of stakeholders and experts during discussion preparation. Another problem is that if the viewpoint is not from a stakeholder or expert, it is difficult to claim that that constitutes a challenge to ideas because it might lack relevance.

I also ask students to use contrasting words to clearly show that they are challenging ideas. Instead of students asking "How about from ambulance drivers' point of view?" they ask "*But* how about from ambulance drivers' point of view?" Instead of, "From the ambulance drivers' point of view…" They say, "*However*, from ambulance drivers' point of view, they believe…" Using contrasting words makes discussion assessment for instructors easier as using them signals that students are intending to use viewpoints for challenging ideas. The 2022 Handbook writers state that students can also use viewpoints to support their opinions (i.e., one of the goals for Unit 1). Supporting opinions with viewpoints helps students to better evaluate ideas. They might need to know not to use contrasting words (e.g., however, yet) when they use viewpoints to support their own opinions.

Using Balancing Opinions to Challenge and Evaluate Ideas

Students can evaluate ideas using balancing opinions by thinking of the most compelling advantages and disadvantages, and then deciding whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Instructors can write a list of advantages and disadvantages of an idea, and then have students judge whether the advantages are more convincing than the disadvantages. Next, students can explain their rationale for their decision. In addition to helping students to evaluate, the rationale helps students to think deeply about the idea because their reasoning usually is based on their values or principles of abstract ideas. For example, students might think that the advantages of studying abroad for a year outweigh the disadvantages because they value new experiences more than they value familiarity.

Using Sources of Information to Challenge and Evaluate Ideas

The EDC Handbook writers (2022) state that students can ask for sources of information to challenge ideas using the phrase, “How do you know about that?” To use sources of information for the purpose evaluating ideas, students must judge sources of information based on their trustworthiness. Without doing any research, students might overuse the phrase, “It’s from my experience” to support their opinions. For discussion preparation, students can spend 5 minutes researching one to two sources of information. In another activity, instructors can present a few sources of information and have students discuss to what extent the sources are trustworthy. Students have a required debate course next semester, and they spend time considering the reliability of their sources, but I still think that if the Unit 3 goal is to evaluate ideas, then discussion preparation for researching sources of information is justifiable.

Conclusion

To conclude, EDC students might need more assistance to realize the Unit 3 goals of challenging and evaluating ideas. Revising some of the textbook explanations can add clarity. Students also benefit from certain activities such as researching sources of information, using viewpoints to think of challenges, and providing a set of standards for evaluating ideas. Although these revisions to the textbook explanations are not without issues, by providing an explicit connection between the Unit 3 goals and discussion skills, students might gain a deeper understanding of how to use these skills for the stated purpose.

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Appendix
Example Worksheet for Unit 3 Discussion

An Intelligibility-Based Approach: Teaching English Pronunciation Toward Comprehensibility

Ian Hart

Abstract

Rikkyo University's Department of Foreign Language Education and Research (FLER) offers mandatory English courses for first-year students. The students take a written exam to determine their English level, allowing them to be assigned to a class with similar leveled students. During this course, students are taught how to use critical thinking and research skills to produce speeches and presentations, cross-examine others, rebut others' ideas, and provide feedback. While students are graded on their production of such skills, feedback is not given on the learners' phonological production. With intelligibility and comprehensibility of spoken production being vital for the learners to respond effectively to their classmates, the research questions whether more focus should be placed on the teaching of pronunciation and, if so, what support can be provided by the teacher. This paper provides phonemic and prosodic analysis of two learners who belong to the same class to determine whether differences in their production influence comprehension and performance. After reviewing the results, conclusions are drawn, and support is provided by the beliefs of other researchers in the field to determine whether the teaching of pronunciation is necessary.

Keywords: phonology, pronunciation, EIL, ELF Core, prosodic analysis

Introduction

For Japanese learners of English, it is important for them to make their pronunciation patterns intelligible to others. For example, at Rikkyo University, all first-year students take mandatory content and language integrated learning (CLIL) classes: discussion, debate, and presentation. Many of skills taught in these classes require the learners to respond, challenge, and provide feedback on their classmates' ideas or spoken production. However, if the initial production is not intelligible due to issues with pronunciation, this may have a negative effect on the tasks that follow. Japanese learners face various challenges, especially in segmental phonology, as they must learn phonemes that do not exist in Japanese. Furthermore, the presence of L1 transfer may have a negative influence on phonemic production, as many contrasts between the Japanese and English sound systems exist. One example is the Japanese writing system, which is based on a syllabary rather than a phonetic system.

This paper analyzes the segmental and suprasegmental features in the spoken performance of two learners with English as a second language. By comparing the learners' performance to a standard Received Pronunciation (RP) sample, divergences from the RP model will be highlighted. Possible reasons for these variations will be discussed in relation to the phonological systems of English and Japanese, and teaching implications will be considered.

Method

Participants

The learners in this study were first-year university students. They were enrolled in intermediate-level language classes, with their level being decided by their Test for English International Communication (TOEIC) score. Their scores fell into the same bracket (300-500). The TOEIC test is the most widely used standardized testing system in Japan, designed to measure the everyday English skills of people working in an international environment. The test consists of two equally graded tests: Listening Test and Reading Test.

- Learner A spent 3 months on a homestay program in Hawaii. She had an interest in Hawaiian culture and liked watching American movies.
- Learner B had never traveled abroad. Her interests were focused on Korean pop culture.

The participants were chosen, as the majority of first-year students are placed into intermediate-level classes, and testing suggested that their English skills were of a similar level.

Procedure

The learners were given the model dialogue (Appendix, Table.1) in advance. They were allowed to practice reading the dialogue to minimize hesitation, improve fluency, and check comprehension of the content. Feedback was not given, as the aim was to record an accurate representation of their speaking ability. The recording was then transcribed both phonemically and prosodically for comparison with a transcribed RP model (Appendix, Table.3 & Table.4).

Results

Analysis of Learners' Speech: Segmental Features

When comparing the learners' production with the RP model, clear deviances can be heard. Furthermore, how certain phonemes are pronounced differ between the learners. Phonemes represent the smallest distinctive speech sounds, which help us distinguish one word for another (Rogerson-Revell, 2011). Unlike with English, Japanese has a more limited phonemic inventory. For example, Japanese employs fewer consonants and vowels and no diphthongs.

In this section, an analysis of the learners' production of vowel and consonant phonemes will be given:

Vowels

Compared to English, which has twenty vowels, Japanese only has five, though these may be distinctly short or long (Thompson, 2002). The non-existence of English vowels in Japanese means that Japanese speakers may shorten (or lengthen) English vowels if they do not exist in their native-language phonological system (Baba, 2001). The articulation of English vowel sounds is dependent on the placement of the tongue. When the front part of the tongue is raised, the vowels are defined as front vowels, and when the back part of the tongue is raised, they are called back vowels. As for Japanese vowels, Tsujimura (2013) provides a summary of the five Japanese vowels, listing them as a high-front /i/, mid-front /e/, low-central /a/, mid-back /o/, and a high-back central unrounded /u/

(transcribed as /ɯ/). These five vowels can be observed in all three environments: initial, medial, and final (Baba, 2001). Before analyzing the learners' performance, it was important to understand the difference between these phonological systems, as there is evidence of L1 interference throughout the sample.

One problem that stands out is the appearance of the unrounded Japanese high-back vowel /ɯ/. This is mostly evident in Learner B's speech, as /ɯ/ sometimes follows consonants, as seen with the words /gɯreɪt/ and /sæŋkɯs/ (Item.2), /hævɯ/ and /dɯrɪŋk/ (Item.4), and /gɯriːn/ (Item.6). This problem also occurs when Learner A pronounces the word *quite* as /kɯwaɪt/, although, the /ɯ/ phoneme is less noticeable due to the rolling transition between phonemes. This issue is likely to be caused by the learners' L1 understanding of *katakana* syllabary. In Japanese, loanwords are reformulated using the writing system (*katakana*), which enforces rigid consonant+vowel codification for spelling (Lesley, 2014). Thompson (2002) suggests that consonantal clusters rarely exist, as the Japanese syllable structure is very simple. Each vowel sound has an accompanying consonant, meaning the syllabic order in Japanese is generally consonant+vowel or vowel alone. Carruthers (2006) explains that this also applies to final position consonants, which causes them to be unintentionally extended with /ɯ/ or /o/ phonemes, as seen with /havɯ/ (Item.4 & 6). This is what Thompson (2002) calls a "rounding-off vowel," and Brown (2008) believes this has ramifications for English syllable structure, as learners find it difficult to adjust their L1 tendencies.

A less noticeable problem is Learner B's production of the monophthong /æ/, which is pronounced as a low central /a/. It is advised that Japanese learners stretch or lengthen the familiar vowel /a/ to obtain a vowel identical to /æ/. As Japanese speech, lip and jaw movements tend to be minimized (Thompson, 2002), and these features may carry over into English, making an open /æ/ more difficult to produce. In Learner B's case, this slight mispronunciation does not affect intelligibility. However, as Thompson points out, this issue may also occur with /ʌ/, which can cause confusion in pairs like "*lack* and *luck*, *match* and *much"* (p.297).

The use of diphthongs or gliding, double vowels varied through the sample. While English makes use of eight diphthongs, Japanese consider these phonemes to be two separate sounds of equal length. Learner A's pronunciation of /eɪ/ in the word *make* (Item.3) matches that of the RP model, as is her production of /əʊ/ in *hope*. She pronounces /aɪ/ in *Hi* (Item.1) and *quite* (Item.5) with a pronounced glide to a half-close position in the mouth. Learner B also makes good use of /eɪ/ in *anyway* (Item.4) but deviates from the RP model by using a central /əʊ/ in *problem*, instead of the back, open vowel /ɒ/. This may be because /ɒ/ does not exist in the Japanese sound system. Similarly, in Learner A's pronunciation of the word *chocolate* (Item.5), the final syllable is pronounced as /leɪt/, rather than the RP /lət/. The abbreviation *choco* is commonly used in Japan, so the learner may have unintentionally perceived *chocolate* as two separate words (i.e., *choco* and *late*).

Another deviance from the RP model is when Learner A pronounces the word *your* as /jʊer/ (Item.3), instead of /jɔː/ (Strong form) or /jər/ (Weak form). As /jʊer/ is General American pronunciation, this would suggest that her experience living in Hawaii may have influenced her production of vowel sounds.

Consonants

There are sixteen Japanese consonants, which are referred to as nonsyllabics. Unlike with English, Japanese does not have closed syllables, meaning they never end in a consonant (except for the syllable nasal "n"). English has twenty-four consonants, including six plosives, two affricates, nine fricatives, three nasals, one lateral, and three approximants. The formation of consonant sounds are

described in terms of the place of articulation (i.e., where the sounds are produced), the manner of articulation (i.e., how the sounds are produced), and the presence or absence of voicing (i.e., whether or not there is a vibration of the vocal cords) (Rogerson-Revell, 2011). The most notably absent consonants from Japanese are the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ and the labio-dental fricatives /f/ and /v/. As these consonants do not exist in Japanese, they are often substituted for other consonants.

Thompson (2002) explains that /θ/ and /ð/ may be pronounced with alveolar fricatives /s/ and /z/ or post-alveolar fricatives /ʃ/ or /dʒ/. This is partly confirmed in the learners' sample when Learner B is unable to produce /θ/ at the start of ***thanks*** (Item.2) and ***think*** (Item.6). Instead, the pre-initial syllable is substituted with /s/, forming /sæŋkɯs/ and /sɪŋk/. This can be hard for Japanese learners. When asked to place their tongues between the lower and upper teeth, they sometimes incorrectly press both lips on the tip of the tongue or restrict the airflow with their teeth. Learner A's production of the /θ/ phoneme is more natural, as she successfully pronounces /θ/ in both ***thanks*** (/θæŋks/) and ***think*** (/θɪŋk/) in Item.7.

When producing the consonant /f/, Learner B pauses before saying the word ***fine*** (Item.4). The learner had difficulty situating her lower lip underneath her upper teeth. As she is unable to produce the restricted air coming out from the gap, the /f/ phoneme is not fully produced. The transition between two consonants, an alveolar fricative /z/ to a labiodental fricative /f/, proved difficult for the learner. Learner A's production of the /f/ consonant is closer to that of the RP model, for example, when pronouncing the word ***fancy*** (Item.5).

Another common problem is the articulation of /v/ as a voiced bilabial plosive /b/. Learner B's production of /v/ in the word ***have*** (Item.4) seems to fall somewhere between a labio-dental /v/ and a bilabial /b/. Like with /f/, the friction between the lower lip and upper teeth is not fully detectable, producing a word that sounds more like /habɯ/ than the RP model /hæv/. However, the friction is more noticeable with the second use of ***have*** (Item.6). In this case, the learner's lips do not make contact. Learner A's pronunciation of ***have*** (Item.7) provides a more natural-sounding production of the /v/ phoneme.

The final problem is that the lateral approximant /l/ and the post-alveolar approximant /r/ are typically conflated and pronounced as a Japanese /r/, which Thompson (2002) describes as "a flap almost like a short /d/" (p.298). Japanese learners have difficulty producing the consonant /r/ as it does not exist in the Japanese sound system. This means Japanese learners find it hard to produce /r/ at the start of words as they are required to curl the tip of the tongue backward, position it central in the mouth, and move it up and down without touching the roof of the mouth. At the same time, the speaker's lips move forward while curling the tip of the tongue back inside their mouths. Completing both movements simultaneously is very challenging for Japanese learners. Regarding the production of the consonant /l/, Japanese learners have the opposite problem, where the forward movement of the lips distorts the sound produced. It seems difficult for them to control the movement of their lips and must be instructed to keep freeze their lips completely. This problem occurs when Learner A pronounces the word ***actually*** (Item.7) as /æktʃʊeriː/. From the previous examples, the analysis has shown that Learner A's pronunciation follows the RP model quite closely. This would suggest that the issue with /l/ and /r/ production is a more difficult challenge to overcome.

Segmental Analysis: Summary

Learner A has a better mastery of English phonemes. Learner B tends to rely more on her understanding of her native language phonological system. While remaining mostly intelligible, a subsequent loss of accuracy may cause comprehension issues for listeners unfamiliar with Japanese

phonemic production.

Analysis of Learners' Speech: Suprasegmental Features

When considering syllables and larger units of speech, it is important to analyze the suprasegmental features. This is often referred to as the study of prosody, with features that form the basis for important functions including articulatory shortcuts, rhythm, stress, and intonation (Roach, 2010).

Assimilation

Assimilation happens when phonemes at word boundaries are influenced by each other, causing either the final consonant of the first word to change sound (regressive assimilation) or the initial consonant of the second word to be affected by the preceding word (progressive assimilation) (Rogerson-Revell, 2011).

During the learners' performance, assimilation was rarely used. In Item.5, Learner A uses regressive assimilation to change the /t/ of *what* to a /d/ sound, allowing smoother linking to the following schwa /ə/. However, she fails to use progressive assimilation to produce /ʧ/ in /əbaʊ‿ʧuː/ (*about you*).

Elision

When sounds are not pronounced in connected speech, which would be pronounced if the word occurred in isolation, this is called elision (Rogerson-Revell, 2011). Both learners make good use of elision in unstressed syllables to produce more rapid speech. In Item.4, Learner B elides both the /t/ and /d/, resulting in a glottal stop after each word to produce /wɒ ʃu wiː/ (*what should we*). Learner A also elides /t/ to produce a more rapid connection between /dʒəs hæv/ (Item.7). Learner B elides /k/ at the end of *drink* (Item.4) and *think* (Item.6), which affects intelligibility. Although, this may not have been intentional.

Weak Forms

Weak syllables are unstressed and typically contain a short vowel or schwa (Rogerson-Revell, 2011). While the learners did use the schwa at times, especially when producing weak forms of articles, they did not use them enough to reduce unstressed vowels. For example, *have* was pronounced as /hæv/ rather than a weaker /həv/ and /frɒm/ instead of /frəm/ for the word *from*. While some people may believe that the use of weak forms is not entirely necessary for L2 English speakers, if learners are unaware that they exist, it may be difficult for them to understand speakers who do use them (Roach, 2009).

Stress, Intonation, and Rhythm

While the Japanese are good at repeating stress/intonation patterns, there are limited parallels between the prosodic systems of the two languages (Thompson, 2002). With English, intonation is an important vehicle for meaning, helping the listener to "get a clearer picture of what the speaker intends to mean and fulfils many, overlapping functions, including attitudinal, grammatical, discursive and pragmatic" (Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 179). While tones are only found on a small number of prominent syllables in English, they can "affect the interpretation of an utterance in terms of the speaker's intended meaning" (Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 180).

An examination of the prosodic transcription of the learners' performance reveals their

placement of the tonic stress (i.e., most prominent stress point in the unit) mostly agreed with the RP model. There are some differences, in particular, at the end of items 1, 3, and 6. In all three utterances, a rising tone is incorrectly used on the final syllable of the unit. In Japanese, questions usually have a rise on the utterance-final question participle *ka* (Thompson, 2002). As Japanese learners are taught the basic rule of using rising intonation with English questions, their knowledge of both languages could help explain possible L1 interference. Unnatural use of rising tones is also evident in items 5 and 8. Even though questions are not being asked, both learners A and B apply high-rising pitch movement to words *choco/late* and *prob/lem*.

Apart from some other errors regarding the misuse of a fall-rise or rise-fall, stress at a syllable level remains intelligible. Both learners follow similar stress patterns; however, Learner A's utterances would sound more natural to a native English speaker's ears. Learner A has a more natural-sounding rhythm. Roach (2010) explains that "in speech, we find that syllables take the place of musical notes or beats" and "in many languages, the stressed syllable determines the rhythm" (p.36). If you clapped your hands at the point of each stress point, you would find that the time between each stressed syllable would be quite regular. This is what Roach calls "stress-timed." With Learner A, the time between each stressed mark remains quite regular, producing a natural-sounding rhythm. However, Learner B has difficulty maintaining regular stress-timed rhythm.

Suprasegmental Analysis: Summary

Both learners' use of stress is generally acceptable. While stress is often applied to the appropriate tone units, intonation varies in accuracy, with tonic syllables often rising in pitch. Learner A's production sounds more natural due to better stress-timed rhythm. Assimilation and linking are lacking; however, elision is used and is accurate for the most part. Although, weak forms would help to provide more natural sounding production.

Teaching Implications

Leather (1999) believes that native speaker listeners pay more attention to suprasegmentals than segmental accuracy (Rogerson-Revell, 2011). Derwing and Munro (Derwig & Munro, 1997) conclude that "improvements in NNS comprehensibility, at least for intermediate and high-proficiency learners, is more likely to occur with improvement in grammatical and prosodic proficiency than a sole focus on correction of phonemic errors" (Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 242). In schools, the use of minimal pairs is sometimes used to teach the difference between word sounds; however, the analysis questions the usefulness of such teaching approaches. In Levis and Cortes' (2008) study of minimal pairs in spoken corpora, their research suggests that "many minimal pairs in the textbooks probably fail a very basic test of usefulness" (p.202). I often found that the learners are receptive to clear explanations of phonemic differences; however, intelligibility issues occur, especially when speaking with their NNS classmates. Jones (1997) comments on the overuse of phonemic drills and minimal pairs and promotes a greater emphasis on the communicative function of suprasegmentals. For functional intelligibility to be achieved, learners must understand how prosody operates in realistic contexts. Greer and Yamaguchi (2008) suggest that dictation practice is useful to encourage reflection on weak and strong forms, while Brown (2008) introduces the use of haiku writing to reduce L1 influence. Poetry is popular with researchers, as it can raise learners' awareness of connected speech, consonant clusters, and stress placement (Makarova, 2006).

Based on the viewpoints highlighted above, various techniques were used in the CLIL classes

taught during the duration of this study. In the English presentation classes, rather than using standard phonemic drills, the presentation of minimal pairs and phonemic differences was given through gamified listening trees (*Figure.1*).

Figure.1
Gamified Listening Tree

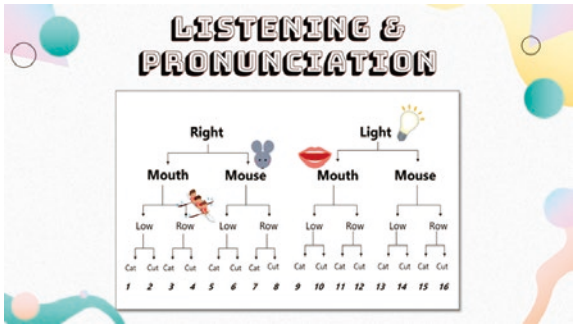
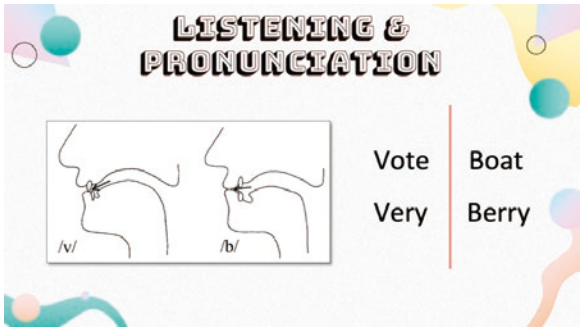


Figure.2
Visual Presentation of Phonemes



Previous studies (e.g., Chou, 2014; Werbach & Hunter, 2015; Baptista & Oliveira, 2018; Hart, 2020) support the idea that by adding competitive elements to learning activities, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be raised, resulting in improved learner input and output. The phonemic differences between the minimal pairs were explained visually with diagrams (*Figure.2*), then practiced first by listening to the teacher and finding the correct answer, and then the learners practiced reading the pairs while their classmates listened to find the answer. Points were awarded. In addition, the video sharing app, Flipgrid, was used to record and share the learners' presentations. This allowed the learners to view themselves speaking and self-evaluate with a focus on both phonemic and suprasegmental features. They also provided feedback on other learners' presentations, making them aware of issues in comprehensibility from the perspective of a non-native speaker (NNS) while also commenting on vocal effect (e.g., pitch, stress, intonation, tone). With presentations and debates being based around real-life issues, information was presented through videos of real-life circumstances and conditions, showing how the language that they might potentially use operates in realistic contexts. TED talks were very useful in showing students how prosody is utilized in effective speeches and presentations.

By contrast, other researchers believe that the majority of communication breakdowns are due to segmental errors, especially for NNS-NNS interactions. In today's world, English is used as an international language between people who do not share a common native tongue. Crystal (1997) estimates that less than a third of the world's competent English speakers are native speakers,

making them a minority. Widdowson (1994) explains that English belongs to everyone who speaks it, not just to native-speakers. This is referred to as English as an International Language (EIL), where the target community is "an international community in which all participants have an equal claim to membership" (Jenkins, 2002, p. 85). Jenkins explains that EIL provides "the right for speakers to express their (L1) regional group identity in English by means of their accent, as long as the accent does not jeopardize international intelligibility" (p.85). This implies that learners do not need to strive for standard pronunciation, such as RP. Instead, new international standards may be considered, replacing the native-speaker model. By re-evaluating core/non-core features of spoken English, Jenkins (2000), creator of the English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) core, provides a set of phonological and phonetic features that are important for intelligibility between NNSs. While these features require pedagogic focus for production, Jenkins suggests that many other items do not cause intelligibility issues and are unnecessary (e.g., weak forms, stress timing, word stress, and pitch movement).

These implications suggest that learners should be given a choice. If Japanese learners' goals are more relevant to EIL intelligibility, then less emphasis should be put on Standard English models, and more phonemic and prosodic errors should be tolerated. Furthermore, learners should be given more exposure to non-native, localized accents of English, while teaching materials should be designed around an EIL foundation.

Conclusion

The analysis has been enlightening. While Learner A's production followed more closely to the RP model than Learner B's, their individual goals were never taken into consideration. Learner B's production remained intelligible, for the most part, and she may not strive for native-like production. I feel that I am in a better position to focus on the core items that may affect intelligibility from an EIL perspective. Standard English norms remain as a teaching model, so there is a growing need for the increased awareness of EIL/ELF standards in EFL classrooms. Furthermore, by raising the awareness of the phonological and prosodic differences between the learners' L1 and English, teachers are in a better position to achieve improved learner outcomes and more intelligible output.

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Appendix

Table 1
Model Dialogue

Model Dialogue
A: Hi how was your trip yesterday?
B: Great thanks. Well, apart from a bit of a delay on the Manchester train.
A: Well I hope it didn't make you late for your appointment?
B: No, it was fine. Anyway, what should we have to drink?
A: I quite fancy a hot chocolate. What about you?
B: Mm I think I'll have green tea. I'll go and order, shall I?
A: Thanks. Actually, I think I'll just have a coffee instead.
B: Sure, no problem, I'll be back in a minute.

Table 2
RP Phonemic Transcription

A: ‖ ˈhaɪ ˈhaʊ wəz jə ˈtrɪp ˈjestədi ‖
B: ‖ ˈgreɪt ˈθæŋks ‖ ˈwel ‖ əˈpɑːt frɒm ə ˈbɪt əv ə dɪˈleɪ ɒn ðə ˈmæntʃɪstə ˈtreɪn ‖
A: ‖ ˈwel aɪ həʊp ɪt ˈdɪdnt meɪk ju ˈleɪt fə jər əˈpɔɪntmənt ‖
B: ‖ ˈnəʊ ‖ ɪt wəz ˈfaɪn ‖ ˈeniweɪ ‖ ˈwɒt ʃəd wi ˈhəv tə ˈdrɪŋk ‖
A: ‖ aɪ kwaɪt ˈfænsi ə ˈhɒt ˈtʃɒklət ‖ ˈwɒt əbaʊt ˈju ‖
B: ‖ mm aɪ ˈθɪŋk aɪl hæv ˈgriːn ˈtiː ‖ aɪl ˈgəʊ ənd ˈɔːdə ‖ ˈʃəl aɪ ‖
A: ‖ ˈθæŋks ‖ ˈæktʃʊəli ‖ aɪ ˈθɪŋk aɪl dʒəst ˈhəv ə ˈkɒfi ɪnˈsted ‖
B: ‖ ˈʃʊə ‖ ˈnəʊ ˈprɒbləm ‖ aɪl bi ˈbæk ɪn ə ˈmɪnɪt ‖

Table 3
Phonemic Transcription Comparison

Item	Learner	RP Transcription (including weak forms)	Learners' Performance
1.	A	‖ ˈhaɪ ˈhaʊ wəz jə ˈtrɪp ˈjestədi ‖	‖ ˈhaɪ haʊ wɒz jɔː trɪp jestəˈdeɪ ‖
2.	B	‖ ˈgreɪt ˈθæŋks ‖ ˈwel ‖ əˈpɑːt frɒm ə ˈbɪt əv ə dɪˈleɪ ɒn ðə ˈmæntʃɪstə ˈtreɪn ‖	‖ ˈgɯreɪt ˈsæŋkɯs ‖ ˈwel ‖ əˈpɑːt frɒm ə ˈbɪt ɒv (ə) dɪˈlaɪ ɒn də ˈmæntʃɪsta ˈtreɪn ‖
3.	A	‖ ˈwel aɪ həʊp ɪt ˈdɪdnt meɪk ju ˈleɪt fə jər əˈpɔɪntmənt ‖	‖ ˈwel ‖ aɪ ˈhəʊp ɪ(t̄) ˈdɪdnt meɪk juː ˈleɪt fɔː jʊer apɔɪntˈment ‖
4.	B	‖ ˈnəʊ ‖ ɪt wəz ˈfaɪn ‖ ˈeniweɪ ‖ ˈwɒt ʃəd wi ˈhəv tə ˈdrɪŋk ‖	‖ ˈnəʊ ‖ ɪt (w)ɒ(z) ˈfaɪn ‖ ˈenɪweɪ ‖ ˈwɒ(t̄) ʃu(d̄) wiː ˈhabɯ tuː ˈdɯrɪŋ(k̄) ‖
5.	A	‖ aɪ kwaɪt ˈfænsi ə ˈhɒt ˈtʃɒklət ‖ ˈwɒt əbaʊt ˈju ‖	‖ aɪ ˈkuwaɪt ˈfænsiː æ ˈhɒ(t̄) ʧɒkəˈleɪt ‖ ˈwɒd əˈbaʊt ˈjuː ‖
6.	B	‖ mm aɪ ˈθɪŋk aɪl hæv ˈgriːn ˈtiː ‖ aɪl ˈgəʊ ənd ˈɔːdə ‖ ˈʃəl aɪ ‖	‖ maːm aɪ ˈsɪŋ(k) aɪl habu ˈgɯriːn ˈtiː ‖ aɪl ˈgeʊ ənd ɔːˈda ‖ ˈʃæl ˈaɪ ‖
7.	A	‖ ˈθæŋks ‖ ˈæktʃʊəli ‖ aɪ ˈθɪŋk aɪl dʒəst ˈhəv ə ˈkɒfi ɪnˈsted ‖	‖ ˈθæŋks ‖ ˈæktʃʊeriː ‖ aɪ ˈθɪŋk aɪl ˈdʒəs(t̄) hæv ə ˈkɒfi ɪnsˈted ‖
8.	B	‖ ˈʃʊə ‖ ˈnəʊ ˈprɒbləm ‖ aɪl bi ˈbæk ɪn ə ˈmɪnɪt ‖	‖ ˈʃɜːr ‖ ˈnəʊ prəʊˈblem ‖ aɪl biː ˈbæk ɪn ə ˈmɪnɪts ‖

Table 4

Prosodic Transcription Comparison

Line	Learner	RP Transcription	Learners' Performance
1.	A	‖ ˈHi ˈhow was your ˌtrip ˈyesterday? ‖	‖ ˈHi how was your trip yesterˈday? ‖
2.	B	‖ ˈGreat ˈthanks. ‖ ˇWell, ‖ aˈpart from a ˈbit of a deˈlay on the ˏManchester ˈtrain. ‖	‖ ˈGreat ^thanks. ‖ ^Well, ‖ aˈpart from a ˈbit of (a) deˈlay on the \Manchester ˈtrain. ‖
3.	A	‖ ˈWell I hope it ˈdidn't make you ˈlate for your aˇppointment? ‖	‖ ˈWell ‖ I ˈhope it ˈdidn't make you ˈlate for your aˈppointˈment? ‖
4.	B	‖ ˏNo, ‖ it was ˏfine. ‖ ˏAnyway, ‖ ˈwhat should we ˈhave to ˏdrink? ‖	‖ ˏNo, ‖ it was ˏfine. ‖ ˇAnyway, ‖ ˈwhat should we ˈhave to ˈdrink? ‖
5.	A	‖ I quite ˈfancy a ˈhot ˏchocolate. ‖ ˈWhat about ˏyou? ‖	‖ I ˈquite ˈfancy a ˈhot chocoˈlate. ‖ ˈWhat aˈbout ˈyou? ‖
6.	B	‖ Mm I ˈthink I'll have ˈgreen ˏtea. ‖ I'll ˈgo and ˏorder, ‖ ˏshall I? ‖	‖ Mm I ˈthink I'll have ˈgreen ˏtea. ‖ I'll ˈgo and ˏorder, ‖ ˈshall ˈI? ‖
7.	A	‖ ˏThanks. ‖ ˇActually, ‖ I ˈthink I'll just ˈhave a ˏcoffee inˈstead. ‖	‖ \Thanks. ‖ ˇActually, ‖ I ˈthink I'll ˈjust have a ˏcoffee inˈstead. ‖
8.	B	‖ ˏSure, ‖ ˈno ˏproblem, ‖ I'll be ˈback in a ˏminute. ‖	‖ ˈSure, ‖ ˈno probˈlem, ‖ I'll be ˈback in a ˏminute. ‖

Shared Inquiry and CLIL: A Teaching Practice Report

James Carpenter

Abstract

The Shared Inquiry method is a form of collaborative learning that requires students to relate the themes in a literary work to their own lives (Browning & Halvorsen, 1996). Some have argued that this method can support foreign language students at Japanese universities to develop the four macro skills and improve critical thinking. In this practice report, I review my experiences teaching Shared Inquiry to Japanese university students. First, I describe my experiences teaching the course using materials published by the Great Books Foundation, which originated the Shared Inquiry method, then using the materials I recently developed for a CLIL seminar focused on Japanese culture at Rikkyo University. At the end, I argue that the Shared Inquiry approach may be useful for designing CLIL classes.

Keywords: Shared Inquiry, CLIL, Content-based Learning

The Shared Inquiry method is a form of collaborative learning that requires students to relate the themes in a literary work to their own lives (Browning & Halvorsen, 1996). The method is based on the "Great Books" seminars conducted at the University of Chicago (Great Books Foundation, 2021, p. 1). The question of whether the literary works chosen are objectively great is irrelevant. The important point is that the works hang together around some common themes. To employ Shared Inquiry, everyone must read the same passage before class and be prepared to discuss that passage using examples from the text itself (Great Books Foundation, 2021). Some have argued that this method can support foreign language students at Japanese universities to develop the four macro skills and to improve critical thinking (e.g., Browning & Halvorsen, 1995; Browning & Halvorsen, 1996).

I have taught using Shared Inquiry in Japan for five years: three years with English majors at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, next, in a twice-per-week lecture and discussion class at Rikkyo University; and now in a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) seminar about Japanese culture at Rikkyo University. CLIL courses, which are increasingly part of English language curricula across Japan, usually require language teachers to teach content as a means to improve language skills (Yamamoto & Nitta, 2021). Shared Inquiry is a useful approach for CLIL teachers because it plays to their strengths. Teaching Shared Inquiry requires the ability to make complex ideas comprehensible, create stimulating discussion questions, and encourage student-centeredness. Conversely, Shared Inquiry does *not* require language teachers to pretend to be experts about things which they are not. In what follows, I provide two examples of the Shared Inquiry method. First, using materials published by the Great Books Foundation (2021), which originated the Shared Inquiry method, and then with the materials I recently developed for my CLIL seminar.

Shared Inquiry Example 1

The following excerpts and discussion questions were adapted from the Shared Inquiry textbook *Introduction to Great Books* 3, produced by the Great Books Foundation (1990). Below is an excerpt

from the first reading in the book—A selection from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics:*

> The proper function of man, then, consists in an activity of the soul in conformity with a rational principle or, at least, not without it. In speaking of the proper function of a given individual we mean that it is the same in kind as the function of an individual who sets high standards for himself…On these assumptions, if we take the proper function of man to be a certain kind of life, and if this kind of life is an activity of the soul and consists in actions performed in conjunction with the rational element, and if a man of high standards is he who performs these actions well and properly, and if a function is well performed when it is performed in accordance with the excellence appropriate to it; we reach the conclusion that the good of man is an activity of the soul in conformity with excellence or virtue, and if there are several virtues, in conformity with the best and most complete.

In a Shared Inquiry activity, students may be asked to discuss as many as 15 questions related to a single reading. For brevity, the following is a discussion questions specifically related to the above excerpt:

> What do you think Aristotle means when he says that "good" for human beings is "an activity of the soul in accordance with excellence or virtue"? Do you think that behaving correctly is necessary for your happiness?

Whereas the above excerpt from Aristotle would be difficult to parse even for native speakers of English, my experience has been that through discussing this question, students can grasp the basic point that Aristotle is describing an understanding of happiness very different from theirs. The typical Japanese college student likely equates happiness with the number of pleasurable states they experience (Tiberius & Hall, 2010). In contrast, Aristotle thinks that happiness is intimately connected to correct behavior, or that happiness depends on adhering to principles that are always correct regardless of how we feel about them. Students can interrogate their own beliefs about this further via questions such as the following:

- Is a good person automatically happy?
- Can happiness mean different things to different people?
- Can a person have his or her own idea about how to be happy?

Next, students read Mary Lavin's short story *On Happiness*. After reading Aristotle, the following excerpt provides an interesting contrast:

> There was only one place Mother found rest. When she was at breaking point and fit to fall, she'd go out into the garden—not to sit or stroll around but to dig, to drag up weeds, to move great clumps of corms or rhizomes, or indeed quite frequently to haul huge rocks from one place to another. She was always laying down a path, building a dry wall, or making compost heaps as high as hills. However jaded she might be going out, when dark forced her in at last her step had the spring of a daisy. So if she did not succeed in defining happiness to our understanding, we could see that whatever it was, she possessed it to the full when she was in her garden.

> One of us said as much one Sunday when Bea and I dropped round for the afternoon. Father Hugh was with us again. "It's an unthinking happiness, though," he caviled.

Once again, the students may be given many discussion questions about this short story; however, the following question is directly related to the above excerpt:

> Why does Mother have happiness "to the full" when she is working in her garden? Why does Father Hugh call her happiness "unthinking"?

The view of happiness depicted here is likely closer to the students' own view: That engaging in something pleasurable without any obligation to conform to some standard of behavior *is* true happiness (e.g., Frey & Vogler, 2019). Through discussion, students may recognize Aristotle's perspective smuggled into the story via the character of Father Hugh, who represents the position that happiness and virtue are intertwined. Students can deepen their discussion further via questions such as the following:

- By talking so much about happiness, is Mother trying to teach her daughters how to be happy, or is she trying to convince herself that she is happy?
- Must a person experience sadness to know true happiness?
- Why does Mother think that happiness has no value if it can be easily erased?

Later in the course, students will have the opportunity to think more about happiness; for example, through discussing excerpts from John Dewey's *Human Nature and Conduct* students will be introduced to the view that happiness is not a choice but a habit, that is, that the difference between happiness and unhappiness is related to how one directs their attention. In contrast, through discussing a selection from Plato's *The Crito*—which chronicles the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates' refusal to flee Athens and escape execution—the students will be introduced to the idea that happiness is irrelevant. Rather, acting in accordance with a principle is the highest form of human life.

A few points about Shared Inquiry can be gleaned from these examples. First, helping students discuss complex, academic-level literary works *to develop their language skills* does not require specialist-level knowledge about the historical context or original language. Second, encouraging students to relate a literary work to their own lives can empower them to say more about it. L2 learners enrolled in a CLIL class can likely already express a lot about their lives; Shared Inquiry encourages learners to bring those skills into the discussion of academic-level texts and themes.

Shared Inquiry Example 2

As noted above, the number of CLIL courses is increasing at many Japanese universities (Yamamoto & Nitta, 2021). During the 2022 academic year, I was allowed to pilot a new CLIL course devoted to Japanese culture at Rikkyo University. As a longtime resident of Japan, I have an amateur interest in Japanese culture; however, I am not an expert in Japanese studies. For this reason, I chose to develop the CLIL course using Shared Inquiry. My goal was to find representative texts that would be familiar to students because they were assigned these texts in their junior high school or high school classes. Table 1 below lists the texts I chose.

Table 1
CLIL Texts

"Speaking as an Unrealistic Dreamer" by Murakami Haruki
"The Seventeen-Article Constitution" by Prince Shotoku
"Esoteric and Exoteric Teachings" by Kukai
"The Tale of Genji" (excerpts) by Murasaki Shikibu
"Good and Evil" by Shinran
"Meaning and Context" by Dogen
"In Defense of the Japanese Way" by Motoori Norinaga
"Conditions for Reform" by Yosano Akiko
"Pure Experience" by Nishida Kitaro
"The Rise of Women's Movements" by Hiratsuka Raicho
"The Classics Reborn" by Nakano Koji

Unlike in Example 1 above, I created all the course materials myself using a two-stage process: First, I found conceptually rich excerpts from English translations of the texts I chose and, in many cases, simplified the language for readability; second, I created discussion questions that either focused on specific content in these excerpts or larger themes in the work. I relied on Heisig, et al.'s (2011) *Japanese Philosophy: A Source Book* for most of the translations; I also relied on Kasulis' (2018) commentary for some of my discussion questions. Below is an excerpt from my modified version of the Kukai reading from Table 1 above:

> Question: According to what you have said, teachings about the essence of Buddhism that are beyond language and thinking are called esoteric, and anything else is exoteric. Is this correct?
> Response: There are many definitions of exoteric and esoteric. Viewed from the perspective of shallow teachings, deeper ones are esoteric and the shallow ones are exoteric.
> …Exoteric teachings give medicine according to the capacity of the listener; its words are not useless…[However] what I mean by esoteric is the ultimate, highest teaching. …Compared to the esoteric teachings, the exoteric teachings are not true and real…This difference should be clearly understood.

Even on a casual reading, Kukai is clearly describing two types of knowledge: the exoteric and the esoteric teachings. The following discussion questions adapted from Kasulis (2018) can help students understand the distinction he is making:

- Who knows more about clay? (A) a geologist or (B) a potter?
- Who knows more about language? (A) a linguist or (B) a poet?
- Who knows more about light? (A) a physicist or (B) a photographer?
- Who knows more about breath? (A) a pulmonologist or (B) a meditator?

Through discussing these questions, students can recognize that all the category A professions (geologist, linguist, etc.) make use of exoteric knowledge, that is, knowledge that is public and verifiable. In contrast, all the category B professions (potter, poet, etc.) make use of esoteric knowledge, that is, knowledge based on direct experience that is incomprehensible to those without similar experience. As the excerpt above indicates, Kukai views esoteric knowledge as superior to exoteric knowledge. Students can discuss the implicates of Kukai's argument further via questions such as the following:

> On the last page, Kukai writes "…Exoteric teachings give medicine according to the capacity of the listener; its words are not useless…[However] what I mean by esoteric is the ultimate, highest teaching. …Compared to the esoteric teachings, the exoteric teachings are not true and real…This difference should be clearly understood." Are there really esoteric teachings? Or does Kukai just want power?

Next, students read an excerpt from Washburn's (2015) translation of Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji*. Whereas the entire translation is over 1000 pages, the following excerpt appears in Chapter 55, which in Washburn's translation is entitled "Fireflies." Here, Genji is speaking to his favorite consort Murasaki about a book she is reading:

> Genji studied the illustration. "How precocious children were back then. I was quite reserved by comparison when I was their age ... a model of behavior, really." In truth, he was fond of being the model for all sorts of unheard-of behavior.
> "You shouldn't be reading love stories in front of [my daughter]," he continued. "She may not be all that intrigued by some young girl holding a secret love in her heart, but she is destined to be Empress, and it would be most unfortunate if she grew to accept the idea that it was normal for such affairs to actually take place."
> …"People with shallow minds may imitate the behavior they read about in these stories, but they look rather pathetic when they do," Murasaki replied. "In The Tale of the Hollow Tree, the young Fujiwara Princess, Atemiya, is a prudent, dignified woman who never goes astray. However, her manner is stiff and unyielding, she lacks feminine grace, and her story ends up being just as bad an influence."

Earlier in the story, Genji chastised another of his consorts—Tamakazura—for reading superficial stories. In that part, Genji preached a view very similar to Kukai's: That reading such stories is only valuable insofar as they impart something about the true nature of reality. As the above excerpt shows, when Genji shared his analysis with Murasaki, she indirectly criticizes him for being shallow. Through discussing this passage, students can come to understand that Murasaki is critiquing a philosophical anthropology, that is, a theory about what it is to be human, prevalent during her time. Genji's philosophical anthropology, based on the idea that there is no stable self, denies human agency. Throughout the novel, Murasaki Shikibu criticizes the superficial belief systems of her aristocratic—and especially her male—characters in this way.

Later in the course, students will have the opportunity to interrogate this critique in more detail while discussing works by Yosano Akiko and Hiratsuka Raicho, arguably the founders of Japanese feminism. As a brief introduction, in her essay "The Conditions for Reform," Yosano Akiko argues that Japanese women must claim the agency that Genji—at least in the above excerpt—appears to deny them. In contrast, Hiratsuka Raicho asserts—in her essay "The Rise of Women's Movements" as well as other places—that the entire male-created system needs to be dismantled and rebuilt into something else. Through reading both articles, learners can come to recognize that Japan has a feminist tradition, and that this tradition is in continuity with the emphasis on naturalness found throughout Japan's intellectual history (Brown, 1993). Particularly in Hiratsuka Raicho's writing, it is obvious that her view of feminism is deeply connected with basic, biological facts about being a woman—including the desire to have children.

Final Thoughts

As noted above, Shared Inquiry allows language teachers to develop content-based courses that play to their strengths, that is, Shared Inquiry encourages teachers to read deeply and create discussion questions that encourage student-centeredness; however, Shared Inquiry does not require a teacher be an expert about all the literary works he or she will assign. Instead, this method encourages teachers to select works that are conceptually rich and hang together around similar themes. In the first example, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Mary Lavin's *On Happiness* share the common theme of happiness in human life. In the second example, Kukai's philosophy of exoteric and esoteric knowledge supplies two conflicting views about the nature of truth. Genji adopts the esoteric view that the only true knowledge is that which illuminates the Buddhist path; however, his interlocutors point out that this view is shallow and inaccurate. Indeed, conflicting views of how and on what basis we can know things flow through the Japanese intellectual tradition, including into early expressions of Japanese feminism. In this way, Shared Inquiry can be an effective way to develop a CLIL course because, whereas the emphasis is still on the content, the way students engage with the content is primarily through invoking personal experiences and using their language to talk about it. When level-appropriate, my experience has been that this is an extremely rewarding—and even addictive—way to teach CLIL.

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The Formulation of a Classroom Observation Instrument for Recording Purpose of Recording Error Correction in EFL Classes

Jason Murray

Abstract

The paper investigates error correction in English as a Foreign Language Discussion classes and methods employed by teachers when addressing errors. The paper will begin with discussing general attitudes and perceptions toward error correction. The body of the paper primarily focuses on formulating an observation instrument (OI), which is able to effectively record error corrections. From the results, the OI will be evaluated and modified at three stages of the formulation. It is hoped that the formulations and analysis will improve the OI in areas such as ways in which teachers navigate error correction through the stages of the lesson, ways in which the errors are corrected, and the effectiveness (i.e., is the error likely to be repeated again?) of the correction. The paper will conclude with an overall reflection of the investigation and will assess the effectiveness of the OI as a tool for trainee teacher development purposes, with a focus on measuring error correction.

Keywords: error correction, English as a Foreign Language, teacher development, observation instrument

Introduction

One of the most important aspects in English as a Foreign Language class is error correction. It is also considered invaluable for motivating students and assisting with learning. However, error correction poses teachers obstacles when addressing errors. For instance, not all students like to be corrected, yet want to improve their accuracy and fluency. If the chosen correction is not given correctly, it could potentially affect students' confidence and inhibit fluency. The teacher also has to consider how much error correction is adequate. Insufficient correction might leave students feeling dissatisfied, and potentially, the students will continue to make the same mistakes. In Hendrickson's 1978 review of feedback, he asks a series of questions for the teacher to consider:

Should learners' errors be corrected?
When should learners' errors be corrected?
Which errors should be corrected?
How should errors be corrected?
Who should correct learner errors?

However, there have been many disputes among linguists over these questions. Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Ellis (2001) provide us with examples of the various types of feedback. For example, implicit, recast, clarification request, metalinguistic clues, elicitation, and repetition. From the various types of feedback, past surveys have indicated that recast is the most common, though its effectiveness is disputed. Recasts deploy repetition as correction. Mackay and Philip (1998) argue that repetition is mechanical and question whether the student is simply repeating without learning. Hornby and Sally (2009) provide a thought-provoking example by definition when separating the words. For example, Error is a formal way of saying mistake, and Correction is a change from

something more accurate than it was before. With the aforementioned linguist's comments considered, we can say that the error is a violation to the set of rules, and as the linguists/teachers write the EFL textbooks and set language rules for teaching and learning, it is the teacher's role to address the errors. Furthermore, if students are being tested and evaluated on the set of rules from the textbooks, that alone justifies the importance of error correction. The aims of the investigation is for teacher development purposes and to elucidate the practice of error correction in EFL classes. In addition, it is hoped that the OI will facilitate in answering the research questions for this paper.

Research Questions

Which stage in the lesson did the error happen?
What was the language error?
Who corrected the error?
How was the error corrected?
How effective was the correction?

Observations: The class observations were conducted at Rikkyo University in Tokyo. The English Discussion program promotes the Communicative Approach methodology and follows a unified curriculum (Brereton, 2019). All the teachers tailor their lessons to ensure that the students have a high degree of student speaking time (SST) and for the classes to be as student-centered as possible. On average, there are 10 students in each class. The English Discussion program is credit-based and is mandatory for all freshmen students. The class levels range from Level 1, the highest, to Level 4, the lowest. Prior to the observations, the teachers were not given explicit details of the research as not to influence their actions and impact the OI. The objectives for each lesson is for the Discussion Skills (function language) and Communication Skills (comprehending, clarifying, and paraphrasing language) to be incorporated in the discussions. An important consideration when planning observations was to observe a variety of lessons and levels, which would enrich the gathered data as a result.

Observation Instrument Plan for Design One

Design One was organized to be as broad as possible; 4 columns were used. The first column was the *stage* to record when the error took place. The second column focused on the *language errors.* It was important to find out any patterns of errors, which would make the investigation more comprehensive for the observer. The third column could identify the teacher's *correction strategy.* The effectiveness of the feedback given to students could also be noted. Furthermore, it would make interesting reading for the observer to see the various correction techniques. In the fourth column, a *Correction: Teacher/Student* was included in order to be able to record the number of corrections made by the either the teacher or the student.

Classes Observed: Three Discussion Classes - Level 2 (x1), Level 3 (x1) and Level 4 (x1).

Observation Instrument - Error Correction　Design One

Level	Class time	Number of Students

Stage Key
F= *3-2-1 Fluency*
P2= *Practice 2*
D1=*Discussion 1*
D2= Discussion 2

Stage of Lesson	Language Error	Correction Strategy	Correction: Teacher/Student

Evaluation of Observation Instrument Design One

Various data were recorded from the three observations. On reflection, it was challenging and time-consuming writing the relevant information in the appropriate columns. The student's utterances were also recorded. However, it was difficult to accurately record the teacher's correction strategy. Throughout the lesson, error corrections were missed due to constantly writing down data. Another area of the OI that was over-looked was class notes, which would be beneficial when evaluating the OI. After the first two observations, strategies were developed where specific references could be used for the teacher's feedback as opposed to writing in dialogue form. The reduced time spent writing made it possible to assemble information much more accurately and comprehensively than before. Recording information in the *stage* column was quite straightforward, and as expected, corrections were always given after activities. The *Correction: Teacher/Student column* was proving to be inconclusive. The lower-level classes were mainly teacher-centered as opposed to student-centered. From the first two observations, 99% of the corrections were by the teacher. As a result, the *Correction: Teacher/Student* column needed to be redesigned.

Classes Observed: Three Discussion Classes - Level 2 (x1), Level 3 (x1) and Level 4 (x1).

Observation Instrument Plan for Design Two

From the evaluation of Design One, significant changes needed to be made in order to measure quantitative data smoothly. After consideration, the *stage* box was not amended, as most of the class levels were low Pre-Intermediate (Level 3) to Elementary (Level 4). The low-level classes were very structured, and as a result, data could be measured accurately and without any restrictions. Furthermore, as there is a lot corrective feedback variation from class to class, analyzing and noting that many teachers felt comfortable when using a particular correction method significantly influenced the recorded data on the OI. The *correction strategy* column was a concern and needed to be refined, so noting all the different types of corrective feedback were made. The inclusion of a key would reduce writing (i.e., recording letters as opposed to words), which would save considerable time. The *correction strategy key* was implemented as follows (with meanings): *EC= Explicit Correction*. The teacher makes it clear to the student that their utterance was incorrect and directly corrects. *R= Recast*. The teacher informs the error implicitly and provides the correction. CR=Clarification Requests. The teacher may indicate an error by asking the student to repeat the information, pretending not to have understood the information. MC= *Metalinguistic Clues*. The teacher does not directly give the correction but will ask a question directly referring to the incorrect utterance. E= *Elicitation*. The teacher will elicit the mistake by asking questions. Repeating the student's utterance until the mistake. The teacher's pause will indicate the error and allow the student to reformulate the utterance. There are similarities between metalinguistic clues and elicitation. The difference being that elicitation correction requires the student to repeat their utterance. A metalinguistic clue requires only a yes/no response. A slight change was made to the *correction* column. The amendment enables the student's response to the feedback and corrected/uncorrected errors to be recorded.

Observation Instrument-Error Correction

Design Two

Level	Class time	Number of students

Stage Key
F = *3-2-1 Fluency*
P2 = *Practice 2*
D1= *Discussion 1*
D2 = *Discussion 2*

Correction Strategy Key
EC = *Explicit Correction*
R = *Recast*
CR = *Clarification Requests*
MC = *Metalinguistic Clues*
E = *Elicitation*

Correction Key
C = *Corrected*
U = *Uncorrected*

Stage	Correction Strategy	Correction

Evaluation of Observation Instrument Design Two

Recording the errors were considerably easier for Design Two, and the amount of time writing while observing lessons significantly reduced. As mentioned from the Design One evaluation, the *stage* column contributed to inconclusive results, as there were no clear-cut stages during the first two observed lessons. The *stage* column worked effectively when the observed lessons were structured. The low levels were much more structured, and a range of errors at various stages of the lesson could be recorded. The high levels tended to be more of a mixed bag or content-based instruction, and there was not any variation between discussing the homework at the beginning of the class to the wrap-up activity at the end of the class. While observing, all the abbreviated stages had been included on Design Two without difficulty. Recording language errors significantly improved. The errors could be noted with more accuracy than before due to the *correction strategy* column. After each lesson, analyzing the errors and highlighting the types of errors in red pen were made. Errors in areas such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary were accounted. Modifying the *language error* column in order to reduce writing time and to monitor the types of errors was considered. The size of the *language error* box needed improving, as there was insufficient space to record dialogue between student and teacher accurately. The inclusion of the *correction strategy* column made very interesting reading. Recordings of the correction strategies from each teacher and the effectiveness of a particular strategy provided interesting analysis. For example, the most common strategies used and the ones which were the most effective were clearly visible on the OI. It was also interesting to note the variation of strategies used by teachers. For instance, in the first observation, 12 corrections were recorded and the recast strategy was used 9 times. In the second observation, 10 errors were recorded and the elicitation strategy was used 6 times. It was clear that some teachers felt comfortable employing a particular correction strategy as opposed to using a variation of correction strategies. The *correction* column allowed recordings of the number of corrected and uncorrected errors. From the findings, comparing effective and ineffective correction strategies was possible. Overall, the *correction* column was very successful and the results were very useful, though the *correction* column could still be improved, which would make gathered data from Design Three much more conclusive.

Classes Observed: Four Discussion Classes - Level 3 (x2) and Level 4 (x2).

Observation Instrument Plan for Design Three

For Design Three, sufficient writing space in the *language error* box was a consideration. It is intended to include dialogue between student and teacher, which would help measure successful and unsuccessful error corrections. The *correction method* box and the *stage* box would remain the same. The *correction method* box proved to be very successful in Design Two and saved crucial time measuring the information accurately. The *stage* box had been successful in structured lessons for low levels. The majority of lessons observed have been structured low-level classes. For *language error*, a tick system is included. The tick system would assist identifying the types of errors at speed. Furthermore, being able to analyze the most frequent errors with clarity and the effectiveness of the correction would be advantageous. The *correction* box needed modifying in order to obtain more conclusive data. An *uptake* key box was included. The uptake would focus on the student's response immediately after being corrected and the student's actions from the teacher's corrective feedback.

Observation Instrument-Error Correction

Design Three

Level	Class time	Number of students

Stage Key
F= *3-2-1 Fluency*
P2= *Practice 2*
D1= *Discussion 1*
D2= *Discussion 2*

Uptake Key
TR=*Teacher Repaired*
SR=*Student Repaired*
U= *Unrepaired*

Correction Method Key
EC= *Explicit Correction*
R= *Recast*
CR= *Clarification Requests*
MC= *Metalinguistic Clues*
E= *Elicitation*

Language Error Key	
G= *Grammar*	**P**= *Pronunciation*
V=*Vocabulary*	**M**=*Miscommunication*

Stage		DIALOGUE
Language Error		
Correction Method		
Uptake		

Stage		DIALOGUE
Language Error		
Correction Method		
Uptake		

Stage		DIALOGUE
Language Error		
Correction Method		
Uptake		

Stage		DIALOGUE
Language Error		
Correction Method		
Uptake		

Stage		DIALOGUE
Language Error		
Correction Method		
Uptake		

Stage		DIALOGUE
Language Error		
Correction Method		
Uptake		

The key would focus on the following three areas: The teacher repaired error correction (TR), a student repaired error correction (SR), and unrepaired student error (U). In order to record the data smoothly, accurately, and to be able to identify each error easily, the layout design needed to be amended. Using five boxes, the design would be much more compact. Four of the boxes, *Stage*, *Language error, Correction method,* and *Uptake*, simply required a tick. The enlarged *dialogue* box would allow writing the dialogue between the teacher and the student. Counting corrections identified from previous observations, the average number of recorded errors were between 10/12. OI Design Three can record six error corrections; therefore, at least two OI (12 errors) would be required per lesson.

Evaluation of Observation Instrument Design Three

The findings from Design 3 were very conclusive, and the OI could be used more effectively than that for the previous designs. The *dialogue* box proved invaluable, as it was possible to virtually record the exact dialogue between the teacher and the student, and as a result, it helped assess the *uptake* accurately. As the key was abbreviated, the abbreviations could be easily memorized, so recordings could be done without the need to refer to the key. Other notable data from the OI indicated that effective correction would generally occur when the teacher asked questions directly to the student. Elicitation was by far the most effective method of correction. The least effective corrections occurred when the teacher gave feedback after speaking activities. For example, when incorrect utterances were written by the teacher on the whiteboard. The students could identify the errors in written form and in groups or individually, generally repairing the error that can be harmful when learning a language. Although the uptake of these errors was SR (student repaired), it is more likely that the student will repeat the error in the future. Furthermore, almost all recast and explicit corrections were unrepaired. Overall, the Design 3 OI could function as intended. However, if I were to make a further amendments, then recording data at various stages of the lesson would be a consideration. For instance, omitting the *Warm-up* stage of the lesson as it generally provided inconsequential data. On reflection, the *uptake* area of the OI has made me more aware as to how and when to give feedback. Although I am an experienced teacher, I now consider my own corrective strategies when teaching with much more cognizance.

Conclusions and Implications

From this investigation, approaches and methods used in lessons varied considerably, which greatly affected the OI. For instance, the OI was more effective when observing structured lessons, such as when employing presentation, plan, and production and test, teach, and test methodologies. However, the OI was least effective during a content-based lesson. As a result, data were insufficient, and many areas on the OI were largely redundant. In addition, the data indicated that the number of errors corrected contrasted considerably from teacher to teacher. That statistic could imply either that some teachers are less concerned about correcting errors or that some teachers have received comprehensive training and some teachers have not had adequate training. For further research in error correction, the OI tool, after redesigning, could be used to pursue further investigations. For instance, measuring the success/failure of the teacher's error correction techniques and a more in-depth account of the methods of correction. The OI recorded five methods of correction. From the observations, notes were also taken on teachers' behavior. For example, some teachers were very

theatrical when addressing an error. For example, using over-the-top intonation as a way to draw the students' attention to the error. The correction was applied by finger correction, head shaking, or gesticulating. The errors were generally repaired. On reflection, the teacher's strategies were very effective, as errors were dealt with in a light-hearted manner. Overall, much insight on corrective feedback techniques and the transformed OI served as a useful tool during the research. It is hoped that the developed OI could assist a trainee EFL teacher for teacher development purposes to become more competent when giving effective error correction. As a result, the teacher would feel more accomplished with gaining an overall understanding into error techniques, which would generate more awareness and a good attitude toward learners' error correction. The investigation from this paper indicated that the students' need for error correction is essential for learning. However, the argument remains that there is not one universal rule for all teachers to follow, though showing understanding and sensitivity toward students' feelings is recommended.

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【Teaching Practice Report】

How Masks Have an Impact on Communication

Jon Mahoney

Abstract

This study reflects on how wearing facial masks has an impact on communication. In total, 118 students took part in the study. A mixed methods approach was utilized to collect both qualitative and quantitative data in the form of class notes, interviews, and a Google Form, respectively. In general, students gave negative impressions about wearing masks, indicating that wearing them negatively impacted their ability to communicate smoothly with their classmates. For example, being unable to read the other person's mood or nuance and having to use more body language to convey their feelings. Results from this study suggest that instructors need to be mindful of the impact of wearing masks and should implement classroom strategies to compensate for this barrier in communication, such as effective seating arrangements, the issuance of name cards, attention to room temperature and acoustics, and the wearing of transparent face masks.

Keywords: Masks, communication, impact

Introduction

Since the onset of COVID-19, the wearing of masks has become mandatory for all teachers and students in the Japanese education system. This radical change has been implemented rapidly and generally accepted by educators and students alike. While the benefits are clear, providing protection from the COVID-19 virus, the drawbacks are complex and subjective. In this reflective study, the author explores the implications of this significant societal change and investigates how this new normal is impacting communication in classes and discusses the mental processes simultaneously taking place within this idiosyncratic environment. By investigating and analyzing the impact that wearing masks has on students' ability to communicate smoothly, the author will endeavor to provide some pedagogical strategies that instructors ought to be cognizant of.

This study took place at a private University in Tokyo, Japan. A total of 118 students took part in the study. All the students were participating in the discussion module, a 14-week course with the primary goal of having students discuss present-day topics using a selection of marked language skills. Instructors are required to encourage maximum verbal output from students and to facilitate balanced and interactive discussions about current topics in English with their peers (Hurling, 2012). Each class consists of around 10 students, with each member placed into classes with other members with a similar English competence. Preferably, 10- and 16-minute discussions take place in every lesson and should be balanced, interactive and co-constructed by all participants.

Masks and Communication

During the height of the pandemic the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended that healthy people wear nonmedical masks to control the spread of COVID-19, such as, in settings where physical distancing is unable to be achieved (WHO, 2020). This implies that peoples' faces have been obscured from one another. Our faces provide vital information of personal identity; —for example, trustworthiness, attractiveness, age, and sex. All these visual factors enable an interlocuter to be able

to gauge the other's emotional state via expression analysis (Bruce & Young, 1986). Face masks routinely worn during the COVID-19 pandemic to cover the mouth and the nose, envelop about 60 to 70% of the lower area of the face that is important for emotional expression and, consequently, emotion reading. Significantly, these masks cover an area of the face that is vital for the effective nonverbal communication of emotional conditions (Nguyen et al., 2021). Recognizing emotions is pivotal for social interaction. Explicitly, interpreting other people's facial gestures is of paramount importance during social development when children learn to interrelate with others (Denham et al., 2014).

Several studies have recently focussed on trying to understand the impact of face masks on various aspects of social interaction and cognition (Carbon, 2020; Carbon and Serrano, 2021; Freud et al., 2020; Gori et al., 2021; Marler and Ditton, 2021; Noyes et al., 2021; Spitzer, 2020). Many of these studies have demonstrated the deleterious effects of masks on the recognition of facial emotion and identity. The ability to see one's facial movements is useful for knowing mental states and plays a part in cultivating empathy (Marini et al., 2021). Facial expressions play a vital role in communication and the passing on of emotion across individuals. People judge the facial expressions of one another, which helps them forecast events and situations and allows them to develop suitable responses to them (Mheildy, 2020). The importance of the role of facial expressions in communication would seem to be apparent. One way to negate the impact of masks has been put forward by Marini et al (2021), who have argued that transparent masks that restore visual access to the mouth region have almost no adverse effects on emotion recognition. In the next section, the history of masks in Japan shall be reviewed.

Masks in Japan

Prior to the pandemic, mask usage was already well-established in Japan. Burgess and Horii (2012, p.1184) have argued that it is "socially embedded as a general protective practice" as a kind of "risk ritual." Mask wearing seems to be a normal coping strategy for Japanese people and is adjustable to various kinds of risks and uncertainties (Horii, 2014). The genesis of this refuge in wearing masks in Japan is debatable. One credible impetus for the inception of this behaviour is the onset of Spanish Flu in 1918. Rice and Palmer (1993) have posited that this global pandemic brought the nation of Japan together. By wearing a mask, it was a representation of a national defense against an invisible threat. Another possible catalyst toward the road of mask dependency is the emergence of hay fever in Japan. The ubiquity of Japanese cedar pollinosis increased 2.6-fold between 1980 and 2000 (Kaneko et al., 2005). Significantly, around 80 per cent of those afflicted using "self-care" methods of avoiding pollen (Okuda, 2003), with over 70 per cent of those wearing masks for protection. (Dake et al., 2003). Furthermore, the outbreak of SARS in 2003 caused a notable rise in the usage of flu masks in Japanese society, chiefly at international airports (Horii, 2014). While these events seem to provide a timeline to masks being so widely adopted in Japan, there may be more deeper reasons for their prevalence. Mask usage in Japan has developed into an ambiguous behavioral adaptation concerning health risks, sometimes without a specific objective, which also encompasses "cosmetic and comfort purposes" (Simonitch, 2012).

Methodology

After gaining consent from students via a research consent form stating my intentions, starting

from week two, the author began taking notes in class on what he deemed to be any abnormal behavior caused from wearing masks. For example, breakdowns in communication, unusual body language, or raised voices. In the final class of the semester, the author shared a Google Form with seven closed quantitative questions using the Likert scale and one open-ended qualitative question (see Appendix A), which asked the students to share their feelings on how wearing a mask has impacted their ability to communicate throughout the semester. Students were also allowed to discuss this topic in the final class of term. Research by Carbon (2020, p.6) posited that "face masks may complicate social interaction as they disturb emotion reading from facial expression." The author intends to explore what impact wearing masks has on 1st-year Japanese university students, who are required to interact smoothly in class in English in the discussion class module. The author will also consider the pedagogical implications of the findings and how it may be possible to limit the negative impact that masks have on communication.

Lookatme Masks

In lesson six, the theme of the lesson was culture. The author included a warm-up question: "*Did you have a custom of wearing a mask before COVID-19?*" Most of the students indicated that they did not but that they did wear them when they were sick to protect other people. Some students also indicated that wearing masks in the wintertime helped them to keep warm. During these questions, the author often heard the students say that they strongly disliked wearing masks now, especially in the heat of summer. Some of the ideas mentioned in this lesson by students included the following:

Wearing a mask is bad because we can't make friends and remember names, but we must try our best.
I don't like wearing a mask because I can't tell who is speaking and I feel hot.
I want to see people's expressions and enjoy speaking more.
Wearing a mask is good because we have facial equality.

The responses given by students in this activity prompted the author to experiment with using Lookatme masks (see Appendix B) in two of his classes. In the previous academic year, the university in which this study is conducted distributed transparent Lookatme masks to all teachers and students. All these masks were free of charge, and their usage was encouraged by the university but not deemed as mandatory. Several emails were sent by the university to teachers and students that these masks were available, and all were encouraged to wear them. The author had issued Lookatme masks to his students in the previous year and advised them to wear them if they wanted to, but none of the students did so. This was perhaps influenced by the fact that the author did not set an example of wearing the mask himself, since he felt unaccustomed to them. Being that this was during the height of the pandemic and students had been studying online for over a year in most cases, this response was perhaps understandable. The author proposed to students in two classes in this study from week nine that they try wearing the masks for just one lesson and to see if they aided in their communicative abilities. The students agreed, and the university provided enough free masks for the two classes. The author began wearing a Lookatme mask from week eight and had noticed that although students were initially surprised, they soon got used to the author wearing it. The author also believed that they understood his instructions more easily and appreciated that they could see his smile and facial reactions to their discussion performances.

When the students in the two participating classes initially put the masks on, it was the first time for them to see each other's faces. Therefore, there was a mixture of excitement and nervousness. It was soon apparent that students became relaxed wearing them and started to enjoy speaking to each other with more freedom. In one class especially, it was noticed that all the students smiled for almost the entire class and participated actively. Unfortunately, on the day of trying the masks for the first time in the other class, the weather was extremely hot and uncomfortable since there was a heatwave in Japan at that time. Although very similar findings were produced, due to the heat the students took longer to relax and enjoy seeing each other's faces. At the end of each class, students were asked if they felt that the mask improved the smoothness of their speaking, and 19 out of 20 students agreed. The students were advised that if they wanted to continue wearing the Lookatme masks for the remaining five classes, then they should bring one to the class and that it was completely their choice. In the following classes, three students in one class continued to wear the Lookatme masks until the end of term. While, in the other class, just one student brought the Lookatme mask and wanted to wear it, but because the other classmates had not done so, this student swiftly put the mask away into their bag, indicating to the author that peer pressure had played a role in this.

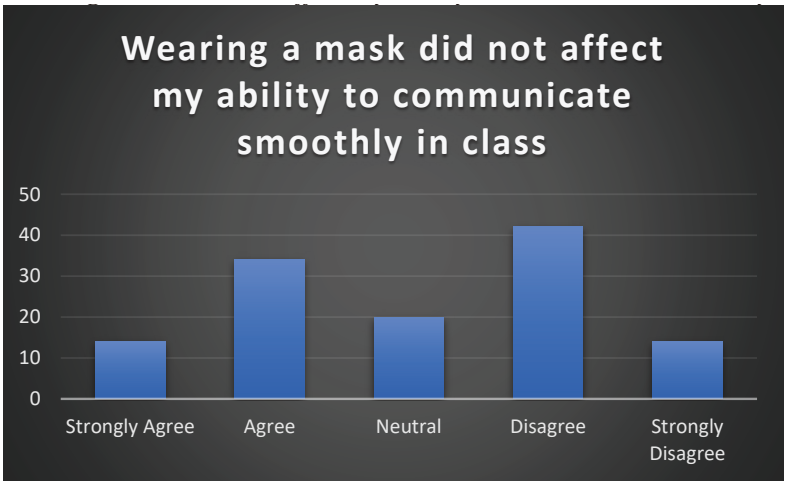
Findings

In the final class of the semester, the students were asked to complete a Google Form to indicate their impressions of using masks throughout the semester. A total of 118 students completed the form.

The first four statements posed to students were designed to foster their general feelings of wearing masks in class. The results were reasonably ambiguous from the first statement poised to the participants. Figure 1 below shows that students did not clearly indicate if masks had impacted their ability to communicate smoothly in class. However, there was a marginal preference that masks did have a negative impact, with 56 students (48%) indicating that they had and 48 students (40%) indicating otherwise.

Figure 1

Wearing a mask did not affect my ability to communicate smoothly in class



Statement two: "Wearing a mask in class made me feel comfortable," provided similar findings, with a majority 46 students (38%) agreeing with this and some 32 students (27%) disagreeing this

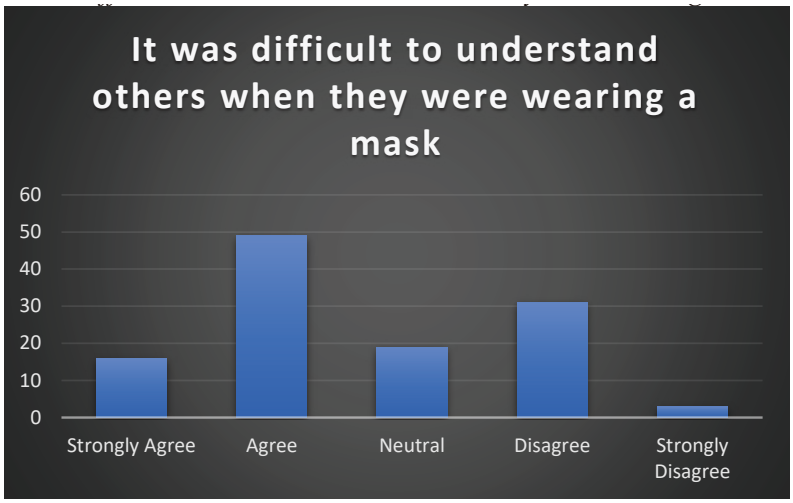
statement. This finding can be attested to the obvious fact that masks protected students from infection.

Statement three: "I often wanted to take my mask off in order to communicate smoothly" also provided slightly agreeable data. A total of 45 students (38%) agreed with this statement, with 36 students (32%) giving an opposite view. The observation by the author during class of many students often adjusting their masks lend credence to the fact that almost half of students indicated that they had felt this compulsion.

The fourth statement posed to students provided clearer results. A total of 64 students (56%) agreed that it was difficult to understand others when wearing a mask, with 33 students (30%) indicating that it was not difficult. With this being a discussion class, in which it is very important to understand other's ideas and opinions smoothly, this is a sizable difference in opinion. This perhaps suggests that some students were more accustomed to wearing a mask than others.

Figure 2

It was difficult to understand others when they were wearing a mask

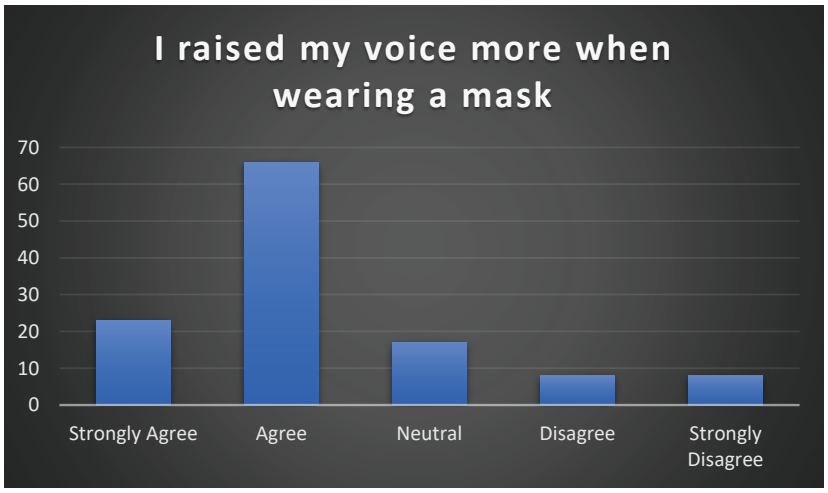


Statements five, six, and seven were designed to garner students' feelings of how the wearing of masks affected their behavior during the class. A total of 58 students (49%) agreed with statement five: "I used more body language than usual when wearing a mask," with only 28 students (23%) disagreeing, suggesting that students were required to exert more energy when using a mask to make their opinions understood.

Regarding statement six, we can see a clear disproportionate response from students on the topic of raising their voices in class. A total of 89 students (75%) agreed with the statement, with just 16 students (14%) disagreeing (see figure 3 below). Together with the extra usage of body language, the extra pressure of having to speak louder may play a role in students' performance and motivation.

Figure 3

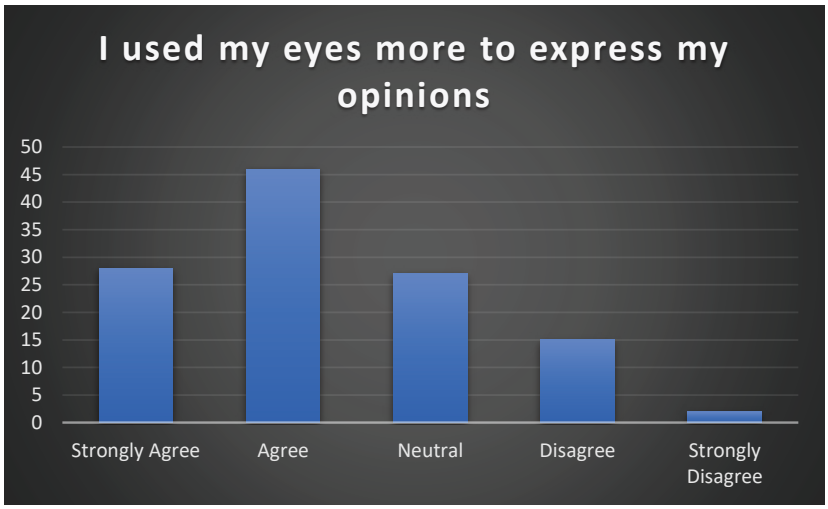
I raised my voice more when wearing a mask



The data gathered from statement seven regarding using eyes as a form of communication was also unambiguous. A total of 74 students (62%) indicated that they did rely on more eye communication, with just 16 students (14%) indicating otherwise (see figure 4 below). The author paid particular attention to the eye movement of students when evaluating speaking tests. By doing this, the author could usually detect who was taking speaking turns smoothly.

Figure 4

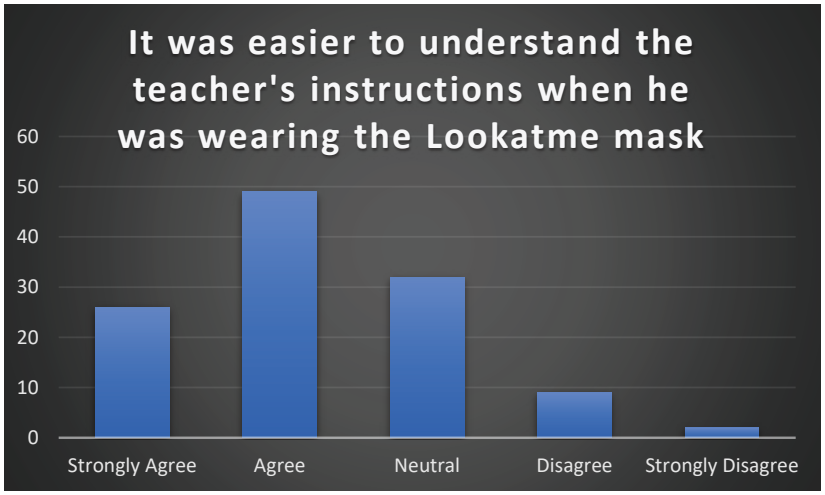
I used my eyes more to express my opinions



The final statement was chosen to collect students' impressions of the teacher wearing a transparent mask in class. The author wore the Lookatme mask for the final six classes of term. The results, with 74 students (63%) agreeing that they understood the teacher's instructions more clearly, pale in comparison with that of only 11 students (9%) disagreeing (see figure 5 below).

Figure 5

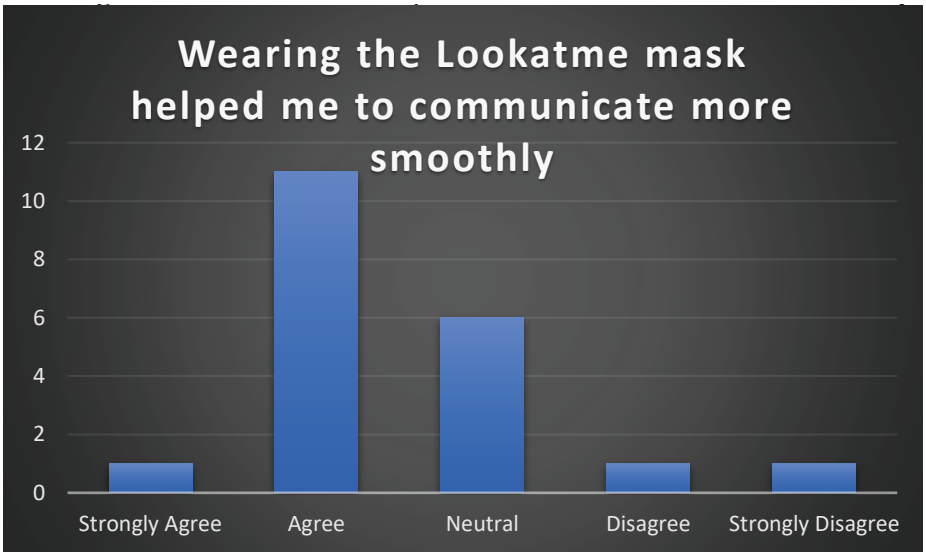
It was easier to understand the teacher's instructions when he was wearing the Lookatme mask



There was an additional statement on the Google Form for the two classes who wore the Lookatme masks. By looking at the figure below, we can see that 20 students (60%) agreed that wearing the masks boosted their ability to communicate smoothly, with only two students (10%) indicating otherwise. Six students (30%) were neutral (see figure 6 below). Since most students had a favorable experience of wearing the masks, the reasons why almost all the students did not continue wearing them in the following lessons could be deemed as complex.

Figure 6

Wearing the Lookatme mask helped me to communicate more smoothly



The final question was open-ended, asking students to indicate any positive or negative impact that they had felt about wearing masks in class. A total of 14 distinct advantages were stipulated by

students. The most common were feeling relaxed and having peace of mind (seven), followed by taking better care of pronunciation (four). Other noteworthy advantages mentioned included no need for make-up (three) and being shy to show their faces (three). It is understandable that students should pinpoint that masks made them feel relaxed due to the highly transmissible COVID-19 virus. The fact that students mentioned that they had to concentrate on their pronunciation more as an advantage was unexpected and is one of few examples of how masks may improve a student's speaking ability.

Students specified significantly more disadvantages to wearing masks. The most common included unable to see mouths, facial expressions, and emotions (41) and asking classmates to repeat often (18). Having to speak with a loud voice (14) is perhaps linked to the fact that students had to concentrate on their pronunciation more, thereby providing a possible caveat to this advantage. Hard to breathe and feeling hot (10) and difficult to make friends (four) were the other noteworthy disadvantages mentioned. The students who claimed it was hard to breathe lends credence to a study by Dooly et al. (1996), who reported that wearing a mask reduces the approximate value of maximal oxygen uptake by about 10% in an individual.

Group Discussions and Interviews

In the final class of term, the final discussion questions were posed to the students: "What are the advantages and disadvantages of wearing masks?," and "How does wearing a mask impact on communication?"

The most common advantages mentioned fell in line with responses in the open-ended Google Form question, such as protection against viruses and hay fever, no need to wear make-up, or no need to shave and feeling less nervousness. However, some other noteworthy advantages were given, such as from a shy person's point of view, it was easier to start speaking everyone has a beautiful face, there was no need to show a fake smile, and students could hide their true feelings. One student mentioned an advantage as "*No mask, no life,*" to which all the students' classmates agreed. The author later asked: "*What do you mean by this*?," to which the student replied, "*We have been wearing masks for three years, so we feel shy to take them off and change our faces.*"

The most prominent disadvantages again correlated with the data from the Google Form, such as can't see people's true feelings, feeling hot and hard to breathe, and must use body language more. A few students mentioned that it was difficult to speak for prolonged periods because their glasses steamed up.

Many students responded to the second question by saying that they couldn't understand others' true feelings because they couldn't see facial expressions. This prompted the author to ask the question "How did this make you feel?"

Some of the responses to this follow-up question included the following:

It was difficult to express myself confidently.
I had to use gestures more to convey my feelings.
I was worried that they were disappointed about what I had said.
Because I couldn't read the person's mood, I felt anxious and confused.
It was difficult to predict how they would feel or react, so I felt anxious and hesitant.
The flow of the discussion was interrupted because I couldn't understand classmates' nuance.

The two classes who had participated in the Lookatme experiment were also asked the follow-up question: "Why did you discontinue wearing the Lookatme masks?" Some of their responses included:

The Lookatme masks helped us to communicate, but do we not have a custom of wearing these masks.
The Lookatme masks are uncommon. We first met wearing normal masks, so it was difficult to change.
The shape of the masks is like a bird's mouth. It was strange for us.

Three students continued to wear the Lookatme mask until the end of term. All these students were male, suggesting that male students had less inhibition to show their faces. One of these students gave some positive feedback of using the Lookatme masks.

I'm grateful for the Lookatme mask. Regular masks irritate my skin and make me feel hot. I also wore my Lookatme mask walking to the station from campus and on the train. It is much better than a regular mask.

Classroom Behavior

Starting from the first classes of the semester, the author noted any abnormal behavior by students that he felt was caused by wearing masks. Some of the main behaviors observed included students speaking louder and gesticulating more frequently; awkward breakdowns in communication when turn taking should have been smoother; frequent adjusting of masks whilst and after prolonged periods of speaking; displays of exasperation in the amount of effort speaking while wearing a mask; often using a folding fan or a portable electric fan to keep cool when speaking; a tendency for extroverted students to maximize their facial visibility to others, in contrast to introverted students who minimized their facial visibility as much as possible; an inability to remember each other's names, which would take place when they had forgotten their name cards; raising hands to take turns and pointing at themselves when speaking; looks of confusion as to who was speaking; frequent requests for classmates to repeat their ideas.

Instructor's Perspective

Masked faces are harder to recognize (Marini et al., 2021). This is no trivial matter. The author's ability to connect with students and create a collaborative environment in classes was impaired by the wearing of masks. If students forgot to bring their name card to class, the author would sometimes find it difficult to remember names to the detriment of the classes' atmosphere. During the semester, the author had a variety of rooms that ranged from small to spacious and a variety of individual differences in students, varying from highly extroverted to extremely introverted. The acoustics of each room is unique, as well as outside on campus or noise from other classes since all doors needed to kept open to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. All these factors play a role in the ability of a teacher to be able to listen carefully and accurately to each class and individual. In addition, wearing masks of all students undeniably made the teacher's task of accurately hearing a student speak was much more challenging. An additional barrier to understanding was that students wore various types

and sizes of masks, making the tasks of deciding who is talking even more difficult. Most students tended to use some form of body language or optic expression to make themselves understood more clearly. However, a significant number of students did not employ such practices, confusing the author as to who was speaking. At such instances, the author had to pay significant attention to discreet movements in the students' eyes and masks to identify who was enunciating. The author often felt that whilst wearing a standard mask, sometimes the students could not read his instructions or feelings accurately. The author clearly noticed that when wearing the Lookatme mask, students understood instructions much faster. It was noted that students focussed on the teacher's oral movements and facial gestures to garner deeper understanding of the lesson's instructions and feedback. It is the author's opinion that showing a smile of approval or a grimace of disapproval is an extremely effective way of giving immediate feedback to students.

Discussion

The fact the students indicated feelings of frustration at not being able to read other student's emotions and true feelings is understandable. Since this study was carried out in a discussion class where the main purpose is for students to maintain conversations and take turns smoothly meant that the masks clearly obstructed and hindered their performance. They made students feel anxious, hot, and tired due to extra body language being used. By contrast, with around a third of students indicating that they felt comfortable wearing a mask and did not want to show their faces, this suggests that Japan has an affinity with wearing masks, which dates back to a century ago. However, the author wonders how detrimental this reliance on masks is for one's communicative and social development. And what is the impact on society itself? Do people become more detached from one another? Will people be able to take off their masks and interact naturally again? One student remarked "No mask, no life" and subsequently explained that they had been wearing masks for three years, which equates to the entirety of their high school days, suggesting that wearing masks has significantly impacted some students' confidence and social skills. Adolescence, which begins with puberty, is a phase in which physical changes such as changes in facial structure take place, along with cognitive, social development as well as changes in perception, motivation, and behavior (Negrea et al., 2019). It is also worth considering the impact on young children. They have perhaps been unable to learn communicative facial cues in early childhood that are pivotal for smooth communication and have been part of human evolution. As was previously mentioned, communication is a combination of voice, body language, and facial expressions. The possibility of breakdowns in communication between people wearing masks cannot be underestimated. Some of the examples that the participants in this study suggested show this is the case. In retrospect, the author should have issued the Lookatme masks earlier in the semester.

Conclusion

There can be no doubt that COVID-19 has profoundly changed the world and has affected how people interact with each other. Good speaking teachers create environments where students can express themselves creatively (Nunan, 2015). Creating this environment has become more challenging. A covered mouth restricts breathing and makes communicating less efficient, while also interfering with understanding. Trust, empathy, timing, and recognition are all negatively impacted when a mouth is obscured. Furthermore, mask wearing creates a sense of acceptance and

compliance, giving a feeling of reassurance in times of distress.

Since a high percentage of the students indicated that they wanted to see the teacher's mouth movements to gain deeper understanding of the instructions and word pronunciation, it is recommended that teachers, especially those who are teaching an L2, consider wearing a facial screen as opposed to a regular medical mask to facilitate this. For now, in Japan, masks are here to stay. It is crucial for teachers of English communicative classes to develop ways of facilitating effective communication in masks while mask wearing remains prevalent, such as effective seating positions with clear name cards in view, management of room temperatures, attention to room acoustics, and an acute awareness of the sensitivity of students in this environment. Teachers will also need to become adept at judging students' communication and participation levels in class, such as paying extra attention to their eye expressions, tone, and body language. More research in this area could be carried out to include the integration of video-based tools into class curricula, which would allow students to become accustomed to speaking without a mask and to see other students' faces, which could possibly aid in diminishing students' reliance on masks.

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Appendix A
Student Survey

1. Wearing a mask did not affect my ability to communicate smoothly.
   Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. Wearing a mask made me feel relaxed and comfortable in class.
   Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. I often wanted to make my mask off to communicate more smoothly.
   Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. It was difficult to understand others when they were speaking in a mask.
   Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. I used more body language than usual when I was wearing a mask.
   Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. I raised my voice more when wearing a mask.
   Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. I used my eyes more to express my opinion.
   Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. It was easier to understand the teacher's instructions when he was wearing the Lookatme mask.
   Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. **Wearing the Lookatme mask helped me to communicate more smoothly**
   Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. Please leave any positive or negative comments about how wearing a mask impacted on your ability to communicate in class.

Note: Question nine was only asked to the two classes that wore the Lookatme masks

Appendix B
Lookatme mask

【Teaching Practice Report】

Identifying and Learning From a High-Intermediate Class Struggling From Foreign Language Anxiety

Jonathan Hennessy

Abstract

Anxiety can have negative effects on student participation in the language classroom, and intervention from the teacher may be required. This paper considers the research into how foreign language anxiety and public speaking anxiety may influence language learners and reflects on a teaching journal of an intermediate English presentation class that may have struggled as a result of their anxiety in the classroom. The class in question struggled with participation in lessons and when they did speak, often spoke very quietly. This was observed in all activities where they were asked to speak in English, and it was particularly problematic during presentations. The author discusses several attempts to address low participation as well as the teacher's process in identifying anxiety as a likely cause of the classes' struggles. While several activities and pieces of feedback were successful in temporarily increasing participation, anxiety and shyness in the classroom continued through the semester. The paper concludes with plans and goals for working with students in future classes that suffer from foreign language anxiety.

Keywords: Anxiety, Presentation, Journal

Introduction

First-year students at Rikkyo University in Tokyo, Japan are required to take an English presentation course during their second semester. They are expected to develop language skills related to organizing and presenting on a variety of topics, and they are also asked to learn skills related to giving an effective presentation, such as maintaining eye contact and controlling their voice to be clear and engaging. While some students thrive and are able to give engaging presentations while easily holding their audience's attention, others struggle with anxiety when asked to speak in a foreign language in front of so many of their peers. This paper reflects on a teaching journal kept for one class where the majority of students never really seemed to be comfortable, despite being a relatively linguistically proficient group.

While linguistic proficiency can be useful as a way for teachers to appropriately match their lessons and goals to the students' abilities, it does not necessarily reflect the students' comfort with using the language. Fear of speaking in public can also cause difficulties for learners regardless of their proficiency and comfort with the language. I started keeping a journal as a result of a class that was the highest proficiency of my presentation classes seeming to struggle to participate and use English in the classroom. My first thoughts questioned their motivation, but this paper will delve into the research that suggests anxiety as a likely cause of the students' struggles and will discuss my process for understanding and trying to help the class in question.

Literature Review

One reasonable expectation for a presentation class is that some students are likely to feel public speaking anxiety. Public speaking anxiety is a common issue for many people (Bartholomay & Houlihan, 2016; Bippus & Daly, 1999; Furukawa et al., 2012; Pull, 2012). Public speaking anxiety is

particularly prevalent among individuals with social anxiety disorder (Furukawa et al., 2012; Pull, 2012) but can also be observed independent of other issues with anxiety (Furukawa et al., 2012; Knappe et al., 2011). Different authors have estimated the prevalence of public speaking anxiety differently. Stein et al. (2010) found public speaking fears in between 9% and 13% of people depending on the location. Furukawa et al. (2012) found 7.3% of junior and senior high school students in one prefecture in Japan. Bartholomay & Houlihan (2016) stated that the most severe form of public speaking anxiety has a prevalence rate of 7%, while 25% to 30% of those in their study demonstrated elevated levels of public speaking anxiety and 50% experienced moderate anxiety related to public speaking.

Public speaking anxiety can have negative effects for those who suffer from it. Bartholomay & Houlihan (2016) noted that public speaking anxiety can be related to lower academic performance and difficulty in employment. Faravelli et al. (2000) explained that avoidance of public speaking is a very common tactic to deal with the anxiety it causes. With the high prevalence of public speaking anxiety, it is reasonable to expect many groups of students to have some struggles with a presentation class where they are expected to speak in front of their classmates.

Foreign language anxiety can make it difficult for learners to participate in a language class, and in some cases, it can affect a learner's ability to acquire the new language (Apple, 2013; Horwitz, 2002; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Ostman & Xethakis, 2021; Pappamihiel, 2002; Shachter, 2018; Teimori et al., 2019; Woodrow, 2006; Yan & Horwitz, 2008). Apple (2013) explained that many researchers have insisted that L2 anxiety is the result of low language skills in the learner's L1, whereas others have suggested that anxiety may instead be a cause of low L2 proficiency. Llinás & Garau (2009) observed higher-proficiency students demonstrating more anxiety than lower-proficiency students. MacIntyre et al. (2002) found that students with high levels of anxiety tended to underestimate their abilities, whereas those with low anxiety overestimated themselves. Of particular relevance to the class in question, anxiety among Japanese learners of English has been observed to be higher than that in Western students learning English (Woodrow, 2006). Ostman and Xethkis (2021) also found that first-year university students were particularly prone to foreign language anxiety.

The outcome of foreign language anxiety on learning is not entirely clear in the research. The most common view is that anxiety has a negative influence on learning outcomes (Pappamihiel, 2002; Woodrow, 2006; Yan & Horwitz, 2008). However, some authors have found no effect from anxiety (Llinás & Garau, 2009) or have found that when the anxiety is appropriately addressed that differences in achievement can be significantly reduced (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). Both Horwitz (2002) and Teimori et al. (2019) noted that anxiety can have negative effects but that it may also have no effect or even positive effects in some cases. In terms of behavior, students with foreign language anxiety may be resistant to speaking in front of their classmates (Ostman & Xethkis, 2021), and they may avoid using certain types of language (Teimori et al., 2019). Woodrow (2006) found that anxiety interfered with output in the classroom, and Pappamihiel (2002) reported that students would choose not to respond or speak in the classroom. Yan & Horwitz (2008) found anxiety could even interfere with comprehension, with students reporting that they could not understand spoken instructions in the classroom but could understand the same instructions later when listening to a recording.

The evidence does suggest that foreign language anxiety can be reduced. Communicative activities and opportunities for conversation have been tied to reducing anxiety (Dykes, 2018; Ostman & Xethkis, 2021; Watson, 2020), and Ostman & Xethkis (2021) specifically noted that making friends in the classroom improved feelings of anxiety. Yan & Horwitz (2008) found that humor in the

classroom could be tied to lower anxiety. Shachter (2018) even observed that anxiety decreased over the course of a semester without any particular intervention.

Poor performance in a language class can also be tied to motivation. Anxiety can have negative effects on motivation (Yan & Horwitz, 2008), but language learning motivation is also often tied to the learner's thoughts about their ideal L2 self (Aubrey, 2014; Hughes et al., 2020). Many students in Japan have few opportunities to use English, thus limiting the development of their ideal L2 self (Takahashi, 2013). Hughes et al. (2020) explained that many second language learners are motivated by a desire to integrate with the communities of speakers in their new language but that in an EFL context, this motivation may not be present. However, teachers can address this potential lack of motivation in the classroom. Cowie and Sakui (2012) found that teachers believed that their actions in the classroom could improve short-term motivation, although they were skeptical of long-term improvements. Visgatis & Tada (2020) found that intervention and assistance from teachers lead to improved student motivation. Watson (2020) found that genuine interest and praise from teachers also had a positive impact on student motivation. Takahashi (2013) found that many students do have goals but are more limited by their opportunities, which could allow teacher intervention to support students in their achievement of those goals.

Discussion

The class that is targeted in this journal was in the level 2 proficiency band, the second highest of the four levels at the university. Teachers are told they can assume the students would have had a TOEIC score between 480 and 680. Previous experience with students of this level was mostly positive, with feedback often focused on meta skills rather than heavily focused on target language or participation. I began writing a journal about this class after the fifth lesson, and in that journal, I wrote that the class seemed quiet and did not participate strongly in the online classes. I was hopeful that the switch to face-to-face classes could be motivating, given that the students had not chosen online lessons, but rather were forced into it by the pandemic. With the quick switch to in-person classes, many classes were not comfortable in the first lesson on campus, but the continued struggles of this class in the fifth lesson made me decide to keep a journal.

Lesson Five: First Face-to-Face Presentations

Students had presented to the class once during their online classes. They each prepared and gave a short self-introduction presentation in the second lesson. They prepared for their first face-to-face presentation in the fourth lesson and gave the presentations in the fifth. These presentations were clearly difficult for the students, though at the time it was not immediately clear to me as to the reason for their struggles. Many students were extremely quiet while giving their presentations to the point that it was difficult to hear many of the presenters from the back of the room, even though the rest of the class was silent as listeners. Most students also primarily looked at their notes, rather than looking at their classmates while speaking. I wrote that it seemed like they did not want to be giving these presentations. Many presenters also failed to reach the required two-minute speaking time. The content of the presentations and the relative fluency with which the students spoke suggested that their language ability was enough to succeed, but for some reason, they struggled to perform well. Most of my experience with other classes at this level had been positive, with one or two students perhaps needing support due to shyness or anxiety, but nearly everyone in this class

struggled with their presentations, and I decided to start keeping a teaching journal. At the time, I could tell there was a problem, but I was unsure what was causing this behavior.

Lessons Six Through Nine: Lead Up to the Next Presentation

After seeing the students struggle with presenting in front of the class, I tried to make the classroom atmosphere more comfortable. I hoped that if they enjoyed being in class more and felt more relaxed, they would be able to participate more and speak more confidently. I believed that the abrupt switch from online classes to face-to-face could have been causing stress and discomfort for students and so I tried to make the atmosphere in class more relaxed. My journals during this period frequently describe the students as seeming to be shy in class but note that they behave differently when they are trying to work in English versus when they speak together in Japanese. This behavior was not limited to presentations but was observed with any activity where they had to speak English.

In the sixth lesson, students were quiet and even getting verbal replies to confirm understanding was difficult. When asked to speak in English with a partner in a warm-up, most groups only stayed in English for a short time before switching to Japanese. I tried to make the atmosphere positive and supportive. I gave praise for answering questions and gave away the answer to a few questions before asking the students to answer. I hoped to reduce what I perceived as a fear of being wrong. This did seem to lead to students being willing to participate, but their energy remained low. At the end of the lesson, students were given ten minutes to discuss the possible topics for their next presentation and choose what they wanted to present about. In my other classes, most students were able to choose a topic in this time limit. However, none of the students in this class replied that they had chosen. It is possible that they had chosen a topic but were unwilling to reply, but this made me question whether the students were shy or extremely unmotivated. Their refusal to participate did remind me of lower proficiency classes with low motivation and no desire to learn English.

In the seventh lesson, I decided to focus on speaking volume, hoping that since the students did generally follow instructions that they might attempt to speak louder when the expectation was explicitly stated. This did temporarily have a positive effect, with activities going better than in previous lessons, but many students quickly returned to speaking quietly. I noticed that when we finished our activities and students began working on their presentations and were allowed to use Japanese to speak to their classmates, their energy and speaking volume increased dramatically. The fact that they seemed to work well in Japanese but shut down when English was required suggested to me that the problems likely were related to English use and comfort with the language.

The eighth lesson was the last lesson to prepare before the next in-class presentations. As usual, students were shy and asking questions to the class yielded no responses. In this lesson, I met with each student individually to discuss their script and give advice and feedback. In these one-on-one discussions, the students seemed to match my expectations about their proficiency. They seemed to understand the feedback and could answer questions easily. During these meetings, students were asked to practice their presentations and to speak with a medium volume, but participation and energy was poor. At the time, I was confused how a class that seemed to be proficient in English seemed unable to use English with confidence. However, in my journal, I did write that it was clear to me that the students were shy about using English. I would mark this as the point that I was clear they were fighting anxiety, even if I did not use those words in my journal.

Lesson Nine: Second In-Class Presentations

The next presentations took place in the ninth lesson, and students were given time to practice with partners before presenting in the front of the class. My journal for this lesson notes that, while students did practice, they were still very quiet and did not seem interested in their practice. In fact, when I turned the projector on to begin preparing for presentations, the entire class stopped speaking and practicing despite having time left. Fortunately, their presentations were somewhat improved from the last time they presented to the class. In the fifth lesson, I had noted that several students were nearly inaudible, whereas this time, none of the students were nearly that quiet. In my journal, I wrote that students still seemed nervous and did not look comfortable in their presentations but that they did seem to take the advice on speaking volume. I was hopeful that if I continued to give specific advice, they could continue to improve for their final presentations.

Lessons Ten Through Twelve: Preparing for the Final Presentation

After the improvement in the students' presentations, I decided to continue focusing on keeping the classroom positive and on giving specific, actionable advice to help students improve. I did not yet know how to improve their participation in activities, but I was hopeful that if I could make them feel more comfortable at least I could make their final presentations a success.

In the tenth lesson, I used a vocal warm-up activity with all of my classes to help emphasize speaking volume and gave instructions at each step to help students more easily speak at louder volumes. This activity was well received in other classes, and the humor involved in making silly noises in a warm-up seemed to help students relax. I was nervous about using the activity with this class as I was not sure that they would be willing to participate, but they did go along with the activity and even followed the feedback about increasing their speaking volume between rounds. I tried to build rapport with the class by using a little Japanese to acknowledge that it could be embarrassing, and several students laughed in response. It is not possible to be sure whether the warm-up had a positive effect or if the students were just finally becoming more comfortable in class on their own, but their speaking volume during group activities was improved. I noted that humor did seem to have a positive effect on their mood and shyness. However, in an activity designed to focus on eye contact, the students were unwilling to correct mistakes made by their classmates. In this activity, students were asked to read a passage aloud from the book but were instructed to only speak while looking at their classmates and to stop their partner if they spoke while looking at the textbook. In other classes, the listeners were engaged and enthusiastic about catching their classmates' mistakes, but in this class, the listeners never stopped the speaker. Even in egregious examples, where the speaker was clearly reading from the book without eye contact, the listeners would not say anything.

While preparing for the eleventh lesson, I noticed that the low energy and perceived shyness of this class was affecting my feelings going into the class. I wrote in my journal that I felt like I just did not want to work with them. I felt like I did not want to do the activities that I thought they would not enjoy even though they seemed so successful with other students. I hoped that I could keep my own feelings controlled so that I could help the students improve to the best of my abilities. In the lesson, they did show some improvement from when I began keeping the journal. Students did not seem to particularly enjoy activities, but they did participate willingly and their energy in class did seem higher than previously. I wrote down that some students seemed to either not listen to or not understand instructions, as several students ignored the instruction to leave their books on the table

for a practice activity. However, it is not clear that this was anything more than a small group of students not listening carefully. In this lesson, students received some feedback on the outlines they submitted for their final presentation and the effort put into those outlines clearly varied considerably. Several students put together a clear, detailed plan that showed thought and hard work, while others failed to meet the minimum requirements of the assignment. At the end of the lesson, I emphasized the benefit of really knowing your content in a presentation and shared some stories that caused some positive reactions from the class, and I wrote in my journal that I hoped it would have an impact on their preparation.

The twelfth lesson was the last lesson before we began final presentations. Most of the time was spent practicing with small groups and meeting with me one-on-one for feedback on their scripts. My notes for this lesson were brief, as so much of my time was spent one-on-one with the students. I did write that, while students were willing to practice their scripts with their groups, they were very quiet while doing so. I wrote that I was unsure if this was a sign of a problem or just normal behavior since multiple groups would have presenters speaking at the same time. I also noted that the overall willingness of students to answer questions and speak up in class had improved since our first face-to-face lessons, and in my journal, I wrote that I hoped the final presentations would continue the improvement I saw between the first and second in-person presentations.

Lessons Thirteen and Fourteen: Final Presentations

The final presentations began in the thirteenth lesson, after the university's two-week winter vacation. I was pleased with the warm-up, and students did seem to have energy when working together as a class. They were a little quiet while practicing with a partner, but it seemed that every student was trying to practice. However, the actual presentations were not as successful as I had hoped. Nearly all of the presenters failed to speak for the minimum required time, and most speakers stared at their notes for the majority of their presentation, leading to poor eye contact. I also wrote in my journal that no student spoke loudly enough for me to have considered it a good performance, and a few were nearly inaudible from my position at the back of the classroom. I thought it was possible that students were less energetic since they had just finished their winter holidays, but it did not seem like the students were motivated or prepared.

We finished our final presentations in the fourteenth lesson, and there was no improvement from the previous week. Students were very quiet during the warm-up activity and practice and their presentations were poor. Again, most speakers failed to reach the minimum required speaking time, and nearly every speaker avoided eye contact, read from their notes, and spoke quietly. Two students even had to be stopped and told that they were so quiet that I could not hear them and one of those failed to raise their voice even after being stopped. I wrote that it was difficult to judge whether the students were shy, afraid, or just did not care about the class. I was disappointed that the improvements I saw during the semester had entirely disappeared for the final presentations.

Reflection

Looking back on the class, reflecting on the journal, and considering the literature that I read to help understand this class, I am confident that foreign language anxiety was a major contributor to the difficulty the students had performing in class. Initially, I had some thoughts about public speaking anxiety, but the way that students struggled in groups and in activities that did not involve

presenting showed that it is not really possible to explain everything with just a fear of presenting. In particular, what stands out to me is the dichotomy of their behavior when using English and their behavior when they were allowed to speak Japanese. I would expect that any class would feel more comfortable in their native language, but this class went between nearly silent and impossible to work with to relaxed and energetic with the switch. The avoidance of participation and refusal to use the target language was as detailed by Pappamihiel (2002). There were certainly times in the class where I considered motivation to be the culprit, but there were students who seemed to work hard outside of class only to shut down when they needed to use English in class, suggesting that motivation could not be the sole cause of their problems. It is possible that the students' anxiety also reduced their motivation in class, as Yan & Horwitz (2008) noted.

My previous experience with students at this proficiency level led me to expect them to function reasonably well in English, and while I would not have been surprised if some students were anxious to start the semester, I was caught off-guard when the entire class struggled to participate. I had expected that higher-proficiency students would be less anxious and better able to perform but, as Llinás & Garau (2009) stated, there are cases where higher proficiency students are more anxious. Learning this will better prepare me to more quickly identify cases when high-proficiency students struggle from anxiety issues.

I have also learned that it is critical to address anxiety issues early and consistently. Shachter (2018) saw anxiety decrease over a semester without any particular intervention, but as I observed in this class, that cannot be counted on to be adequate. As Horwitz (2002) noted, teacher intervention and support can help with anxiety, and there are a variety of options for helping to address anxiety, including using humor (Yan & Horwitz, 2008), using communicative activities (Dykes, 2018), and fostering friendship between students (Ostman & Xethkis, 2021). In this class I did see some impact from activities and teacher feedback, but I believe that designing the course to identify and support anxious students from the start would be more effective at improving their comfort and performance.

Conclusion

Reflecting on this semester and this one problematic class has helped me understand how classes may differ from a teacher's expectations and face challenges that the teacher did not expect before the class began. I also have a better understanding of how foreign language anxiety can impact performance in a language classroom, and I believe I can identify it more readily in the future.

From this experience, I have several changes that I plan to make to my teaching going forward. First, I will separate my understanding of students' proficiency level from my expectations about their comfort in class. By avoiding this assumption, I should be able to do a better job quickly assessing a classes' needs. Second, I plan to adjust the syllabus design to give students more chances to work in small groups and use English together. I believe that while students often do appreciate preparation time for their presentations, reducing interaction time and chances to speak and be friendly with classmates is not a trade-off I want to make. Finally, I want to investigate how I might be able to support students in dealing with anxiety through teacher modeling and interaction. Specifically targeted feedback did seem to improve student performance temporarily, and humor also temporarily seemed to increase participation. I believe that making this a focus for future journals and research could continue to improve my ability to help students who struggle in the language classroom.

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【Teaching Practice Report】

Overcoming Barriers to Student Wellbeing in the Classroom: Utilizing Universal Design for Learning Principles in Lesson Planning, Content, and Delivery

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Abstract

Recent global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic have brought the mental wellbeing of university students to the forefront of many educator's minds. However, they are not, nor should they be expected to be, experts in psychological matters. Therefore, the question becomes as follows: what can educators do to support the wellbeing of students? Taking a social psychology model of disability to understand student behaviors, this paper applies Universal Design for Learning principles to common English language class activities, and based on a teaching journal kept by the author, evaluates their perceived impact on student wellbeing. Comments and suggestions for modifications and accommodations are then offered in order to aid teachers who seek to embed student wellbeing into the design and delivery of their English language curricula.

Keywords: Curriculum design, equality, mental health, psychology, wellbeing

Introduction

Awareness of mental health and wellbeing related issues in society has grown in recent times, at least in part due to global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic (United Nations, 2021). In the tertiary education sector, these challenges have become particularly acute: one study found that in 2020–2021, more than 60% of university students met the criteria for at least one mental health problem, a rise of almost 50% since 2013 (Dopp et al., 2013). In addition to the intrinsic wellbeing impacts incurred by the affected individual, there is also the effect that mental health has on learning. For instance, students with such problems are not only less likely to complete individual modules and get passing grades than those without mental health difficulties (Richardson, 2015), they are also more likely drop out of university altogether (Brown, 2016). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated these concerns. One report noted that 80% of respondents said their mental health had deteriorated during the Coronavirus pandemic (Young Minds, 2020), with young adults aged 18–24–that is, the age of most university students–at greatest risk of suffering from hopelessness, loneliness, and suicidal thoughts (Mental Health Foundation, 2020).

Therefore, having established that challenges to mental wellbeing experienced by university students are significant in number, have a detrimental effect on learning outcomes, and have been exacerbated by recent global events, the need for educators to reflect on mental wellbeing is arguably greater than ever

Regarding terminology, while "mental health" and "wellbeing" are often used synonymously, wellbeing is a wider concept of which mental health belongs to and refers to "a state of happiness and contentment, with low levels of distress, overall good physical and mental health and outlook, or good quality of life" (American Psychological Association, n.d.-b). Moreover, some advocate for a focus on wellbeing rather than mental health. As Houghton and Anderson (2017, p.7) contend,

"…not everyone who experiences a decline in their wellbeing would associate that with a 'health'

concern. Moreover, we wish to draw a distinction between mental wellbeing, which we all have, and a mental health problem which only some of us would identify as experiencing."
In other words, a focus on wellbeing is more inclusive and therefore has greater application, widening the potential benefits of actions that consider it.

Although this paper will discuss concepts around wellbeing, the aim is not to diagnose or assess students for mental health problems, or even to have knowledge of related terminology beyond a layman's definition. Rather, it is hoped that by exploring common wellbeing concepts in the context of the language classroom, individual educators will be better equipped to support the wellbeing of *all* learners. If serious concerns about student wellbeing do occur, advice should be sought from the relevant support department of the individual instruction.

Background

Barriers to Wellbeing

In order to discover how wellbeing can be addressed through curriculum design and delivery, it is first necessary to explore various ways in which learning can impact wellbeing at the classroom level. One useful concept here refers to *barriers to wellbeing* (Oliver 1996). Rooted in the social model of disability, this approach focuses on the environmental, structural, and attitudinal barriers that affect a disabled individual's inclusion and progress in life (Oliver, 1996). Related to this, Lister, Seale, and Douce (2021) discuss a comprehensive array of wellbeing issues in an educational context in their taxonomy of barriers and enablers to wellbeing. This detailed work recognizes the multivariate environmental, skills-related, and study-related aspects of wellbeing in learning. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to cover the work in this field in-depth, a selection of the principal themes identified by Oliver (1996) in particular will be identified and introduced below, along with associated major wellbeing concerns.

Identity. The link between identity and wellbeing is long accepted in psychology. There are innumerable ways through which the classroom experience may impact identity; however, as a starting point, based on Tajfel's (1981) influential work, conceptions of identity in the classroom might consider the learner's personal identity (allowing them opportunities to know and express themselves and their preferences); group identity (letting them participate in group activities in ways they like and are comfortable with); and demographic identity (through awareness and representation). As this can lead to more positive self-conceptions and higher self-esteem, a focus on identity from the formulation stage of lesson planning can therefore help teachers not only to avoid putting up barriers to their students' wellbeing but also design activities that promote it (Bliuc et al., 2017).

Belonging. As Vygotsky (1978) noted, learning is a social process and interactions are key. These social interactions (and therefore learning) inevitably involve the formation of groups–from university wide cohorts, to particular classes, and also formal or informal study groups within classes–at which point a sense of belonging becomes an important consideration. Skipper and Fay (2019) argued that if we feel accepted and valued by other members of a group, we are more likely to seek and develop stronger relationships with them, which will in turn lead to improved wellbeing. The reverse is also true. If we feel like we do not belong, our mental energy is taken up by these feelings, leaving less space for learning (Eisenberger & Cole, 2012). Indeed, many studies have

linked sense of belonging with student performance (OECD, 2000). The responsibility then again falls on educators to focus on belonging in the classroom through cultivating a sense of community wherever possible, explicitly encouraging a supportive atmosphere, and representing students' identities in lesson activities and materials if possible.

Powerlessness. This refers to "state in which individuals either lack or believe that they lack control or influence over factors or events that affect their health (mental or physical), personal lives, or the society in which they live" (American Psychological Association, n.d.-a). The connection to wellbeing is clear, in that when people feel like things are outside their control, their wellbeing is challenged and they are more at risk of mental heal problems (Cheng et al., 2013). Among university students, those who believe they have control over their lives are more likely to be proactive in their learning, whereas those who do not believe they have control are more likely to experience passivity and feelings of hopelessness (Khumalo & Plattner, 2019). An initial way to address this is therefore to find ways to give a sense of power back to students. Studies have shown that whether this is real or simply perceived control is not important, and the wellbeing outcomes are the same (Khumalo & Plattner, 2019). Giving choice over topics, questions, or other classroom details amount to what Scrivener (2012) calls "small bursts of democracy" (p. 115) that can make students feel empowered and heard. Meanwhile, it has long been argued that explicitly emphasizing that academic failures and successes are connected to individually controllable things such as effort, rather than uncontrollable things such as intelligence or natural ability, can also promote a sense of control (Dweck, 1975).

Stress and anxiety. Stress and anxiety are intrinsically connected, with stress described as the response to a threatening situation and anxiety as the reaction to that stress (Mental Health Foundation, 2018). While stress can sometimes be positive (when it is "pressure" to motivate achievement), it can also have negative impacts if there is too much of it. Indeed, the statistics related to university students and stress and anxiety are alarming. During the COVID-19 pandemic, one meta-analysis suggested that the occurrence of anxiety reached 29%, and that stress prevalence reached 23% (Wang et al., 2021). When looking at cases without diagnosis or treatment, the figures become even starker: 84% of students said they felt overwhelmed, 79% felt exhausted, and 46% felt hopeless (Samuolis et al., 2015). The relevance for learning outcomes is clear in that anxiety and stress are clearly related to lower academic performance (Kitzrow, 2003). There are, of course, a range of personal, cultural, and circumstantial influences on stress and anxiety that fall outside the classroom and therefore outside a teacher's influence. However, by being aware of and encouraging coping strategies in their learners, teachers can still have a positive effect. One tactic is problem-focused coping, where students ask for and receive help on a difficult, stress-inducing task (Clarke, 2006). Another is emotion-focused coping, where the stressful task (and therefore the stressful feeling) is avoided altogether (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). Moreover, in further evidence of the importance of belonging, how connected a student feels to their school has also been shown to play a role in ameliorating stress and its effects (Gilman & Anderman, 2006).

Social anxiety. A particular kind of anxiety worthy of its own mention is social anxiety. This discomfort or fear of social situations or events can for some be a barrier to everyday wellbeing as it manifests itself in discomfort or even complete avoidance of certain tasks. As the classroom environment is, in principal, unavoidably social, this type of anxiety is especially relevant for academic performance. It has been found to impair academic educational achievement in particular due to

reduced concentration levels in the classroom (Leigh et al., 2021) as well as how it effects communication with instructors, peers, and overall student experiences (Archbell & Coplan, 2022). However, it is important not to assume that the "solution" to social anxiety is simply more communication and group participation for the concerned individual. Research also shows that that some students simply prefer to work alone where possible and may achieve more as a result (Hood et al., 2021).

Universal Design for Learning

It will be evident to anyone who has spent even a short amount of time in a classroom that every learner is different. Still, while acknowledging that there is no "one-size-fits-all" strategy for addressing classroom wellbeing, the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (CAST, 2018) can yet provide a useful guiding framework for those seeking to cultivate a teaching space with student welfare at its heart. At its core, it encourages flexibility in teaching and learning and can aid a teacher in making their classrooms more comfortable for all. All learners can benefit from UDL principles, not only those with identified wellbeing issues. UDL achieves this by focusing on three key areas: multiple means of engagement, multiple means of representation, and multiple means of action and expression. Due to limitations in the scope of this paper, only a brief overview of UDL's main tenets will be offered before discussing how they can be put into practice in the classroom.

Multiple means of engagement. Offering multiple means of engagement may take the form of giving students a diverse and authentic lesson experience with chances to work alone or in groups. This should be implemented with the individual's autonomy in mind, not forced on them.

Multiple means of representation. This can involve providing learning materials and content in different modes (i.e., audio, video, written, etc.) so that learner autonomy and comfort can be respected, allowing them to choose the format they prefer wherever possible.

Multiple means of action and expression. Related to the above, multiple means of action and expression are simply connected to giving students the opportunity to choose how they prefer to demonstrate their learning. This may include allowing them to record a video instead of presenting in front of the class or answering a topic through a writing assignment rather than a speaking assignment. This must be balanced with individual class or institutional-level grading and assessment criteria.

Methodology

To explore specific ways in which UDL can be employed to overcome various classroom wellbeing barriers, this paper will continue by describing various activities included in typical English language lessons. Then, based on the author's real reflections on teaching these activities, they will be reviewed in light of their potential wellbeing impacts, and suggestions will be made for changes. Finally, more general thoughts on possible intersections of English language classes and wellbeing will be examined, and further amendments will be offered. These views were recorded in a reflective teaching journal, which is a useful means for educators to scrutinize their classroom behaviors, attitudes, and outcomes (McDonough, 1994). Principally, the three cognitive dimensions of reflective

teaching were analyzed: reflection for action, reflection in action, and reflection on action-in other words, interrogating one's instruction before, during, and after the event (Schon, 1983). It is then hoped that the reader will gain a practical understanding of how to embed mental wellbeing in their own curricula.

Discussion

Quizzes

A short paper-based quiz may be given to students in order to assess completion of homework reading tasks. A standard number of minutes is given for this activity, and the filled-out answer sheets are exchanged with a classmate for immediate peer grading. However, when carried out in this standard way, this activity does not follow UDL guidelines. Firstly, the lack of flexibility and autonomy afforded may make learners feel powerless, and secondly, grading each other's work can also have wellbeing impacts. While peer grading is an established time-saver for teachers (Sadler & Good, 2010), studies have suggested that having other learners know and judge their performance can be a source of anxiety (Weisi & Karimi, 2013).

To make this stage of the lesson more wellbeing-friendly, alternative methods of homework assessment should be considered. One possibility is to ask students to journal their reflections on the reading assignment instead of taking a quiz, which could allow freer expression, potentially helping them feel empowered because, as Baik et al. (2017) argue, it allows them to align their responses with their own personal interests. A second benefit is that by giving learners the chance to keep possession of their journals themselves, they provide a differentiated form of self-assessment through which progress over time can be reflected on and self-monitored, which are important parts of the UDL (CAST, 2018). A final benefit here is that it removes the need for peer grading and any associated anxiety. If teachers do wish to continue using quizzes to monitor homework completion, consideration should at least be given to marking the answer sheets themselves.

Speaking Fluency

Speaking-focused classes such as English Discussion Class regularly have students completing a speaking fluency activity that involves standing up for a total of 15 minutes, taking turns speaking on unrehearsed topics. First and foremost, asking students to stand for 15 minutes here may be physically difficult for those with impairments. Officially, there are both formal and informal institutional channels through which students may make their teachers aware of any problems they may have with standing up for extended periods, such as disclosing a physical disability to the student support office. However, in practice, many individuals are reluctant to do so for reasons including fear of stigma and a lack of awareness of available support and accommodations (Thompson-Ebanks & Jarman, 2017). In its present form, this activity therefore puts up what Lister, Seale and Douce (2021) refer to as a *physical space barrier to learning*–as this physical activity is unrelated to the learning outcomes, it can easily be removed from the lesson. A simple adjustment would be to arrange the desks in the classroom to permit students to carry out this speaking activity while sitting, making the lesson less physically demanding.

Furthermore, typically, the speaking prompts at this point of the lesson are defined by the teacher, with students offered no autonomy. Denying students the chance to utilize their decision-

making ability may further contribute to a sense of powerlessness. An alternative would be to offer a range of questions related to the topic for the students to choose from while making sure the choices are simple enough to follow, and enable learners to express their true selves.

Asking Students to Volunteer Answers to the Class

At various points in a lesson, the teacher may select individuals to briefly present their ideas about the topic to the whole class. The goal of this activity may be to check comprehension or share interesting comments with other students. Indeed, on the surface, this may seem like a harmless routine event in any classroom; however, it does raise wellbeing concerns. It has been suggested that, especially for English language learners, the pressure of having to speak un-prepared in front of the class can actually cause significant feelings of stress and anxiety (Mak, 2011).

Refraining from routinely asking students to speak unrehearsed can easily eliminate this source of anxiety, and to alternatively assess their understanding of the material, the teacher could monitor the students' speaking and write down any noteworthy ideas. The teacher themselves can share these ideas with the class. Although monitoring accurately can be challenging, particularly with large class sizes, if done with care, the teacher will still be able to understand the strengths, weaknesses, and areas of comfort of a class. They will therefore be able to take into account the diverse learning profiles within a particular group while also meeting the learning outcomes of the lesson plan (Tomlinson et al., 2003).

Group Work (Debates, Discussions, Presentations, etc.)

Group work in particular is a known source of stress for students. For example, the process of group formation has the capacity to significantly affect feelings of inclusion during an activity, as well as impact anxiety levels and overall classroom comfort (McPherson et al., 2019). Moreover, these activities may be further problematic for learner wellbeing, as they often do not easily allow for reasonable alternatives or adjustments and due to the potential for ambiguity and lack of clear structure (University of Kent, 2016).

A direct way to remove some ambiguity from group formation is for the teacher to assign groups. Although this method may take away some autonomy, the wellbeing benefits may be a worthwhile tradeoff. Similarly, the teacher could allot clear roles within the group to further reduce uncertainty–for example, deciding in advance which members will ask questions, who will control the slides, and who will present each point in a debate, etc. Moreover, close attention should be paid to both individual group members' behaviours and also to wider group dynamics. In order to minimize negative social and learning experiences, the teacher could disrupt alpha-pairs, promote equal participation, and encourage quieter members to contribute in non-pressuring ways (Gilbert, 2016).

In addition, after the groups have been formed but before the group work begins, an icebreaker should be carried out. A suggested activity here is to ask students to share 3 important facts about themselves. However, students should be made aware that they can share as much or as little as is comfortable and may skip this activity if they wish. In allowing the students to speak about their identity in this way, wellbeing is promoted through the building of cooperative relationships (Barret, 2014).

Exams

A final frequent activity in English classes is the exam–either assigned in-class or as a take-home task. No matter the form, the link between exams and wellbeing problems is long-established, with one study noting that they were the number one source of stress for UK school children (Kyriacou & Butcher, 1993). Similarly, anxiety and negative feelings toward exams have been found to affect both a learner's ability to perform and also self-estimations of ability (Zwettler et al., 2018). An activity that replaces the exam with a written assessment could reduce stress on the student as it allows for a more flexible completion of the task (CAST, 2018).

Further Considerations

The Need for Reasonable Accommodations

A key point to bear in mind throughout lesson planning and delivery is the need for accommodations to be made for students with different abilities, preferences, and comfort levels. At all times, teachers should approach their duties with flexibility so that wherever possible, all students can participate effectively while still meeting the learning outcomes. A concrete example is that students may, after communication with the teacher or student support staff, submit alternative forms of assessment. This may take the form of submitting a speaking task in written form or being able to complete a task as part of a pair. Such inclusive lesson design can minimize the negative effects of the classroom experience and enhance a learner's wellbeing (Gaydarov, 2014).

Clear Goals and Processes

As mentioned above, ambiguity can be a major source anxiety in the classroom, especially among foreign language learners (Dewaele & Shan, 2013). Simply put, being unsure of what to do or what is expected of them can make students uncomfortable. An important step toward mitigating these negative feelings is to make sure lesson plans–including instructions, tasks, and learning goals-conform to SMART criteria. This requires that tasks be simple, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Using this framework to reduce ambiguity can make students feel more confident in the classroom and therefore reduce the risk of negative wellbeing effects (Fulmer, 2017).

Practically speaking, the purpose of each individual task should be made clear at each stage of the lesson. This can be done verbally during the class and also in written form in a syllabus distributed before a course begins. Along similar lines, making the learning outcomes known in advance (through the institution's online portal) and reinforcing them by repeating them at the start of class can improve the learners' metacognition and empower them to make strategic decisions, which put them in control of their own learning.

Barriers to Implementation

In terms of challenges that an educator may face when preparing and teaching a wellbeing focused curriculum, the additional time commitment needed is one concern. For instance, to consistently and effectively adhere to UDL criteria would necessitate "a thoughtful, slow, and rigorous process […requiring] enough time for ideation, iteration, high-quality media production,

and formative assessments" (Abramenka-Lachheb et al., 2021, p. 17). There may also be institutional-level barriers. Teachers must consider whether or not they have the freedom to design or adapt lessons as they wish; the assessments may be fixed by entities outside their control, and some of the required resources may be unavailable. As Scott (2018) summarized, new approaches are "often contingent on teachers' liberties to use inclusive instructional strategies" (p. 1).

Lastly, students themselves may be reluctant to embrace different styles of learning or assessment. The source of this resistance can be rooted in a culture's learning and social norms. In Japan, for example, education is typically expected (by providers *and* students) to be "top-down" or teacher-led (Nemoto, 1999). Teachers employing more student-centered, UDL-focused lesson plans may be met with skepticism, as this style may vastly differ from what students are used to.

Conclusion

Educators seeking to tackle the challenges of implementing a curriculum that is mindful of student welfare would do well to heed the words of Freire (2000), who advocated for respectful dialogue between students and teachers. His principles for positive communication included equality in interactions; humility in respecting a student's knowledge and dignity; faith in both your own and others' abilities; critical thinking in approaching knowledge; and hope by way of an optimistic attitude toward student abilities and outcomes. If these messages are followed, the learner is more likely to have a positive classroom experience. Indeed, overcoming such challenges is a key part of the teacher's role in terms of promoting institutional change through research and practice and helping students to feel the emotional and educational benefits that can be attained through curriculum design.

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Pleasure Reading: Incorporating CLIL Into an Extensive Reading-Based Course

Michael Peragine, Christopher Mattson

Abstract

The goal of this paper is to introduce the pedagogical methodology in which Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) was incorporated into Pleasure Reading, an extensive-reading based course for L2 university students in Tokyo. Described simply, the course can be seen as having two strands: students read self-selected literature and learn content selected by the instructor. After devising a method of teaching content to analyze literary texts, the authors structured their lessons based on the principles of CLIL, mainly Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture, or the 4Cs. Activities were scaffolded using Bloom's revised taxonomy, moving from lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) to higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). Visual and graphic organizers were incorporated to aid the comprehension of authentic texts and higher-level content. The paper concludes with a sample lesson handout designed using the aforementioned principles.

Keywords: pleasure reading, extensive reading, graded readers, EFL, CLIL

Introduction

Pleasure Reading is an elective course within the Independent Module at Rikkyo University. The course is aimed at helping L2 sophomores, juniors, and seniors improve their reading skills through extensive reading. The class is designed to help students find English books they wish to read in English and make it a pleasurable experience. Students choose graded readers based on their current reading level and complete various assignments based on those readings. While it is up to the assigned teacher how best to achieve course objectives, typically this course includes activities such as in-class reading, discussion of selected books, and written or oral assignments that both summarize and analyze the material being read. This paper addresses the attempts of the authors to implement a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) framework for the Pleasure Reading course in order to more effectively engage students in the understanding and enjoyment of literature.

Perhaps it is best to start with a shared definition of pleasure reading, which the National Literacy Trust describes as follows:

> Reading for pleasure refers to reading that we to [sic] do of our own free will anticipating the satisfaction that we will get from the act of reading. It also refers to reading that having begun at someone else's request we continue because we are interested in it. It typically involves materials that reflect our own choice, at a time and place that suits us. (Clark & Rumbold, 2006, p. 6)

Similarly, students in the Pleasure Reading course select books at the request of their teacher, although they are expected to read both in the classroom and independently outside of class. Choice is an essential component of this extensive-reading course. It should be no surprise that the books young people find most interesting are the ones they have chosen for themselves. Gambrell (1996, p. 21) reports that when children were asked to talk about the books they enjoyed most, "over 80%

responded that they had self-selected the books from the classroom libraries." While students in the Pleasure Reading course are free to choose their reading materials, it is generally recommended that they select graded readers, which are adaptations of literature from various cultures designed to help L2 students improve their reading skills. With thousands of level-appropriate titles available from the school library, it is hoped that students will come away feeling motivated by the experience of self-selecting their reading materials for class.

At least part of what separates the Pleasure Reading course from more conventional EFL courses is its emphasis on extensive reading (ER) and the extensive reading of literature in particular. The term "extensive reading" was first used by Harold Palmer in his attempt to differentiate between texts for "intensive reading" in which "each sentence is subjected to a careful scrutiny," whereas in extensive reading "book after book will be read through without giving more than a superficial and passing attention to the lexicological units of which it is composed" (1917, p. 205). Day and Bamford's (2002) principles for teaching extensive reading are built on this concept further by emphasizing the use of easy-to-read texts that are self-selected by students from a variety of topics and materials, with a focus on speed, reading enjoyment, and limited teacher interference, encouraging teachers to play the role of guide as students read both independently and silently. With regard to reading materials, Tsang and Paran (2021, p. 2) remind us that in the L2 context, there "has been a widening of the concept of literature and literary texts," referring to McRae's (1991) description of literature as having either a capital 'L' for traditional works of the literary canon or a small 'l' for more modern works "ranging from fantasy and young adult novels." Within the L2 classroom, all of these works are considered classroom literature and are encompassed within the spectrum of graded readers.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in and acknowledgment of the benefits of such literature in the L2 contexts. Takase (2012) notes that various studies have shown the beneficial effects of ER, including proficiency gains not only with discrete skills but also gains with the positive affect and self-confidence that stem from self-selected, extensive reading of literature. Secondary-level EFL students, as documented by Tsang, Paran, and Lau (2020), tend to be quite positive about the use of literature in the EFL classroom. A few of the improvements that extensive reading of literature provides are "becoming independent of others" as well as promoting confidence and motivation (Walker, 1997, p. 124).

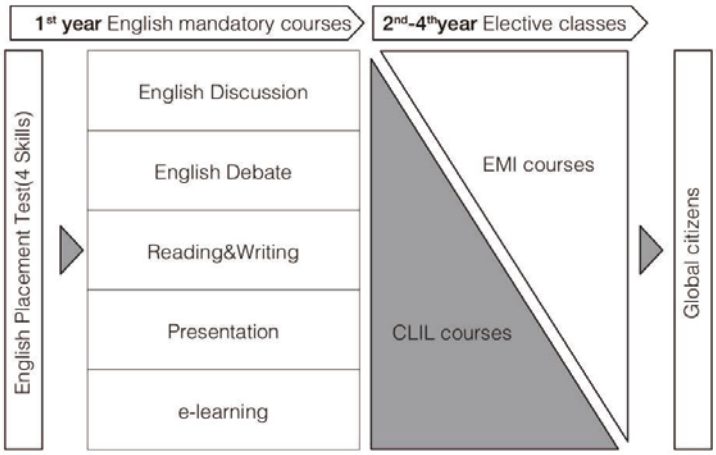
It is also important to note that while Yang (as cited in Paran, 2008) found "language improvement in classes using literature in contrast with classes that did not," the classes that "experienced traditional teacher-centered lecturing on literature" had "a sharp drop in attendance" (p. 472). Moreover, a study by Tsang and Paran (2021) found that while learners generally have a positive attitude toward the use of literature in the L2 classroom, they occasionally experienced lowered levels of motivation when teacher-selected texts were considered poor or uninteresting. These studies remind us that to achieve the full benefits literature can bring to the L2 classroom, adherence to the principles of extensive reading–such as limited teacher interference and the provision of student self-selected materials–is essential.

The Role of CLIL in Pleasure Reading

Content and Language Integrated Learning is defined by Coyle, Hood, and Marsh as "a dual-focused approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language" (2010, p. 1). Graddol differentiates CLIL from English-medium instruction (EMI) by stating that "the learner is not necessarily expected to have the English proficiency

required to cope with the subject before beginning study" (2006, p. 86). This distinction is fitting considering that Pleasure Reading—as part of the forthcoming framework of CLIL courses under the subheading of Global Communication—will follow the mandatory freshman-level courses while preceding most EMI courses, which are generally taken near the end of the undergraduate program (Figure 1). CLIL is typically categorized into two main types: *hard* and *soft*. Hard CLIL, also known as *strong* CLIL, refers to a content-led approach, whereas soft CLIL, alternatively known as weak CLIL, describes language-led approaches (Ball, Kelly, & Clegg, 2015, p. 26-27). In other words, hard CLIL courses might be content-heavy and somewhat closer to immersion compared with soft CLIL courses that utilize more scaffolding while emphasizing language skills. Courses such as Pleasure Reading would fall somewhere in between, but with a heavier emphasis on content than mandatory courses such as English Discussion, Debate, Presentation, and Reading & Writing, all of which typically provide scaffolding such as sentence stems to assist spoken and/or written communication. Therefore, it can be said that Pleasure Reading as a course should place more of an emphasis on its content than these mandatory courses.

Figure 1.
Four-year curriculum framework (Yamamoto & Nitta, 2021, p. 126)

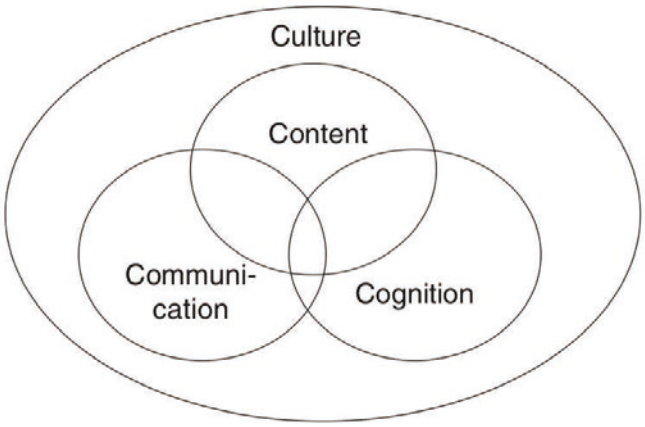


The authors' pedagogical goal was to apply the principles and frameworks of CLIL to the Pleasure Reading course. While students were expected to engage with the readings, having a full understanding of the text was not necessary. That is to say that the discrete learning of typical grammar- and vocabulary-based courses was not part of the curriculum. However, full engagement with the material was required in the form of pair and group activities and written assignments. Students were not tested on their reading in traditional ways, like vocabulary checks, but rather assessment was conducted through students' writing. Students were expected to understand and use the literary concepts taught in the course, such as genre and symbolism, and this was assessed in their written reports, oral presentation, and/or regular discussion-based activities.

The guiding principles of CLIL are *content, communication*, *cognition, and culture*, also termed the 4C's by Coyle et al. (2010). The starting point and foundation is the first C: content. Communication is the second aspect, and while this is a very broad aspect, for the purposes of CLIL instruction, "it involves learners in *language using* in a way which is different from language learning lessons" (Coyle, 2005, p. 5). Learners are challenged to use higher-order thinking skills with cognition, the third principle, and culture (or to be more specific international cultures and multicultural focus) completes the framework. These four aspects should not be considered as a linear process or as

separate from one another; indeed, throughout the coursework, the 4C framework focuses on the interrelationship between all four of these principles toward the broader goals of integrated learning and language learning (Gierlinger, n.d.). Nitta and Yamamoto (2020) take this one step further in their reconceptualized 4C framework (Figure 2), in which "Culture is given a superordinate role of integrating the other Cs," essentially structuring the curriculum in such a way that Content, Communication, and Cognition occur *through* Culture as opposed to alongside it. In this way, students acquire intercultural skills by understanding "other cultures (Content), communicating with others (Communication), and learning critical thinking skills (Cognition), all of which contribute to developing competency to negotiate and solve complex social problems (Culture)" (Nitta & Yamamoto, 2020, p. 52). This reconceptualization fits naturally with Pleasure Reading because of its emphasis on graded readers that naturally introduce cultural concepts through the perspectives of foreign characters within a global community. By learning basic concepts of literary analysis (Content), discussing with both teacher and peers (Communication), and applying critical thinking skills to produce written and oral projects (Cognition), students both engage with and begin to internalize new global perspectives.

Figure 2.
Nitta & Yamamoto's Reconceptualized 4C framework



While Pleasure Reading would not necessarily be considered soft CLIL, at least not to the extent of the aforementioned mandatory courses, a certain amount of scaffolding is necessary to ensure maximum effectiveness of the course aims throughout individual lessons. Bruner (as cited in Coyle, 1999) coined the term "scaffolding" to refer to "the provision of temporary, adjustable support that is provided by a teacher to assist students in developing and extending their skills" (p. 60). Ball, Kelly, and Klegg remind us that students within the CLIL context "make more cognitive effort to fulfil the academic demands of the syllabus, probably because they are more aware of the gap between their cognitive level and the language required to nail down their learning" (2015, p. 55). That's why it is up to the teachers to make efforts to reduce this cognitive gap through a process of careful lesson planning.

One aspect of scaffolding that should be carefully considered is the cognitive skills needed to complete the tasks within a CLIL lesson. Cognitive skills are essentially "thinking skills," which include (1) *information processing*, "or concrete thinking skills, such as identifying and organizing information," (2) *abstract thinking,* "such as reasoning and hypothesizing," (3) *creative thinking* and synthesis, "for example, when we use our knowledge to imagine, to solve problems, and to think of new ideas," (4) *enquiry skills*, "for example, when we ask questions and plan how to do research," and

(5) *evaluation skills,* "for example, when we use criteria to comment on how good our work is" (Bentley, 2010, p. 20). Bloom's (1956) revised taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) organizes these skills into six main areas in order of cognitive complexity: Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating. To help students deal with the cognitive load, teachers of CLIL should carefully organize lessons in a conceptual hierarchy from *lower-order thinking skills* (LOTS) to *higher-order thinking skills* (HOTS). For example, early in the lesson, students might be asked to recall facts or concepts (Remember) related to the lesson's target, which prepares them to classify new but related information (Understand) and inevitably to use that new knowledge (Applying) to complete level-appropriate tasks. Remembering, Understanding, and Applying not only require LOTS, but also serve to prime students for the challenges ahead requiring HOTS. For example, in the second half of the lesson, students might be asked to compare and contrast what they have learned (Analyzing), judge which is better for a given situation (Evaluating), and write their own example (Creating) to be presented to the peers. Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating are HOTS and should therefore be utilized in the latter half of the lesson. By organizing a lesson from LOTS to HOTS, students will be better prepared to contend with the cognitive load of content-rich CLIL lessons.

Another form of scaffolding that can aid student learning is the use of concept mapping to break down complex content. Phil Ball (n.d.) points out that CLIL learners, especially adults, will face a concept-language gap in which they may struggle with the cognitive demand of materials due to a lack of language skills, particularly when dealing with authentic texts that are conceptually and linguistically complex. This point is reiterated by Nitta and Yamamoto (2020), who remind us that in most CLIL courses, "learners are required to understand linguistically and conceptually demanding texts and use low-frequency academic vocabulary and complex structures, which are hardly used in everyday conversation." To help students cope, visual or graphic organizers such as mind maps, t-charts, tables, and Venn diagrams can be used to help CLIL students categorize information as a means of connecting ideas to better understand information (Bentley, 2010, p. 43). Although these organizers can be used at various stages of a lesson, the authors of this paper used them during the presentation phase while introducing new content, mainly to support authentic reading passages or short lectures that introduce key concepts. One added benefit of using graphic organizers is that they help to deal with the level gap within mixed-ability elective classes. Carol Ann Tomlinson describes how the use of organizers can help teachers overcome the challenges of differentiated instruction:

> Some students, even of older ages, find it very difficult to read text or listen to a lecture and come away with a coherent sense of what it was all about. For such students, it can be quite useful to work with a visual organizer that follows the flow of ideas from the text or lecture. Not only might such organizers help them focus on key ideas and information, but they may also help some learners see how a teacher or author develops a line of thought. (2001, p. 77)

Although mixed-ability learners may not necessarily understand every word of an authentic text or lecture, after collaborating with their peers to complete a graphic organizer, it can be reassuring for teachers to see that all students were able to come away with a conceptual understanding of the key points of the lesson.

While graphic organizers may help tackle the challenges of authentic teacher-selected texts, students are free to choose their extensive-reading materials, and thus, a certain amount of

scaffolding will still be necessary to ensure the success of students' choices. For this reason, graded readers can be implemented as a form of scaffolding within the Pleasure Reading course. However, at the onset of class, it is necessary that teachers provide guidance on how to choose graded readers that are at an appropriate level for each student. This can be done using placement tests such as those provided by Oxford University Press and the Extensive Reading Foundation. Students can also be encouraged to follow the Extensive Reading Foundation's "Five-Finger Rule," which is based on a similar concept by Hiebert & Reutzel (2010). According to this method, students can open a self-selected book to any page, read it, and count the number of unfamiliar words. If there are two to three new words, this would be an appropriate level, while four words might be considered challenging but acceptable if the book seems interesting to the student. However, one or less could be considered too easy, whereas five or more should be ruled out due to its difficulty. While students should be encouraged to take note of newly learned words in their reading records, they also need to understand that the goal of the course is to read without a dictionary.

A CLIL Lesson for Pleasure Reading

In terms of assessment, Pleasure Reading was set apart from traditional courses in that there was no testing of students on the reading material; the instructors wanted the course to live up to its name and actually be pleasurable, and tests, many students would argue, are not pleasurable. Similar activities that L2 students are frequently tasked with, for example, cloze activities such as gap fills, were not used. Instead, the focus was placed on discussion-based activities centered around literary devices that help students to analyze the texts in a more meaningful way. Since the stories students self-select are written at their level, there were no quizzes to determine if they had achieved 100% comprehension. Instead, the instructors wanted students to deeply engage not only with the text but also with their peers. As Paran posits, "Our fundamental goal as language professionals is to expand and enrich the lives of our students and the society in which they live" (Paran, 2008, p. 469). The 4Cs were used in the Pleasure Reading Course in the following ways:

Content (Literary Devices). As Coyle emphasizes, when explaining best practices in CLIL curriculum planning, "the content is the starting point of the planning process" (Coyle, 2005, p. 4). Lectures, slideshows, and handouts were the media by which students learned the content, which focused on various literary devices. This portion of the class was generally teacher-centered, though with frequent comprehension checks with partners and groups that were implemented with graphic organizers. The lectures on literary devices included topics such as genre, theme, character, etc., and these dimensions of literature were taught with little to no emphasis on conventional grammar and vocabulary. Aside from the topics and concepts themselves (i.e., "genre") as novel vocabulary terms, the pedagogical focus lay in defining and exemplifying the topic and, ultimately, having students apply and synthesize those ideas through the lens of their own chosen graded readers. Students were given handouts (see Appendix), either a hard or digital copy via Google Docs, and these contained activities geared toward providing students with a steady progression of complexity and cognitive skills.

Communication (Discussions). Focus was also placed on student-to-student interaction as opposed to teacher-centered instruction when possible. For this reason, students frequently discussed content in pairs and groups. These activities ranged from simple, low-order skills like

remembering and understanding and progressed to higher-order skills such as creating and evaluating. L2 discussions were at the core of many class activities, from Warm-up and Pre-reading Questions at the start of the class (i.e., "What kind of books was it?") to collaborative pair and group projects in which students used higher-order thinking.

Cognition (Discussions/Production/Book Reports or Presentations). As Coyle emphasizes, for CLIL to be effective, students must use HOTS and "construct their own understanding and be challenged" (2005, p. 5). In Pleasure Reading, these skills were demonstrated in discussions and also in projects such as book reports, in which students applied their knowledge of literary concepts and other material toward a summative evaluation of their graded reader. Course activities also included creative writing, either individually or in pairs/groups, which utilized communication skills as well as the highest-order thinking skill of creating. Other "high-order" class projects involved students creating short skits based on their readings and performing them in class.

Culture (Foreign Graded Readers). Just as Nitta and Yamamoto's framework depicts the Culture aspect as encompassing the other three, this principle applied for the graded readers students chose in the Pleasure Reading course. By choosing foreign-language readers (all were English-language books), students were engaged in reading content, not just outside their L1 language but also outside their L1 culture. Most graded readers were from Anglosphere countries (U.K., U.S., Canada, Australia, N.Z.) but not all; many selections were from various countries around the world. The cultural context plays an important role in the course; if we treat the readings as "cultural artifacts," then they provide "authenticity, cultural value, and meaning" (Coyle & Meyer, 2021, p. 151). With regard to LOTS and HOTS, the authors structured lessons keeping Bloom's revised taxonomy in mind. This can be demonstrated by following the sample lesson handout (Appendix). The initial stages of the lesson focus primarily on the use of LOTS, whereas the final project culminates in the use of HOTS. By looking at these stages in order, one can see how the 4Cs and scaffolding have been implemented:

Pre-Reading (Communication)

The first stage of the lesson is simply a communication-based warm-up activity. Students are asked to recall a book or film, which relates to Bloom's taxonomy's lowest-order thinking skill of remembering. The pre-reading questions are intended to lead students toward the topic of genres by asking them to consider whether they often read/watch similar kinds of books/films. While the purpose of the course is to discuss students' extensive reading, the authors frequently used movies as a way to help students connect with and become interested in the lesson's theme. However, the emphasis was always placed on "stories," as the literary analysis tools taught in the class could be applied to both literature and film. For example, if the lesson's theme is characters, it does not necessarily matter whether students talk about characters in *Hamlet* (play), *Harry Potter* (film/book), or *Howl's Moving Castle* (animation) because the focus would be on terminologies such as protagonists, antagonists, and static/dynamic characters. Therefore, films can be a useful bridge for connecting with course content.

Reading (Content/Communication/Cognition/Culture)

In the second stage of the lesson, the main content about genres is introduced with an authentic text based on an online article (Urban, 2022). However, scaffolding has been provided in the form of a graphic organizer to assist with cognition. The examples provided in the text reference works such as *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (ancient Mesopotamia), *Romeo & Juliet* (16th century England), and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (20th century Netherlands), which could be further explored in order to enhance the cultural aspect of the 4Cs. This activity relates to the second level of Bloom's taxonomy, Understanding (LOTS), because students are being asked to both explain and categorize. Before reading, students scan the article to find the definition of the word "genre" and then paraphrase its meaning in their own words. They then read the article while categorizing the four Literary Genres (Figure 3). This can be done independently or in pairs; however, to make the activity more communicative, students should be encouraged to help each other while comparing their answers with their classmates before revealing the correct answers. Communication with peers also helps to address level gaps when dealing with mixed-ability classes.

Figure 3.
Answer key for Reading section

Literary Genre	Key Features	Type(s)	Example
Poetry	-lines and stanzas -figurative and rhythmic language about emotional and heartfelt ideas	epic poem	*The Epic of Gilgamesh*
Fiction	-figurative language -sentences and paragraphs -punctuation and grammar	mystery, fantasy, and science fiction	*I am a Cat* (by Natsume Soseki)
Drama	-a kind of fiction but differs because it is intended to be performed for an audience	a play	*Romeo and Juliet*
Non-fiction	-It is not fake. -It comes from real life	Newspapers, diaries, and biographies	*Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl*

Vocabulary (Content/Cognition)

Depending on student levels, the third section may be skipped in favor of something more challenging. Alternatively, it could be assigned for homework or used for review in the subsequent lesson. Both the Vocabulary and Identifying Genres sections expand on topic content by adding terminology that aids cognition, thus solidifying concepts for the upcoming discussions. This lower-level activity simply asks students to match images with key vocabulary, again covering Bloom's taxonomy's second level of understanding (LOTS). It's worth noting that in higher-level classes where this activity was skipped, many students opted to complete the task anyway due to the intrinsically fun nature of matching activities.

Identifying Genres (Content/Cognition)

This activity is a slightly more challenging alternative to the vocabulary-matching activity. The task asks students to identify the genre using a one-sentence clue, which again falls under the Bloom's taxonomy category of understanding (LOTS). For higher-level students, this activity can be

taken one step further by providing slightly longer excerpts from authentic texts and asking students to identify the genre based on keywords, for example:

> Mr. Ollivander moved closer to Harry. Harry wished he would blink. Those silvery eyes were a bit creepy. "Your father, on the other hand, favored a mahogany wand. Eleven inches. Pliable. A little more powerful and excellent for transfiguration. Well, I say your father favored it—it's really the wand that chooses the wizard, of course. (Rowling, 1997, p. 82)

From this *Harry Potter* excerpt, students should be able to identify the genre as fantasy fiction based on keywords such as wand, wizard, and transfiguration. The authors used excerpts from other authentic texts such as *Dracula* (horror/gothic fiction), *Treasure Island* (adventure), *Pride and Prejudice* (romantic fiction), *The War of the Worlds* (science fiction), and *The Adventure of the Speckled Band* (mystery).

Project (Content/Communication/Cognition)

The final stage of the lesson requires students to use cognition and communication to apply what they have learned to dramatize a genre of interest. As this lesson would most likely be taught early on in the course, teachers may also opt to have students write their own short excerpt in a specific genre, thus sparing them the potential discomfort of having to perform in front of unfamiliar peers while still achieving the objectives of the activity. To complete the project requires several steps, all of which necessitate HOTS with regard to Bloom's taxonomy. Students compare their favorite genres through discussion, create a short skit of a favorite genre in pairs, perform their skits while classmates identify the genre, and evaluate their own performances, all of which require students to analyze, create, and evaluate. For the self-evaluation, students should be offered targeted questions such as the following: "Did you feel good about your performance? Why or why not? Could your classmates guess the genre? If so, what clues helped them? If not, what other clues could you have provided?" The activity concludes with teacher-fronted feedback including keywords that could further enhance genre identification.

Conclusion

As more Japanese universities begin to incorporate CLIL-based courses into their undergraduate programs, it becomes essential for instructors to consider how to best implement its essential principles. While language-heavy courses such as debate may take a more soft-CLIL approach and content-heavy courses such as chemistry require a more hard-CLIL approach, a course in extensive reading with mixed-ability students ends up falling somewhere in between, creating unique challenges in terms of lesson planning and curriculum development. Therefore, the authors of this paper hope that sharing the pedagogical methodology used for designing lessons will create a dialogue between others facing similar challenges. In some respects, the authors found certain aspects regarding scaffolding to be commonplace in most EFL lessons, although the means of doing so differs in its use of Bloom's revised taxonomy to structure lessons from LOTS to HOTS. Nonetheless, the concept itself is far from foreign. However, an area of particular interest has been the implementation of the 4Cs, which remains at the heart of CLIL itself. Furthermore, an understanding of the Nitta and Yamamoto's reconceptualized 4C framework (2020) in which Content,

Communication, and Cognition occur *through* Culture is useful when devising lessons that both highlight and supplement the cultural aspects of both graded readers and lesson content.

While this paper focuses mainly on the application of CLIL in the planning of a lesson on genres, further research is necessary to better understand the impact of CLIL on the overall course outline of curriculums based on extensive reading. For these reasons, the authors plan to continue their research into CLIL to improve future iterations of the Pleasure Reading course. The future aim of this project is to report on the author's methodology of curriculum development by introducing the specific content taught to improve students' literary analysis skills. It can then be demonstrated that by teaching these skills, students will be able to improve the quality of course assignments such as in-class discussions, book reports, and presentations. In addition, further details will be provided on the research conducted in hopes of better understanding the students' perspectives of the newly implemented course content.

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Appendix
Example Handout for Lesson on Genres

2 TALKING ABOUT LITERARY GENRES

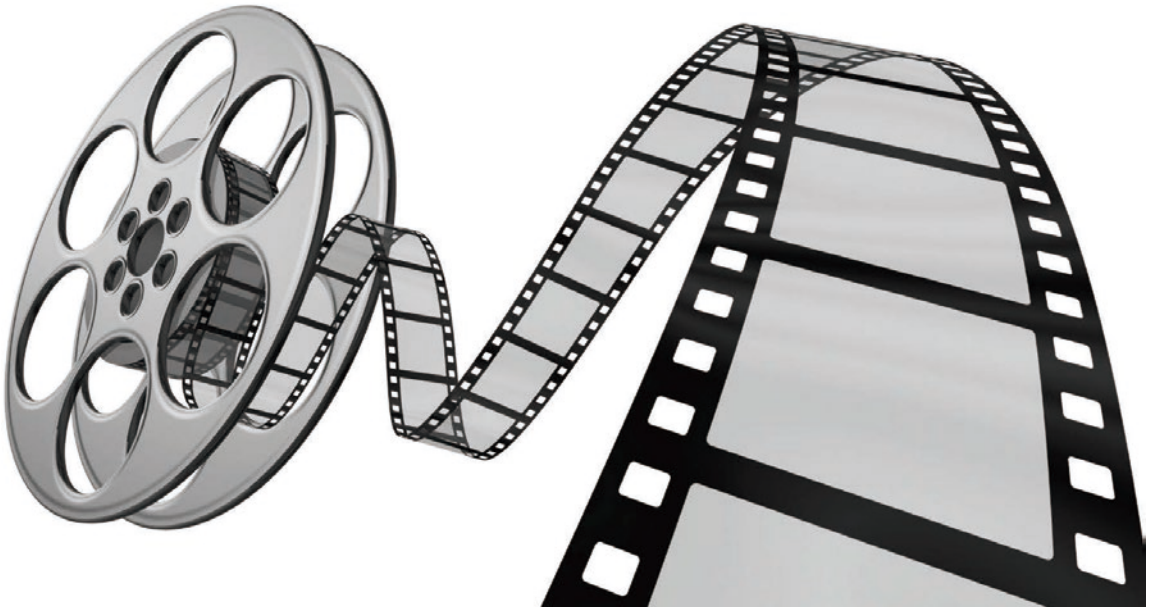
Reading for Pleasure

Our Favorite Stories

1. Pre-reading

Think about the last movie you watched and answer the following questions:

- What was the movie's title?
- What was the movie about?
- What kind of movie was it? (i.e., horror)
- Did you like or dislike the movie? Why?
- Do you often watch similar kinds of movies? Why or why not?



Now, think about the last book you read and answer the following questions:

- What was the book's title?
- What was the book about?
- What kind of book was it?
- Did you like or dislike the book? Why?
- Do you often read similar kinds of books? Why or why not?
- Are the books you enjoy reading similar or different to the movies you watch?

2. Reading

Skim the article and find the meaning of the word “genre.”
Can you explain it in your own words? Do you know how to say it in Japanese?

What is a Literary Genre?

Have you ever had a friend suggest a movie to go see, but you responded, “I'm not in the mood for that?” What did you mean? Was it a scary movie and you were in the mood to laugh? Was it a sad movie, but you wanted some action? If so, then you already know about genres. A **genre** is a term that translates from the French to mean “kind” or “type,” so it refers to any works that share certain characteristics. When choosing a book to read, just like choosing a movie, it is important to know the genre because readers will already have certain expectations before they begin to read. The term **literary genre** makes it clear that you're talking about books and writing. In literature, there are four main genres to help the reader focus their expectations for the piece. These genres are **poetry, drama, fiction,** and **non-fiction**. However, these genres can be broken down even further.

The oldest of all the literary genres is poetry. Unlike other genres, poems are typically written in lines and stanzas instead of sentences and paragraphs. They may use figurative and rhythmic language to express emotional and heartfelt ideas. Early **epic poems** were longer and described the extraordinary deeds of characters as they deal with gods and other supernatural forces. The oldest epic poem is the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, which was written over 3000 years ago. Another literary genre that utilizes figurative language is fiction. However, unlike poetry, fiction is organized into sentences and paragraphs with proper punctuation and grammar called prose. It is usually broken up into chapters, as well. Fictional stories are about events that didn’t really happen, so **mystery**, **fantasy**, and **science-fiction** novels are full of imaginary characters. Natsume Soseki famously used a cat as the main character in his fictional novel *I Am a Cat*! Drama, on the other hand, is a kind of fiction but differs because it is intended to be performed for an audience. Shakespeare’s most famous **play**, *Romeo and Juliet*, dramatizes the tragic romance of two young lovers born into feuding families. If fiction is fake, then non-fiction is the opposite: it comes from real life. When you read the **newspaper**, you are reading non-fiction. Other examples include **diaries** and **biographies**. For example, *Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl* is the diary of a teenage girl who hid from the Germans in World War II. After her death, her family published the diary without changing her words. What Anne wrote was real. It was her life, and a great example of non-fiction.

Libraries and bookstores use literary genres as a way to separate books into different sections, like "classics" or "mysteries." Therefore, to help you find the book that’s right for you, we will discuss the kinds of literary genres you like (and dislike) reading!

*adapted from Study.com

Literary Genre	Key Features	Type(s)	Example*
		epic poem	
			I am a Cat (by Natsume Soseki)
Drama			
	It is not fake. It comes from real life.		

3. Vocabulary

Match the picture with the correct genre.

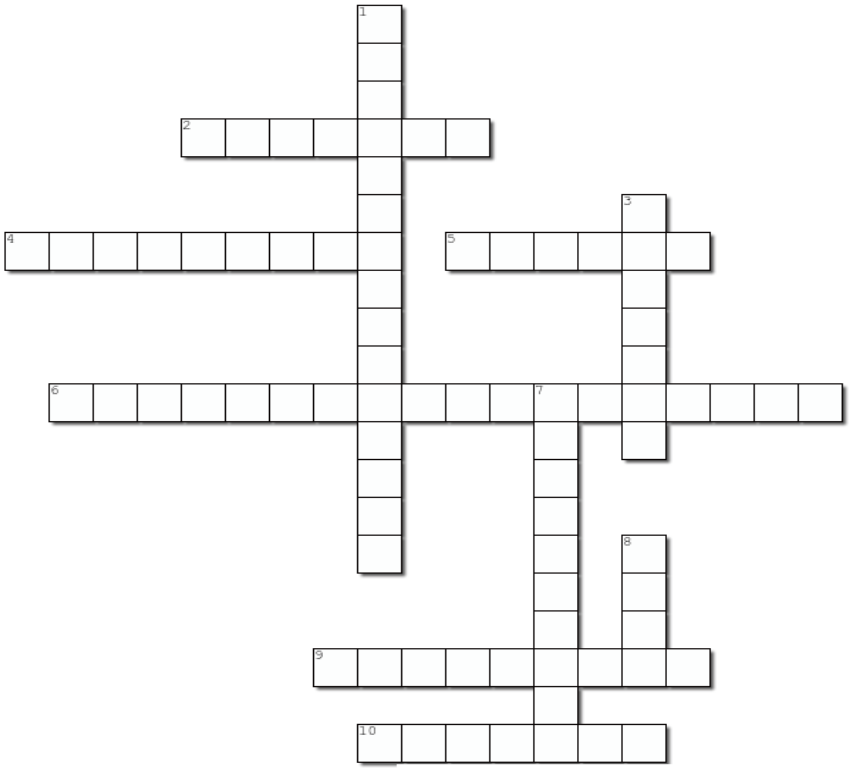
comedy	•	•	
fantasy	•	•	
horror	•	•	
war	•	•	
history	•	•	
thriller	•	•	
mystery	•	•	
biography	•	•	
romance	•	•	
tragedy	•	•	
science fiction	•	•	

Do you know of any other genres?

4. Identifying Genres

Complete the crossword puzzle using the vocabulary and clues below.

science fiction	fairy tale	myth	western	adventure
romance	biography	mystery	horror	historical fiction



Across

2. A young boy tries to tame a wild pony to impress the man who is temporarily staying with his family.
4. It's man against ocean when Joe Martin attempts to sail around the world.
5. There's a monster hiding in the forest, but now it is hungry—for blood!
6. A female radio operator during WWII befriends a Nazi spy.
9. The true story of the life of New York's first mayor is told by his great grandson.
10. A down-on-his-luck detective must find a serial killer or get kicked off the force.

Down

1. Human set out to colonize Mars, but space travel is more dangerous than they bargained for.
3. A man and woman experience instant attraction, but they are opposing counsel in an important lawsuit.
7. A princess is tricked into biting a poison apple and can only be revived by the kiss of true love.
8. The story of a man who was so strong that he could snap tree trunks with his bare hands.

5. Project

Work in pairs or small groups. First, you will talk about books, films, and comic books that you like. Please be sure to identify genre. (i.e., "My favorite comic book is One Piece. It's an adventure story. The reason I like it is…") Then, you will choose a book that you have all read (or want to read) and introduce it to you classmates. First, discuss these questions with your classmates:

- What is your favorite **book**? What is its genre? Why do you like it?
- What is your favorite **film**? What is its genre? Why do you like it?
- What is your favorite **comic book**? What is its genre? Why do you like it?
- Is there a **book, film,** or **comic book** that you all like?

Next, you will perform a scene from your favorite book, film, or comic book. However, you won't tell its title or genre. Your classmates will try to guess. With your group, please do all of the following:

1. Choose a book, film, or comic book you all know.
2. Select a scene you all want to act out*.
3. Decide who will play each character.
4. Create a short script of your scene.
5. Enact a scene from your classmates' chosen book or film (1-2 minutes per group)
6. Ask your classmates to guess the genre.

*It's also okay to create your own imagined scene that's not from a book, film, or comic.

Opening Translanguaging Spaces: Facilitating Bilingual Development in an English Discussion Class

Omar Shelesh

Abstract

This teaching practice report documents the experimental implementation of the bilingual pedagogy of translanguaging in an undergraduate English discussion program at a Japanese university, with the primary aim being to facilitate bilingualism and the development of a bilingual identity among learners. This intervention specifically focuses on how translanguaging practices can be integrated into an established teaching context while providing learners with opportunities or *spaces* to utilize their native linguistic resources to enhance their experience of learning English discussion.

Keywords: translanguaging, English discussion, bilingualism, Japanese university

Introduction

This teaching practice report details the implementation of a bilingual pedagogical practice in an experimental classroom-based intervention in an undergraduate English discussion program at a Japanese university, with the primary goal being to promote bilingualism and, more specifically, the growth of a bilingual identity among learners.

Although open to wide interpretation, the terms *bilingual* and *bilingualism* most often refer to "the use of two or more languages (or dialects) in everyday life" (Grosjean, 2013, p.5), and it is generally accepted that a bi- (or multilingual) person is an individual who knows, uses, and is fluent to various degrees in two or more languages. Going by this definition, it could be said that the state of being bilingual suggests a certain level of mastery of a foreign, second, or other language (L2) and, therefore, achieving bilingual *status* is something that L2 learners should be encouraged to strive for and even embrace. This view has been espoused by academics, such as Ofelia García, who argue that foreign language learners—irrespective of their actual level of language proficiency—should be recognized as "emergent bilinguals" (García, 2009). This condition requires that an L2 learner is nurtured through routine exposure to bilingual pedagogical practices, which not only serve to bolster their self-identity as a capable and competent user of foreign languages but also work to raise their cognitive awareness of the interrelationship between their native language (L1) and the foreign language(s) they are studying.

Such an enviable situation, however, stands in stark contrast to the reality of the author's personal experiences of teaching tertiary-level L2 learners in Japanese universities, where it is clear that while bilingualism, as a concept, is understood by most learners, the prospect of personally attaining bilingual status is not something the majority could conceive of or would feel comfortable adopting as part of their sociolinguistic identity. This appears to be a common phenomenon among native Japanese L2 learners and has been documented in recent research (see Turnbull, 2021). This sentiment is further compounded by the fact that general foreign language education programs (and EFL in particular) adhere to the policies of language segregation (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017), which are

deeply embedded in their teaching methodologies, both at the practitioner and institutional level.

Therefore, in an effort to reverse this trend, the primary purpose of the current teaching practice report is to document the integration of a bilingual pedagogical practice within an English discussion course context and promote the development of bilingualism amongst L2 learners. By providing learners with *spaces* to utilize their native linguistic resources, it is hoped that this course of intervention works to strengthen attitudes and beliefs in their abilities as competent and confident bilingual Japanese-English speakers.

Translanguaging: A Bilingual Pedagogy

What is required to achieve the stated objective is the deployment of an effective bilingual pedagogy, one which provides a foundation upon which the practice of normalizing the combined and intentional use of multiple languages can transform the process and experience of foreign language learning. This is where *translanguaging* comes into prominence. A concept initially conceived by Cen Williams in the Welsh language as *trawsieithu* (Williams, 1994), it is the bilingual practice of strategically combining the use of two languages within a single subject lesson. The English version of the term, *translanguaging* was subsequently introduced by Colin Baker (2001), who outlines translanguaging as "the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages" (Baker, 2001, p. 288). In a practical sense, the subject content is presented in one language, after which learners can demonstrate their understanding by producing it in another. The benefits of this are twofold: it promotes a more complete understanding of the subject matter whilst supporting the development of the L2 (Baker, 2001, as cited in García & Lin, 2017). Further delineations of the concept were made by García and Lin (2017) to reflect different theoretical perspectives on how languages are learned, with distinctions drawn between *weak* translanguaging and *strong* translanguaging (García & Lin, 2017, p. 124). Weak translanguaging (as practiced in educational contexts) essentially preserves boundaries between named languages; however, it also views these boundaries as flexible, fluid linguistic spaces where the exchange and transfer of information and meaning occur among bilingual learners and their learning environment. The strong form of translanguaging (as practiced by bilinguals in any context) views all named languages as being part of a single, holistic linguistic system, underpinned by a universal grammar structure. Bilingual speakers can freely navigate through this system using all linguistic resources available, enabling them to effectively and appropriately communicate in any given interactive context. The perspective of a single linguistic system is also espoused by Canagarajah (2011a), who describes translanguaging as "the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system" Canagarajah (2011a p.401). Other important theoretical distinctions come from Cenoz and Gorter (2022), who recognize *spontaneous translanguaging*—to denote the communicative events of bilingual speakers that occur naturally (and beyond a teacher's control)—and *pedagogical translanguaging*—the controlled and deliberate implementation of teaching strategies designed to activate a learner's bi-/multilingual skill set. The notion of learners engaging in purposeful, teacher-directed bilingual pedagogical practices is also conceptualized in the research of Jones (2017), who designates this as *Cognitive Academic Translanguaging.*

In light of the stated aims of this teaching practice report and the theories outlined here, it should be stated that no particular form or method of translanguaging will be given preference over another in the process of planning and implementing bilingual pedagogical practices. This will allow

for flexibility as different strategies are considered in terms of their potential practical application within the discussion lesson setting.

The Need for Translanguaging Spaces

As the title of this report declares, the objective is to facilitate bilingual pedagogical practices through the use of spaces (opportunities) for translanguaging. The necessity to create such spaces in this educational context alludes to the possibility of unfavorable, even hostile reactions that await emergent bilingual learners in foreign language classes who engage in what might be ordinarily natural behavior to them. Whilst framing the situation this way is somewhat extreme, it is not unrealistic, as Canagarajah (2011b) points out, bilingual learners often conduct translanguaging discreetly amongst each other and out of sight of the teacher, possibly fearing negative repercussions if they are "discovered." Therefore, there are virtually no *safe* spaces for these learners. This may be an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of the longstanding language separation/segregation policies that permeate foreign language education (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017). This means that the learners' L1 is largely isolated and/or ignored whilst foreign language skills are being taught. Language separation practices stem from theories about the potential risk of errors due to L1 "interference" (Lott, as cited in Bhela, 1999, p.22; Ooi & Abdul Aziz, 2021), which is often cited as justification for using such methods.

Fortunately, however, proponents of pedagogical translanguaging have come to vigorously defend the concept of translanguaging spaces, citing the importance of teachers consciously and proactively creating spaces to foster healthy translingual competency in and amongst bilingual learners (see Canagarajah, 2011b; Wei, 2011). Bonacina-Pugh et al. (2021) also draw some useful insights on this subject from their analysis of translanguaging practices in foreign language education, forming the conclusion that, "… as teachers open up *spaces* for translanguaging practices, students can creatively interact with each other, engage with their own text, and together find solutions for the linguistic problems they encounter; and ultimately, students can develop the target language that they are learning" (Bonacina-Pugh et al., 2021, p.24, my emphasis).

Therefore, it is upon this theoretical basis that the author set out to create viable translanguaging opportunities in the given teaching context, which will manifest in the form spaces, both physical—in the sense of time and place—and cognitive, as in the mind of learners (Wei, 2011).

Teaching Context and Participants

The teaching context featured in this report is an English language discussion course provided by Rikkyo University in Tokyo. All first-year freshmen students are required to take *Discussion class*, a weekly 100-minute-long class consisting of practical, topical discussion-based lessons, conducted over a 14-week semester. The relatively small (ten student) teaching groups are arranged according to ability level (I-IV) based on students' TOEIC scores. Students study oral functions frequently utilized in discussions, namely *Discussion Skills* phrases (e.g., "*What's your opinion?*" and "*In my opinion…*", etc.) and *Communication Skills* phrases (e.g., "*Could you repeat that, please?*" and "*Do you understand?*", etc.), developing their ability to contribute to the exchange of ideas. The course adheres to a unified lesson format and communicative teaching approach, comprising four main teaching stages: The Fluency stage, the Function Presentation stage, the Practice stage, and two Discussion stages. These are taught in conjunction with the aforementioned Discussion and

Communication Skills.

In light of the stated aims of this report, an examination of the syllabus design, teaching approach and objectives of the course was conducted. It revealed that the program does not expressly reject bilingualism or bilingual development in learners. However, neither does it accommodate it. This is evident in the founding documentation, authored by Hurling (2012), which, by omission, appears to implicitly advocate monolingualism through the aforementioned general language separation/segregation practices in EFL teaching. This influence can be seen in both classroom practice and research within the Discussion class program: The course follows a strictly communicative teaching approach, and instructors are strongly encouraged to conduct classes as an *immersive* English language experience; learners are also required to use English at all times throughout lessons whilst receiving and following directions from instructors in English. Furthermore, in-house action research has often focused on the development of effective strategies to deter and/or suppress learners' use of L1.

These were influential factors when it came to selecting a suitable participant teaching group as the subject of study and intervention: any potential candidate class would have to have already accepted and adapted to the principles of an immersive, monolingual environment by demonstrating a consistent use of English throughout lessons. Equally, however, to fulfill the stated objectives, the participants would also need to be willing to contemplate issues relating to their bilingualism as well as participate in any bilingual activities required by the intervention.

Therefore, based on these criteria, the group selected was a single, Level-II ability class, consisting of 10 (majority female) native Japanese speakers with combined TOEIC listening and reading scores ranging from 480 to 679. The students were judged by the author to be above average in terms of English language proficiency and attitude toward learning and, most importantly, capable of maintaining an English-only environment during lessons. Moreover, learners were willing to share their opinions on the subject of bilingualism, which the author gauged through informal discussions with individual participants. This yielded largely predictable results, as it was revealed that the bilingual label was not what the majority of students felt comfortable associating themselves with, even if they commanded a higher level of English proficiency. Amongst the most frequently cited reasons were, (1) a lack of self-belief in their English language ability and (2) not wanting to appear boastful in front of peers by proclaiming to be bilingual. As mentioned previously, the denial of bilingual identity seems to be a common stance amongst native Japanese learners of English, particularly at the tertiary level (see Turnbull, 2021). Nevertheless, the students' professed reluctance to identify as bilingual would be advantageous for this study, as it established a contextual foundation upon which bilingual pedagogical practices could be implemented and provide opportunities for evidencing the impact of the intervention.

Method

From a methodological perspective, collecting and recording evidence of this type of practical intervention would be most effectively achieved through a reflective teaching journal. Journaling is a form of qualitative, longitudinal data collection that can be documented in the form of *retrospective field notes* as well as incorporating *reflections on* and *for action* (Murphy, 2014). This would enable the author to document and respond effectively to what was being observed whilst students were engaging in translanguaging during the intervention period.

The intervention and reflection period for this teaching journal officially took place in lesson 7,

with lessons 1 through 6 being used purely for class observation, evaluation, and planning. In addition, unofficial observations were made from lesson 8 onwards. Furthermore, to meet the objectives and develop an appropriate interventional strategy, the following initial research question was proposed: *What are the practical planning considerations when designing pedagogical translanguaging activities on an English discussion course?* In response, the author made reflective notes during observations of lessons 1-6, which gave rise to further guiding questions to evaluate potential areas for creating viable translanguaging spaces within a standard discussion lesson:

1. *Considering the practicalities of physically accommodating translanguaging spaces (both spatially and temporally) in class, how will it be possible to implement pedagogical translanguaging activities without unduly disrupting classroom management, lesson stages, and/or timing?*
2. *Is there potential for the course to accommodate pedagogical translanguaging strategies (that is, mental/cognitive translanguaging spaces) without disrupting or undermining learners' ability to achieve the functional, linguistic objectives of the course?*

Therefore, in response to the above questions, it was necessary to consider the purpose and compatibility of each of the planned stages of a typical Discussion lesson, that is for their potential to accommodate the physical (spatial) and temporal adaptations required for pedagogical translanguaging

Figure 1.
Lesson Stages Identified as being Compatible with Pedagogical Translanguaging Activities.

Discussion class lesson stage/ activity	Description/purpose	Is it potentially compatible with pedagogical translanguaging activities? How?
[1] Quiz	An 8-question, multiple-choice test based on homework reading from the textbook.	No
[2] Fluency	Interactive speaking and listening warm-up pair work activity, using questions based on the lesson topic.	Yes—learners can easily be directed to discuss warm-up questions (written in English) using L1.
[3] Presentation	First exposure to the new target language (Discussion and Communication Skills phrases).	No
[4] Practice	Semi-controlled pair work practice of target language.	Yes—a short plenary activity can be added where learners are directed to translate the target language (English Discussions Skill phrases) into L1, followed by the second practice of the same questions but conducted entirely through L1.
[5] Discussion 1 Preparation	Generate ideas/topical content, ready for the following discussion.	No
[6] Discussion 1	Interactive, free-production group activity utilizing target language (with scaffolding).	No
[7] Discussion 2 Preparation	Generate ideas/topical content, ready for the following discussion.	Yes—specific organizational Discussion Skills phrases can be deployed as an L2 phrasal framework, through which learners can conduct their discussions but express the content of their ideas through L1.
[8] Discussion 2	Interactive, free-production group activity utilizing target language (no scaffolding).	

Note. The stages judged to be most suitable for this purpose were the Fluency stage [2], the Practice stage [4], the final Discussion Preparation stage [7], and Discussion stage [8].

activities. All stages of a standard Discussion class lesson have been outlined in the following table and include those stages identified as being compatible with pedagogical translanguaging activities (see Figure 1).

Teaching Journal

The following section of this report documents the experimental implementation of pedagogical translanguaging activities for each of the lesson stages previously identified as being compatible with such practices. Each stage will be designated as an *Intervention* which is followed by a *Rationale* section (explaining the intended pedagogical strategy for creating the translanguaging space), a *Recorded experience/event* section (detailing what exactly transpired whilst implementing the strategy), and concluded by a *Reflection* section (a discussion segment exploring thoughts and ideas produced in response to what occurred during the intervention).

Reflective Teaching Journal Entries for Lesson 7

Intervention: Lesson Stage [2]—Fluency
Rationale: Opening Translanguaging Space No. 1

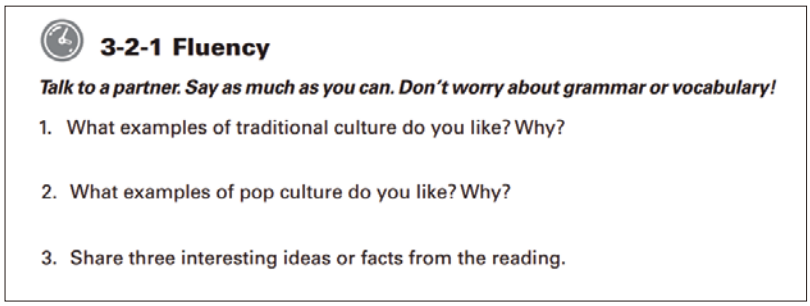
The Fluency (or warm-up) stage involves learners working in pairs and orally responding to 3 questions based on the lesson topic (see Figure 2). It has been a standard procedure for students to discuss all questions in English, and from experience, question three (Q3) [*Share three interesting ideas or facts from the reading*] has never been popular among students; their interaction rate falls, and the answers given are always short and lacking in detail. Therefore, as a question that was producing very little student engagement, I judged that there would be minimal disruption to the learning if I were to commit this question to become the first weak or pseudo-translanguaging space in the lesson by making the students discuss Q3 in Japanese only. This would also serve as an icebreaking event at the start of this lesson to subtly introduce the legitimate use of L1 into the course.

To aid the students' understanding of this intentional change, I produced a visual presentation slide to direct students to switch to using L1 for Q3 (see Figure 3).

Recorded Experience/Event:

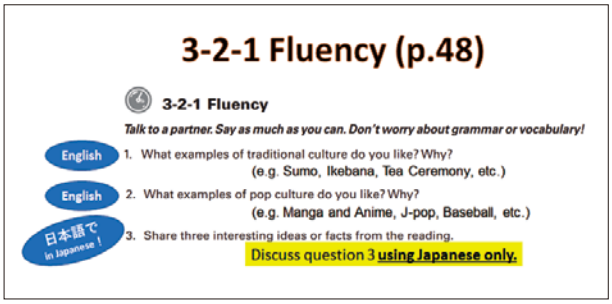
When introducing the warm-up questions, I asked the students to answer Q3 in Japanese only.

Figure 2.
Textbook-based Warm-up Questions to Activate Schemata on the Lesson Topic.



From: Kita et al., (2022). *What's Your Opinion? Interactive Skills for Effective Discussion Book II* (2nd ed., p. 48).

Figure 3.
Presentation Slide Displaying Warm-up Questions with Additional Directions to Open Translanguaging Space 1.



Adapted from: Kita et al., (2022). What's Your Opinion? Interactive Skills for Effective Discussion Book II (2nd ed., p. 48).

The students were slightly confused by this instruction, pausing and looking at me with expressions that appeared to say, "Why do you want to hear us speak Japanese?" I had to repeat myself, trying to do my best to appear confident in assuring them that this was a legitimate part of the lesson. I revealed the adapted presentation slide, which reinforced my verbal instruction, after which they accepted the direction without further question and proceeded with the activity. Not surprisingly, when using L1, there was a definite uptick in interaction when they reached Q3, with some pairs continuing to talk after the three-minute timer had elapsed. Overall, they appeared relatively comfortable switching from English to Japanese mid-way through an activity.

Reflection: Lesson Stage [2]

I have tentatively labeled this as a *pseudo-translanguaging* space, as the overall warm-up activity facilitates the very weak translanguaging practice of abruptly alternating L2-L1 between questions. There is also a mild form of translanguaging that takes place within the interactive exchanges of Q3 itself; students read the English text whilst also discussing it in Japanese, in a process similar to that which Baker (2011) alludes to in his definition of translanguaging.

Whilst I had anticipated students would switch over from using L2 to L1 (Japanese) quite willingly, I did not anticipate that I myself would initially feel slightly awkward and somewhat professionally negligent about asking them to use L1 in an English language class. It appears as though I may require some psychological reconditioning to become more comfortable during this period of administering and implementing pedagogical translanguaging practices.

Overall, it appears as though we have mutually accepted that L1 can be used in Discussion class; it is no longer to be kept "hidden" in fear of reprimand, as observed by Canagarajah (2011b). Therefore, I will incorporate this new translanguaging space in subsequent lessons. However, there are adaptations to be made for future lessons: to ensure students have remained on task throughout the activity, I will nominate some of them to provide verbal feedback to me (in English) at the end of the activity about what they discussed in Q3. This additional English reproduction stage will bring the practice more in line with Baker's translanguaging notion of learners "processing and digesting" the content (Baker, 2011, p.289). Furthermore, I must think about how to better explain the purpose of these interventions to students, specifically why they must use their L1.

Intervention: Lesson Stage [4]—Practice
Rationale: Opening Translanguaging Space No. 2

The Practice stage usually involves the semi-controlled practice of the Discussion Skill phrases (see Figure 4), using specially selected extended practice questions designed to elicit the target Discussion Skills phrases (see Figure 5). Again, as with all stages of the lesson, it has been a standard procedure for students to discuss all questions using the target language in English. This stage always appears to be one of the most productive in terms of achieving its objectives; therefore, I was reluctant to interfere directly with the processes of this stage. However, I judged that further reinforcement of target language acquisition could be achieved with the addition of some type of consolidation activity involving the students' L1 in a strong translanguaging space immediately after the L2 practice activity. Using Cenoz and Gorter's (2022) theory of raising learners' "metalinguistic awareness" (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022, p.31), I devised a simple two-step activity that involved students translating the target language (Discussions Skill phrases) into Japanese (the opening of a translanguaging space), followed by a free practice of the same practice questions but conducted completely in Japanese. I produced another visual presentation slide to prompt students to translate the target language phrases as well as initiate practice of the same questions but using L1 (see Figure 6 and Figure 7). This will form the second translanguaging space.

Recorded Experience/Event:

After students completed the regular practice activity, I asked them something to the effect of, "So, does anyone know how to say these Discussion Skill phrases in Japanese?" They had never been asked this type of question about the Discussion Skills phrases, and once again, they looked around at each other, appearing perplexed as to why the teacher was interested in hearing them speak Japanese. After about 30 seconds of talking amongst themselves, several

Figure 4.
Textbook-based Target Language Discussion Skills Phrases for Lesson 7.

Joining a Discussion

Asking Others to Join a Discussion	Joining a Discussion
Who would like to start?	Can I start?
Would anyone like to say something?	Can I say something?
Would anyone like to ask a question?	Can I ask a question?

From: Kita et al., (2022). *What's Your Opinion? Interactive Skills for Effective Discussion Book II* (2nd ed., p. 48).

Figure 5.
Textbook-based Practice Stage Questions.

Practice 2

Discuss the following topics. Use today's phrases to join the discussion and ask others to join the discussion.

- *Japanese Cities* What is the best city in Japan for international tourists to visit?
- *Food in Japan* What is the best food in Japan for international tourists?
- *Sports* Which is more interesting – sumo or baseball?
- *Music* Which is more interesting – J-pop or foreign pop music?

From: Kita et al., (2022). *What's Your Opinion? Interactive Skills for Effective Discussion Book II* (2nd ed., p. 49).

Figure 6.
Presentation Slide Displaying the Target Discussion Skills Phrases with Additional Directions to Open Translanguaging Space 2.

Adapted from: Kita et al., (2022). *What's Your Opinion? Interactive Skills for Effective Discussion Book II* (2nd ed., p. 48).

Figure 7.
Slide Displaying Additional Prompts to Initiate Practice of the Same Questions Using L1.

Adapted from: Kita et al., (2022). What's Your Opinion? Interactive Skills for Effective Discussion Book II (2nd ed., pp. 48-49).

students volunteered a translation of the phrases. Not being a competent Japanese speaker myself, I tried my best to repeat what I had heard (to the amusement of the students) and then I asked back, "Does everyone agree that these translations are correct?", to which they all nodded (but, of course, I had no idea if they were right). Students were even more surprised by my next instruction: "You can now discuss any of the practice questions again, but in 100% Japanese—don't forget to use the translated Discussion Skills". After another silent pause, I gradually began to hear a trickle of Japanese phrases, interspersed with giggles. The L1 they were producing sounded slightly stilted as if they were making a cognitive effort to spontaneously translate all previously learned Discussion Skills as well as apply the newly acquired target language phrases. I then revealed the presentation slide to students as additional guidance and cement understanding, after which the exchanges soon turned into full-blown L1 discussions, accompanied by bursts of raucous laughter. After the 2-minute activity had finished, students appeared to be in a state of amused bewilderment. I asked them how it felt to use the Discussion Skills in Japanese, to which I received replies like, "weird" … "interesting" … "unnatural."

Reflection: Lesson Stage [4]

As per standard lesson procedures, students always learn and apply the target language in English; however, this activity forced them to engage in subsequent practice of the target language, but through L1 (Japanese). I have tentatively designated this process as *L1 retropracticing*. The L1 retropracticing process allowed them to remap and further assimilate the target language using the cognitive architecture of their L1, enhancing their metalinguistic awareness following Cenoz and Gorter's (2022) notion. Moreover, I felt this activity took students experientially beyond the usual subject matter limitations set by their English language abilities, as they could use L1 to articulate and explore ideas more deeply (ideas that could be imported back into English discussions later on).

This intervention appeared to lower students' affective filter, as it evoked a range of emotional and physiological responses (for example, laughter) promoting a more relaxed learning environment and possibly increasing students' *willingness to communicate* (WTC) (McCroskey, 1992). Furthermore, taking only a total of 4 minutes, incorporating this activity directly after the practice stage had minimal impact on overall lesson timing and pacing.

Adaptions to be made for future lessons: I need to ensure that students are able to make appropriate translations of the target language into Japanese. Therefore, I shall prepare pre-translated target language phrases, ready to present as confirmation. Finally, I need to think about how I, as the teacher, can *close* this translanguaging space to transition more smoothly to the next stage.

Intervention: **Lesson Stage [7]—Discussion 2 Preparation**
Lesson Stage [8]—Discussion 2

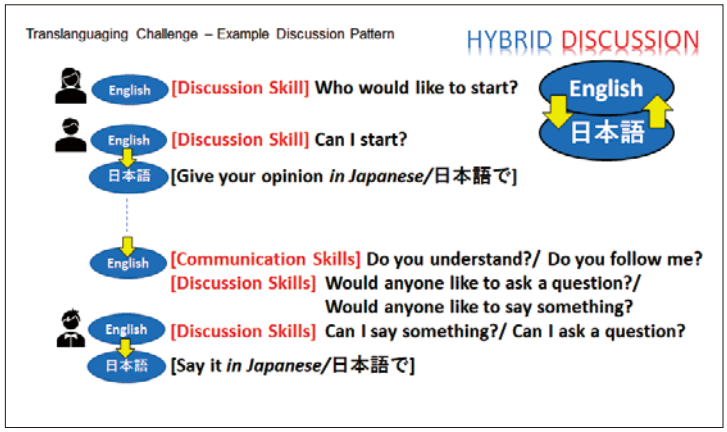
Rationale: **Opening Translanguaging Space No. 3**

Stages 7 and 8 are closely linked, that is, the Discussion 2 Preparation stage enables students to generate content and ideas, ready to use in the un-scaffolded, free-production Discussion 2 stage. I deemed that it may be beneficial to create the final space across these two stages in a single translanguaging activity that would resemble a preparatory *hybrid* L1–L2 (Japanese-English) translanguaging discussion just before the main discussion. This consists of deploying the functional target language, that is, organizational English Discussion Skills as an L2 framework of phrases, around which students can conduct their discussions and add the L1 content of their ideas. I anticipate that I will encounter difficulties verbally articulating what I need the students to do for the

Figure 8.
Presentation Slide Introducing the Hybrid Discussion with Questions and Discussion Skills Phrases to Open Translanguaging Space 3.

Adapted from: Kita et al., (2022). *What's Your Opinion? Interactive Skills for Effective Discussion Book II* (2nd ed., pp. 48, 51).

Figure 9.
Presentation Slide Displaying a Model Translanguaging Hybrid Discussion Pattern.



Adapted from: Kita et al., (2022). *What's Your Opinion? Interactive Skills for Effective Discussion Book II* (2nd ed., p. 48).

hybrid discussion; therefore, I produced two more visual presentation slides, the first to open the translanguaging space (see Figure 8) and the other to model the discussion pattern structure so that students can engage in the translanguaging task more efficiently (see Figure 9).

Recorded Experience/Event:

After successfully completing the Discussion 1 stage, I warned the students that they were going to need to use their Japanese language skills to prepare for the final Discussion stage. The reaction to this was mixed, but I got the overall impression that they were curious and wanted to try out whatever I had planned. This practice was completely new to them, but after displaying the model presentation slide, I asked two of the more confident students to demonstrate an exchange, after which the whole group was keen to begin. As with the intervention at stage 4, there was considerable excitement and elevated levels of interaction, especially when making the L1-L2 switches. The hybrid discussion ended after 5 minutes, at which point the discussion groups appeared sufficiently energized with ideas, ready to conduct the discussion again in English. Subsequent spoken use of the target language (Discussion Skills) by students, on the whole, was produced accurately and with very little hesitation. Discussions also appeared to progress in a more sustained manner, with students wanting to speak right up until the final bell.

Reflection: Lesson Stage [7] & [8]

Many aspects recorded in the previous intervention stage were present in this stage also, such as enhancing metalinguistic awareness, lowering the affective filter, and enabling students to fully explore and share ideas and content knowledge through L1, before exercising them in English. Moreover, this particular hybrid discussion task allowed students to experience a strong form of deliberate, teacher-directed translanguaging, designated as Cognitive Academic Translanguaging (Jones, 2017).

Incorporating this activity directly after the Discussion 1 stage had minimal impact on overall lesson timing and pacing, taking only a total of 5 minutes. I will, therefore, include this in subsequent lessons as the final safe translanguaging space in the lesson plan.

Conclusion

This report set out to document the practical considerations of applying pedagogical translanguaging practices through the creation of translanguaging spaces in an English discussion course in a Japanese university setting. Judging by the findings made during the writing of the teaching journal, it is important to consider not only what translanguaging practices should be employed but how such practices may be incorporated within a course without unduly impacting the pre-existing pedagogical infrastructure. Once these aspects have been considered, however, the process of designing and applying context-appropriate pedagogical practices based on the latest translanguaging theory can result in both observable and convincing outcomes. For example, as reported in the reflective journal here, the application of an effective pedagogical translanguaging discussion activity (the intervention at Stages 7 and 8) enabled learners to comfortably switch between English and Japanese in a planned and deliberate manner (Jones, 2017). This means that students could achieve the aims inherent to the Discussion class, that is, to demonstrate the ability to engage with the task cognitively on multiple linguistic levels and to simultaneously synthesize their knowledge of the Discussion Skills patterns in English (Hurling, 2012). Moreover, during this preparatory phase of the discussion, as students were interacting in L1, this constituted a legitimate form of *strategic planning* and *rehearsal*, as defined by Ellis (2005, 2009). Therefore, as the resulting oral performances demonstrated, the bilingual pedagogical practice of translanguaging can produce learners who are noticeably more stimulated, confident, and primed to express their views in the context of a monolingual English discussion.

Despite these apparent successes, however, certain aspects remain unclear and could not be addressed in this report, such as the issue of identity: did exposure to pedagogical translanguaging practices, as demonstrated in this teaching context, in any way persuade learners into becoming more accepting of their bilingual status? This is a complex issue, and it would be impossible to gauge this from data gathered from the narrow, short-range interventional study presented here. However, whilst I doubt that any significant progress has been made, I believe that through the course of translanguaging, the learners' internal L1–L2 barrier (established over years of segregated language instruction) has been partly "disrupted" (García, 2009). This disruption, caused by the controlled practice of incorporating two languages into a single academic task, has potentially triggered a shift within learners; a shift in the balance of power between the L1–L2 dichotomy, an equalization of languages, so to speak, which, on a subconscious level, could work to cultivate a learner's bilingual identity over the longer term.

The results of this interventional study and the body of current literature make it abundantly evident that more empirical inquiry in this field is both necessary and feasible. Furthermore, it is hoped that the results of any future study could potentially lead to changes in other curricular contexts offered by Rikkyo University, such as the English debate course, where students would be able to benefit from exercising their inherent bilingual abilities and all from the safety of a translanguaging space.

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【Teaching Practice Report】

Using CLIL to Design Elective University Courses

Tanya L. Erdelyi

Abstract

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) has become increasingly popular worldwide over the last few decades. It is generally described as teaching content in a language not native to the learners. In this paper, I provide a report on how I used the principles of CLIL to design two university elective courses. Using content-related vocabulary and a combination of authentic and original materials, the courses were designed to provide students with the opportunity to explore content while speaking, writing, reading, and listening to English. Activities were designed to support students with low-level English proficiency commonly found in these mixed-level classes as well as provide students of all English proficiency levels interesting and meaningful interactions with the course theme, lesson topics, and other students. First, I briefly explain some of the CLIL-related theories on which I based many of my course design and classroom interaction decisions. Then, I outline the syllabus and lesson plans for the two courses. I conclude the report with some informal classroom observations and recommendations for incorporating CLIL into university elective courses.

Keywords: Content and language integrated learning; CLIL; elective courses

Introduction

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is an educational approach where a non-language content course is taught in a language generally different from the learners' first (Coyle *et al.,* 2010; Dalton-Puffer, 2011). CLIL does not necessarily require an equal division of subject and language education; instead, it is an interwoven fusion between the two (Coyle *et al.,* 2010). CLIL is generally associated with bilingual education and content-based instruction. Focus on implementing CLIL in the classroom and subsequent studies on CLIL emerged from European countries in the mid-1990s (Coyle *et al.,* 2010; Nikula *et al.*, 2016). Soon after, CLIL began spreading worldwide (Coyle *et al.,* 2010; Graham *et al.*, 2018). Some common characteristics of CLIL education in Asia, as well as other parts of the world, are that the target language is generally English, and the content is generally given more emphasis as the teachers tend to be non-native English speakers teaching their subjects of expertise, with additional language lessons provided by language experts (Dalton-Puffer, 2011).

However, that does not mean that language in CLIL classrooms is completely ignored. In fact, just as CLIL is a union between content and language education, so too is the support that CLIL teachers provide. With regard to support in a CLIL environment, teachers utilize several strategies. One common strategy is scaffolding, the process of experts providing novices with support to accomplish tasks beyond their abilities (Bruner, 1976, as cited in Lyster, 2007). Mahan (2022) created a framework from some of the existing literature on CLIL for analyzing scaffolding in CLIL classrooms. They settled on three aspects of scaffolding: prior knowledge, supporting materials, and academic language. In their study, they found that content teachers in the natural sciences, geography, and social sciences use a variety of scaffolding strategies such as activating students' prior knowledge, supplying supporting materials, and giving academic language prompts for understanding content and accomplishing tasks. In terms of strategies used for error correction,

recasting is a common and often preferred practice. Recasting involves repeating a student's erroneous utterances using the correct grammar and vocabulary in the hopes that the student will notice the difference (Lyster, 2007). Recasting is used to keep students on topic with minimal interruption, allowing them to hear academically correct models that match and allow students to check their ideas. However, the main focus of recasting in a CLIL setting is often not on correction but on semantic paraphrasing (Mohan & Beckett, 2001 as cited in the study by Lyster, 2007, p. 95).

Furthermore, the outcomes of CLIL are difficult to identify (Dalton-Puffer, 2011; Graham *et al.*, 2018). Studies that focus on the outcomes of CLIL tend to focus more on language as it can more easily be measured quantitatively than content (Dalton-Puffer, 2011; Nikula *et al.*, 2016). Additionally, studies that focus on language acquisition due to CLIL are often confounded by other factors such as pre-existing language knowledge or language acquisition that might be contributed to accompanying language courses (Dalton-Puffer, 2011). Further mixed results on language acquisition show that many of the studies are conducted on elective courses that tend to draw students with higher motivation and aptitude in language learning (Bruton, 2011). However, of the 25 articles exploring CLIL language outcomes analyzed by Graham *et al.* (2018), most showed that the CLIL students performed equal to or better than non-CLIL students on tests. As for content learning, as most CLIL classes are filled with content-rich videos and other visuals, CLIL students have an easier chance of comprehending the content (Graham *et al.*, 2018).

The purpose of this paper is to report on two English elective courses I designed and taught using the fundamentals of CLIL. I begin with an explanation of the students, courses, lessons, activities, and materials while providing justifications for many of my design choices. Next, I offer some informal observations of the CLIL classes, along with some possible recommendations for those who wish to teach courses that are more aligned with the CLIL approach.

Course and Lesson Design

The following is a description of the students as well as the course and lesson designs. As this is merely a report on the CLIL courses and lessons I designed and taught, the descriptions of the students are based on observations I made while teaching; I do not have any objective evidence about their actual language abilities or comprehensive knowledge of each students' department or major.

Students

The students enrolled in these elective CLIL courses were second-, third-, and fourth-year university students from different departments studying several different majors in a private Japanese university. Their first language was Japanese. The students also differed greatly in English language proficiency, ranging from fairly fluent speakers of English to those who sometimes struggled to form complete sentences depending on the complexity of the topic.

Course Design

I designed two elective courses, both taught in the same semester. The students in each course met for 100 minutes once a week for 14 weeks. The Language and History course had 11 students, and the Japanese Studies Through English course had 25 students. Each elective course was taught entirely in English. I used the same general design for each course's syllabus and the same general

format for each lesson across both courses. Each lesson during weeks 1-7 and 9-13 focused on a different topic related to the theme of the course. Each course also had a midterm and final presentation assignment in weeks 8 and 14, respectively. On the same day as the midterm and final presentations, the students submitted a one-page single-spaced reaction paper that included a one-paragraph summary of the lectures and homework readings for each lesson leading up to the assignment (weeks 1-7 for the midterm and weeks 9-13 for the final), along with an opinion paragraph reacting to some of the topics they had studied throughout the course. Table 1 contains the syllabus for the Japanese Studies Through English course. Table 2 shows the Language and History syllabus.

Table 1

Syllabus for a Japanese Studies Through English Elective Course

Week	Topic	Homework Due
1	Course Introduction; What is Cool Japan and Soft Power? Reading Skills; Writing summaries	
2	Japanese Traditional Culture and Past Influences; Lecture; Discussion; Note Taking Skills	Reading & Summary
3	Japanese Films; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
4	Japanese Martial Arts; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
5	Japanese Food; Lecture; Discussion; Presentation Skills	Reading & Summary
6	Japanese Music; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
7	Japanese Fashion; Lecture; Discussion	Prepare for Assignment 1
8	Assignment 1 – Presentation 1 (small groups)	Presentation 1/Reaction 1
9	Japanese Subcultures; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
10	Japanese Manga; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
11	Japanese Anime; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
12	Japanese Cosplay; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
13	Japanese Video Games; Lecture; Discussion	Prepare for Assignment 2
14	Assignment 2 – Final Presentation (small groups)	Presentation 2/Reaction 2

Table 2

Syllabus for the Language and History Course

Week	Topic	Homework Due
1	Course Introduction; Origins of Language; Reading Skills review; Writing summaries review	
2	Origins of Speech and Writing; Lecture; Discussion; Note Taking Skills review	Reading & Summary
3	Languages of the World; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
4	Language Diversity; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
5	History of English; Lecture; Discussion; Presentation Skills	Reading & Summary
6	Etymology (word origins); Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
7	Place and People Names; Lecture; Discussion	Prepare for Assignment 1
8	Assignment 1 – Mini-Presentation (small groups)	Presentation 1/Reaction 1
9	Language Change; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
10	The Electronic Revolution; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
11	Political Correctness; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
12	Dying Languages; Lecture; Discussion	Reading & Summary
13	Modern Languages; Lecture; Discussion	Prepare for Assignment 2
14	Assignment 2 – Final Presentation (small groups)	Presentation 2/Reaction 2

Lesson Design

Each lesson followed the same general format containing four to five tasks or discussions. I chose this uniformity because I find that when working with mixed-level classes, routines foster confidence in students with low-level proficiency in the target language as they know what is expected of them in each lesson. Activities for the lessons were chosen to maximize the students' exposure to the content as well as all four language skills (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, and writing).

For each lesson, the students sat in the same group of three to four learners for the duration of the lesson, with new group configurations at the beginning of each lesson. The lessons began with a review of the previous lesson's topic. The discussion was facilitated by questions that focused on reviewing the main messages and supporting ideas of the previous lesson's content. Next, the students engaged in a warm-up discussion or activity to activate the pre-existing vocabulary and knowledge the students have on the topic, a form of scaffolding as mentioned in the study by Mahan (2022). Following the warm-up discussion, I gave a mini-lecture on the weekly topic. As they listened to the lecture with accompanying visuals on slides, the students took notes using the note-taking skills taught during lesson two. Each lecture contained a video on the lesson's topic to give the students an opportunity to practice listening to natural expressions and speaking speeds in authentic materials; this choice was made to help students gain a richer understanding of the content (Graham *et al.*, 2018). Closed captioning subtitles were turned on to help students with low-level proficiency in English process the information. After the lecture, the students compared their notes to fill in gaps in the information they might have missed, along with identifying the main messages and supporting ideas about the topic. I encouraged the students to include these main messages and ideas in their summary writing homework, a weekly assignment the students completed in order to help write their mid-term and final reaction papers. The note-taking discussion also helped students with low-level proficiency in English notice any missed key points, confirm what they had heard, and discuss what they had just learned. The final discussion for each lesson focused on that week's topic, including questions about their opinions as well as questions that allowed the students to discuss the topic critically as recommended by Dalton-Puffer (2006 as cited in the study by Lyster, 2007, p. 92) as comprehension questions tend to limit student responses. Many of the lessons also ended with a short instructive activity on a skill that might be needed for a future activity or assignment (e.g., note taking, summary writing, paragraph writing, presentation script writing, slide design, etc.). Finally, students were given an authentic text on the following week's topic to read and summarize in writing for homework. Figure 1 shows a sample lesson plan from the Japanese Studies Through English course. The structure of the lesson in this plan closely aligns with most of the lessons taught during these two courses. The main difference between each lesson, besides the topic, included variations in the types of tasks completed during the warm-up phase and the special skill often taught at the end of the lesson. These lesson plans were also distributed to the students weekly as worksheets and often included visual images related to the topic of discussion for that week that the students would critically analyze and discuss.

At the end of each discussion activity (tasks 1–4 on the lesson plan), the students shared interesting information, ideas, and opinions from their group's discussion with the rest of the class. To avoid a lack of volunteers as well as give each learner the opportunity to report back to the class, the students played rock paper scissors after each discussion to decide who would share. The student who lost the game had to report to the class. To prevent nervous students from not knowing what to

Figure 1

Sample Lesson Plan from the Japanese Studies Through English Course.

Lesson 10 - JSTE 6/17 (F)

1. **Review Discussion from Last Lecture**
   1. How has Japan influenced other countries with Japanese subcultures?
   2. What ideas and values from Japanese subcultures do you think would be a good message for people overseas to help them understand how Japanese people think?
   3. What are the main messages/ideas from last week's lesson?

2. **Warm-up Discussion about Japanese *Manga***
   a. Look at the *manga* and comics on the table at the front of the room. Make notes. Then, discuss the following with your partners: What are the similarities and differences you can see between the Japanese *manga* and English comics? What are the similarities and differences you can see between the Japanese *manga* and English translations of *manga*?

Japanese *Manga*	English *Manga* Translations	English Comics

3. **The Influence of Japanese *Manga* Lecture**
   a. Please listen to the mini-lecture.
   b. Take notes and write down questions you have.
   c. Compare your notes with those of your partners. Write info you might have missed.
   d. What ideas from today's lecture would you include in a 1-2 sentence summary?

4. **Weekly Topic Discussion** - In small groups, answer the following questions:
   a. What were the most interesting things you learned from today's reading & lecture?
   b. Do you read Japanese manga? Why or why not? If yes, what *manga* do you read?
   c. What Japanese *manga* do you think are popular in Japan? Why?
   d. What Japanese *manga* do you think are popular overseas? Why?
   e. What can people overseas learn about Japan from *manga*?

5. **Paragraph Writing - Structure and Topic Sentences**
   a. Let's look at the "Paragraph Writing" worksheets.

6. **Any questions?**

Homework

Read the Homework Reading and write a short summary for *Fri., June 24 (13:25)*. Write the summary on the Summary Doc that you linked to the Gateway Document.

Note: Students received a copy of the lesson plan for each lesson.

share, I gave a 30-second preparation time to confer with their partners about what they should say. Students who reported back after a discussion were subsequently exempted from the next few rock paper scissors rounds. Thus, most students only had to speak to the entire class once per lesson, unless they raised their hand to volunteer information or ran out of group members who had not shared yet as we completed each discussion or task. These group reports allowed students the chance to speak English and to hear what other groups in the class were talking about. The reports also allowed me to recast their responses using proper grammar and the content-related vocabulary (Lyster, 2007) that was often mentioned during the lecture.

Observations and Recommendations

The following observations and recommendations are based on casual observations I made while teaching the two CLIL elective courses.

Observations

One of the most impressive observations I made during these two CLIL elective courses was the absence of spoken Japanese. Students with varying English language proficiency levels in both courses spoke only English for the full 100-minute lessons across all 14 weeks during group work, discussions, presentations, and when addressing the entire class. Surprisingly, the students chose to speak only English on their own volition as I had never explicitly instructed them to do so. Perhaps, the nature of the course compelled them to communicate only in English. It could also be due to the higher motivation and language learning aptitude of students drawn to English electives as mentioned by Bruton (2011). Another observation was the frequent assistance the students with high-level English proficiency provided those with lower proficiency in English. This action was facilitated and perhaps encouraged by the consistent confirmation checks I had built into each lesson. Lastly, it should be noted that the students consistently provided insightful observations and critiques on the weekly topics rather than a mere regurgitation of the facts they had learned.

Recommendations

Based on my observations while teaching these two CLIL courses, I would like to make a few recommendations. To begin with, CLIL lessons have the possibility of providing a much-needed relief from rigid English lessons that focus mainly on grammar, translation, test strategies, and single language skill building (e.g., listening courses). Additionally, elective English classes based on an underlying core content (e.g., Japanese Studies Through English, Language and History, World Heritage Sites) provide an excellent foundation for applying CLIL practices. Finding a way to implement some core CLIL practices into the aforementioned rigid English lessons might be a productive next step. Should a teacher decide to design and implement a CLIL course or lesson, proper scaffolding should be provided for the mixed level of English proficiency these classes often have. Lesson activities should be designed to allow students a chance to critically analyze and comment on the content in order to get a deeper understanding of the topics of discussion (Dalton-Puffer, 2006 as cited in Lyster, 2007, p. 92). Finally, it might be possible for both content and language teachers to be encouraged to use their expertise to teach CLIL elective courses at the university level.

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多言語教育実践ジャーナル投稿規定

概要：センター内の言語科目における実践報告を年 1 回出版

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