

Yeh, M.L. (2015). The preference of learning with various authentic materials on an e-platform: A survey on advanced-level students. *Accents Asia*, (7), 2, pp. 1-23.

The Preference Of Learning With Various Authentic Materials On An E-Platform: A Survey On Advanced-Level Students

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ABSTRACT

Numerous academic findings have shown that authenticity engages students in learning languages. Also, language learners have relied on authentic materials as evidenced in much research. The purpose of this paper is to determine the viability of applying authentic materials to an e-learning platform by collecting quantitative information from a questionnaire surveying 77 freshmen students at a technology university in Taiwan. These students were placed at an advanced level. They were exposed to various kinds of authentic materials in the one-year Freshmen English class. By the end of the school year, they were asked to fill out a Likert-scale questionnaire concerning their attitude toward the authenticity presented in the class. The findings are intended to illuminate the effectiveness of authentic materials in an e-learning platform.

INTRODUCTION

E-learning today does not only serve as a vehicle for delivering teaching contents, but acts interactively with students as it contains multi-faceted resources adapted from media. Teachers using web 2.0 technologies can promote the motivation of students through innovative use of media, which can be used in the development of authentic learning tasks that enliven the learning experience. Language instruction is perceivably driven by shifting advances of technologies, however, incorporating materials that can motivate students' learning is crucial to promote successful learning.

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Students we are now teaching are the “Internet generation.” The Internet and modern gadgets are surrounding students’ lives. E-learning has become inevitable for this young generation. When either low-tech solutions or state of the art technology is adopted, the contents of the teaching materials always prevails. However, how teachers can utilize the currently favored pedagogy is a challenging task for them. Teachers need to combine technologies available with suitable teaching resources to get the best benefits of using technology and the Internet in the classroom.

This paper is a preliminary investigation of students' preference for types of authentic materials to be used on an e-learning platform. The surveyed items included Youtube short films, online music videos, ICRT online radio news programs, and an American TV sitcom series. The purpose of this survey was to find out what types of authentic resources best interest students and whether these contents can contribute to their acceptance or understanding of the target culture. Furthermore, this study intends to show what linguistic competence, listening, speaking, and vocabulary, that each of these different genres can promote.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Use of e-learning platforms has become more common in classrooms. Technology in language instruction heightens students' motivation (Davis, 2006). Net-based language teaching and learning (NBLT) stated by Warchauer and Kern (2000) involving the use and support of computers connected by networks is one of the most pertinent principles for L2 acquisition. With the support of technology, curricular objectives still have to be reached through the intervening technology by combining with properly selected materials to fulfill the goals of a lesson. Davis (2006) suggests what causes the success and failure of any technology rests mostly in sound teaching practices. The Internet is an almost limitless repository of abundant and valuable learning resources. Davis describes features of the Internet as a source of learning:

This is often a quandary for teachers who realize that they need to help students learn to critically examine information on the Internet in terms of credibility, authority, citation, timeliness, and accuracy. Furthermore, students these days have been raised in an online world, ... teachers should bare the responsibility of helping

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students combine both the massive and easily-accessible Internet with conventional research techniques. (p. 3)

Students need to be guided through these online materials to acquire the desired learning outcomes. It is believed to be a teacher's responsibility to ensure the usefulness of Internet resources or websites uploaded on the learning platforms. Students should not be asked to navigate the plethora of information without confirming the learning objectives first (Davis, 2006).

Authentic materials unmodified in form are shown to motivate students in performing communicative tasks, reading, note taking and writing (Drzic, Seljan, Djigunovic, Lasi-Lazic, Stancic, 2011). The advantage of incorporating multimedia, authentic resources into teaching is to stimulate students' competence for real life communication and interaction by bringing the outside world into the classroom, and thus make the learning process more rewarding and exciting. Authentic materials can lend real-life situations to the learning environment, strengthening the bond between the outside world and classroom settings (Brinton, 2001). Mollica (as cited in Brinton, 2001) stresses that Internet resources have been effective in developing learners' language competence, helping them process linguistic information more readily so that they tend to communicate with native speakers with more ease and confidence. In other words, authentic multimedia is an effective means of enhancing learners' language production.

Collins (1988) defines situated learning as "the notion of learning knowledge and skills in contexts that reflect the way the knowledge will be useful in real life" (p.2). Later, Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1989) proposes the theory focusing on the *situated cognition* or *situated learning*. Hummel (1993) further developed this theory as a model claiming the application of computer-based learning to contrast traditional apprenticeship. Reeves (1993) states that one of the major benefits of language instruction technologies is their ability to provide "opportunities for simulated apprenticeships as well as a wealth of learning support activities" (p.107) Computers can now model real-life settings using the Internet or other multimedia resources providing simulated real-life experiences. McLellan (1994) later also points out that a situated learning model can be an anchoring context through the use of video or multimedia programs.

Herrinton (2000) stresses that practical knowledge is gained in a learning environment that comprises nine situated learning elements. Three of them relevant to authenticity are the following:

1. Provide authentic context that reflect the way the knowledge

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will be used in real life.

2. Provide authentic activities.
3. Provide for authentic assessment of learning within the tasks.

METHOD

This research was carried out on the basis of surveying 81 first-year students at the tertiary level for Freshmen English classes at the end of the 2nd consecutive semester with special attention given to learners' preference toward different genres of authentic materials. The subjects were placed into advanced-level classes majoring in management, design, and engineering etc. The questionnaire is in the form of a Likert-scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. 77 valid questionnaires were received and the data obtained in the research were analyzed using SPSS.

Four categories of variables were set including Youtube short films, online music videos, ICRT online radio news programs, and an American TV sitcom series. Each category was then subdivided with a focus on probing the subjects' awareness for the foreign culture, listening and speaking competences, vocabulary, intonation and pronunciation. Each question measuring the same language competence area under a different category was calculated together by SPSS. A more independent question under each category was designed to ask the respondents' attitude toward the target culture or English songs. The result of these independent questions were run individually.

RESULT

Learning Motivation

The subjects feel generally positive about adding authenticity into language instructions (Table 1). Among them, they favor the American sitcom films the most. 59.7% responded *strongly agree* that it adds more fun in learning. While most respond positively (from agree to *strongly agree*) with a percentage significantly over 50%, ICRT easy radio news barely reached 50% of the overall positive responses.

TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics of Q1, 10, 14, 23 for Learning Motivation

Q1 I feel that Youtube short films relevant to the textbook subjects
make learning more interesting.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
Agree	36	46.8	46.8	49.4
Strongly agree	39	50.6	50.6	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q10 I feel that MV with subtitles relevant to the textbook subjects makes learning
more interesting.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	4	5.2	5.3	5.3
Agree	32	41.6	42.1	47.4
strongly agree	40	51.9	52.6	100.0
Total	76	98.7	100.0	
Missing System	1	1.3		
Total	77	100.0		

Q14 I feel that watching American TV sitcoms makes learning more interesting.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	4	5.2	5.2	5.2
Agree	27	35.1	35.1	40.3
Strongly agree	46	59.7	59.7	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q23 I feel that listening to ICRT news programs makes learning more interesting.

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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
Neither agree nor disagree	25	32.5	32.5	35.1
Agree	31	40.3	40.3	75.3
Strongly agree	19	24.7	24.7	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Understanding of Culture

Regarding the cultural aspect, American sitcoms ranked higher than two others - Youtube and ICRT (Table 2). 39 students chose *strongly agree* that the films helped them better understand American culture, which accounted for 50% of the total respondents. 20 of them responded *neither agree nor disagree* for ICRT news, so that it inevitably decreased the responses for *agree* and *strongly agree* which altogether reached 74.1% as opposed to 89.6% (Youtube), and 83.1% (American sitcoms).

TABLE 2
Descriptive Statistics of Q3, 16, 25 for Understanding of Culture

Q3 I feel that watching Youtube short films help me know more about the cultures of English-speaking countries.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	7	9.1	9.2	9.2
Agree	42	54.5	55.3	64.5
Strongly agree	27	35.1	35.5	100.0
Total	76	98.7	100.0	
MissingSystem	1	1.3		
Total	77	100.0		

Q16 I feel that watching American TV sitcoms help me know more about American culture.

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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	13	16.9	16.9	16.9
Agree	25	32.5	32.5	49.4
Strongly agree	39	50.6	50.6	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q25 I feel that listening to ICRT news programs helps me get to know the cultures and events around the world.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	20	26.0	26.0	26.0
Agree	32	41.6	41.6	67.5
Strongly agree	25	32.5	32.5	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Listening Ability

The students rated American sitcoms as the most helpful among Youtube and ICRT in terms of improving their listening competence (Table 3). Even though no students responded *disagree*, 9 students (11.7%) responded *neither agree nor disagree*, which did not show a significant difference than ICRT. This phenomenon leaves some room for further investigation.

TABLE 3
Descriptive Statistics of Q4, 17, 26 for Listening Ability Improvement

Q4 I feel that watching Youtube short films helps improve my listening ability.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Neither agree nor disagree	6	7.8	8.0	9.3

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Agree	33	42.9	44.0	53.3
Strongly agree	35	45.5	46.7	100.0
Total	75	97.4	100.0	
Missing System	2	2.6		
Total	77	100.0		

Q17 I feel that watching American TV sitcoms helps improve my listening ability.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	9	11.7	11.7	11.7
Agree	27	35.1	35.1	46.8
Strongly agree	41	53.2	53.2	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q26 I feel that listening to ICRT news programs helps improve my listening ability.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Neither agree nor disagree	15	19.5	19.5	20.8
Agree	32	41.6	41.6	62.3
Strongly agree	29	37.7	37.7	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100	

Speaking Ability

It seemed harder for most of the students to perceive any improvement for the productive skill, speaking ability (Table 4). 22.1% and 32.5% responded *neither agree nor disagree* or *disagree* for Youtube and ICRT respectively. Among them, American sitcoms were still their favorite.

TABLE 4
Descriptive Statistics of Q5, 18, 27 for Speaking Ability Improvement

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Q5 I feel that watching Youtube short films helps improve my speaking ability.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	4	5.2	5.3	5.3
Neither agree nor disagree	17	22.1	22.4	27.6
Agree	28	36.4	36.8	64.5
Strongly agree	27	35.1	35.5	100.0
Total	76	98.7	100.0	
Missing System	1	1.3		
Total	77	100.0		

Q18 I feel that watching American TV sitcoms with subtitles helps improve my speaking ability.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Neither agree nor disagree	12	15.6	15.6	16.9
Agree	28	36.4	36.4	53.2
Strongly agree	36	46.8	46.8	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q27 I feel that listening to ICRT news programs help improve my speaking ability.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Neither agree nor disagree	25	32.5	32.5	33.8
Agree	31	40.3	40.3	74.0
Strongly agree	20	26.0	26.0	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Vocabulary & Prosodic Features

This study also intended to explore whether the subjects' were conscious of the speakers' use of vocabulary (Table 5), and prosodic features of intonation (Table 6), and pronunciation (Table 7) for each genre of media. The results show that the subjects tend to notice less the use of vocabulary for Youtube and ICRT. *Agree* and *strongly agree* were 74.1%, 81.9%, 85.8, and 59.8 respectively for Youtube, MV, American sitcoms, and ICRT. Comparing intonation and pronunciation, the subjects generally paid attention to both. However ICRT contributed relatively less in these two fields. Close to 30% of the respondents answered *neither agree nor disagree*.

TABLE 5
Descriptive Statistics of Q6, 13, 19, 28 for Attending to Vocabulary

Q6 I would pay attention to the dialogues or wording when watching Youtube short films.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
Neither agree nor disagree	16	20.8	21.1	25.0
Agree	29	37.7	38.2	63.2
Strongly agree	28	36.4	36.8	100.0
Total	76	98.7	100.0	
Missing System	1	1.3		
Total	77	100.0		

Q13 I would pay attention to the wording in the lyrics when listening to MV.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	14	18.2	18.2	18.2
Agree	31	40.3	40.3	58.4
Strongly agree	32	41.6	41.6	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

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Q19 I would pay attention to the characters' wording when watching American TV sitcoms.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	11	14.3	14.3	14.3
Agree	32	41.6	41.6	55.8
Strongly agree	34	44.2	44.2	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q28 I would pay attention to the anchors' wording when listening to ICRT news programs.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
Neither agree nor disagree	29	37.7	37.7	40.3
Agree	27	35.1	35.1	75.3
Strongly agree	19	24.7	24.7	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100	

TABLE 6
Descriptive Statistics of Q7, 20, 29 for Attending to Intonation

Q7 I would pay attention to the speakers' intonations when watching Youtube short films.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	13	16.9	16.9	16.9
Agree	36	46.8	46.8	63.6
Strongly agree	28	36.4	36.4	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

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Q20 I would pay attention to the characters' intonations when watching American TV sitcoms with subtitles.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	11	14.3	14.3	14.3
Agree	34	44.2	44.2	58.4
Strongly agree	32	41.6	41.6	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q29 I would pay attention to the anchors' intonations when listening to ICRT news programs.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Neither agree nor disagree	21	27.3	27.3	28.6
Agree	33	42.9	42.9	71.4
Strongly agree	22	28.6	28.6	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 7
Descriptive Statistics of Q8, 12, 21, 30 for attending to Pronunciation

Q8 I would pay attention to the speakers' pronunciations when watching Youtube short films.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	14	18.2	18.2	18.2
Agree	31	40.3	40.3	58.4
Strongly agree	32	41.6	41.6	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q12 I would pay attention to the singers' pronunciations when listening to MV.

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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	8	10.4	10.4	10.4
Agree	34	44.2	44.2	54.5
Strongly agree	35	45.5	45.5	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q21 I would pay attention to the characters' pronunciations when watching American TV sitcoms with subtitles.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	11	14.3	14.3	14.3
Agree	36	46.8	46.8	61.0
Strongly agree	30	39.0	39.0	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q30 I would pay attention to the anchors' pronunciations when listening to ICRT news programs.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Neither agree nor disagree	22	28.6	28.6	29.9
Agree	32	41.6	41.6	71.4
Strongly agree	22	28.6	28.6	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Difficulty of the Authentic Materials

The difficulty in understanding the authentic materials was also examined on this survey, and it showed that there were more students who have varying problems understanding the context than those who can understand even among these advanced-level students (Table 8). 32.5%, 20.8%, and 14.3% (which represent Youtube, American sitcoms, ICRT respectively) respondents indicated

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they have no problems or lesser amount of difficulty in understanding, contrasting with 36.4%, 52%, and 61.1% feeling that they encountered difficulty understanding the context. These statistics could entail certain meanings on how to tailor appropriate authentic materials for students with advanced-level proficiency, and this can be an issue for future research.

TABLE 8
Descriptive Statistics of Q9, 22,31 for the Difficulty in Understanding the Authentic Materials

Q9 I feel it difficult to understand the Youtube short films played in the class.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
Disagree	23	29.9	29.9	32.5
Neither agree nor disagree	24	31.2	31.2	63.6
Agree	18	23.4	23.4	87.0
Strongly agree	10	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q22 I feel it difficult to understand the American TV sitcoms with subtitles.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	8	10.4	10.4	10.4
Disagree	8	10.4	10.4	20.8
Neither agree nor disagree	21	27.3	27.3	48.1
Agree	27	35.1	35.1	83.1
Strongly agree	13	16.9	16.9	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Q31 I feel it difficult to understand ICRT news programs even with transcripts.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid Strongly disagree	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
Disagree	8	10.4	10.4	14.3
Neither agree nor disagree	19	24.7	24.7	39.0
Agree	29	37.7	37.7	76.6
Strongly agree	18	23.4	23.4	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

Other Related Issues

Finally, the conclusions drawn from the four independent questions concerning whether they are interested in knowing more about the culture of the English-speaking countries (Table 9), whether they like to listen to English songs (Table 10), the American culture (Table 11), and the world culture (Table 12) reveal that the subjects mostly were willing to accept more input from the foreign cultures. This is a positive indication that they were open-minded in receiving authentic culture input in the class.

TABLE 9
Descriptive Statistics of Q2 for Knowing the Culture

Q2 I am interested in knowing the cultures of the English-speaking countries.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
Neither agree nor disagree	12	15.6	15.6	18.2
Agree	34	44.2	44.2	62.3
Strongly agree	29	37.7	37.7	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 10
Descriptive Statistics of Q 11 for English Songs

Q11 I like listening to English songs.

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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
Agree	26	33.8	33.8	36.4
Strongly agree	49	63.6	63.6	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 11
Descriptive Statistics of Q15 for American Culture

Q15 I am interested in knowing American culture.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
Neither agree nor disagree	16	20.8	20.8	23.4
Agree	26	33.8	33.8	57.1
Strongly agree	33	42.9	42.9	100.0
Total	77	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 12
Descriptive Statistics of Q24 for the World Culture

Q24 I am interested in knowing the cultures and events around the world.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neither agree nor disagree	17	22.1	22.4	22.4
Agree	31	40.3	40.8	63.2
Strong agree	28	36.4	36.8	100.0
Total	76	98.7	100.0	
Missing System	1	1.3		
Total	77	100.0		

CONCLUSION

Comparing the receptive skills and productive skills, the authentic materials proved to facilitate students' listening competence more than speaking according to the survey outcomes. This might be due to the reason that the students actually were not required to model or engage in a simulated speaking activity after they received the authentic input. For future curricular design, simulated speaking activities are suggested to implement after students receive authentic input. American TV sitcom series was the students' favorite in terms of enhancing their perceived listening competence; however, as reported, some students appear neither to agree nor disagree about that. The TV sitcom comprises shifting visual and audio inputs, which could be a hindrance for some students' comprehension. Considering the subjects were advanced-level students, if similar genre of authenticity to the American sitcom is to be used in the class, students should be readily informed or prepare in advance to guide them through the plots and background information of the shows so that they have more background of what they are exposed to in the TV sitcom.

Authentic materials were in unmodified form and portrayed real life situations. The characteristic of being unmodified could be creating obstacles for students to understand. The survey shows there are more students who have problems understanding than who do not. Therefore, more attention should be paid to selecting materials in an easier or more acceptable manner.

Being rich in culture is a prominent attribute of authentic materials. Most of the subjects in this survey acknowledged their indulgence in foreign culture. To introduce culture in the class, online authentic or multimedia resources should be welcomed among students in the tertiary level.

With the rise of the Internet and ubiquity of multimedia equipment, traditional apprenticeship has been mostly replaced by technologies. Language instruction in the past was criticized as lacking real-life situations. Most students' perception about university language classes is that they are lacking in authentic context, where instead students are required to receive pieces of factual information delivered by traditional textbooks.

This research presents the preliminary results of students' favorite online/multimedia materials integrated in an e-learning platform. Generally, students

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favor the American sitcoms more than Youtube, MV, and ICRT, which also appears to be the least favorite in any aspect. Analyzing the genre, ICRT online radio news program lacks images and more entertaining elements, which are both important for motivating learning. Future research will focus on detecting the reasons why the subjects find some genres particularly interesting over others. Also, the instructional design of the guided practice and assessment techniques for using online resources to make the learning more effective should also be explored.

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APPENDIX 1: STANDARD DEVIATION

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	77	4.4805	.55275
Q2	77	4.1688	.78477
Q3	76	4.2632	.61900
Q4	75	4.3600	.69048
Q5	76	4.0263	.89403
Q6	76	4.0789	.86044
Q7	77	4.1948	.70783
Q8	77	4.2338	.74155
Q9	77	3.1429	1.07256
Q10	76	4.4737	.59941
Q11	77	4.6104	.54183
Q12	77	4.3506	.66424
Q13	77	4.2338	.74155
Q14	77	4.5455	.59704
Q15	77	4.1688	.84919
Q16	77	4.3377	.75412
Q17	77	4.4156	.69492
Q25	77	4.0649	.76670
Q26	77	4.1558	.77908
Q27	77	3.9091	.79772
Q28	77	3.8182	.83866
Q29	77	3.9870	.78629
Q30	77	3.9740	.79429

Q31	77	3.6623	1.07128
Valid N (listwise)	74		

APPENDIX 2: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Learning with Authentic Materials

This questionnaire is designed to understand whether you are more motivated to learn English by using Youtube short films, English songs, TV program series, radio programs other than the textbooks used in the classrooms. Please answer each question with discretion according to how you really feel. Thank you for your cooperation.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I feel that Youtube short film relevant to the textbook subjects make learning more interesting.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
2. I am interested in knowing the cultures of the English-speaking countries.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
3. I feel that watching Youtube short films help me know more about the cultures of English-speaking countries.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
4. I feel that watching Youtube short films helps improve my listening ability.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
5. I feel that watching Youtube short films helps improve my speaking ability.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
6. I would pay attention to the dialogues or wording when watching Youtube short films.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
7. I would pay attention to the speakers' intonations when watching Youtube short films.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
8. I would pay attention to the speakers' pronunciation when watching Youtube short films.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
9. I feel it difficult to understand the Youtube short films played in the class.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□

10. I feel that MV with subtitles relevant to the textbook subjects makes learning more interesting.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
11. I like listening to English songs.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
12. I would pay attention to the singers' pronunciation when listening to MV.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
13. I would pay attention to the wording in the lyrics when listening to MV.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
14. I feel that watching American TV sitcoms makes learning more interesting.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
15. I am interested in knowing American culture.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
16. I feel that watching American sitcoms help me know more about American culture.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
17. I feel that watching American TV sitcoms helps improve my listening ability.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
18. I feel that watching American TV sitcoms with subtitles helps improve my speaking ability.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
19. I would pay attention to the characters' wording when watching American TV sitcoms.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
20. I would pay attention to the characters' intonations when watching American TV sitcoms with subtitles.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
21. I would pay attention to the characters' pronunciations when watching American TV sitcoms with subtitles.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
22. I feel it difficult to understand the American TV sitcoms with subtitles.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
23. I feel that listening to ICRT news programs makes learning more interesting.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
24. I am interested in knowing the cultures and events around the world.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
25. I feel that listening to ICRT news programs helps me get to know the cultures and events around the world.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
26. I feel that listening to ICRT news programs helps improve my listening ability.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
27. I feel that listening to ICRT news programs helps improve my speaking ability.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□
28. I would pay attention to the anchors' wording when listening to ICRT news programs.	5□	4□	3□	2□	1□

Yeh, M.L. (2015). The preference of learning with various authentic materials on an e-platform: A survey on advanced-level students. *Accents Asia*, (7), 2, pp. 1-23.

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|--|----|----|----|----|----|
| 29. I would pay attention to the anchors' intonations when listening to ICRT news programs. | 5□ | 4□ | 3□ | 2□ | 1□ |
| 30. I would pay attention to the anchors' pronunciations when listening to ICRT news programs. | 5□ | 4□ | 3□ | 2□ | 1□ |
| 31. I feel it difficult to understand ICRT news programs even with transcripts. | 5□ | 4□ | 3□ | 2□ | 1□ |

NNESTs on the rise: Learning and teaching of L2 pragmatics

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ABSTRACT

It has been a widely accepted perception that only the native-language teachers can teach the authentic language form, whereas nonnative-language teachers are considered as second class professionals (Mahboob, 2004; Brain, 2010; Kumaravadivelu, 2012); the so called “native speaker fallacy” (Phillipson, 1992). With such preference to native teachers still being prominent on one hand, the population of nonnative English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) today outnumbers its counterpart on the other (Kahmi-Stein, 2004). Although the benefit of the local NNESTs are somewhat recognized (Medgyes, 1999; Mahboob, 2004), the favoritism toward native teachers seems to be deep-rooted (Mahboob, 2004; Braine, 2010). This phenomenon brings about several disadvantages to nonnative-language teachers, such as limited employment opportunities and difficulties in teaching areas such as pronunciation and culture, which can lead to diminishing confidence as language-teaching professionals altogether. Despite this undesirable circumstance, research on instructional pragmatics, which specifically targets the needs of nonnative English-speaking teachers, is rather scarce. Thus, this paper examines how NNESTs can be empowered to teach the target community pragmatics, by investigating NNESTs’ challenges in learning and teaching the target community pragmatics, and secondly, by exploring means to overcome some of the disadvantages that hinder NNESTs as English language professionals.

INTRODUCTION

As English became the main medium of inter-cultural communication around the world, the demand for English language education keeps growing. With such accelerated needs, the opportunities for English language teachers are also expected to be plenty. However, learner’s preference for the native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) is strong, especially in non-English speaking countries (Lee, 2004; Liu, 2004; Mahboob, 2004; Matsuda & Matsuda, 2004; Braine, 2010), resulting in reduced employment opportunities for the trained nonnative English-speaking teachers (NNESTs). On the other hand, the vast majority of English language teachers in non-English speaking countries are nonnative speakers of English (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004). This

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implies that a large number of trained and competent NNESTs are at a disadvantage when finding jobs. Such preference, or the so called “native speaker fallacy” (Phillipson, 1992), has been a source of argument for many years as to who is better suited to teach a foreign language.

Since the emergence of communicative language teaching (CLT) in second-language curricula in the 1970s, attention to the teaching of communication has grown rapidly. This movement opened the door for an emphasis on the pragmatic component in the language curriculum. However, due to various issues, such as economics, geography, culture or the time constraints, many NNESTs have never had experiences in English speaking countries, nor received instruction from native English speakers (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004). In spite of their limited knowledge and lack of experience in the target community, these NNESTs are faced with the challenge of *teaching* something to which they have not been exposed. On the other hand, learning the range of language uses and functions in different cultural settings is said to be one of the largest obstacles in foreign language acquisition, even for advanced students (Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan & Reynolds, 1991; Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998). Putting these two concepts together, one may wonder how the NNESTs teach the target community pragmatics if they have not acquired themselves the full knowledge of what these pragmatics entail. If NNESTs fail to address the importance of intercultural communication in their classes, their foreign-language students will consequently not be equipped with second-language (L2) pragmatic knowledge. This goes against the current communicative language-teaching movement, which stresses the important role of pragmatic competence in foreign language education. If this circumstance is true for the NNESTs around the world, then there is an urgent need for a constructive framework to prepare and equip these educators with this key knowledge. Possible solutions to such dilemmas must be explored for the growing population of NNESTs.

In spite of such needs, much of the research on pragmatics in the past has dealt with *learners’* pragmatic development and the effective instruction for *learners’* acquisition. The focus of this paper is motivated by the scarcity of research and materials on instructional pragmatics that specifically address the issues of NNESTs. Thus, this paper will investigate the challenges that NNESTs face in teaching English community pragmatics, as well as explore means to overcome some of the disadvantages that hinder NNESTs as L2 instructors. It will begin with a brief definition of pragmatic competence and an overview of the relevant literature in the field of L2 pragmatic development. Then, it will discuss the challenges for NNESTs as learners of L2 pragmatics, followed by the results of empirical research on pragmatic-focused instruction for NNESTs. Finally, it will end with suggestions for developing L2 pragmatic competence for NNESTs.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

What is Pragmatics?

With the growing attention to the teaching of communicative language use in foreign language classrooms, the role of target-community pragmatics has become more significant. Among many available definitions of pragmatics, Kasper (1997b) cites Crystal’s (1985) definition of pragmatics stating that “pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choice they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language have on other participants in the act of

communication” (Kasper, 1997b, p. 1). Likewise, Chomsky (1980) defines ‘pragmatic competence’ as “knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use in conformity with various purposes” and it “places language in the institutional setting of its use, relating intentions and purposes to the linguistic means at hand” (p. 224-225). In other words, pragmatics is the study of language use in sociocultural contexts. Thus, pragmatic competency in a foreign language “requires offline knowledge and online control of the linguistic and the sociocultural aspects of pragmatics” (McNamara & Roever, 2006, p. 54-5). That being said, what is the actual role of pragmatic knowledge in “language competency”?

In order to develop student’s L2 competency, language teachers must first know what language competency is comprised of, so that they have an understanding of what they need to equip themselves with in order to teach. According to Bachman’s model of language ability (Bachman & Palmer, 1996), language knowledge is divided into two categories: organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. The organizational knowledge is divided again into grammatical knowledge and textual knowledge. The pragmatic knowledge is also further divided into functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge, where the former “enables us to interpret relationships between utterances or sentences and texts and the intentions of language users”(p. 69) and the latter “enables us to create or interpret language that is appropriate to a particular language use setting” (p. 70). Such categorization illustrates that pragmatics is not an extra knowledge or a “finishing touch” in language acquisition, but it is as essential as the grammatical and textual knowledge; hence, a learner’s target language pragmatics must be developed simultaneously with the organizational components (Kasper, 1997).

Many studies show the difficulties in developing pragmatic competence in a foreign language. Thomas (1983) explains that a language learner’s communication breakdown, or pragmatic failure, can be categorized into two groups: pragmalinguistic failure and sociopragmatic failure. Pragmalinguistic failure is caused by divergence of linguistic encoding, in other words, pragmalinguistic failure refers to a speaker’s incorrect choice of linguistic form in relation to the context. For instance, when someone offers to help carrying large bags, a Japanese learner of English may respond “so sorry, you are very kind” instead of thanking the person. The other category, sociopragmatic failure, is caused by cross-culturally different perceptions of acceptable behavior. For example, even though it may be acceptable in certain circumstances, it is generally considered inappropriate in English-speaking countries to ask someone you’ve just met for the first-time about his/her salary. Research findings show that the sociocultural aspect of language use is particularly difficult to learn, because it is not as “explicable or quantifiable as grammar and lexis” (McConachy, 2008, p. 124). The same view is shared by Thomas (1987), Takahashi, Beebe, and Uliss-Weltz (1990), and Kasper (1997b).

Ishihara (2010a) also lists transfer of first language (L1) pragmatics as one of the reasons for divergence. The learners may apply their L1 knowledge of appropriate behavior, which could be different in the target community. The level of L2 proficiency could also cause a learner’s misunderstanding of a native speaker’s intention or a misunderstanding due to the learner’s incorrect expression. In other cases, known as overgeneralization of perceived L2 norms, language learners may develop a certain perception of L2 pragmatics and apply their perceived pragmatics in the L2 context. For instance, in their wish to accommodate or acculturate into the target language community, learners may apply their hypothesized pragmatics and surprise or even offend the native speakers (Murphy & Neu, 1996; Nakabachi, 1996; Fujioka, 2003). Instruction or instructional materials can also cause pragmatic divergence. Overemphasizing one aspect of pragmatics may lead the learners to stereotype L2 pragmatic norms, which may be

different from the L2 norms in reality. Lastly, learners may not always attempt to apply their L2 pragmatic knowledge. Some learners intentionally avoid assimilating into the L2 culture (pragmatic resistance) in order to maintain their cultural identity.

Factors Influencing Learner's L2 Pragmatic Development

Thus far, this paper has examined difficulties in acquiring the target community pragmatics and possible reasons for cross-cultural communication breakdown. However, many studies have shown promising results on foreign language pragmatic development. One of the most important factors that influence L2 pragmatic development in foreign language learning is the availability of input. In comparison to the ESL context, EFL learners receive less input for social and cultural features of context (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Schauer, 2008). In an FL (foreign language) context, learners receive pragmatic input through classroom instruction, textbooks, and media (internet, movies, TV shows, etc.). However, it has been reported that the range of speech acts and realization strategies that are presented in class are narrow (Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2004). Likewise, research on English language textbooks regarding pragmatic components shows that they do not provide adequate pragmatic input (Kasper, 1997a; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004; Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009). The use of audiovisual material together with the use of textbooks has been reported to be beneficial in providing an input-rich classroom (Rose, 1997; Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2004). The authors claim that the audiovisual materials provide opportunities to discuss pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of L2 language use, and that they also invite students to analyze and think about different linguistic choices for specific cultural contexts.

The other influential factor is instruction. As seen above, the availability of input is limited in FL contexts. This highlights the important role of instruction as one of learners' primary sources of input. There is evidence that learners who have received pragmatics instruction outperformed those who have not (Wildner-Bassett, 1984; Cohen, 2005). Since "learning a new pragmatic system often entails learning how to make new interpretative assessments of the world" (Schmidt, 1993, p. 34). Awareness-raising activities on contextual language use, drawn from Schmidt's noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990), have demonstrated positive outcomes (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991; Schmidt, 1993; Rose, 1994; Hinkel, 2001; Eslami-Rasekh, 2005a). Teachers cannot possibly prepare students for every expression in every possible context, but building their awareness of the L2 cultural norms can allow students to make their own choices of what to say, when to say it, and how to say it in new contexts. However, it has been reported that awareness does not necessarily lead to the learning of L2 pragmatics. In their discussion on pragmatic awareness versus production, Bardovi-Harlig and Dornyei (1998) claim that although increased awareness should be one of the goals in a pragmatic-focused class, awareness alone is not enough to develop learner's pragmatic competence. They suggest that awareness-raising "should supplement the introduction of pragmatically relevant input in instructed L2 learning" (p. 256). Another approach that has shown promising results is explicitly providing metapragmatic information (Rose, 1994, 1997; Hinkel, 2001; Tateyama, Kasper, Mui, Tay, & Thananart, 2001; Eslami-Rasekh, 2004). The rationale behind its effectiveness is that clear explanation supplemented with metapragmatic information makes the target pragmatic features more salient. Additionally, equipping students with metapragmatic tools will help them analyze pragmatic features in their new contexts.

The learners' L2 proficiency can also influence their L2 pragmatic acquisition. Although it has been reported that even low proficiency learners can improve pragmatic ability through instruction (Wildner-Bassett, 1994; Tateyama et al., 1997), other studies show that learner's pragmatic ability progresses in proportion to their language proficiency (Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Rose, 2000). Additionally, many other interlanguage studies resulted in fewer cases of negative L1 transfer along with their improvement in L2 language proficiency (Trosborg, 1987). All these findings can be linked back to Bachman's definition of language competency, which indicates that the organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge are equally weighed in one's language competency. This is an essential aspect to consider in terms of curriculum or syllabus designing since it confirms that pragmatic routines must be incorporated right from the beginning.

The learner's affective filter can be another factor regarding pragmatic development. Originating in the SLA theory, lowering the learners' affective filter may increase a learner's motivation and interest for L2 pragmatics. Their positive views on the development of their own pragmatic ability could influence their actual development of pragmatic competency (Ishihara, 2010a). On the contrary, negative emotion such as anxiety or stress could raise students' affective filter and potentially impede their learning.

The last factor is "the length of stay" (Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2004), however, this factor is only applicable to ESL students. Since exposure and practice opportunities are limited in the FL context, this factor will be discussed in terms of "frequency of exposure" (lessons, media, conversation in L2, etc.) in this paper. Language learners must take control of their restricted exposure in an FL context, and actively seek to create learning opportunities. Nevertheless, there is no definite goal as to how much exposure is necessary or ideal for the L2 pragmatic development to take place. More research is needed in this area.

Challenges for NNESTs as Learners of L2 Pragmatics

As shown above, extensive studies have been conducted for learners' development of L2 pragmatic competence. Nonetheless, teaching of target community pragmatics to EFL students is not entirely applicable to that of pre-service and current NNESTs. Firstly, teaching requires more comprehensive knowledge of the content, and secondly, teachers must know *how* to teach their students effectively. Many researchers claim that instructional pragmatics is largely neglected in teacher training programs (Rose, 1997; Cohen, 2005; Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2008; Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009; Ishihara, 2010), although awareness and control of L2 pragmatics are two of the most important components of nonnative English speaker's language proficiency (Nemtchinova et al., 2010). Moreover, the fact that the majority of English teachers in non-English speaking countries around the world are NNESTs, constructive strategies that specifically focus on the target population are needed. As the past research illuminated the importance of noticing opportunities and in-class instruction, researchers must now pay attention to the larger picture of pragmatics development and explore how the NNESTs can be empowered to teach this subject matter in an EFL context.

So far, this paper has reviewed the important aspects of incorporating pragmatics into English language curricula, the positive result of learners' pragmatics development, and possible reasons for pragmatic failure. The specific issues associated with the NNESTs will now be explored, with the focus of how EFL learners can be prepared to teach L2 pragmatics as

NNESTs. First, an examination of the teachers' and students' perception of NNESTs in comparison to the NESTs is needed.

Mahboob (2004) conducted research on ESL students' opinions of the "native" status in different language teacher criteria. These criteria included oral skills, literacy skills, grammar, vocabulary, culture and teaching styles. NNESTs scored higher in grammar, literacy skills and teaching styles. On the other hand, NESTs dominated teaching of oral skills, vocabulary and culture. One of the ESL students said, "I want the *truth* (sic) pronunciation which non-native teachers can't speak or use voice like native speakers" (p. 141). Such comments reflect the students' view that there is an "authentic," "correct," or "ideal" pronunciation of English language. Although some ESL students reported that NNESTs can be a source of L2 cultural knowledge, by explaining the target cultural background in student's L1, NESTs were more in favor because students believed that, "no matter how well one learns a new language, one will always maintain their cultural heritage" (p. 133), meaning NNESTs' L1 culture could interfere with their ability to teach L2 culture. Similarly, language institutions often receive requests from students or students' parents that they would like NESTs (Shao, 2005). Such demands, caused by students' or parents' negative perception of NNESTs is one reason for unequal job opportunities. Cited in Bernat (2008), Rajagopalan's questionnaire collected from 450 NNESTs reported that more than half of the participants felt handicapped when it came to career advancement, causing anxiety and inferiority complexes.

Being aware of such unenthusiastic views on nonnative language teachers, some NNESTs are unsure of themselves as English language professionals. It is not uncommon, as Eslami-Rasekh (2005b) notes, that an NNEST introduces himself or herself saying, "my English is weak. I am ashamed to say that I have been an English language teacher [...] for 8 years" (para.2). Although the virtue of modesty may apply to a certain extent in Japanese pragmatics when one is talking about his or her own achievement, the low self-confidence due to their lack of English language proficiency seems to be a concern to many NNESTs. It is important to note that "language proficiency" discussed here is defined as the grammatical knowledge and pragmatic knowledge in the Bachman's model discussed earlier in this paper. Some NNESTs also acknowledge cultural knowledge as areas of difficulty (Kamhi-Stein, et al., 2004), explaining that they view their variety of English as "deficient and that lack of English proficiency constrains them when implementing communicative methodologies" (p. 83). Liu (2004) recalls his experience as needing constant attention to fill the gap as an NNEST. In another study, a survey by Medgyes (1994) on the perceptions of NNESTs' own proficiency, the nonnative teachers "viewed themselves as poorer listeners, speakers, readers and writers" (p. 33). These NNESTs identified speaking, fluency, pronunciation, listening, vocabulary and idiomatic and appropriate use of English as particularly problematic. Some secondary schools separate the responsibility of NESTs and NNESTs, with the former teaching oral English skills exclusively and the latter teaching grammar. While it is true to say that NESTs can provide an English-rich environment in class, this arrangement makes some NNESTs feel that their work is undervalued and that they are overshadowed by NESTs (Lee, 2004).

L2 Pragmatic Development for NNESTs

The following section will examine NNESTs as "learners of pragmatics teaching" and explore how NNESTs can teach pragmatics in their EFL classrooms effectively and successfully.

In other words, how an EFL learner could be trained and prepared to become an NNEST candidate in a foreign language context.

Ishihara lists the following factors as required teacher knowledge for teaching L2 pragmatics (Ishihara, 2010a, p. 23):

- Subject-matter knowledge, which can be used to teach the range of pragmatic norms in the target community (pragmatic variation)
- Knowledge of metapragmatic information, which is an essential tool to explain and analyze pragmatics to the students
- Pedagogical content knowledge, which is important in deciding how to teach effectively and how to assess student's L2 pragmatics understanding
- Knowing the students (their cultures, identities, L2 proficiency, etc.) will affect teacher's instructional decision
- Knowledge of pragmatics-focused curriculum affects teacher's instructional decision
- Knowledge of the role of L2 pragmatics in that particular educational context will also affect teacher's instructional decision

Instructional pragmatics for L2 pragmatics teaching is a fairly new area and needs further research (Rose, 2005; Vasques & Sharpless, 2009; Ishihara, 2010a). Preparing teachers with the above knowledge will give them tools and framework to customize their pragmatics-focused lessons in accordance to their students' needs.

RESEARCH

Kasper stresses the importance of pragmatics in a teacher education program (Kasper, 1997). Regardless of the extensive literature on the learners' pragmatic development and effects on instructional approach, there is a paucity of studies that address the particular issues on NNESTs, such as their dual roles as 'learners' as well as 'teachers', the anxiety from the difficulties in L2 pragmatic acquisition, the pressure of the mastery of the subject, and limited L2 access despite their high motivation and enthusiasm for their professional development. Among the limited supply, this paper will now examine two studies that have been conducted on NNESTs pragmatic development.

Rose (1997) applied a consciousness-raising approach to experiment pragmatic consciousness-raising (PCR) with English language teachers in Hong Kong in order to become familiar with research in pragmatics, raise awareness regarding context-based variation in language use, and to provide teachers with pragmatic analytical skills, so that they could ultimately help their students to do the same. He used a three-part process for PCR:

1. Develop familiarity with theory and research in pragmatics
2. Conduct pragmatic analyses of the teachers' L1
3. Conduct pragmatic analyses of the L2

This approach demonstrated how cultural relativity contributes to the appropriate judgments when making language choices. Even though this three-part model of PCR alone is not sufficient in fulfilling the pressing need for the NNESTs, these activities "will help develop prospective

teachers' sensitivity to variation in language use as well as equip them with analytic abilities which they can apply in their language teaching" (p. 136).

In her quasi-experimental study, Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh (2008) investigated the effect of metapragmatic instruction on the speech act awareness and production of Iranian NNESTs in an EFL context. Participants in this study were MA TESL students in Iran, who have had nine years of English instruction but had not spent any time in English speaking countries. To begin with, students were given a number of research papers on various pragmatics topics (e.g. Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Rose & Kwai-Fun, 2001), so they could raise pragmatic awareness and provide them with opportunities for communicative practice. Having gone through these research papers gave the students some analytical tools to think about appropriate language use. Activities in this study, she describes, were designed to make learners consciously aware of differences between the native and target language speech acts. The findings showed that the explicit metapragmatic instruction was effective and that "with the pedagogical focus on pragmatic competence, pragmatic awareness and production can be acquired in the classroom or more specifically in the FL classroom" (Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2008, p. 192). This supports the earlier studies on acquisition of pragmatic awareness with pedagogical focus on pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Takahashi, Beebe, & Uliss-Wltz, 1990; Kondo, 2008). This result clearly indicates that certain aspects of L2 pragmatics do not develop adequately on their own. Another finding was that despite NNEST candidates' high motivation, their lack of pragmatic competence became prominent through this experiment. Eslami-Rasekh suggests input-rich instruction for their further development of pragmatic competence.

DISCUSSION: NNESTs IN ACTION

Thus far, this paper addressed multiple obstacles that NNESTs are dealing with as they thrive to develop as competent and qualified professionals. In this section, the learner factors for L2 development, issues with NNESTs and the research findings will be synthesized to propose some practical ideas that NNESTs may be able to put into effect in their FL context. Since awareness and control of L2 pragmatics is one of the most important components of nonnative English speaker's language proficiency (Nemtchinova et al., 2010), this section will explore development of NNESTs as learners of teaching L2 pragmatics. The practical ideas presented are:

- a. Rich L2 pragmatic input
- b. Awareness-raising, explicit instruction with metapragmatics
- c. Journal writing
- d. Class observation
- e. Learner-as-researcher approach
- f. Lowering affective filter
- g. Recognize student's subjectivity and encourage class discussion

The limited L2 input in an FL context, which was discussed earlier, has been identified as a crucial disadvantage in many studies (Kasper, 1997; Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2008; Eslami-Rasekh, 2008). This suggests that NNESTs must actively seek input opportunities and make use of available sources, which would be useful for both learning and

teaching purposes. One of the key techniques for creating an input rich environment is the use of audiovisual materials. It has been recommended to provide opportunities to learn and practice pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic awareness in a variety of contexts (Rose, 1997, 2001; Schauer, 2006; Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2008). Also, keeping current with the pragmatic topics outside of teacher preparation programs through academic resources, journals and conferences, may also help further professional development, since pragmatics is generally under-represented in TESOL programs (Rose, 2005; Velasquez & Sharpless, 2009).

As for the L2 pragmatic instruction, research on the effects of different teaching approaches has shown positive results for awareness-raising approach and explicit instruction with metapragmatic information (Schmidt, 1993; Rose, 1994; Kasper, 1997; McConachy, 2008). Discussion and analysis following these activities were found to be beneficial in encouraging metapragmatic analysis, as the students actively analyzed, gave thoughts and reflected on the activities among each other (Rose, 1997; Eslami-Rasekh et al., 2004, Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2005; Kondo, 2008). NNESTs can implement such an approach in their pragmatic learning as well as teaching.

Ishihara (2010a) encourages language teachers to use written reflections and interactive discussions as much as possible “because learning through reflection can be enriched, supported, and furthered by dialoguing with oneself or with colleagues” (p. 29). Matsuda and Matsuda (2004) also support this task, claiming that teachers learn from their differences, and that, “professional, cultural, and linguistic diversity that teachers bring with them becomes an asset” (p. 177). Since the hardship of learning the L2 pragmatic norm lies in the sociocultural differences, such opportunities to exchange and discuss different ideas and experiences about them seem particularly valuable for NNESTs’ L2 pragmatic development.

Another idea to empower nonnative teachers to enhance their instructional pragmatic skills is to observe pragmatic-focused lessons of peer NNESTs (Ishihara, 2010a), because studying actual lessons that teach pragmatic components could “expand their repertoire of teaching strategies and ideas about assessment” (p. 123). NNESTs can further engage in discussions and share their rationale or insights about the lessons. Peer observation may also be arranged among the NESTs and NNESTs. As many teacher preparation programs do not include teaching of L2 pragmatics (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005b; Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009), both native and nonnative teacher candidates can benefit from participating in classes where they may bring in different strengths and values to the class. In-class presentations followed by class discussion will also be beneficial in teacher training programs.

In the learner-as-researcher approach, teachers collect authentic samples of speech act sets from the news, movies, magazines and newspapers, and analyze the data based on the framework of different speech acts in research articles (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005b). NNESTs can work collaboratively with other English teaching professionals, whether native or nonnative, and present the findings to the class in teacher education programs. Such activity will also contribute to the availability of L2 input and metapragmatic analysis, which can be followed by interactive reflection in order to further enhance learning.

The other aspect we must attend to is NNESTs’ affect. Lowering the affective filter seems especially vital in the case of NNESTs, because the negative perception of others about the NNESTs we have outlined earlier may further affect the teachers’ existing pessimistic self-perception as English teachers; their motivation and self-confidence may decrease even more and their anxiety may increase. This vicious circle must come to an end somehow. In contrast to the

previously mentioned negative perception, some positive comments about the NNESTs have also been reported (Medgyes, 1999). The NNESTs can:

- provide a good learner model for imitation
- teach language learning strategies more effectively
- supply learners with more information about the English language
- anticipate and prevent language difficulties better
- be more empathetic to the needs and problems of learners
- make use of the learner's mother tongue

Some ESL students commented that NNESTs could be better in grammar and writing, and that they can explain or answer students' questions in a clearer manner (Mahboob, 2004). NNESTs' should know their strengths, build confidence and let these strengths lower their affective filters. "Those with attitudes more conducive to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input and it will strike 'deeper'" (Krashen, 1982, p. 31). This is especially applicable to NNESTs because their dual role as teacher/learner can motivate many of their students. Since attaining an input-rich environment is one of the challenging factors in an FL context, affective filter seems to play an important role for learners' willingness to learn, and consequently, to further expand their opportunities to learn.

As teaching of L2 pragmatics can be a sensitive matter for FL learners, NNESTs must recognize their students' subjectivity in their language choices. Ishihara (2010b) found how some nonnative speakers intentionally avoided applying L2 pragmatics, even though the participants were linguistically capable of constructing the target community pragmatics. Such avoidance indicates that the native-like pragmatics is not necessarily the language learner's preference when it comes to the actual production. Therefore, Ishihara suggests that L2 pragmatics could be taught separately for the purpose of *receptive* skills, to understand the native speaker's intention, and for *production*, where learners can build their L2 pragmatic repertoire so that they can make their own decisions regarding self-expression. In such circumstance, it is NNESTs' forte, as language learners themselves, to be able to understand students' dilemma in performing L2 pragmatic norms, and as a result, make choices that are not native-like; choices that are driven by their multicultural or multilingual identity. When such resistance is noticed in the EFL classroom, where students share their L1 and L1 pragmatics, it may be beneficial for the whole class to engage in metapragmatic analysis and discussion, where students can learn from pragmatic interpretation of their peers. Furthermore, the follow up analysis and discussion will help the learners internalize and mold the L2 pragmatic features within themselves.

CONCLUSION

Numerous ways have been examined in which NNESTs can be empowered to answer the EFL students' needs. This paper has also revealed many concealed advantages that NNESTs possess in teaching L2 pragmatics. Building their confidence and making the most of their strengths will assist NNESTs in further developing as English language professionals. At the same time, as the need for competent NNESTs increases, their valuable role as bilingual/bicultural language teachers should receive greater acknowledgement. The fact that the language learners' views on NNESTs are not all negative is perhaps an indication that NNESTs will soon be free of constraints and the labels such as NEST and NNEST will no longer be used.

Having said that, NNESTs must not forget that, “being proficient is a continuum, rather than an either-or proposition” (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004, p. 163). Regardless of their status, whether native or nonnative, or novice or experienced, teachers must not stop learning. They should try to develop their teaching skills throughout their career and stay current with research topics of their professional area; what they know affects what their students learn.

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The Effects of Journaling on Taiwanese EFL Students' Extensive Reading Habits and Attitudes

Keith M. Graham¹

ABSTRACT

This research study examines the effects of journaling on the extensive reading habits and attitudes of Taiwanese English as a foreign language (EFL) students. The study was conducted with eleven eighth grade students enrolled in a private junior high school in northern Taiwan. Students were asked to submit weekly journal letters online to their teacher about English novels read outside of class. The teacher responded with comments and questions. Data from the study show that using journaling as an activity increased the amount of extensive reading done in English as well as improved many students' attitudes toward extensive reading.

INTRODUCTION

Extensive reading has become an important component of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms due to increasing evidence of its benefits for language acquisition (Krashen, 2004, Grabe 2009). Although many extensive reading programs occur within school hours, this is not always possible for many teachers with limited instructional time and mandated curriculums. This can be a huge obstacle given that extensive reading's benefits can only occur when reading is done in high quantity (Nation, 2009.) Therefore, it is important for teachers in these situations to implement activities that can successfully promote extensive reading outside of school. One activity suggested by researchers is journaling.

This study, conducted with eleven Taiwanese junior high school EFL students, explores two research questions in regards to journaling with extensive reading. First, this study explores what effect weekly journaling had on the amount of extensive reading done by junior high school EFL students. Second, this study examines the students' attitudes toward extensive reading in English before and after journaling was introduced.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Defining Extensive Reading

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Extensive reading, which is also sometimes referred to as independent reading, “is the part of a comprehensive literacy curriculum when students have time to read books of their choosing, whether in or out of school” (Kasten & Wilfong 2007, p. 1). Extensive reading is often done with “minimal accountability, writing brief summaries or comments on what they read” (Mason & Krashen 1997, p. 91). It is “designed to help students increase the time they spend reading and give them continued opportunities to expand and practice reading strategies” (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 116).

Benefits of Extensive Reading

The benefits of extensive reading have been documented in countless research studies. Reported benefits include increased rate of second language acquisition (Elley 1991; Mason & Krashen 1997), vocabulary growth (Lao & Krashen 2001), and an increase in student motivation (Elley 1991; Mason & Krashen 1997; Kasten & Wilfong 2007; Yamashita 2013). Although a thorough review of extensive reading literature is beyond the scope of this paper and has been done comprehensively by other authors (Krashen 2004, Grabe 2009), below are a few studies that illustrate the benefits of extensive reading.

Language Acquisition as a Result of Extended Reading

In the study “Acquiring literacy in a second language: The effect of book-based programs,” Elley (1991) documented the effects of extensive reading, or as termed in the paper, “book floods.” Elley found “children who are exposed to an extensive range of high-interest illustrated story books, and encouraged to read and share them, are consistently found to learn the target language more quickly” (p. 375).

At a time when extensive reading was receiving criticism as a technique that would only be effective with “good” students, Mason and Krashen (1997) studied its effects on a group of Japanese college students who were retaking an English course after failing in a previous term. The researchers compared test results between a control group of second year students in a class comprising a traditional curriculum of reading; comprehension questions; and vocabulary, grammar, and translation exercises” (Mason & Krashen, 1997, p. 92) with an experimental group which was given extensive reading opportunities, both in class and for homework, with graded readers. Although the pre-test revealed a significant gap between these two groups, the extensive reading group achieved far greater gains and nearly closed the achievement gap between the two groups.

Vocabulary Growth as a Result of Extended Reading

In another study conducted at the university level comparing traditional instruction versus extensive reading, Lao and Krashen (2000) found that extensive reading once again proved successful. The study reports that students in the extensive reading group “made superior gains on measures of vocabulary and reading rate, when compared to students enrolled in a traditional academic skills class” (Lao & Krashen 2000, p. 261).

Motivation as a Result of Extensive Reading

There have been many studies that have shown that extensive reading has helped increase learner motivation. Elley (1991) reported that "children appear to...develop positive attitudes toward books" (p. 375). In their study of Japanese students retaking an EFL class, Mason and Krashen (2007) were most impressed to find that extensive reading changed the learning attitudes of the participants from reluctant readers of English to eager ones.

Finally, Yamashita (2013) sought out to focus exclusively on the affective domain of extensive reading, rather than the cognitive domain like many of the previously reported studies. The study looked at the effect of extensive reading on EFL reading attitude in terms of five categories: comfort, anxiety, intellectual value, practical value, and linguistic value. The data showed positive effects on many aspects of EFL reading attitude as a result of extensive reading. Yamashita reported that extensive reading helped increase the comfort students felt with EFL reading, helped reduce feelings of anxiety with EFL reading, and raised the intellectual value students attached to EFL reading.

One reason motivation may increase is due to student choice. Kasten and Wilfong (2007) surveyed 1000 students in Ohio about their attitudes and habits toward independent reading and the factors that encouraged or discouraged reading. Kasten and Wilfong found, "student choice is a critical factor in independent reading because it has been shown to motivate reading" (p. 2). Giving students the option to choose their learning through extensive reading causes them to have more intrinsic motivation.

Journaling as an Extensive Reading Activity

Kasten and Wilfong (2007) define journaling as "free choice uncorrected writing in response to reading books" (p. 4). Kaiser (2003) furthers this definition by stating, "the purpose of these journals is to stimulate authentic discussion about literature between teachers and students" (p. 2).

Fountas and Pinnell (2001) recommend using a reader's notebook to journal with extensive reading by having students write in letterform. The authors state that, "writing letters in a reader's notebook is one way to increase the depth of reader's response" (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 163). They believe the writing of letters is far superior to writing book reports because "the book report doesn't necessarily help students become better readers" (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 165). They recommend that students and teachers write thoughtful responses about the books back and forth once per week.

Journaling has been found to be effective with students, particularly in terms of motivation. In their study of student preferences of extensive reading activities, Kasten and Wilfong (2007) found in their survey of native speaking students that "journaling showed to be a popular strategy, especially with younger students in the elementary schools" (p. 4). In a study with her own students, Kaiser (2003) found that her students "were generally eager to write their response journals" (p. 22) and that "intrinsic motivation often increases because children share with teachers in the inquiry process" (p. 6). These studies show that journaling may be a good choice of an activity to pair with extensive reading.

METHOD

Participants and Research Questions

This study was conducted with eleven eighth-grade Taiwanese students enrolled in a private school in northern Taiwan. The school offers an extended English curriculum beyond the country's requirements with students taking additional reading classes, music, art, PE, and computer science all in English. Although there was a variation in the students' language abilities, the group as a whole would be classified as intermediate level English learners. A few students may have been considered approaching an advanced level as a result of either living abroad for a period of time or being enrolled in dual-immersion programs during elementary school.

This study hopes to answer two questions. First, how does the use of journaling affect the amount of extensive reading done by the students when compared to a previous semester? Second, how does the use of journaling affect the students' attitudes toward extensive reading in English?

Data Collection

To set a base for comparison, students were asked to fill out a survey in regards to their attitudes toward extensive reading in English and their extensive reading habits (Appendix 1). This survey asked students to focus on the previous semester where no extensive reading activities occurred.

Following the survey, students were asked to journal about their extensive reading books once per week. Students used Edmodo.com, a social learning community for teachers, students, and parents, to record their weekly journals. I, acting as both researcher and teacher, responded to their weekly journals with comments and thought-provoking questions to help them think outside of the text.

To prep them for the journaling activity, a lesson was given where I showed an example letter (Appendix 3). This letter has been slightly adapted from one of Fountas and Pinnell's (2001) example letters (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 166). I explained that the letter should include a brief summary of what they read that week, their feelings or reactions to what happened in the story, and a response to my questions from the previous week's letter. Each week, an assignment was posted on Edmodo with the prompt, "Tell me what you've been reading. Don't forget to respond to my last letter."

After a period of three months, students were asked to fill out a follow-up survey (Appendix 2) that was nearly identical to the one filled out at the beginning of the study. This survey focused on the 3-month period of the study, and its purpose was to identify changes, if any, in the amount of extensive reading done and the students' attitudes toward extensive reading in English.

The data from the two surveys were compared, with a focus on changes from the two periods of time. Since the surveys were in English, the students' second language, group interviews were conducted to ensure students were clear on what was being asked on the survey and that the data they provided were accurate. Surveys were marked with the names of the students so that they could be compared between the two time periods and so follow up interviews could be conducted if needed.

FINDINGS

Amount of Books Read

In the semester prior to the study, participants had read an average of 1 book. The most books read by a student was 3, while the least was 0. A total of four students had read 0 books in the previous semester for extensive reading.

Following implementing journaling as an activity for extensive reading, the average rose to 3.3 books. The most books read by a student was 9, while the least was 1. Two students read 1 book, while all others had read more than 1.

Attitude Toward English Reading

In the first survey prior to the study, seven students reported not enjoying English extensive reading, and four students reported enjoying English extensive reading. Those reporting that they do not enjoy English extensive reading cited two primary reasons: "boring" or "too difficult to understand." In the first survey, the term "boring" occurred in four responses, while the term "too difficult", or variations with similar meaning, occurred in three responses. For those reporting that they enjoy English extensive reading, the most common reason was "interesting." The word "interesting" was found in two responses.

Following implementing journaling, the number of students who reported they enjoyed English extensive reading rose to nine, whereas those reporting not enjoying English extensive reading declined to two. As in the first survey, reasoning for both enjoying and not enjoying English extensive reading included "interesting" and "can improve my English." For those who reported enjoying English extensive reading, three used the word "interesting," and three used the phrase "can improve my English." For those who reported not enjoying English extensive reading, the terms "boring" and "too difficult to understand" both appeared in one response respectively.

DISCUSSION

After implementing journaling as an extensive reading activity outside of class, the amount of extensive reading done by the students rose by a little over two books. Although the number rose, one question that must be asked is did it rise enough? According to Nation (2009), for extensive reading to be effective "the quantity of input needs to be close to 500,000 running words per year, which is equivalent to...six unsimplified novels" (p. 50). With Nation's suggestion as the standard, students would have to read 1.5 novels in a three-month period. Two of the eleven students lagged behind this standard by only completing 1 novel in the three-month period. Although this is a clear improvement from eight out of eleven students not meeting the standard in the previous semester, the question remains on how to push those final two students to read a little more without forcing them to achieve a certain number through extrinsic motivation.

As both the researcher and the teacher, the most exciting finding for me from this study is the change in attitudes toward English extensive reading. Five out of the eleven students changed their attitude toward English extensive reading from not enjoying it to enjoying it. Two students' responses to why are very encouraging. Student E initially reported that "[English extensive reading] is boring," but after journaling said, "[English books] are interesting and my English skills are getting better and better." This student discovered that English extensive reading and journaling helped to improve English skills, and therefore, has begun to enjoy English extensive reading for these rewards.

Another student, Student L, also offered interesting commentary. Student L states, "I enjoy reading English novels because I found out it's interesting." Prior to implementing this activity, Student L felt English extensive reading was not enjoyable because of the difficulty of reading English books. However, after journaling, this attitude changed. One could speculate that the written dialogue between the teacher and the student in the journal helped this student overcome past difficulty, as well as making the experience more interesting.

A Note About Journaling's Practicality as a Teacher

Although the focus of this study is not on the experience of the teacher, it is worth noting the struggles a teacher may face in terms of their own time when implementing the activity of journaling. Fountas and Pinnell (2001) state that journaling is "practical and easy to use" (p. 163). However, my experience does not seem to be inline with this. As a teacher, I found writing letters back and forth weekly incredibly time consuming. I could not imagine doing this with a large class, and certainly not with multiple classes. Kasier (2003) confirms my experience. "[Journaling] did consume a great deal of time each evening when it was time for me to respond" (Kasier 2003, p. 27).

Although this study's results suggest journaling has a positive effect on students' extensive reading attitudes and habits, teachers need to look at their own teaching situation in terms of their time commitments before committing to this time intensive activity. If journaling is one of the only homework assignments during a week, I think it is feasible a teacher could set aside time each day to complete a few letters per day. However, if the teaching situation involves multiple classes, all with daily homework assignments and regular testing, the teacher may not have the time to respond adequately.

CONCLUSION

With the amount of evidence that exists in regards to the language acquisition benefits of extensive reading, it is vital for teachers to find activities that will promote good extensive reading habits in their students. In this study, it was found that the activity of journaling with English extensive reading had positive effects on both the amount of books students read outside of class and their attitudes toward extensive reading. However, the practicality of journaling in terms of a teacher's time may not make it feasible in many teaching situations. Future research should look into the effectiveness of other activities that are both practical and promote good extensive reading habits and attitudes for EFL students.

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APPENDIX 1

Pre-Study Survey on Extensive Reading Habits and Attitudes

1. How many English novels did you read last semester?

2. Do you enjoy reading English novels?

Yes No

3. Why or why not?

APPENDIX 2

Post-Study Survey on Extensive Reading Habits and Attitudes

1. How many English novels did you read this semester (September-December)?

2. Do you enjoy reading English novels?

Yes No

3. Why or why not?

APPENDIX 3

Sample Journal Letter For Teaching Purposes (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 166)

August 8, 2014

Dear Mr. Graham,

I am reading *The Helen Keller Story*, by Catherine Owen Peare. In Helen's second winter she gets a horrible fever and she becomes blind and deaf. And because she is so young, she couldn't speak either. Soon she becomes out of control. They go to Boston, then Washington, D.C. They get in touch with Mr. Anagnos and eventually he sends them a twenty-year-old Anne Sullivan.

I think it is horrible what happened to Helen. Helen is extremely lucky that she is getting her wish. She is learning how to talk! I think her mom and dad shouldn't have given in every time she did something. She is getting spoiled. She is lucky she has a great teacher who helps her learn.

Sincerely,
Emily

APPENDIX 4

Collected Survey Data on Extensive Reading Habits and Attitudes

Student	1.1	2.1	1.2	2.2	1.3	2.3
A	2	4	No	Yes	I can't stay on my chairs with out moving. It feels bad when I am reading books I don't like.	I always choose the books I would like to read.
B	1	2	No	Yes	Because it is boring	It's interesting
C	1	2	No	Yes	Because there are usually too many words I don't understand, I can't get the fun.	Because it is more clear than the Chinese books that are translated.
D	1	1	Yes	Yes	I enjoy reading English novels sometimes but I'm really not interested in English.	I like to read novels.
E	0	2	No	Yes	It is boring.	They are interesting and my English skills are getting better and better.
F	1	5	Yes	Yes	Because it is interesting, and it can improve my English.	It can improve my English.
G	3	4	Yes	Yes	I like to read English novels I like, but I don't like to read the English novels I don't like. Novels I like are always really awesome and interesting, so I really enjoy reading English novels I like.	I love to read some English novels but not all of them. If the novel is too difficult for me, then I won't read it. I can read difficult magazines but not novels. I'll lose interest when I'm reading difficult novels.
H	0	2	No	No	I don't like to read English novels because they are too difficult to read.	Too hard to read.
I	0	1	No	No	Because it's boring.	It's boring
J	2	9	Yes	Yes	I say yes but honestly I feel so so about reading English books. I like to read all novels except science fiction.	I like reading English novels because it can improve my writing skills and help me know more vocabulary.
K	0	5	No	Yes	I don't enjoy it because when I open the novel it's full of words and I can't continue reading it even though it's an interesting book.	I enjoy reading English novels because I found out it's interesting.

Note: The numbers at the top of each column are {Survey#}. {Question#}. See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for the survey questions.

Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Team-Teaching Practices in Two Japanese Senior High Schools

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ABSTRACT

In this study I explored the perceptions of local Japanese teachers of English (JTEs), foreign assistant language teachers (ALTs) and their students of team-teaching practices in language classrooms in Japan. Data were collected from two pairs of team teachers and four of their students in two Japanese senior high schools through multiple qualitative methods, including interviews, pair discussions and focus group discussions. Findings suggest that the teachers and students considered team-teaching practices to be: unique, because of the participation of a native English speaker in the team, and also because of the particular nature of teamwork by both teachers; open-ended, due to vague definitions; and less important than other commitments at school. It is noteworthy that the participants had these perceptions with different degrees (from very strong to very weak) and with various, sometimes opposing, attitudes (from very positive to very negative). These participants' complex perceptions derived from their personal experiences, contextual factors and research conditions.

INTRODUCTION

Team teaching is said to facilitate teaching efficiency and learning effectiveness by encouraging the strengths and complementing the weaknesses of each teacher (Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2008). In English language classrooms, benefits of team teaching conducted by Native English Speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-Native English Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) include an increase in the quality and quantity of students' English talk (Bailey, Dale, & Squire, 1992). This collaboration by NESTs and NNESTs in

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the form of team teaching can now be observed in numerous parts of the world on a national level (e.g., Brazil, Hong Kong, Slovenia, South Korea) as well as on a local level (e.g., Taiwan).

Team teaching in Japan conducted by local Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) and foreign assistant language teachers (ALTs) through the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program has received high acclaim both domestically and internationally (Council of Local Authorities for International Relations [CLAIR], 2014b). It has created a "foreign language classroom in which students are engaged in communicative activities" (Brumby & Wada, 1990, p. vi). Despite these positive claims, however, some researchers have reported that team teaching in Japan fails to improve the communicative ability of Japanese students (McConnell, 2000; Reesor, 2002). It might also cost more money and human resources than individual teaching and generate new types of problems such as class scheduling and conflicts between team teachers stemming from different beliefs about team teaching. Even after a quarter of a century since the implementation of the nation-wide team-teaching scheme, very few researchers have conducted in-depth case study, which values participants' real-life contexts, to inquire into the actual experiences of the stakeholders involved in team-taught classes.

Exploring teachers' and students' *perceptions* of team-teaching practices is a necessary step to improve team-taught classes because there is crucial interplay what teachers/students think and what they do (Barkhuizen, 1998; Freeman, 2002). In this study, therefore, I examined team teachers' and students' perceptions of team-teaching practices in two Japanese senior high schools; in particular, I show how the participants considered team-teaching practices to be unique, open-ended and less important than other commitments at school. I also discuss how strongly/weakly and how positively/negatively the participants held those perceptions. I hope my study, by adding particular perceptions of team teachers and students from two specific cases (two senior high schools in Japan), will contribute to the literature of team teaching in language classrooms in the Japanese and other similar contexts.

TEAM TEACHING

According to Sandholtz (2000), team teaching ranges from a simple allocation of responsibilities between two teachers outside the classroom (e.g., separately making lesson plans) to full collaboration inside the classroom (e.g., sharing equal responsibility for delivering lessons). Villa et al. (2008) argue that among the four different types of in-class collaborative teaching (i.e., supportive, parallel, complementary and team teaching), team teaching is the most sophisticated process, which allows teachers to divide their instruction

equally and alternate the leader and supporter role fluidly. Team teaching therefore comes in various forms and levels of collaboration, determined by individual teachers and their circumstances.

Two or more teachers productively collaborating in the classroom provides a range of benefits for both teachers and students. Team teachers, for example, can help each other by cooperatively making plans, implementing lessons and evaluating the results (Benoit & Haugh, 2001). They are also able to capitalize on their respective skills and knowledge (Hourcade & Bauwens, 2002). For students, team-taught classes are considered to improve lesson quality as a result of a lower student to teacher ratio (Benoit & Haugh, 2001). Buckley (2000) points to two other advantages: there are more opportunities for individual or small group support because two teachers are simultaneously present in the classroom, and the classroom could become livelier due to teachers' different personalities, teaching styles and voices. In sum, team teaching, which encourages the strengths and complements the weaknesses of each teacher, facilitates teaching and learning (Villa et al, 2008).

NESTs and NNESTs can learn from each other, not only with regard to linguistic and cultural matters but also pedagogically (e.g., de Oliveira & Richardson, 2004; Gebhard & Nagamine, 2005). This is probably why team teaching by local teachers and foreign teachers has been widely recommended. For example, in 1995 South Korea started the English Program in Korea (EPIK), which had three aims: (a) to improve the English abilities of students and teachers, (b) to develop cultural exchanges, and (c) to reform English teaching methodologies (EPIK, 2014). Similarly, against the backdrop of the pressing need to improve the quality of English teaching and learning, in 1998 Hong Kong began hiring NESTs who held teaching and/or English qualifications (Education Bureau, 2014). Taiwan followed the trend of 'EFL team teaching' (Chen, 2009, p. 31), in which NESTs and NNESTs team teach English to local students, and NESTs have been recruited by the local governments since 2001 (Islam, 2011). Team teaching by NESTs and NNESTs is not only relevant to Asian countries but also to other parts of the globe such as Europe (Slovenia) (see Alderson, Pizorn, Zemva, & Beaver, 2001) and South America (Brazil) (see Corcoran, 2011). The team-teaching arrangement has thus gained increasing attention in language teaching and learning. Some studies, however, have revealed a number of problems with the arrangement, such as lack of planning time for team-taught classes (Carless, 2006) and insufficient collaboration between team teachers (Chen, 2009).

TEAM TEACHING IN JAPAN

Early discussions on team teaching involving JTEs and ALTs have concentrated on descriptive explanations of its advantages and shortcomings. Researchers have shown the benefits to team teachers such as the promotion of cultural exchange and, specifically to JTEs, enhancement of knowledge about communication-oriented approaches (McConnell, 2000). Brumby and Wada (1990) identified benefits of team teaching for students, such as increased interaction in English, more model conversation provided by team teachers and the promotion of cross-cultural awareness. Tajino and Tajino (2000) argue that students' linguistic and interactional competences improve, provided the notion of team teaching is clarified among teachers and students. Negative aspects of team teaching, however, have also been raised. McConnell (2000) found that some JTEs often treat their ALT like "a human tape recorder" (p. 190) and do not see the value of team-taught classes. Iwamoto (as cited in Miyazato, 2009) maintains that JTEs sometimes take a passive role, functioning merely as interpreters. Others (e.g., Hasegawa, 2008) warn that discrepancies exist between the aims and outcomes of team-taught classes and the requirements of student exams.

Empirical studies on team teaching have begun to appear. Adachi, Macarthur and Sheen (1998), for example, collected survey data from nearly 100 teachers and thousands of students. Both the JTEs and ALTs believed that ALTs have positive effects on student motivation, but the student participants considered team-taught classes to be unrelated to and easier than JTEs' solo classes. Exploring the roles of team teachers, Tajino and Walker (1998a) obtained questionnaires from 151 senior high school students. In another study, they collected questionnaires from 20 junior high school JTEs and 18 senior high school JTEs (Tajino & Walker, 1998b). In both studies, they found that the participants had positive perceptions of team teaching. The participants also perceived distinct roles for JTEs and ALTs, the former being grammar instructors and interpreters, and the latter cultural informants and 'authentic' English providers. Mahoney (2004) collected questionnaire data from over 1,400 junior and senior high school teachers. He discovered that participating team teachers were unclear about the roles of JTEs and ALTs. This underlined the lack of clearly defined teachers' roles and responsibilities, which he argues might have contributed to team teachers' doubts about the efficacy of ALTs and the JET program more generally.

Hiramatsu (2005) recruited eight JTEs and one ALT from a senior high school, and conducted interviews and class observations to examine the JTEs' and ALT's perceptions of team teaching. She found that: (a) team teaching could be either a threat or stimulus, dependent on JTEs' confidence with their English; (b) there were rigid team-teaching routines and team teachers' roles; (c) there were few opportunities for teachers to

cultivate collegiality; and (d) teachers faced conflicting tension between communicative English lessons and exams. Collecting questionnaires from 31 JTEs, 14 ALTs and 428 students, Galloway (2009) found that the participants had favorable attitudes toward ALTs and that they felt team teaching increased students' exposure to English and their cultural knowledge.

Miyazato (2012) conducted group and individual interviews with 31 students in three senior high schools to investigate their views on team teachers. They held positive images of the ALTs because of their 'authenticity' as well as their inclusion of activity-instruction in class. However, they perceived ALTs' lack of Japanese language skills and political power in class as a negative. As for JTEs, it was reported that the students appreciated their linguistic, cultural and psychological mediator roles but viewed their lack of target language skills as detrimental to their language learning. Johannes (2012) examined, over a ten-day period, the perspectives of 4 JTEs, 2 ALTs and 112 senior high school students through mixed methods – questionnaires, class observations, individual interviews with the JTEs and ALTs, and focus group interviews with 16 students. The results indicate, unlike previous studies (Mahoney, 2004; Tajino & Walker, 1998b), that JTEs and ALTs did not have conflicting perceptions of team teacher roles and that a wider mismatch existed between students' and teachers' perceptions. That is, the students regarded JTEs as teachers for grammar and examinations, and ALTs for foreign cultures and English pronunciation. However, the teachers did not hold such perceptions. The study also revealed that the students considered team-taught classes to be more beneficial to developing their English skills than their JTEs' solo classes. Johannes suggests that a 50/50 partnership between JTEs and ALTs is necessary to contribute to the instruction of grammar, culture, pronunciation and exam preparation.

As seen, most researchers interested in team teaching in Japan have focused on general perceptions of teacher roles and the benefits and shortcomings of team-taught classes, for the most part through anecdotes, surveys as well as questionnaires. Very few studies have taken into account all the people concerned in team-taught classes (i.e., JTEs, ALTs and their students) or have provided participants' particular personal and contextual information relating to team teaching (e.g., teaching experiences of teachers, age of students and type of school). In my view, one-dimensional descriptions of what team teaching is and how it should be practiced are unhelpful because they do not lead to the unpacking of perceptions and practices of actual teachers and students. My primary interests lie instead in exploring the perceptions of particular teachers and students in their idiosyncratic teaching and learning contexts, as the local contexts in which they teach and learn – social, political, economic, institutional and cultural – are influential in shaping how they think and practice (Barkhuizen, 1998; Johnson, 2006). The following research

question thus guided my study: What perceptions do participating JTEs, ALTs and students have of team-teaching practices in their situated contexts?

METHODOLOGY

The Participants

Two pairs of team teachers (each pair consisting of a JTE and an ALT) from two public senior high schools located in the northern part of Japan participated in this study. Aitani (JTE) and Matt (ALT) – all the names of the people and places are pseudonyms – worked together at Sakura High School. Takahashi (JTE) and Sam (ALT) taught together at Tsubaki High School. Background information on teachers is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Background information on teachers.

School	Sakura		Tsubaki	
Type of school	Vocational		General	
Name	Aitani	Matt	Takahashi	Sam
Type of teacher	JTE	ALT	JTE	ALT
Age	46	32	45	23
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Male
Nationality	Japanese	Australian	Japanese	American
Received degree	Master in English language teaching	Bachelor in visual arts	Bachelor in English linguistics	Bachelor in history education, minor in ESL
Teaching license	Senior high school (English)		Senior high school (English)	
Overseas experiences	Traveled to UK	Traveled to NZ	Lived in USA for 6 months	Traveled to China
Language proficiency	Advanced (English)	Intermediate (Japanese)	Advanced (English)	Beginner (Japanese)

Both Aitani and Takahashi had considerable teaching experience, and for both Matt and Sam, it was their first year to live and teach in Japan. Aitani had taught at four schools with 13 different ALTs over the course of her teaching career. Matt was teaching at eight schools and working with 17 different JTEs. Takahashi had worked at four schools with 10 different ALTs, and Sam was working at three schools with 13 different JTEs. Also in this study were four 2nd-year senior high school students from the two classes (2A and 2B) that each pair was teaching. The JTEs chose two focal students from each class

who were not busily engaged with club activities after school hours. Kanon and Tatsuya were chosen at Sakura, and Sayaka and Yousuke were chosen at Tsubaki (see Table 2).

Table 2. Information on classrooms and focal students.

School	Sakura		Tsubaki	
Class	2A		2B	
Courses	General		International	
Teaching subject	English II		English Expression	
Number of students	40		36	
Focal students	Kanon	Tatsuya	Sayaka	Yousuke
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Male
Club	Student council	Soccer	Japan culture	Student council

Data Collection Methods and Data Analysis

In this article, I describe part of a larger study conducted from December 2011 to March 2012. Multiple data were collected using the following methods:

- Semi-structured interviews (SI): At the beginning and the end of the study, all the teachers and the students took part in individual interviews at each school in their respective mother tongues. The length of each interview was approximately one hour.
- Teacher pair discussions 1 (TPD1): Each pair of team teachers had three separate discussions at each school in English. Each discussion lasted about one hour.
- Teacher pair discussions 2 (TPD2): The two JTEs and the two ALTs had three separate discussions at neutral venues (e.g., a community centre) outside school. The teachers chose the language to be used. All used their respective mother tongues, except when the JTEs had their second discussion in English. Each discussion lasted about a half hour.
- Focus group discussions (FGD): On three different occasions at neutral venues (e.g., a community centre) outside school, all four teachers watched video clips of both pairs' classes and, in English, had a focused discussion about them and

about team teaching in general. Each discussion took approximately one and a half hours.

- Student pair discussions (SPD): Each pair of focal students had three separate discussions at each school in Japanese. The discussions lasted about a half hour.
- Field notes (FN): I kept a detailed record of events, incidents and participants' comments at the research sites.

All the interviews and discussions were either audiotaped or videotaped. I transcribed them and translated the Japanese transcripts into English. Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) in which the focus is on the meaning of the participants' comments. This analytic process was applied to individual participants over time (e.g., Aitani, from the beginning to the end of the study) and across different participants (e.g., Aitani and Matt, two teachers working at the same school; Aitani and Yousuke, a teacher and a student at different schools). Although the participants' perceptions of team-teaching practices varied considerably, I present below salient categories most relevant to the research question. Inevitably, certain categories were discussed more by some participants than by others as they were more pertinent to them. For instance, classroom pedagogy is more relevant to and was discussed more by the teachers than the students.

FINDINGS

Team-teaching practices were considered to be: (a) unique practices because of a native speaker and a team; (b) open-ended practices due to vague definitions; and (c) less important practices as a result of the participants' other priorities and infrequent team-teaching schedules.

Unique Practices

Unlike teaching practices by JTEs alone or by other subject teachers, team-taught classes involved teamwork, including contributions of a native English speaker.

Contributions of a Native Speaker

The teachers and students focused on the fact that there is a native speaker of English in team-taught classes. During the first group discussion, for example, the ALT at

Sakura, Matt, drew everybody's attention to his native English: "the instruction delivered only in English pretty much is the key ... the purpose is for them [the students] to hear a native speaker" (FGD). The JTE at Tsubaki, Takahashi, emphasized the need for English provided by native speakers along much the same lines: "I should expose them [students] to native speakers' English more. They need to get used to listening to native speakers' English" (TPD1). Another example of how the participants valued native English appeared when JTEs prepared class materials. Aitani, the JTE at Sakura, said: "when making reading materials and classroom activities, I ask ALTs to run a 'native check'" (SI). The students also noted the key role that ALTs play. One of the focal students at Sakura, Tatsuya, commented on the native pronunciation of ALTs: "I noticed the difference between the English of Japanese teachers and the English of ALTs.... ALTs came here to show us correct pronunciation" (SI). An explicit response about the presence of a native speaker came from a focal student at Tsubaki, Yousuke: "there is a difference when we have actual foreign people in the classroom" (SI).

Apart from the positive contributions of the ALTs, several participants mentioned possible limitations associated with having them in the classroom. For example, Tatsuya wondered if ALTs could conduct classes with a full understanding of what was taking place, as classroom interaction is sometimes carried out only in Japanese. Yousuke indicated that team-teaching practices could become somewhat unfriendly and create "a space where everybody gets a bit tense" (SI) due to the ALTs' lack of familiarity with their students. On at least one occasion, however, Takahashi did not have any particular opinion about the contributions of native speakers of English. She stated: "Team teaching by Japanese English teachers would also work. We don't have to have native speakers of English. It is now common to incorporate team teaching in math classes or special education schools" (SI).

Although there were some exceptions, the participants recognized that overall 'authentic' English provided by native speakers of English was a key feature of team-teaching practices in the Japanese English language classroom.

Contributions of a Team

The teachers and students described another characteristic of team-teaching practices: two teachers working collaboratively. Aitani commented on how she perceived team teaching compared to her individual teaching:

There need to be differences between team-taught classes and JTEs' solo classes When there are two teachers, we can divide our attention and cover many

students If we are to increase the numbers of teachers, we should increase learning and teaching outcomes accordingly, right? (SI)

The teachers from Tsubaki, Sam and Takahashi, had the following conversation after watching a video clip of a team-taught class at Sakura:

Sam: I think because there were two of you [the teachers at Sakura], while you [Matt] are talking at the front, she [Aitani] can go around and help.

Takahashi: Yeah, it's good for the students.

Sam: And that way, if they won't listen or they are not getting it, then there is somebody to kind of help direct them. (FGD)

The students also identified the value of teachers' teamwork. Kanon at Sakura said: "when there is only one teacher, the teacher only stands in front of the blackboard. But when there are two teachers, one of the teachers always walks around the classroom, so it is easy for me to ask questions" (SI). The benefits of having two teachers in class were also highlighted by Sayaka at Tsubaki: "Team-taught classes are good because we have plenty of opportunities to be exposed to proper English and when we don't understand the difficult English, the Japanese teachers can tell us what it means" (SI). Similarly, Yousuke noted: "The class goes on smoothly because Takahashi plays the role of translating into Japanese, and Sam of translating into English. We can learn a lot also because both teachers interact with each other in front of us" (SI).

The team consisting of a JTE and an ALT seemed to be effective in most cases. It was, however, to be expected that teams would not always function well. For example, Aitani confessed that working with another person necessitated more discussion when planning and conducting classes:

The ALT only comes to my school on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. We cannot discuss things thoroughly ... so there are parts left unfinished sometimes.... When more than one person plans a lesson, we need to negotiate a lot and meet half-way because each person has different ideas. We have to compromise and choose whichever idea we feel is right. This takes a lot of time and energy. (FN)

The fact that JTEs speak English as their second language made negotiation even more of a challenge. Aitani commented: "If possible, we [JTEs] want to avoid having discussions with ALTs about what is to be done in class because we might be hesitant to negotiate in English, which is not our mother tongue" (SI). Interestingly, Yousuke on one occasion stated that he did not see the difference between JTEs' solo classes and team-

taught classes: "In team-taught classes, one teacher teaches, and the other just observes. So team-taught classes are just like the usual JTEs' classes" (SI).

Overall, the participants were positive about the teachers' teamwork mainly because they viewed it to be an advantage having two teachers offering different areas of expertise. Insufficient coordination between team teachers, however, seemed to have sometimes restricted the productivity of the team.

Open-Ended Practices

According to CLAIR (2014a), team teaching provides "opportunities for active interaction in a foreign language in the classroom, enhances the students' motivation towards learning a foreign language, and deepens the students' understanding of foreign cultures" (p. 81). Apart from the reference that the ALTs should not "conduct classes alone, nor be the 'main' teacher" (CLAIR, 2014a, p. 81), team-teaching practices in Japan seem to be quite open-ended. Sam pointed out: "The contract is vague. From what I understand, I am obviously required to go to class, and my work time is set ... everything else is vague" (SI). Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the participants held a variety of views about the roles of teachers and classroom pedagogy.

The Roles of Teachers: Divided or Undivided?

When team teachers work together, they usually divide their roles in terms of planning, instruction and evaluation so that they know how best to contribute to their practices (Villa et al., 2008). As described above, however, the roles of team teachers in Japan do not seem to be clearly distinguished. Moreover, it became apparent in this study that the teachers had limited opportunities to discuss their teaching roles. Matt claimed that his JTEs generally decide his role: "It's up to the JTEs what role we are able to play in team teaching or how much opportunity we are able to be given to lead or design" (SI). For Sam, the role he plays is flexible: "Sometimes I am an assistant, and I don't do anything more than check grammar and read stuff. And sometimes I lead certain activities or help explain things.... So it really depends on the lesson" (SI). The JTEs were also ambivalent about the roles of team teachers. Takahashi explained:

The ALT just came last summer, so we haven't been able to divide our roles successfully yet. As for Oral Communication classes, we conduct classes planned 100% by him.... As for English Expression classes, since he comes to them only once a week, I plan all the lessons. He is basically like a guest. Perhaps what

subject we teach has a lot to do with how we utilize ALTs.... Also it depends on the objective of the subject and on how those classes are usually conducted. (SI)

Both Takahashi and Sam seemed to agree that their teaching roles are variable. They made the following remarks when asked about what distinguished their respective roles:

Takahashi: We don't decide that kind of roles.

Sam: I guess, it depends. Sometimes you lead more, sometimes I lead more.

Takahashi: Sometimes I notice something, sometimes you notice. So whichever teacher who notices the good timing gives feedback first. (TPD1)

Aitani also commented on the changing nature of the roles of team teachers: "The role of ALT and JTE can be changeable. At one time, ALT is the leader of the lesson.... At another time, we both work the same amount.... At still another time, JTE can be the leader" (FGD). Particularly noteworthy here is that Takahashi and Sam believed that the ideal role allocation for team teachers is equal and tried to achieve it. In contrast, Aitani thought the roles of team teachers should not be inflexibly pre-determined.

The JTEs, however, did hold one invariable perception: ALTs should be 'main' teachers in team-taught classes. Both JTEs highlighted the fact that they tend to let their ALT lead the classes. Allowing ALTs to play the role of a 'main' teacher was at odds with the original concept of team teaching in Japan (CLAIR, 2014a). Nonetheless, Aitani said: "In team-taught classes with ALTs, I tend to be an assistant, rather than a person who would explain first" (TPD1). By the same token, Takahashi commented: "I try not to speak.... I want students to listen to Sam speak.... I always offer the role of writing" (TPD1).

Contrary to the teachers, however, the students clearly saw the division of labor in team-teaching practices. For the most part, they regarded the ALTs as 'main' teachers who direct lessons and provide instruction in English while they viewed the JTEs as 'supporting' teachers who sometimes help with Japanese translation. Kanon described an extreme case: "They [JTEs] just watch the ALT's class at the back of the classroom without doing anything" (SI).

The team teachers believed that team teaching was an open-ended practice, dependent on the beliefs and experiences of individual teachers as well as the subject and goal of the class. Some valued the flexible nature of teacher roles, and others attempted to reach an equal division of labor. Nonetheless, the JTEs had one recurring perception of teachers' roles: ALTs should be the main source of the target language in class. In the students' eyes, the roles of their teachers were simpler: ALTs are in charge of team-taught

classes by providing native English whilst JTEs offer occasional assistance in Japanese and sit backstage.

Classroom Pedagogy: Rigid or Flexible?

Classroom pedagogy in team-taught classes was also considered to be open-ended. Some JTEs consistently employed one pedagogical style, and others were more flexible. For instance, in this study the ALTs perceived Aitani and Takahashi to be pedagogically progressive and open-minded compared to other JTEs. Matt said to Aitani in a pair discussion: "I don't think they [other JTEs] think of it [team teaching] as progressively as you do in terms of really being kind of a give and take affair" (TPD1). This view was echoed by Sam when talking about Takahashi:

Takahashi is ... non-traditional.... She would disregard [what two of them had planned], but I know some teachers would be like, "It's in the textbook!" ... if they see it in the textbook, "Oh well, today's topic is cloning, and we use these phrases", and the whole lesson would be about cloning, and it's not useful at all. (TPD2)

In addition to the lesson content and classroom material, another pedagogical issue raised was the use of Japanese. During one focus group discussion, Aitani explained how much and why she used Japanese in her class. Her comment illustrates her changing perceptions about the topic:

I didn't mean to use that much of Japanese at first, but ... when I was explaining the situation ... I thought that it was a little bit unclear, so I unconsciously thought that I should reinforce it in Japanese. But later I changed my mind and thought: "I should just stick to English". (FGD)

In contrast, Takahashi was certain about her use of Japanese: "I use English only in my regular lessons even when I teach alone, and I don't use Japanese so much in team-taught class either" (FGD).

Less Important Practices

The participants considered team-taught classes to be less important than other classes, or other school commitments for that matter. This was mainly due to the limited

time available for JTEs, high-stakes tests for students, and infrequent/tokenistic teaching for ALTs.

Available Time

Available time for team teachers at school was often the focus of teacher interviews and discussions. Matt summarized the situation succinctly: “We don’t get the time to evaluate what is happening and what will happen [in class]” (SI). He felt that substantial interaction with his JTEs was not taking place. His JTE, Aitani, indeed found it difficult to allocate time for him: “When we had winter vacation, Matt and I could not really contact each other. And he was not here yesterday either. So today’s class was almost unprepared. We just dived into the class” (FN). She then admitted: “I feel team-taught classes end up a very low priority compared to other classes” (SI).

Takahashi at Tsubaki was in a similar situation. The demands on her time as a JTE were heavy. She explained: “The lack of communication is because we [JTEs] have to work other things during working hours. It often happens that I don’t have free periods or I have to talk with my students” (SI). She prioritized other work over team-teaching matters. During a pair discussion, Aitani asked Takahashi how she usually prepares for team-taught classes. Takahashi answered: “I don’t have time to prepare for team-taught classes with Sam. I teach just out of mere habit” (TPD2). In a focus group discussion, Takahashi admitted: “[Sam and I spend] one minute [for preparation] ... while we are going upstairs (laugh)” (FGD).

The JTEs thus perceived team-teaching practices to be secondary in comparison with other teaching or school work. This was primarily due to their time constraints and heavy workloads. Communication between the JTEs and ALTs reached only superficial levels.

Testing and Grading

Testing and grading practices inevitably affected the participants’ perceptions of team-taught classes. Matt remarked that although he had once made “a small contribution to their [JTEs’] overall grading” (SI) by creating parts of listening questions, he had never been given other evaluation tasks. Sam mentioned that he could sometimes lose entire classes for a day due to testing: “If it’s a test week next week, almost all my classes would be used to review. You gotta finish some area of the textbook, so all of my classes can get taken over by JTEs” (FN).

Because team-taught classes were not directly related to high-stakes tests, and the academic performance of the students in those classes was not graded as rigorously as

other classes, the students did not view team-taught classes to be of great importance. For instance, in response to a question about the frequency of team-taught classes, Tatsuya said: "I want to prepare for tests.... So it's a bit too much if the ALT comes five times a week. I think having team-taught classes once or twice a week is about right" (SI). Sayaka maintained that team-taught classes could be somewhat troublesome if she had them every day: "I don't want to have team-taught classes all the time, but maybe once a month" (SI). Sayaka added that the content covered in team-taught classes does not appear in term tests, which usually consist of a number of questions associated with translations, idioms and grammar rules.

Infrequent and Tokenistic

Team-teaching practices were also regarded as infrequent and tokenistic. Matt believed that infrequent teaching was the main reason for him feeling underused at his schools: "I do feel somewhat underused. But that's the symptom of being shuffled around different schools all the time. It's just too disjointed to have a more active or more enriched role" (SI). In a pair discussion, Sam was surprised at Matt's teaching schedules (i.e., visiting eight schools). Matt and Sam concurred about how challenging it is for them to build relationships with their students:

Sam: I know some of the kids, but I don't know as many as I probably should.

Matt: I mean, you are not in one school either ... so that doesn't make it easier. I know my situation. It's not really possible to spend much time [with each student].

Sam: Yeah, it's odd that your job is like, big thing is to get more connected to kids and you get so many schools that it's basically impossible. (TPD2)

This perception of team-teaching practices as infrequent was also expressed by Takahashi: "ALTs visit different schools, and it is almost impossible to make a team all the time. So the important question is how we [JTEs] use ALTs who show up very infrequently" (SI). For some students, like Tatsuya, team-taught classes were so few and far between that they did not seem to have a large impact on their lives at school: "I didn't notice the ALT had not come to our class this year (laugh)" (SI).

The participants also considered team-taught classes to be tokenistic. Matt perceived his teaching practice to be "almost a token gesture" and felt that "it is about a foreign presence and just hearing the language a little bit" (FN). Matt told an illuminating story, which describes how ALTs' classroom practices and team-taught classes as a whole are treated:

It was very frustrating, a couple of times lately. Half of the class time has been spent marking their written tests that they have done the week before. And the test was returned to the students and they were given the answer sheet. They spent 25 minutes And then, the second half of the class was just me demonstrating how to say words. Yep, they would do better with the CD that comes with the textbook. (SI)

Token practices also occurred in all the schools where Sam worked. The best example came from 'the best high school in the area' (TPD2). Sam explained his experience in the school to Matt: "I go to three different classes within each period and do like one 10-minute activity. So I basically teach the same, mildly boring activity six times" (TPD2). Matt exclaimed: "Only 10 minutes! What the hell can you do in 10 minutes?" Sam continued:

What I have been doing is I pick news articles ... and I rewrite it, and then we will do a listening activity.... And then, next class I do it again and next class and next class ... it's very boring, very boring. (TPD2)

A small number of benefits, however, were underlined. Matt believed that one upside of the infrequency of his teaching schedules is that the students are able to see "a fresh face" with "slightly different energy" (SI). This view was echoed by Tatsuya: "Aitani is usually the only teacher in the classroom. When that lasts for a long time, I don't get excited. But when an ALT comes, I feel tense in a positive way" (SPD). Matt also highlighted the benefit of working at three different institutional sectors: "I have the luxury of being involved in all three levels of schooling from elementary, junior high, high school I have a nice way of seeing how the education system works through that progression" (SI).

DISCUSSION

The participants in this study, both teachers and students, were cognizant of the unique contributions to their classes of a native speaker of English (see Adachi et al., 1998; Galloway, 2009; Miyazato, 2012) and teamwork in team teaching (see Buckley, 2000; Hourcade & Bauwens, 2002). However, the teachers were confused by the open-ended nature of team-teaching practices and ended up being indecisive about classroom pedagogy and the roles of teachers (see Mahoney, 2004; Tajino & Walker, 1998b). The students, however, appeared to see clearly distinct roles for team teachers: JTEs as

assistants/translators and ALTs as main teachers/English providers (see Johannes, 2012; Tajino & Walker, 1998a). Both teachers and students generally felt that team-taught classes were less important than other classes/school activities due to the limited available time of the JTEs, the concerns the students had about tests, and the infrequent visits of the ALTs (see Hiramatsu, 2005).

Some of the findings reported in the literature were also evident in my data, but others were not. It is particularly noteworthy that in my study the participants had different perceptions of team-teaching practices (i.e., unique, open-ended and less important) to varying degrees (from very strong to very weak). For instance, the Tsubaki teachers were quite convinced that they needed to use the target language only in class (strong perception) – e.g., “I use only English in my regular lessons ... and I don’t use Japanese so much in team-taught classes either” (FGD); the Sakura teachers were not so certain (weak perception) – e.g., “I didn’t mean to use that much of Japanese at first.... But later I changed my mind” (FGD). The participants had different perceptions with various, sometimes opposing, attitudes as well (from very positive to very negative). For example, Kanon at Sakura and Yousuke at Tsubaki had positive views on team teaching – e.g., “when there are two teachers ... it is easy for me to ask questions” (SI) – whereas Tatsuya and Sayaka did not consider team teaching always to be a preferable learning option – e.g., “I don’t want to have team-taught classes all the time” (SI). It also became apparent that contradictory comments came even from the same participants. Although Takahashi said in an interview: “Team teaching by Japanese English teachers would also work. We don’t have to have native speakers of English” (SI), in a pair discussion she remarked: “I should expose them [students] to native speakers’ English more” (TPD1). Yousuke at one time said: “team-taught classes are just like the usual classes” (SI). At another time, however, he told me: “there is a difference when we have actual foreign people in the classroom” (SI).

Findings in previous studies have often been presented in an either-or manner – e.g., “results reveal positive attitudes towards English and the ALTs, that ALTs have increased students’ exposure to English and cultural knowledge” (Galloway, 2009, p. 169), and recommendations to date are sometimes deterministic – e.g., “students ... find team-taught classes more beneficial.... These results suggest the school might want to offer more team-taught classes” (Johannes, 2012, p. 181). In an attempt to compare ALTs’ job satisfaction, Tsuido, Otani and Davies (2012) assessed their questionnaire data collected from current ALTs with that of ten years ago collected from different participants and argue that “the ALTs’ responses indicate that situation [of the ALTs] has improved” (p. 57). These findings and recommendations might not have taken into consideration the particularities of the participants, their surroundings and the processes of data collection. Instead, I maintain in this article that the participants’ perceptions of team

teachers and teaching practices inevitably vary, depending on the participants' individual traits (e.g., age, previous perceptions and previous experiences), contextual factors (e.g., school and class culture) and data collection conditions (e.g., timing/place/methods of data collection).

CONCLUSION

My study investigated teachers' and students' perceptions of team teaching conducted by JTEs and ALTs in Japan. At first glance, the participants seemed to have positive attitudes toward the unique practices of team teaching due mainly to the contributions of a native speaker of English (ALT) and the collaborative work by both team teachers, negative feelings about its open-ended practices because they generated confusion regarding teacher roles and pedagogy, and negative perceptions about the less important status of team-teaching practices. A closer look, however, uncovered the complexity of the participants' perceptions, revealing divergent degrees and attitudes. Individual participants' personal experiences, contextual factors within which they live, and changing research conditions such as the timing of data collection might have affected their perceptions. Therefore it is perhaps advisable that teacher educators and researchers should neither value one team-teaching practice over others nor expect all team teachers to carry out their classes in prescriptive ways. Individual team teachers and students, who are familiar with their particular needs and situations, should often have an opportunity to (re)consider and discuss issues raised in this article (e.g., what team-taught classes mean to them; how the roles of team teachers can be defined; to what extent they should use Japanese; what to include in student tests) without limiting themselves to taken-for-granted conceptions of what team teaching should be. They can create this opportunity on their own in the form of teacher research (Borg, 2013) or with support from the board of education. By doing so, they could compare their perceptions with those of the participants in this study and attempt to alternate their perceptions (and practices) if deemed appropriate.

Although the small number of the participants (i.e., eight) means that the findings of my study will not represent all team teachers' and students' perceptions about team-teaching practices, my study nevertheless adds illuminating cases to the literature of team teaching in language classrooms. Future inquiries should involve several types of teachers and students (e.g., novice JTEs, experienced ALTs, elementary school students) in diversified contexts (more urban/rural research sites) with various data collection conditions (e.g., employing questionnaires) in order to more fully understand the teachers' and students' experiences with their team-teaching practices. Every team-teaching pair is unique, and no teaching practice is black and white.

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Pedagogical implications of discourse analysis: One-on-one teacher-student interaction in a second language preschool class

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ABSTRACT

The study connects two areas of language research: discourse analysis and second language pedagogy. The overall goal of this study is to raise young learners' language teachers' awareness on how to improve the quality of classroom talk in order to make it more comprehensible to students. As professional development is a long process, in this study I will only introduce three techniques language teachers of young children can explore in order to achieve a more comprehensive and engaging language classroom without having to give up natural speech. The language activity chosen for analysis is based on the content-based theory, which allows connecting drawing with language learning in the international preschool context. In the activity described in this research, students were engaged in one-on-one conversations with teachers and answered their questions to show comprehension. Two teachers' interaction patterns were tested in terms of repetitiveness, turn-distribution and reference to the information provided by students. Based on my findings, I recommend three tools language teachers can utilize to modify their interaction style and enhance students' comprehension: systematically repeat key words provided by students, create opportunities for students to initiate conversation and use reiteration to emphasize grammatical patterns. With this study, I hope to open new doors in the field of preschool language acquisition in Japan and encourage more researchers to support second language educators of that age group.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, English language education of young learners has been getting more attention in Japan. Along with the elementary, junior-high and high school immersion programs already introduced to Japanese parents in the late nineties, a new system of English immersion, or so-called international preschools and kindergartens, started to gain popularity as an alternative to the formal Japanese daycare system (Bostwick, 2001).

My study takes place in one of those schools where I have been working as a head teacher and a teacher trainer for six years. Already, at the beginning of my career I encountered important issues, which require the attention of classroom researchers and educators: lack of research in classroom language for this unique setting and the development of communicative strategies for teachers to activate language acquisition devices for their students. This research attempts to fill teachers' practical need for designing language of instruction that will support students on their way to develop aural linguistic skills.

The choice of aural focus for this research was not coincidental. Nunan (2007), in a section pertaining to interaction analysis, first expressed the need for aural focus, an issue especially pertinent to the age group in this research. Nunan provides an important starting point for my study when he suggests applying child-adult interaction analysis in the first language to improve pedagogical methods in the second language. The analysis of interaction between child and adult in the first language can contribute to second language pedagogy as it provides knowledge of conditions under which languages are acquired.

In my study, I designed and piloted a language learning activity that included one-on-one interaction between teacher and student. All interactions were transcribed then analyzed. The activity was implemented in a preschool drawing class for students between ages two and three. This study, using classroom interaction analysis, will attempt to provide a practical response for further linguistic and pedagogical research on teaching English at preschool level in the immersion context (Garcia, 2006). The research question raised is the following: What discourse patterns in teacher talk enhance comprehension in one-on-one teacher-student interaction?

The theoretical background I found relevant to my study includes content and theme based learning theories, language comprehension processes in general and in young learners classroom in particular, and discourse analysis with emphasis on classroom discourse. In the next section, I will provide a short overview of the major research in those areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching environment of L2 teacher in immersion preschool: content-based classroom rationale for immersion preschool curriculum

As it will be seen in the methodology section, the curriculum of immersion preschool is conducted and designed according to the principles of content-based instruction. The daily schedule of the students is divided into subjects such as drawing, phonics, math, crafts, culture and science. Thus, language is introduced to the students through subject contents. In this section of the chapter, I will introduce general ideas regarding the rationale of content-based instruction and its place in the language learning system.

One of the core works in content-based method belongs to Dewey (1943), who saw a general need for unification of all disciplines and for creating contextual and interactive learning frameworks. In the specific field of language acquisition, Graves (1975), Clay (1979) and Zepeda-de-Caney (1980) argued that children do not learn the language arts in discrete instructional context.

There is an important role of inter-subjectivity in the learning process in which valuable connections are made by the students between language classes and other school subjects (Genishi, 1981). Focus on content in language acquisition is supported by Moll and Diaz (1987), who state that children achieve greater comprehension when the focus is on making meaning rather than on the correctness of the utterance.

Gordon (2007) expressed a similar idea in his work when he described successful learning processes of the first language as “exploration of the world by students and discussions of those explorations with adults” (p.132) rather than by means of studying vocabulary and then learning how to use the words. I share Gordon’s (2007) concern and clearly see a need to design experiential activities that provide contextual clues and comprehensive input.

In Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), I found studies that expand on Gordon’s (2007) ideas regarding the curriculum designed on the content-based approach. According to Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), the term “content” can be divided into three different types: “linguistic content, thematic or situational content and subject-matter content” (p.187). While linguistic contents apply to language, thematic or situational approaches emphasize contextualization and meaningful, as well as, relevant use of target language during the learning process. (ibid.)

Several studies (Cameron, 2001; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000) discuss the appropriateness of using theme-based teaching in the primary foreign classroom as an approach that introduces the language as a communicative tool through which children acquire thematic contents. In my analysis of the activity for preschool-aged students in an immersion setting using a theme-based learning approach, I wish to introduce the concept of effective and comprehensive instruction in the target language.

Comprehension: how children process what they hear

Widdowson describes the listening process as “unseen and inaccessible” (Widdowson, 1990, p.108, as quoted in Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p.102). I attempted to access the “inaccessible” (ibid.) by designing a listening activity that offers students an opportunity to demonstrate they can successfully convert part of the information from comprehensible teachers’ input (Krashen, 1985) and make it accessible for their own consumption.

Several studies (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000) describe listening as the most frequently used language skill in everyday life that has both top-down and bottom-up processes. (Anderson & Lynch, 1988, quoted in Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p.102)

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) provide an outlook on both, and reveal the complexity of listening mechanisms. The top-down process is described as an “activation of schematic knowledge and contextual knowledge”. (p.102) As I will show later in the discussion section, the top-down listening process has more weight in the case of young learners. The bottom-up process of listening involves prior knowledge of the language system (phonology, grammar, vocabulary) (ibid.) At the beginning of their first and/or second language acquisition, children might still be in the process of building their knowledge (Lightbrown and Spada, 2006).

Cameron (2001) emphasizes two guiding principles for teaching aural and oral language to young learners: 1) meaning comes first, 2) importance of active student participation in the learning process. My concern is that excessive focus on the delivery of the exact meaning to the students and excessive usage of the first language in the second language classroom can cause a shortage of second language input and/or output, causing a general delay in acquisition as a result (Swain 1995).

Locke (1993, as cited in Cameron, 2001) argues that for infants, language often “plays a secondary role to the social and affective components, and less attention is paid to the actual language content of talk than to its probable social meanings” (p.38) Another point Locke makes is that children inevitably operate with only partial understanding of what they hear, but it does not stop them from communicating and interacting, even in a second language environment (ibid.).

Along with Locke (1993), Donaldson (1978) and Meadows (1993) (all cited in Cameron, 2001), there is research on additional mechanisms such as ‘innate drive to “coherence” ’ (Meadows, 1993, p.72, quoted in Cameron, 2001, p.38) and usage of experience of intention and purpose by children while performing new tasks in various areas such as second language learning (Donaldson, 1978). I cannot fully agree with “innate drive to coherence” (Meadows, 1993) as a sole learning mechanism and will present my arguments in the discussion section.

Research on analyzing classroom discourse

As the focus of data analysis in my study will be on contextual and interactional components of classroom discourse, in this section I will introduce some of the related theories from the field of discourse analysis.

Contextual elements of analysis are represented by the concept of cohesion analysis as implemented by Halliday and Hasan (1976, 1989). The concept of cohesion is semantic and refers to relations of meanings that exist within each text, spoken or written, and defines text as text” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p.4). In my study I will implement part of cohesion analysis elements to identify contextuality, which will be described in further details in the methodology chapter.

Systemic functional linguistics theory based on the model of “language as social semiotics” developed by Halliday and his followers (Eggins and Slade, 1997) contributed to the foundation of my study in classroom interaction analysis as it enables conversational patterns to be “quantified at different levels and at different degrees of details” (ibid., p.45).

Finally, one last component used in my analysis of classroom interaction relies on Halliday’s idea of “primary and secondary positions of actors” (Wells, 1995). In research on classroom discourse, the idea was developed into a model of distribution of roles in classroom interaction (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975).

As for the more specific field of classroom discourse, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) suggested a framework of analysis where exchanges between the teacher and students are framed into I-R-F moves: “I” stands for initiation of the teacher; “R” for response of the student and “F” for feedback or for follow up by the teacher. The teacher can be recognized as a primary actor or a knower who initiates the exchange and provides the evaluation or follow-up to students’ moves. The students’ response is essential, because without it, there is no exchange (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975).

Studies designed by Wells (1981,1995), Hughes and Westgate (1997, 1997a, 1998) and Lemke (1990, cited in Wells, 1995) took the research of classroom discourse analysis a step

further by creating an alternative to the I-R-F method. Lemke (1990) proposed the idea of analyzing the structure of the activity in terms of functions performed by “successive moves in the exchanges through which the activity is realized” (Lemke 1990, as cited in Wells, 1995, p.8). The idea of successive moves in classroom interaction gives me a focus on factors that promote students’ comprehension by identifying the successive moves that are significant to my study rather than just analyzing I-R-F structure.

Studies by Edwards & Westgate (1994), Westgate & Corden (1993) and Westgate & Hughes (1997, 1998) investigate possible enabling strategies in teacher-led talk with young learners. The main concern of the researchers is to identify strategies in student-teacher communication that will take students’ moves to a higher level of initiation and have them be engaged in speculative or interpretive talk.

As for the practical side, I encountered several recent studies that were similar to my research environment. The following studies illustrate the implications of applying some of the theories of analysis I introduced in the theoretical section of classroom interaction research. Although none of the following research is covered in my study, works by Akcan (2005), Wiebe Berry and Englert (2005), Garcia (2006), Gillies and Boyle (2006) and Radford, Ireson and Mahon (2006) identify recent pedagogical trends in classroom interaction structure. Garcia’s work (2006) was especially significant to my study as it refers to the clear need for further research in the field of immersion preschool settings.

Gee, Michaels and O’Connor’s (1992) research provides an example for practical applications of cohesion analysis that combines other elements of discourse analysis. The study describes one-on-one interactions, between teachers and students who are English native speakers, taking place during “sharing time” in American elementary school. Although the study focuses on oral production of students, researchers analyze teachers’ utterances for the purpose of evaluating lexical supportiveness. The idea of lexical analysis of teachers’ utterances inspired me to analyze connections between lexical elements in teachers’ talk and student comprehension.

In the next section I will introduce methods that motivated my choice of research topic that addresses this very question because I feel there is a need to create more practical studies of classroom interaction in the preschool immersion context, a concern also expressed by Garcia (2006).

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to collect qualitative and descriptive information supported by quantitative analysis regarding pedagogical issues related to listening comprehension activities in the immersion preschool second language classroom. I explore the factors that made classroom teacher-student interaction comprehensible and effective for students’ language learning process.

Settings

The data was collected in the classes of an immersion preschool and kindergarten in central Tokyo. Students spend at least five hours a day, five days a week at school interacting in English as the main language of instruction. As it was mentioned in the literature review, the school’s curriculum was designed based on the idea of content-based instruction. The

students are engaged in disciplines such as math, reading, phonics, drawing, crafts, painting, science and culture. A monthly theme is introduced from different disciplines. Examples of monthly themes include seasons of the year, opposites, animals, etc. If the theme of the month is winter, students will accomplish drawing activities related to that theme, count snowflakes in math classes, make winter crafts or learn about winter weather in science.

I found the school to be a convenient research site, as I have been working there as a head teacher for six years and succeeded in building a relationship with the parents and the Japanese director of the school. At the beginning of the project, the school's Japanese director gave an oral official permission for the research. The parents and other caregivers were informed the video material would only be used for research purposes and would therefore not be distributed or presented in research conferences. By doing so, I received their permission for the research. In order to achieve maximal confidentiality, I refrained from using students' names, replacing them, instead, with numbers.

Participants

The participants in the study were a class of five preschool students, all native speakers of Japanese, between ages two and a half and three, two homeroom teachers and myself as an observer and advisor.

Students

The five students were members of the same class. They all entered the preschool and started their second language acquisition in April 2008. I selected the preschool group for several reasons. The students had a similar language background as Japanese was the language spoken at home. All the class members started their formal English acquisition at the same time. Finally, there was a need for curriculum development as the toddlers' program started to function in April 2008. Lack of research in the area of curriculum development for the second language preschool classroom in the immersion context in a non-English speaking country created the need for observation and analysis to enrich the contents, adjust the program to the students' language needs and engage students in the acquisition process.

Teachers

Two female homeroom teachers in their early twenties and with no former teacher training were involved in the project. Both graduated from an American college and majored in Liberal arts. While Teacher Lisa specialized in history of education, Teacher Akriti majored in psychology. Lisa is an English native speaker from the United States fluent in Japanese. Akriti is a bilingual teacher from India who speaks both Hindi and English with minor knowledge of Japanese. Lisa fulfilled the function of senior teacher as she was in the field for a year and a half when the project started, while Akriti had only six months of teaching experience. Both started teaching in the toddlers' class in April 2008.

My role

I'm Russian-born Israeli, a native speaker of Russian and fluent in English, Japanese and Hebrew. I majored in East-Asian Studies and International Relations for my undergraduate studies in Israeli University and completed my graduate studies in TESOL at Teachers

College Columbia University. I fulfilled the role of head teacher in the immersion preschool where the study took place. On a daily basis, I informally interact with the students, outside the classroom, during free play hours. For the teachers involved in the project, I act both as a supervisor and an advisor. My responsibilities are to advise on curriculum planning, language development of students, classroom observation and provide feedback regarding language-teaching issues based on my experience as a graduate student in the field. As I participated in classroom sessions before the project started, my presence as an observer was taken naturally by the students and by the teachers during the project; something that helped to reduce "observer paradox" (Labov, 1972b) and contributed to creating a natural classroom atmosphere.

Procedure

The schedule of the project started at the beginning of November 2008 and lasted approximately three months. The classroom sessions recorded in the project were drawing sessions for five students conducted by two homeroom teachers. Due to the very young age of the students, the toddler program's classes are usually taught by a team of two teachers. One of the teachers fulfills the role of leader and the other of assistant. They switch roles every other session. As I mentioned earlier, both of the teachers started to teach the toddlers' class in April 2008. That way, both were given an equal opportunity to familiarize themselves with the students.

The drawing classes took place once a week and lasted 20 to 25 minutes. Each session is divided into three parts around 8-10 minutes each. In the first part, the leading teacher introduces the theme. In the second part, a free drawing activity, both teachers assist the students by providing paper and color pencils, and by encouraging students in the drawing process. For the third part, teachers talk to students individually about their drawings. Each interaction lasts no longer than 3 minutes. As one of the main goals for this study was to assess the ability of teachers to create comprehensive interactions and keep students engaged, the questions for the interaction were not prepared in advance. Each teacher could freely choose the theme for each interaction and questions for the discussion of the drawings. The only instruction they were given was to encourage students to develop a three-minute conversation. The students' short attention span allowed conducting only one conversation during each session. All sessions were videotaped. After I collected two recorded sessions (with one teacher) of classroom interactions for each of the five students, I transcribed the interactions and analyzed all ten transcripts.

Data Collection and Units of Analysis

The methods of analysis I used in this study combine the elements of classroom interaction analysis based on Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) with elements of cohesion analysis (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, 1985). From the classroom interaction analysis, I partly borrowed the idea of I-R-F structure introduced earlier in the literature review. In this study, I will focus on I-initiation and R-response concepts to analyze the distribution of roles in the setting.

Elements of cohesion analysis, such as reference and repetitions, served as additional tools to analyze the interactions in terms of cohesiveness and existence of contextual ties between lexical items on the text. Cohesion analysis according to Halliday and Hasan (1976) defines the semantic relations in the text and consists of six categories: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, repetition and lexical cohesion. In this study I will focus on

reference and additional category that indicates cohesiveness-repetition. References are divided into two types: exophoric reference-situational references (referring to the situation outside the text) and endophoric references-textual references (referring to the features inside the text). Repetition of lexical items serves as an additional indicator of the cohesive ties in the text and enlarges the impact of lexical meaning (Halliday, 1989). The importance of cohesive devices of repetition and reference for teacher-student interactions will be introduced later in the discussion section.

I analyzed ten examples of teacher-student interactions (Appendix 1). I divided the turns taken by students in each interaction into successive moves (Lemke, 1985) or as I called them *successful student turns* (SST) and *missed student turns* (MST). Successful students' turns referred to all the correct answers of students to teachers' questions that contributed to a flow of the conversation and helped the teacher to proceed to her next turn. The short "yes" and "no" answers and answers in Japanese were accepted as well if they fit in SST category.

For the quantitative part of the study, I calculated the number of SST and MST for each teacher and summarized them in tables 1,2,3 and 4. Based on the number of SST and MST, I calculated the percentage of comprehension. The percentage of comprehension was calculated as the percentage of MSTs from the total number of students' turns in each interaction. Also, I calculated the percentage of repetitions (Table 4) as the percentage of teachers' turns with repetitions of the information provided by the students from the total number of teachers' turns in each interaction. For the descriptive part of the study, I will present the categories of SSTs and MSTs followed by examples of interactions from the transcripts.

FINDINGS

This section of the study identifies factors influencing the level of students' comprehension of teachers' questions. Table 1 shows, in percentage, the level of comprehension of students. Table 2 shows the number of SST and MST for teacher Lisa. Table 3 shows the SST and MST for teacher Akriti. Table 4 shows the percentage of repetitions in teachers' turns.

TABLE 1
Percentage of comprehension

	S 1	S 2	S 3	S 4	S 5
Lisa	97%	96%	93%	100%	100%
Akriti	75%	86%	85%	77%	75%

S = Student

Table 1 shows a clear difference in percentage of students' comprehension within the interactions. In Lisa's case, the level of comprehension is higher than in Akriti's. While all of Lisa's interactions are situated above 90%, Akriti's are below 90%, the highest are 86% (S2) and 85% (S3). The rest of Akriti's interactions are below 80%. While Lisa reached 100% comprehension in S4 and S5 interactions, Akriti attained 77% for S4 and 75% for S5. In

addition to the range in level of comprehension, Table 2 and Table 3 display the gap between the number of SST and MST.

TABLE 2
Number of students' responses (MST AND SST) teacher Lisa

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
SST	26	16	14	11	21
MST	1	1	1	0	1

S = Student

TABLE 3
Number of students' responses (MST AND SST) teacher Akriti

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
SST	9	12	11	11	6
MST	4	2	2	3	2

S = Student

In interactions with Lisa, students' maximal number of MSTs equaled 1. For Akriti, the minimum was 2 and the maximum was 4. I believe the quantitative data in all tables speaks for itself: the gap between interactions has causes and implications. Because numerical values are not sufficient to explain the gap, in the next section I will provide examples for major tendencies in SSTs and MSTs for both teachers, and discuss their value for teaching practices.

TABLE 4
Repetitions

	S 1	S 2	S 3	S 4	S 5
Lisa	48%	47%	44%	42%	45%
Akriti	14%	20%	43%	27%	33%

S = Student

Main features of successful students' turns (SSTs)

Teacher Lisa

In Lisa's interaction with the students I found the following patterns that led students to answer successfully.

Variety of repetitions. Table 4 reveal a highly repetitive style of Lisa's interactions, that is to say, in approximately 45% of her turns, she consistently repeated the most important part of the new information provided by students.

Excerpt from transcript 1². S1 is telling Lisa about his drawing of his interaction with peers from an older group.

4. S1: **Angry!**

5. L: **Angry** at who?

6. S1: Angry at **Sumire!** –new topic

7. L: What did **Sumire** do?

8. S1: Konan **angry** –new topic

9. L: Is he **angry at Sumire**, because Sumire doesn't want to play with him?

In turn 5, Lisa repeats the key word "angry" from turn 4 and asks for clarification about the name of the classmate, the student or one of his classmates, is angry at. In turn 6, the student shares additional information required to continue the interaction. In turn 7, Lisa asks for the reason for the feelings the student experienced and repeats the key item of the previous turn. In turn 8, the student provides the name of the angry classmate and in that way expands teacher's opportunities for interaction.

Reiteration. Also Lisa used the technique of reiteration when she consistently repeated similar grammatical structures in the interactions. The structure "What are/is doing?" was very common in transcript 1. The structure "What is it?" consistently came up in transcript 5. Finally, in transcript 7, the structure "Is it....?" was repeated more than three times.

Emphasis on context. In part of the interactions, the teacher repeated the information provided by the student earlier in the interaction to show her engagement and in order to underline the contextual background of the interaction with the student.

Excerpt from transcript 5. S3 is telling Lisa about a rainy day she drew.

21. TL: **This one** is what?

22. S3: **Rain**

23. TL: And where are you going? To school or outside? Where are you going?

24. S3: To pool.

25. TL: To pool? In the **rain**?

26. S3: Yes

27. TL: And what did you do? Did you go swimming?

28. S3: Swimming.

29. TL: With everybody? And what is it? More **rain**? Lots of colors?

Lisa repeated the word "rain" in turn 25 and 29 after the student introduced the concept in turn 22. As "rainy day" was the key point of the session, Lisa offered additional opportunity for review and kept the dialogue focused by repeating the concept and showing interest in student's theme.

Reference. Along with repetitions, the references to the information provided by students prevailed in Lisa's interactions. In a majority of interactions, I noted the comprehension of endophoric pronominal references, advanced grammatical concepts for non-native students of English in general and toddler groups specifically. Multiple references to the student's

² Repetitions are bolded.

concepts inside the text, supported by consistent repetitions, contributed to a high percentage of comprehension.

Excerpt from transcript 9³. S5 is telling Lisa (TL) about the fish she drew.

6. S5: Snowfish!
7. L: Where?
8. S5: Here
9. TL: And what's the snowfish doing?
10. S5: Santa
11. TL: Santa? What is **it** doing with Santa?
12. S5: Drawing!
13. TL: The snowfish is drawing with Santa?
14. S5: Yes
15. TL: Wow, how interesting and where are **they**?
16. S5: Water

In turn 11, the pronoun "it" refers to the snowfish mentioned by the student in turn 6 and by Lisa in turn 9. In turn 12, the student succeeded in answering the question that referred to the word "snowfish". In turn 15, "They" refers to "Santa" and "snowfish" from the previous turns. The student replied correctly to the questions about "they" as the references were endophoric, thus backed up by nouns in the text. In the text, the nouns were located close enough to the pronouns to emphasize a lexical tie and assist the student in making immediate contextual connections.

In addition to pronominals, Lisa incorporated demonstrative references such as "this", "that" and "these".

Excerpt from transcript 3: S2 is telling Lisa about his classmate's face he drew:

20. TL: And what is this?
21. S2: Circle
22. TL: Circle? And what is this? What is this?
23. S3: Hair
24. TL: What is the blue? This one blue.
25. S3: *Kaminari* (lightning-japanese)

"This", backed up with lexical meanings provided by the student, served as an endophoric reference. It seems that the reference "this" included clear request for specification as the student responded correctly with one lexical item at a time as a response to teachers' questions.

The reference "this" seems to include a clear request for specification, as the student responded successfully to the teachers' questions.

Student in the role of the initiator: The students were given various opportunities by Lisa to initiate the turns. In part of the interactions, the students took the role of the initiator in the opening part.

Excerpt from transcript 7. S4 is telling Lisa about a snake he drew:

1. S4: Snake.

³ References are bolded.

2. TL: A blue snake? A bad snake?
3. S4: Yes, bad snake.
4. TL: Is it scary?
5. S4: Yes, scary.
6. TL: It gets the bad guys?
7. S4: *Namae mo aru yo.* (It has a name-japanese)
8. TL: Does he have a name?

S4 opens the interaction by mentioning the “snake” in turn 1. Lisa acts as a receiver and requests S4 initiator to give more information about the snake in turns 2 and 4. S4 confirms Lisa’s ideas regarding the features of the snake in turns 3 and 5. In turn 7, the student adds information, in Japanese, about the snake having a name. Here, Lisa acts as a receiver. Instead of overlooking the Japanese information, she interprets it into English. By doing so, she demonstrates her curiosity and avoids a breakdown in the conversation, which as I will show in the MSTs section, happens when the student switches to Japanese.

Teacher Akriti

In Akriti’s interactions with students, the patterns of interactions resulting in SSTs were similar to Lisa’s, though her interactions lacked consistency.

Variety of repetitions. Akriti applied the technique of repetition to some extent. Like to Lisa, she repeated the key concepts introduced by the students and expanded on them. Although as table 4 demonstrates, Akriti consistently repeated the main pieces of information from students’ turns in approximately 20% of her turns.

Excerpt from transcript 6⁴: S3 telling Akriti about the ghosts she drew.

1. TA: What is it?
2. S3: **Ghost!**
3. TA: Is there two **ghosts** or one **ghost**?
4. S3: Two **ghosts**
5. TA: Wow and what is the **ghost** doing?
6. S3: **Play**
7. TA: Are they **playing** with each other? Two **ghosts playing** with each other?

As it appears in Table 4, Akriti achieved the highest percentage (43%) of repetitions in this interaction with S3. The highest amount of repetitions explains the highest percentage (86%) of students’ comprehension in the same interaction. In turns 3, 5, 7, Akriti repeats the information provided by the student and shows her curiosity by asking additional questions without changing the subject for three turns. Even when the student starts a new topic in turn 6, she remains focused on the key concept and requests more information to enhance the contextual connections.

Reiteration. In terms of application of similar grammatical structures in the interactions, Akriti was less systematic than Lisa. I noted examples of reiteration in transcript 6 when the student scored 85% of comprehension. The structure “Is the ...” was systematically repeated more than three times during the interaction.

Emphasis on context. In part of the interactions, Akriti repeated bits of information provided by the student earlier in the interaction, so the repetitions did not follow each of the student’s turns, but were spread over the interaction to strengthen the contextual background.

⁴ Repetitions are bolded.

Excerpt from transcript 4: S2 is telling Akriti about a snowman he drew.

9. TA: Is a **snowman** happy?
10. S2: Angry
11. TA: Angry, I can tell!
Are his eyes opened or closed?
12. S2: Closed
13. TA: OK, is **snowman** near school?
14. S2: No
15. TA: Is he near Takumi's house?
16. S2: Yes.
17. TA: And where is Takumi?
18. S2: Not here. Sick.
19. TA: Oh, you're sick! And did you make a **snowman**?
20. S2: Yes

Repetitions of the keyword "snowman" appear in turn 9, 13 and 19. Though there is no consistency in repetition pattern the repetitions are located close enough to each other to keep focus on the main concept and maintain the thematic flow of the interaction.

Reference. References are less common in Akriti's interactions, although I could still identify some referential patterns that added contextual links and supported comprehension.

Excerpt from transcript 6⁵: S3 is telling Akriti about the ghosts he drew.

19. A: What color are the ghosts?
20. R: Black and yellow
21. A: Great
Are **they** Rei's friends?
Do you see **them**?
22. R: Yes
23. A: Cool
Anything else? Are they cool ghosts? Are **they** friendly or scary?
24. R: Scary

Akriti makes use of pronominal endophoric references "they" in turns 21 and 23 and "them" in turn 21 to refer to the word "ghosts" from turn 19. In turn 23, the reference "they" is backed up by the term "ghosts" that appears right before the question with the reference in it. By doing so, Akriti achieved comprehension of the student by referring to the key concepts from the text shortly enough before the pronominal reference and clarifying the context.

Student in a role of initiator: In Akriti's interactions with students, the role-switch took place, though less frequently than in Lisa's case.

Excerpt from transcript 10: S5 is telling Lisa about her Christmas drawing.

5. S5: Akriti
6. TA: Is teacher Akriti talking to Santa and Sae is Anpanman?
7. S5: Yes. Lisa.
8. TA: What is teacher Lisa doing?
9. S5: Lisa - Santa.

⁵ References are bolded

10. TA: Is teacher Lisa talking to Santa?

11. S5: Yes

S5 fulfills the role of the initiator by starting a new topic. Akriti accepts the position of receiver by asking for elaboration in turn 6. In turn 7, unexpected appearance of new information about Lisa in S5's turn requires Akriti to take the role of receiver and request to fill the contextual gap to continue the interaction. In turn 9, the student adds a new character "Santa" to the scene and by doing so, creates the need for clarification from the teachers' side.

In this part of chapter, I introduced the conditions formed by the teachers under which the students generated an extensive number of successful turns. Before starting the discussion, I will highlight the main tendencies in teachers' talk causing students to miss their turns.

Main features of missed students' turns (MSTs)

In this section, I collected all the turns the students missed and explored the possible causes for the misses.

Teacher Lisa

The transcripts revealed two types of conditions under which the MSTs occurred. First, there was the use of ungrammatical structures and informal language in 1 and 2.

Excerpt from transcript 1: S1 is telling Lisa about his peers.

13. L: So what's up with Sasuke doing?

14. S: -

The question presented by the teacher consisted of ungrammatical element "what's up". Possibly the concept was unfamiliar to the student used to a formal style of questions such as "What is Sasuke doing?". As the formal questions were prevalent in the rest of the interaction, a new type of question brought confusion and caused a comprehension gap.

A second type of MST was connected to the semantic complexity of the questions. Two following examples illustrate this complexity.

Excerpt from transcript 3: S2 is telling Lisa about a face he drew.

15. L: Here? Why is a black eye?

16. T: -

It seems like S2 is unfamiliar with the whole range of wh-questions, especially those requiring reasoning. Due to the very young age of the student, that skill is probably has yet to be mastered, even in his first language.

Excerpt from transcript 5: S3 is telling Lisa about the rain she drew.

7. L: From who?

8. R: -

The MST occurred, as the question was asked in the very early stages of the interaction. In addition, it seems as if the student was not provided with enough contextual background to respond successfully to this complex question at such an early stage of the interaction.

Teacher Akriti

Akriti's interactions consisted of a larger number of MSTs than Lisa's. I detected four major categories of conditions that could be identified as possible causes: use of abstract language categories, placing more than one idea in a question, placing more than one question in a turn, lack of the contextual background and sudden switching of roles.

Use of abstract categories. Excerpt from transcript 2: S1 is telling Akriti about a ball he drew.

9. A: What *kind* of ball is it? Does it have a color?

10. S: -

The terms "kind" can be challenging for the student. It is a general term and incorporates multiple possibilities of responses. The student missed his turn due to an abstraction that affected textual unity and caused confusion.

Placing more than one idea in a question. Excerpt from transcript 4: S2 is telling Akriti about a snowman from his drawing.

21. TA: Did you make a snowman and got sick after?

22. S2: -

In turn 21, Akriti placed two events in one question and caused the students to miss the turn.

Placing more than one question in a turn. Excerpt from transcript 4: S2 is telling Akriti about a snowman from his drawing.

23. A: Did you make a snowman and went atchoo and then you went inside? Is that what happened?

24. T: -

In turn 23, I indicated two questions with four events in one turn. Obviously overwhelmed by the amount of information, the student was confused and missed the turn for the second time in a row.

Lack of the contextual background. Excerpt from transcript 2: S1 is telling Akriti about a ball he drew.

21. A: Cool. What's this part? open

22. S: -

The reference "this" in turn 21 is exophoric and not related to the text, but to the situation. S1 was challenged by the question as he was lacking the background textual context.

Sudden switching of roles. Excerpt from transcript 6: S3 is telling Akriti about ghosts he drew.

13. TA: Is the water cold? Or is it cold?

14. S3: -

In the previous turns of the interaction, the student initiated the new topic of his interest - "ghosts". After 12 turns related to the topic, the teacher decided to change the topic to the one the student was unfamiliar with. By doing so, the teacher imposed the role of the receiver on the student and took the role of the initiator. The topic initiated by the teacher was not of student's interest and as a result the student did not respond and missed the turn.

In the next chapter, I will introduce the analysis of the findings and their relation to the main goal of this study: creating pedagogical implications for teachers' professional development.

DISCUSSION

Now I would like to go back to my research question: What discourse patterns in teacher talk enhance comprehension in one-on-one teacher-student interaction?

In my research, I found three conditions that resulted in SSTs: systematic repetitions, providing an opportunity for students to take on the role of initiator and reference. On the other hand, nine conditions resulted in MSTs: lack of consistency in repetition, multiple questions, multiple ideas in one sentence, sudden role switch with new topic introduction by teacher, lack of consistency in reference, use of abstract language, use of informal language, use of ungrammatical structure and lack of contextual background.

Most of the literature on teaching young learners expresses the need for engaging classroom contents in order to activate the language learning process (Genishi, 1981; Cameron, 2001; Gordon, 2007). The findings of my study deliver a very significant message to teachers working with young children in general and second language learners specifically: The teachers' talk in language-learning process cannot be underestimated.

My study emphasizes that the language teacher is responsible for creating output that activates the language-learning process. As it was mentioned in the literature review, comprehension is seen as an initial step in language acquisition (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). This view gives even more weight to teacher talk as a major language-learning tool.

The components of teachers' interaction language that enhanced comprehension and facilitated students' output can be divided into two categories: text-related and interaction style related. Text related factors are the indicators of cohesiveness, endophoric references, and repetitions that prevailed in SSTs. Interaction style related factor deals with distribution of roles that have a supportive function in the classroom. Next, I will discuss the concepts and their implications I found significant for the teaching practices.

Benefits of the cohesive talk

As it was illustrated in the findings, there was a clear gap in the level (percentage) of student's comprehension between the two teachers. Lisa achieved an average level of comprehension above 90%, while Akriti's was around 80%. Although the gap was not very large, what the findings illustrate is that the main difference between the teachers lied in the ability to create cohesive and repetitive narratives that enforces students' comprehension. Why do the elements of cohesion (Hasan and Halliday, 1976) play such an important role as stimulator of comprehension?

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain's (2000) schematic condition of the top-down listening process is achieved by consistent repetition of vocabulary and reiteration of grammatical structures by teachers. In my opinion, variety of repetitions, another aspect of semantic unity

(Halliday & Hasan, 1976, 1989), were the major contributing factor to the gradual formation of students' contextual knowledge through interactions. Repetitions not only strengthened context hints fed to students by teacher, but also provided a learning tool that strengthened new vocabulary and grammatical structures.

The use of endophoric references, or textual references, well implemented by Lisa, resulted in logical chains of narratives in the interactions and supplied students with necessary contextual knowledge. In each interaction, Lisa constructed questions that systematically referred to the information provided by the student. Akriti's referencing style was less consistent and logical ties were not always clear.

Both teachers relied on a good amount of repetition to form meaningful texts that appealed to students' background and supported the processing of teachers' output. Although I could observe a consistent effort to reinforce grammatical structures and vocabulary in Lisa's interactions, in Akriti's case the reinforcements were not as systematic and the amount of reiterations was significantly less.

Contextual analysis in my study proves the importance of the textual component in comprehension processing. As the findings of my research show, second language teachers cannot rely solely on children's innate communication ability guided by social context and intonation (Locke, 1993), 'innate drive to coherence' (Meadows, 1993) or experience of intention (Donaldson, 1978). From the perspective of this study, language teachers have to strive to adopt coherent and strongly repetitive classroom interaction style that will trigger enhance comprehension and trigger students' curiosity to language learning as a result.

Distribution of the roles in interaction and level of comprehension.

As I indicated in the literature review, which was then supported by findings, the distribution of roles in interactions is another vital aspect of classroom dynamics as it improves comprehension level. The amount of research on the subject indicates a definite desire to find new ways to create a supportive and relaxing environment of communication between students and teachers (Wells, 1981, 1998; Edwards & Westgate, 1994; Westgate & Corden, 1993; Westgate & Hughes, 1997).

In my opinion, teachers using the I-R-F, triadic dialogue, (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) are "constricted" by their obligation to use fixed structured conversation style that prevents them from maintaining a flowing conversation. In my study, the nature of the setting allowed teachers to create interactions where student could take on the role of initiator and were then allowed to express their ideas.

Students' drawings were the only source of information available to teachers in structuring a conversation. In other words, they had to center their conversation mainly on the information provided by students. Naturally, teachers being limited to knowledge provided, students then received the status of the knower of information and, by default, the teacher that of the receiver of information.

In Lisa's interactions, student initiating the conversation was a common occurrence. Every bit of new information contributed by the student was carefully recycled, extended and processed by the teacher. In part of Akriti's interactions, she attempted to take the role of initiator by changing the topic of discussions and causing the student to lose the significance of his role.

It seems to me that imposing a new topic on students without clear references to the main topic of discussion may create a communication barrier, as well as hinder comprehension. The students may also receive the message that their subject-matter does not appeal to the

teacher. Psychological factors and motivational factors are not measured in this study, but there is little doubt that along with comprehension, the result of sudden introduction of new topic might bring about a drop in the level of motivation of student to actively participate.

Finally, going back to the context matter (repetition and references) discussed earlier in this chapter, I believe that engagement of students in the role of initiator is a basic condition for cohesive classroom interaction. Students who are offered the role of initiator supply an important source of information that allows for repetitions and references, which can, in turn, be recycled and consumed by teachers.

The study demonstrates that professional development of language educators in the young learners second language classroom does not have to be such a challenging task. The factors that influenced comprehension are practical techniques of discourse analysis that can easily be acquired. Raising teacher awareness about the importance of repetitions and references, alternative turn-distribution, systematization of grammatical structures and contextual background will help teachers to achieve more comprehension, obtain better involvement from their young learners and by doing so improve the quality of second language education.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to show how second language pedagogy in young children can benefit from applying concepts from the field of discourse analysis such as cohesion analysis and classroom interaction in order to find patterns in teacher-student interaction that would promote student comprehension. In the process, I also hoping to raise teachers' awareness of the influence they have on their students, as the way they speak impacts the process of interaction. I also wish to show that achieving more comprehensive and engaging language classroom does not necessarily require giving up natural speech.

In my analysis, I discuss a language activity connecting drawing with language learning in the preschool environment, which I designed using the content-based theory. In classroom sessions, students engaged in one-on-one conversation with the teacher and answered the questions to show their comprehension. Two teachers' interaction patterns were tested in terms of repetitiveness, turn-distribution and reference to the information provided by students.

The study has certain limitations as it involves a small group of children guided by only two teachers. The setting then makes it hard to generalize for cases in public Japanese kindergartens and preschools with larger classrooms. Another issue relating to the setting is the number of hours students are exposed to the target language in immersion school, which significantly differs from Japanese public kindergartens that offer English classes on a weekly basis.

The findings that emerged from the experiments describe the nature of SSTs and MSTs. In my research, I found three conditions that resulted in SSTs: systematic and various repetitions, opportunity of students to take on the role of initiator and reference. On the other hand, nine conditions resulted in MSTs: lack of consistency in repetition, multiple questions, multiple ideas in one sentence, sudden role switch with new topic introduction by teacher, lack of consistency in reference, use of abstract language, use of informal language, use of ungrammatical structure and lack of contextual background.

Despite these limitations, the findings of this research can assist teachers in obtaining higher levels of comprehension from students in small classroom settings and should be tested in and adapted for larger classrooms.

I covered a very narrow aspect of teaching English to young learners. The data accumulated in this study can be transformed into further studies. The aspects of praise, personalization, analysis of interaction topics, gender issues, bilingual issues, oral production are all possible future directions of the research. Another dimension can be multimodal analysis of possible connections between the visual component (student drawings) and lexical aspects (comprehension or oral production). All these directions definitely deserve attention in order to support the teachers with their task of raising a generation of fluent English speakers in Japan.

Based on my findings, I recommend four tools that language teachers can utilize to modify their interaction style to enhance students' comprehension: create opportunities for students to initiate conversation, systematically repeat key words provided by students, use reiteration to emphasize grammatical patterns and refer to contextual background. With this study I hope to open new doors in the field of preschool language acquisition in Japan and encourage more researchers to focus on quality of instruction of second language educators of that age group.

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APPENDIX 1

Transcript 1: Lisa (L) – Student 1 (S1)

1. L: Alright Sena, tell me what you have! Who is this?
2. S1: Konan
3. L: Konan! And what is he doing?
4. S1: Angry!
5. L: Angry at who?
6. S1: Angry at Sumire!
7. L: What did Sumire do?
8. S1: Konan angry
9. L: Is he angry at Sumire, because Sumire doesn't want to play with him?
10. S1: Sasuke
11. L: Sasuke? Not Konan?
12. S1: Yes
13. L: So what's up with Sasuke doing?
14. S1 : -
15. L: Is he a butterfly, in the butterfly class?
16. S1 : Yes
17. L: In the butterfly room? What is he doing?
18. S: House! Success
19. L: Playing house? With who?
20. S1 : Sumire
21. L: And is Sasuke daddy?
22. S1: Yes and Sumire mommy!
23. L: And is Sena playing too?
24. S1: Yes, mommy success
25. L: You're mommy? Who is Sumire?
26. S1: Here.
27. L: Oh, on the other side!
- So who is this?
28. S1: Ginjiro
29. L: Is he playing in the house too?
30. S1: No
31. L: No? What's he doing?
32. S1: Mmmmm
33. L: What Gin doing? Is he happy?
34. S1: No, angry
35. L: Who's he playing with?
36. S1: Konan success
37. L: Is he angry because of Konan? What are they playing?
38. S1: Kakurenbo
39. L: Hide-and-seek? clarif
40. S1: Yes
41. L: Oh and is Sumire and Sasuke playing too?
42. S1: Yes
43. L: But they are playing house! Is Sena playing with Sasuke and Sumire or Ginjiro and Konan?
44. S1: Gin and Konan
45. L: And who is the monster?

46. S1: Ginjiro
47. L: Ginjiro?! And where is Sena hiding?
48. S1: Butterfly room
49. L: I see in the butterfly room with Sasuke and Sumire?
50. S1: Yes
51. L: And did Ginjiro find you?
52. S1: Yes
53. L: And then what?
54. S1: Run in butterfly room
55. L: So you weren't hiding in there, but you ran into there?

Successful S's turns: 25

Missed S's turns: 2

S's comprehension : 93%

Teacher's turns: 29

Transcript 2: Akriti (A) – Student (S1)

1. A: What is it?
2. S1: -
3. A: Whats is it?
4. S1: Japan
5. A: Whats ensenshuro?
6. S1: Ball.
7. A: Ball?
- Wow this whole big thing is a ball?
8. S1: Yes
9. A: What kind of ball is it? Does it have a color?
10. S1: -
11. A: Can you do something cool with the ball?
12. S1: Yes, Soccer.
13. A: Wow, it's a soccer ball!
14. S1: Yes
15. A: Do you play with the soccer ball?
16. S1: Yes
17. A: Wow, it's cool!
- So it doesn't have any color?
18. S1: No
19. A: Where do you play with it? House or the park?
20. S1: Park!
21. A: Cool. What's this part?
22. S1: -
23. A: Can you say it one more time?
24. S1: -

- 25. A: Are you gonna fight with somebody?
- 26. S1: Yes
- 27. A: Did you say dark lake? Ok, thank you

Teacher's turns: 14

Successful turns: 9

Missed turns: 4

S's comprehension: 75%

Transcript 3: Lisa (L) – Student 2 (S2)

- 1. L: Ok, Takumi! Do you wanna tell me what you drew? Who is this? What is this? open
- 2. S2: Takumi! Konan!
- 3. L: Oh, Its Konan?
- 4. S2: Scary!
- 5. L: Oh, he's scary?
- Who is this? What is this? open
- 6. S2: Me. (eyes - Japanese)
- 7. L: His eyes? Clarif
- 8. S2: Odeko (forehead-Japanese)
- 9. L: Odeko? Points to her forehead. This? Yes/no clarif
- 10. S2: Points to his head. This.
- 11. L: And what's wrong? Does he have an ouchy? Yes/no clarif
- 12. S2: Yes
- 13. L: Does he have a hat? Yes/no clarif
- 14. S2: No
- 15. L: Here? Why is a black eye? open
- 16. S2: -
- 17. L: Why is his eye black? Is he angry? Yes/no clarify, investigating
- 18. S2: Angry
- 20. L: And what is this? open
- 21. S2: Circle
- 22. L: Circle? And what is this? What is these big lines? Open-specific
- 23. S2: Hair
- 24. L: What is the blue? This one blue open-specific
- 25. S2: Kaminari
- 26. L: Lightning? Thunder reflection
- Why, because you're angry? Open followed by suggestion
- 27. S2: No, Konan is angry.
- 28. L: And blue thunder? investigation
- 29. S2: Jap
- 30. L: Long? clarif
- 31. S2: Yes
- 32. L: Konan is angry and there is blue thunder? Yes/no clarif
- 33. S2: This one and this one and this one.
- 34. L: Do you wanna tell me more about Konan? open
- 35. S2: Here too, here too.

Teacher's turns: 17
Successful S's turns: 16
Missed turns: 1
S's comprehension: 89%
Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.9

Transcript 4: Akriti (A) – Student 2 (S2)

1. A: Ok, Ta-kun, this is so cool!
Is it this way? Yes/no clarif
2. S2: This way -reassuring
3. A: And what did you make? open
4. S2: Snowman, snowman.
5. A: Snowman? Yes/no clarif
6. S2: Yes
7. A: Is it snow falling like this? Yes/no
8. S2: Snowman-
9. A: Is a snowman happy? Yes/no new info-investigating
10. S2: Angry
11. A: Angry, I can tell!
Are his eyes opened or closed. Like this (showing) yes/no clarify-choice
12. S2: Closed
13. A: OK, is snowman near Microcosmos? Yes/no clarif
14. S2: No
15. A: Is he near Takumi's house? Yes/no clarif
16. S2: Yes.
17. A: And where is Takumi? open
18. S2: Not here. Sick.
19. A: Oh, you're sick! And did you make a snowman? Yes/no clarif
20. S2: Yes
21. A: Did you make a snowman and got sick after? Yes/no clarif
22. S2:
23. A: Did you make a snowman and went atchoo and then you went inside? Is that what happened?
24. S2: -
25. A: Cool, I like it! Anything else?
26. S2: Yes
27. A: What? What else? Who else is here? open
28. S2: Happy is not here!
29. A: Ok, alright, thank you Takumi!

Teacher's turns: 15
Successful S's turns: 12
Missed S's turns: 2
S's comprehension: 86%
Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.8

Transcript 5: Lisa (L) – Student 3 (S3)

1. L: This one's an umbrella? How many umbrellas? Yes/no initiation
2. S3: This one. Moon.
3. L: And many umbrellas? Yes/no connector –focusing
4. S3: Many umbrellas.
5. L: Many umbrellas? Confirming yes/no
6. S3: Yes
7. L: From who? open
8. S3: -
9. L: Daddy or Rei-chan? Clarifying the open question
10. S3: Rei-chan, this one Rei-chan.
11. L: Who's is this? open
12. S3: This one Mommy's!
13. L: And who's is this? Open repetitive
14. S3: Mai-chan!
- Mai-chan's pink. Providing more information
15. L: I thought it was the moon. Reflecting -feedback
Moon for Mai-chan? Yes/no request for new information
16. S3: Yes
17. L: Wow! Is it raining? Is that what this is? Yes/no –negotiating the meaning
18. S3: This one agreeing
19. L: And where is everybody going? open-initiating a new topic
20. S3: This one, this one, this one (pointing at different objects)
21. L: What is it? Open-
This one is what?
22. S3: Rain
23. L: And where are you going? To school or outside? Where are you going? open-
providing clue and choice
24. S3: To pool.
25. L: To pool? In the rain? Yes/no request for child's approval
26. S3: Yes
27. L: And what did you do? Did you go swimming? Open- clueing and initiating a new topic
28. S3: Swimming.
29. L: With everybody? And what is it? More rain? Lots of colors? Summarizing and asking
for child's feedback
30. S3: Yes.
31. L: Very nice, thank you Rei-Rei.-praise

Teacher's turns: 16

Successful S's turns: 14

Missed S's turn: 1

S's comprehension: 100%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.9

Transcript 6: Akriti (A) – Student 3 (S3)

1. A: What is it?
2. S3: Ghost!
3. A: Is there two ghosts or one ghost?
4. S3: Two ghosts
5. A: Wow and what is the ghost doing?
6. S3: Obake asobi
7. A: Are they playing with each other? Two ghosts playing with each other?
8. S3: Yes! Obake no mizu asobi!
9. A: Are they playing in the water?
10. S3: Yes
11. A: Wow Are they playing with each other in the water?
Are they cold?
12. S3: -
13. A: Is the water cold? Or is it cold?
14. S3: -
15. A: Cold or hot?
16. S3: Hot
17. A: Hot water! Wow
18. S3: Yes
19. A: What color are the ghosts?
20. S3: Black and yellow
21. A: Great
Are they Rei's friends?
Do you see them?
22. S3: Yes
23. A: Cool
Anything else? Are they cool ghosts? Are they friendly or scary?
24. S3: Scary
25. A: Scary, but they're friends with Rei!
26. S3: Yes
27. A: Good job Rei!

Teacher's turns: 14

Successful S's turns: 11

Missed S's turns: 2

S's comprehension: 85%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.7

Transcript 7: Lisa (L) – Student 4 (S4)

1. S4: Snake-child –initiated
2. L: A blue snake? A bad snake? Clarification – yes/no questions
3. S4: Yes, bad snake. Success-answer, followed by clarification

4. L: Is it scary? Yes/no initiating a new topic-personalization of experience
5. S4: Yes, scary. Success-Complex answer
6. L: It gets the bad guys? Yes/no –asking for details
7. S4: Japanese
8. L: Does he have a name? yes/no-bringing back the focus-personalizing
9. S4: Yes-agreement
10. L: What's his name? open-request for details
11. S4: Bob
12. L: Interesting. Bob. Is there one snake? Feedback yes/no question, asking for more details
13. S4: Yes
14. L: Only one? Yes/no –more clarification
15. S4: Yes
16. L: is it big or small? Choice question, avoiding the breakdown
17. S4: big
18. L: And where does he live? Does he live in Takao's house? Open followed up by yes/no - clarification
18. S4: Yes. This one. Success- referring to his picture-personalization
19. L: In your toilet? Yes/no –initiating a new topic , personalizing
20. S4: this one – reinforcing
21. L: where is this? Here? In your kitchen open – request for details
22. S4: This one in takao's house- complex answer
23. L: Good, let me write it down. Feedback

Teacher's turns: 12

Successful S's turns: 11

Missed S's turns: 0

S's comprehension: 100%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 1

Transcript 8: Akriti (A) – Student 4 (S4)

1. A: What did you make Takao?
2. S4: Ultraman
3. A: Who's that?
- What did this Ultraman do? What did he look like? Red?
4. S4: ...
5. A: Does he wear red cloth?
6. S4: Yes
7. A: Where is he? Show me!
8. S4: ...
9. A: He lives there?
10. S4: Yes
11. A: Where is he? Show me?
12. S4: Here
13. A: Oh, cool?
- Whats' this one? A toy? An Ultraman toy? What kind of toy is it? Does it look like a car?
14. S4: ...
15. A: A house?

16. S4: Yes, house.
17. A: Cool. What's this one?
18. S4: Daddy
19. A: Is Daddy in Ultraman's house playing with his toys in the toy house?
20. S4: Yes
21. A: What's this?
22. S4: A snake.
23. A: Is it a toy snake or a real snake?
24. S4: Real snake.
25. A: Scary! Is the snake a friend or is he fighting the snake?
26. S4: Fighting
27. A: My god, that's scary! And what's this purple line?
28. S4: Gonja- name of the character
29. A: Alright, thank you Takao!

Teacher's turns: 15

Successful S's turns: 11

Missed S's turns: 3

S's comprehension: 77%

Transcript 9: Lisa (L) – Student 5 (S5)

1. L: Ok, Sae what is it?
2. S5: Snow
3. L: This is a snow?
4. S5: Yes
5. L: Snow and what?
Snowflakes? Snow and fish?
6. S5: Snowfish!
7. L: Where?
8. S5: Here
9. L: And what's the snowfish doing?
10. S5: Santa
11. L: Santa? What is it doing with Santa?
12. S5: Drawing!
13. L: The snowfish is drawing with Santa?
14. S5: Yes
15. L: Wow, how interesting and where are they?
16. S5: Water
17. L: Wow, how interesting! Snowfish in the water!
18. S5: Yes
19. L: Funny! And it's snowing off the water?
20. S5: Yes
21. L: And is Saeka here or no?
22. S5: No
23. L: Oh, she's just watching?
24. S5: Yes
25. L: Anything else?
26. S5: Yes, wash?

27. L: Wash hands in the water?
28. S5: Yes, with soap!
29. L: With soap? Who's washing in the water?
30. S5: Fish
31. L: Funny, the fish?
32. S5: Yes
33. L: Is he washing his fin and Santa helping him?
34. S5: Yes
35. L: Funny
- Do you want to tell me anything else?
36. S5: Yes, toilet.
37. L: What about it?
38. S5: Fish - Japanese
39. L: Is fish in the toilet washing his hands?
40. S5: Yes
41. L: Oh, my! Isn't that dirty?
43. S5: Yes
44. L: Give five! Funny story

Teacher's turns: 22

Successful S's turns: 21

Missed S's turns: 1

S's comprehension: 100%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.95

Transcript 10: Akriti (A) – Student 5 (S5)

1. S5: Akriti.
2. A: Is that teacher Akriti? What is teacher Akriti doing?
3. S5: -
4. A: is teacher Akriti talking to Santa.
5. S5: Akriti
6. A: Is teacher Akriti talking to Santa and Sae is Anpanman?
7. S5: Yes. Lisa.
8. A: What is teacher Lisa doing?
9. S5: Lisa- Santa.
10. A: Is teacher Lisa talking to Santa?
11. S5: Yes
12. A: What are they talking about?-twice
13. S5: -
14. A: Are they talking about Caterpillars?
- Are they showing Santa who's naughty and nice?
15. S5: Nice
16. A: They are telling Santa about the Caterpillars presents.
- Wow, good job, Saeka!
- Is Saeka gonna get a present?
17. S5: Yes
18. A: We'll tell Santa to get you Anpanman.

Teacher's turns: 9

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Successful S's turns: 5

Missed S's turns: 3

S's comprehension: 63%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.7

NNESTs on the rise: Learning and teaching of L2 pragmatics

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ABSTRACT

It has been a widely accepted perception that only the native-language teachers can teach the authentic language form, whereas nonnative-language teachers are considered as second class professionals (Mahboob, 2004; Brain, 2010; Kumaravadivelu, 2012); the so called “native speaker fallacy” (Phillipson, 1992). With such preference to native teachers still being prominent on one hand, the population of nonnative English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) today outnumbers its counterpart on the other (Kahmi-Stein, 2004). Although the benefit of the local NNESTs are somewhat recognized (Medgyes, 1999; Mahboob, 2004), the favoritism toward native teachers seems to be deep-rooted (Mahboob, 2004; Braine, 2010). This phenomenon brings about several disadvantages to nonnative-language teachers, such as limited employment opportunities and difficulties in teaching areas such as pronunciation and culture, which can lead to diminishing confidence as language-teaching professionals altogether. Despite this undesirable circumstance, research on instructional pragmatics, which specifically targets the needs of nonnative English-speaking teachers, is rather scarce. Thus, this paper examines how NNESTs can be empowered to teach the target community pragmatics, by investigating NNESTs’ challenges in learning and teaching the target community pragmatics, and secondly, by exploring means to overcome some of the disadvantages that hinder NNESTs as English language professionals.

INTRODUCTION

As English became the main medium of inter-cultural communication around the world, the demand for English language education keeps growing. With such accelerated needs, the opportunities for English language teachers are also expected to be plenty. However, learner’s preference for the native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) is strong, especially in non-English speaking countries (Lee, 2004; Liu, 2004; Mahboob, 2004; Matsuda & Matsuda, 2004; Braine, 2010), resulting in reduced employment opportunities for the trained nonnative English-speaking teachers (NNESTs). On the other hand, the vast majority of English language teachers in non-English speaking countries are nonnative speakers of English (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004). This

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implies that a large number of trained and competent NNESTs are at a disadvantage when finding jobs. Such preference, or the so called “native speaker fallacy” (Phillipson, 1992), has been a source of argument for many years as to who is better suited to teach a foreign language.

Since the emergence of communicative language teaching (CLT) in second-language curricula in the 1970s, attention to the teaching of communication has grown rapidly. This movement opened the door for an emphasis on the pragmatic component in the language curriculum. However, due to various issues, such as economics, geography, culture or the time constraints, many NNESTs have never had experiences in English speaking countries, nor received instruction from native English speakers (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004). In spite of their limited knowledge and lack of experience in the target community, these NNESTs are faced with the challenge of *teaching* something to which they have not been exposed. On the other hand, learning the range of language uses and functions in different cultural settings is said to be one of the largest obstacles in foreign language acquisition, even for advanced students (Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan & Reynolds, 1991; Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998). Putting these two concepts together, one may wonder how the NNESTs teach the target community pragmatics if they have not acquired themselves the full knowledge of what these pragmatics entail. If NNESTs fail to address the importance of intercultural communication in their classes, their foreign-language students will consequently not be equipped with second-language (L2) pragmatic knowledge. This goes against the current communicative language-teaching movement, which stresses the important role of pragmatic competence in foreign language education. If this circumstance is true for the NNESTs around the world, then there is an urgent need for a constructive framework to prepare and equip these educators with this key knowledge. Possible solutions to such dilemmas must be explored for the growing population of NNESTs.

In spite of such needs, much of the research on pragmatics in the past has dealt with *learners’* pragmatic development and the effective instruction for *learners’* acquisition. The focus of this paper is motivated by the scarcity of research and materials on instructional pragmatics that specifically address the issues of NNESTs. Thus, this paper will investigate the challenges that NNESTs face in teaching English community pragmatics, as well as explore means to overcome some of the disadvantages that hinder NNESTs as L2 instructors. It will begin with a brief definition of pragmatic competence and an overview of the relevant literature in the field of L2 pragmatic development. Then, it will discuss the challenges for NNESTs as learners of L2 pragmatics, followed by the results of empirical research on pragmatic-focused instruction for NNESTs. Finally, it will end with suggestions for developing L2 pragmatic competence for NNESTs.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

What is Pragmatics?

With the growing attention to the teaching of communicative language use in foreign language classrooms, the role of target-community pragmatics has become more significant. Among many available definitions of pragmatics, Kasper (1997b) cites Crystal’s (1985) definition of pragmatics stating that “pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choice they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language have on other participants in the act of

communication” (Kasper, 1997b, p. 1). Likewise, Chomsky (1980) defines ‘pragmatic competence’ as “knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use in conformity with various purposes” and it “places language in the institutional setting of its use, relating intentions and purposes to the linguistic means at hand” (p. 224-225). In other words, pragmatics is the study of language use in sociocultural contexts. Thus, pragmatic competency in a foreign language “requires offline knowledge and online control of the linguistic and the sociocultural aspects of pragmatics” (McNamara & Roever, 2006, p. 54-5). That being said, what is the actual role of pragmatic knowledge in “language competency”?

In order to develop student’s L2 competency, language teachers must first know what language competency is comprised of, so that they have an understanding of what they need to equip themselves with in order to teach. According to Bachman’s model of language ability (Bachman & Palmer, 1996), language knowledge is divided into two categories: organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. The organizational knowledge is divided again into grammatical knowledge and textual knowledge. The pragmatic knowledge is also further divided into functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge, where the former “enables us to interpret relationships between utterances or sentences and texts and the intentions of language users”(p. 69) and the latter “enables us to create or interpret language that is appropriate to a particular language use setting” (p. 70). Such categorization illustrates that pragmatics is not an extra knowledge or a “finishing touch” in language acquisition, but it is as essential as the grammatical and textual knowledge; hence, a learner’s target language pragmatics must be developed simultaneously with the organizational components (Kasper, 1997).

Many studies show the difficulties in developing pragmatic competence in a foreign language. Thomas (1983) explains that a language learner’s communication breakdown, or pragmatic failure, can be categorized into two groups: pragmalinguistic failure and sociopragmatic failure. Pragmalinguistic failure is caused by divergence of linguistic encoding, in other words, pragmalinguistic failure refers to a speaker’s incorrect choice of linguistic form in relation to the context. For instance, when someone offers to help carrying large bags, a Japanese learner of English may respond “so sorry, you are very kind” instead of thanking the person. The other category, sociopragmatic failure, is caused by cross-culturally different perceptions of acceptable behavior. For example, even though it may be acceptable in certain circumstances, it is generally considered inappropriate in English-speaking countries to ask someone you’ve just met for the first-time about his/her salary. Research findings show that the sociocultural aspect of language use is particularly difficult to learn, because it is not as “explicable or quantifiable as grammar and lexis” (McConachy, 2008, p. 124). The same view is shared by Thomas (1987), Takahashi, Beebe, and Uliss-Weltz (1990), and Kasper (1997b).

Ishihara (2010a) also lists transfer of first language (L1) pragmatics as one of the reasons for divergence. The learners may apply their L1 knowledge of appropriate behavior, which could be different in the target community. The level of L2 proficiency could also cause a learner’s misunderstanding of a native speaker’s intention or a misunderstanding due to the learner’s incorrect expression. In other cases, known as overgeneralization of perceived L2 norms, language learners may develop a certain perception of L2 pragmatics and apply their perceived pragmatics in the L2 context. For instance, in their wish to accommodate or acculturate into the target language community, learners may apply their hypothesized pragmatics and surprise or even offend the native speakers (Murphy & Neu, 1996; Nakabachi, 1996; Fujioka, 2003). Instruction or instructional materials can also cause pragmatic divergence. Overemphasizing one aspect of pragmatics may lead the learners to stereotype L2 pragmatic norms, which may be

different from the L2 norms in reality. Lastly, learners may not always attempt to apply their L2 pragmatic knowledge. Some learners intentionally avoid assimilating into the L2 culture (pragmatic resistance) in order to maintain their cultural identity.

Factors Influencing Learner's L2 Pragmatic Development

Thus far, this paper has examined difficulties in acquiring the target community pragmatics and possible reasons for cross-cultural communication breakdown. However, many studies have shown promising results on foreign language pragmatic development. One of the most important factors that influence L2 pragmatic development in foreign language learning is the availability of input. In comparison to the ESL context, EFL learners receive less input for social and cultural features of context (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Schauer, 2008). In an FL (foreign language) context, learners receive pragmatic input through classroom instruction, textbooks, and media (internet, movies, TV shows, etc.). However, it has been reported that the range of speech acts and realization strategies that are presented in class are narrow (Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2004). Likewise, research on English language textbooks regarding pragmatic components shows that they do not provide adequate pragmatic input (Kasper, 1997a; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004; Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009). The use of audiovisual material together with the use of textbooks has been reported to be beneficial in providing an input-rich classroom (Rose, 1997; Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2004). The authors claim that the audiovisual materials provide opportunities to discuss pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of L2 language use, and that they also invite students to analyze and think about different linguistic choices for specific cultural contexts.

The other influential factor is instruction. As seen above, the availability of input is limited in FL contexts. This highlights the important role of instruction as one of learners' primary sources of input. There is evidence that learners who have received pragmatics instruction outperformed those who have not (Wildner-Bassett, 1984; Cohen, 2005). Since "learning a new pragmatic system often entails learning how to make new interpretative assessments of the world" (Schmidt, 1993, p. 34). Awareness-raising activities on contextual language use, drawn from Schmidt's noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990), have demonstrated positive outcomes (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991; Schmidt, 1993; Rose, 1994; Hinkel, 2001; Eslami-Rasekh, 2005a). Teachers cannot possibly prepare students for every expression in every possible context, but building their awareness of the L2 cultural norms can allow students to make their own choices of what to say, when to say it, and how to say it in new contexts. However, it has been reported that awareness does not necessarily lead to the learning of L2 pragmatics. In their discussion on pragmatic awareness versus production, Bardovi-Harlig and Dornyei (1998) claim that although increased awareness should be one of the goals in a pragmatic-focused class, awareness alone is not enough to develop learner's pragmatic competence. They suggest that awareness-raising "should supplement the introduction of pragmatically relevant input in instructed L2 learning" (p. 256). Another approach that has shown promising results is explicitly providing metapragmatic information (Rose, 1994, 1997; Hinkel, 2001; Tateyama, Kasper, Mui, Tay, & Thananart, 2001; Eslami-Rasekh, 2004). The rationale behind its effectiveness is that clear explanation supplemented with metapragmatic information makes the target pragmatic features more salient. Additionally, equipping students with metapragmatic tools will help them analyze pragmatic features in their new contexts.

The learners' L2 proficiency can also influence their L2 pragmatic acquisition. Although it has been reported that even low proficiency learners can improve pragmatic ability through instruction (Wildner-Bassett, 1994; Tateyama et al., 1997), other studies show that learner's pragmatic ability progresses in proportion to their language proficiency (Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Rose, 2000). Additionally, many other interlanguage studies resulted in fewer cases of negative L1 transfer along with their improvement in L2 language proficiency (Trosborg, 1987). All these findings can be linked back to Bachman's definition of language competency, which indicates that the organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge are equally weighed in one's language competency. This is an essential aspect to consider in terms of curriculum or syllabus designing since it confirms that pragmatic routines must be incorporated right from the beginning.

The learner's affective filter can be another factor regarding pragmatic development. Originating in the SLA theory, lowering the learners' affective filter may increase a learner's motivation and interest for L2 pragmatics. Their positive views on the development of their own pragmatic ability could influence their actual development of pragmatic competency (Ishihara, 2010a). On the contrary, negative emotion such as anxiety or stress could raise students' affective filter and potentially impede their learning.

The last factor is "the length of stay" (Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2004), however, this factor is only applicable to ESL students. Since exposure and practice opportunities are limited in the FL context, this factor will be discussed in terms of "frequency of exposure" (lessons, media, conversation in L2, etc.) in this paper. Language learners must take control of their restricted exposure in an FL context, and actively seek to create learning opportunities. Nevertheless, there is no definite goal as to how much exposure is necessary or ideal for the L2 pragmatic development to take place. More research is needed in this area.

Challenges for NNESTs as Learners of L2 Pragmatics

As shown above, extensive studies have been conducted for learners' development of L2 pragmatic competence. Nonetheless, teaching of target community pragmatics to EFL students is not entirely applicable to that of pre-service and current NNESTs. Firstly, teaching requires more comprehensive knowledge of the content, and secondly, teachers must know *how* to teach their students effectively. Many researchers claim that instructional pragmatics is largely neglected in teacher training programs (Rose, 1997; Cohen, 2005; Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2008; Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009; Ishihara, 2010), although awareness and control of L2 pragmatics are two of the most important components of nonnative English speaker's language proficiency (Nemtchinova et al., 2010). Moreover, the fact that the majority of English teachers in non-English speaking countries around the world are NNESTs, constructive strategies that specifically focus on the target population are needed. As the past research illuminated the importance of noticing opportunities and in-class instruction, researchers must now pay attention to the larger picture of pragmatics development and explore how the NNESTs can be empowered to teach this subject matter in an EFL context.

So far, this paper has reviewed the important aspects of incorporating pragmatics into English language curricula, the positive result of learners' pragmatics development, and possible reasons for pragmatic failure. The specific issues associated with the NNESTs will now be explored, with the focus of how EFL learners can be prepared to teach L2 pragmatics as

NNESTs. First, an examination of the teachers' and students' perception of NNESTs in comparison to the NESTs is needed.

Mahboob (2004) conducted research on ESL students' opinions of the "native" status in different language teacher criteria. These criteria included oral skills, literacy skills, grammar, vocabulary, culture and teaching styles. NNESTs scored higher in grammar, literacy skills and teaching styles. On the other hand, NESTs dominated teaching of oral skills, vocabulary and culture. One of the ESL students said, "I want the *truth* (sic) pronunciation which non-native teachers can't speak or use voice like native speakers" (p. 141). Such comments reflect the students' view that there is an "authentic," "correct," or "ideal" pronunciation of English language. Although some ESL students reported that NNESTs can be a source of L2 cultural knowledge, by explaining the target cultural background in student's L1, NESTs were more in favor because students believed that, "no matter how well one learns a new language, one will always maintain their cultural heritage" (p. 133), meaning NNESTs' L1 culture could interfere with their ability to teach L2 culture. Similarly, language institutions often receive requests from students or students' parents that they would like NESTs (Shao, 2005). Such demands, caused by students' or parents' negative perception of NNESTs is one reason for unequal job opportunities. Cited in Bernat (2008), Rajagopalan's questionnaire collected from 450 NNESTs reported that more than half of the participants felt handicapped when it came to career advancement, causing anxiety and inferiority complexes.

Being aware of such unenthusiastic views on nonnative language teachers, some NNESTs are unsure of themselves as English language professionals. It is not uncommon, as Eslami-Rasekh (2005b) notes, that an NNEST introduces himself or herself saying, "my English is weak. I am ashamed to say that I have been an English language teacher [...] for 8 years" (para.2). Although the virtue of modesty may apply to a certain extent in Japanese pragmatics when one is talking about his or her own achievement, the low self-confidence due to their lack of English language proficiency seems to be a concern to many NNESTs. It is important to note that "language proficiency" discussed here is defined as the grammatical knowledge and pragmatic knowledge in the Bachman's model discussed earlier in this paper. Some NNESTs also acknowledge cultural knowledge as areas of difficulty (Kamhi-Stein, et al., 2004), explaining that they view their variety of English as "deficient and that lack of English proficiency constrains them when implementing communicative methodologies" (p. 83). Liu (2004) recalls his experience as needing constant attention to fill the gap as an NNEST. In another study, a survey by Medgyes (1994) on the perceptions of NNESTs' own proficiency, the nonnative teachers "viewed themselves as poorer listeners, speakers, readers and writers" (p. 33). These NNESTs identified speaking, fluency, pronunciation, listening, vocabulary and idiomatic and appropriate use of English as particularly problematic. Some secondary schools separate the responsibility of NESTs and NNESTs, with the former teaching oral English skills exclusively and the latter teaching grammar. While it is true to say that NESTs can provide an English-rich environment in class, this arrangement makes some NNESTs feel that their work is undervalued and that they are overshadowed by NESTs (Lee, 2004).

L2 Pragmatic Development for NNESTs

The following section will examine NNESTs as "learners of pragmatics teaching" and explore how NNESTs can teach pragmatics in their EFL classrooms effectively and successfully.

In other words, how an EFL learner could be trained and prepared to become an NNEST candidate in a foreign language context.

Ishihara lists the following factors as required teacher knowledge for teaching L2 pragmatics (Ishihara, 2010a, p. 23):

- Subject-matter knowledge, which can be used to teach the range of pragmatic norms in the target community (pragmatic variation)
- Knowledge of metapragmatic information, which is an essential tool to explain and analyze pragmatics to the students
- Pedagogical content knowledge, which is important in deciding how to teach effectively and how to assess student's L2 pragmatics understanding
- Knowing the students (their cultures, identities, L2 proficiency, etc.) will affect teacher's instructional decision
- Knowledge of pragmatics-focused curriculum affects teacher's instructional decision
- Knowledge of the role of L2 pragmatics in that particular educational context will also affect teacher's instructional decision

Instructional pragmatics for L2 pragmatics teaching is a fairly new area and needs further research (Rose, 2005; Vasques & Sharpless, 2009; Ishihara, 2010a). Preparing teachers with the above knowledge will give them tools and framework to customize their pragmatics-focused lessons in accordance to their students' needs.

RESEARCH

Kasper stresses the importance of pragmatics in a teacher education program (Kasper, 1997). Regardless of the extensive literature on the learners' pragmatic development and effects on instructional approach, there is a paucity of studies that address the particular issues on NNESTs, such as their dual roles as 'learners' as well as 'teachers', the anxiety from the difficulties in L2 pragmatic acquisition, the pressure of the mastery of the subject, and limited L2 access despite their high motivation and enthusiasm for their professional development. Among the limited supply, this paper will now examine two studies that have been conducted on NNESTs pragmatic development.

Rose (1997) applied a consciousness-raising approach to experiment pragmatic consciousness-raising (PCR) with English language teachers in Hong Kong in order to become familiar with research in pragmatics, raise awareness regarding context-based variation in language use, and to provide teachers with pragmatic analytical skills, so that they could ultimately help their students to do the same. He used a three-part process for PCR:

1. Develop familiarity with theory and research in pragmatics
2. Conduct pragmatic analyses of the teachers' L1
3. Conduct pragmatic analyses of the L2

This approach demonstrated how cultural relativity contributes to the appropriate judgments when making language choices. Even though this three-part model of PCR alone is not sufficient in fulfilling the pressing need for the NNESTs, these activities "will help develop prospective

teachers' sensitivity to variation in language use as well as equip them with analytic abilities which they can apply in their language teaching" (p. 136).

In her quasi-experimental study, Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh (2008) investigated the effect of metapragmatic instruction on the speech act awareness and production of Iranian NNESTs in an EFL context. Participants in this study were MA TESL students in Iran, who have had nine years of English instruction but had not spent any time in English speaking countries. To begin with, students were given a number of research papers on various pragmatics topics (e.g. Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Rose & Kwai-Fun, 2001), so they could raise pragmatic awareness and provide them with opportunities for communicative practice. Having gone through these research papers gave the students some analytical tools to think about appropriate language use. Activities in this study, she describes, were designed to make learners consciously aware of differences between the native and target language speech acts. The findings showed that the explicit metapragmatic instruction was effective and that "with the pedagogical focus on pragmatic competence, pragmatic awareness and production can be acquired in the classroom or more specifically in the FL classroom" (Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2008, p. 192). This supports the earlier studies on acquisition of pragmatic awareness with pedagogical focus on pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Takahashi, Beebe, & Uliss-Wltz, 1990; Kondo, 2008). This result clearly indicates that certain aspects of L2 pragmatics do not develop adequately on their own. Another finding was that despite NNEST candidates' high motivation, their lack of pragmatic competence became prominent through this experiment. Eslami-Rasekh suggests input-rich instruction for their further development of pragmatic competence.

DISCUSSION: NNESTs IN ACTION

Thus far, this paper addressed multiple obstacles that NNESTs are dealing with as they thrive to develop as competent and qualified professionals. In this section, the learner factors for L2 development, issues with NNESTs and the research findings will be synthesized to propose some practical ideas that NNESTs may be able to put into effect in their FL context. Since awareness and control of L2 pragmatics is one of the most important components of nonnative English speaker's language proficiency (Nemtchinova et al., 2010), this section will explore development of NNESTs as learners of teaching L2 pragmatics. The practical ideas presented are:

- a. Rich L2 pragmatic input
- b. Awareness-raising, explicit instruction with metapragmatics
- c. Journal writing
- d. Class observation
- e. Learner-as-researcher approach
- f. Lowering affective filter
- g. Recognize student's subjectivity and encourage class discussion

The limited L2 input in an FL context, which was discussed earlier, has been identified as a crucial disadvantage in many studies (Kasper, 1997; Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2008; Eslami-Rasekh, 2008). This suggests that NNESTs must actively seek input opportunities and make use of available sources, which would be useful for both learning and

teaching purposes. One of the key techniques for creating an input rich environment is the use of audiovisual materials. It has been recommended to provide opportunities to learn and practice pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic awareness in a variety of contexts (Rose, 1997, 2001; Schauer, 2006; Alcon & Martinez-Flor, 2008). Also, keeping current with the pragmatic topics outside of teacher preparation programs through academic resources, journals and conferences, may also help further professional development, since pragmatics is generally under-represented in TESOL programs (Rose, 2005; Velasquez & Sharpless, 2009).

As for the L2 pragmatic instruction, research on the effects of different teaching approaches has shown positive results for awareness-raising approach and explicit instruction with metapragmatic information (Schmidt, 1993; Rose, 1994; Kasper, 1997; McConachy, 2008). Discussion and analysis following these activities were found to be beneficial in encouraging metapragmatic analysis, as the students actively analyzed, gave thoughts and reflected on the activities among each other (Rose, 1997; Eslami-Rasekh et al., 2004, Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2005; Kondo, 2008). NNESTs can implement such an approach in their pragmatic learning as well as teaching.

Ishihara (2010a) encourages language teachers to use written reflections and interactive discussions as much as possible “because learning through reflection can be enriched, supported, and furthered by dialoguing with oneself or with colleagues” (p. 29). Matsuda and Matsuda (2004) also support this task, claiming that teachers learn from their differences, and that, “professional, cultural, and linguistic diversity that teachers bring with them becomes an asset” (p. 177). Since the hardship of learning the L2 pragmatic norm lies in the sociocultural differences, such opportunities to exchange and discuss different ideas and experiences about them seem particularly valuable for NNESTs’ L2 pragmatic development.

Another idea to empower nonnative teachers to enhance their instructional pragmatic skills is to observe pragmatic-focused lessons of peer NNESTs (Ishihara, 2010a), because studying actual lessons that teach pragmatic components could “expand their repertoire of teaching strategies and ideas about assessment” (p. 123). NNESTs can further engage in discussions and share their rationale or insights about the lessons. Peer observation may also be arranged among the NESTs and NNESTs. As many teacher preparation programs do not include teaching of L2 pragmatics (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005b; Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009), both native and nonnative teacher candidates can benefit from participating in classes where they may bring in different strengths and values to the class. In-class presentations followed by class discussion will also be beneficial in teacher training programs.

In the learner-as-researcher approach, teachers collect authentic samples of speech act sets from the news, movies, magazines and newspapers, and analyze the data based on the framework of different speech acts in research articles (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005b). NNESTs can work collaboratively with other English teaching professionals, whether native or nonnative, and present the findings to the class in teacher education programs. Such activity will also contribute to the availability of L2 input and metapragmatic analysis, which can be followed by interactive reflection in order to further enhance learning.

The other aspect we must attend to is NNESTs’ affect. Lowering the affective filter seems especially vital in the case of NNESTs, because the negative perception of others about the NNESTs we have outlined earlier may further affect the teachers’ existing pessimistic self-perception as English teachers; their motivation and self-confidence may decrease even more and their anxiety may increase. This vicious circle must come to an end somehow. In contrast to the

previously mentioned negative perception, some positive comments about the NNESTs have also been reported (Medgyes, 1999). The NNESTs can:

- provide a good learner model for imitation
- teach language learning strategies more effectively
- supply learners with more information about the English language
- anticipate and prevent language difficulties better
- be more empathetic to the needs and problems of learners
- make use of the learner's mother tongue

Some ESL students commented that NNESTs could be better in grammar and writing, and that they can explain or answer students' questions in a clearer manner (Mahboob, 2004). NNESTs' should know their strengths, build confidence and let these strengths lower their affective filters. "Those with attitudes more conducive to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input and it will strike 'deeper'" (Krashen, 1982, p. 31). This is especially applicable to NNESTs because their dual role as teacher/learner can motivate many of their students. Since attaining an input-rich environment is one of the challenging factors in an FL context, affective filter seems to play an important role for learners' willingness to learn, and consequently, to further expand their opportunities to learn.

As teaching of L2 pragmatics can be a sensitive matter for FL learners, NNESTs must recognize their students' subjectivity in their language choices. Ishihara (2010b) found how some nonnative speakers intentionally avoided applying L2 pragmatics, even though the participants were linguistically capable of constructing the target community pragmatics. Such avoidance indicates that the native-like pragmatics is not necessarily the language learner's preference when it comes to the actual production. Therefore, Ishihara suggests that L2 pragmatics could be taught separately for the purpose of *receptive* skills, to understand the native speaker's intention, and for *production*, where learners can build their L2 pragmatic repertoire so that they can make their own decisions regarding self-expression. In such circumstance, it is NNESTs' forte, as language learners themselves, to be able to understand students' dilemma in performing L2 pragmatic norms, and as a result, make choices that are not native-like; choices that are driven by their multicultural or multilingual identity. When such resistance is noticed in the EFL classroom, where students share their L1 and L1 pragmatics, it may be beneficial for the whole class to engage in metapragmatic analysis and discussion, where students can learn from pragmatic interpretation of their peers. Furthermore, the follow up analysis and discussion will help the learners internalize and mold the L2 pragmatic features within themselves.

CONCLUSION

Numerous ways have been examined in which NNESTs can be empowered to answer the EFL students' needs. This paper has also revealed many concealed advantages that NNESTs possess in teaching L2 pragmatics. Building their confidence and making the most of their strengths will assist NNESTs in further developing as English language professionals. At the same time, as the need for competent NNESTs increases, their valuable role as bilingual/bicultural language teachers should receive greater acknowledgement. The fact that the language learners' views on NNESTs are not all negative is perhaps an indication that NNESTs will soon be free of constraints and the labels such as NEST and NNEST will no longer be used.

Having said that, NNESTs must not forget that, “being proficient is a continuum, rather than an either-or proposition” (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004, p. 163). Regardless of their status, whether native or nonnative, or novice or experienced, teachers must not stop learning. They should try to develop their teaching skills throughout their career and stay current with research topics of their professional area; what they know affects what their students learn.

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The Effects of Journaling on Taiwanese EFL Students' Extensive Reading Habits and Attitudes

Keith M. Graham¹

ABSTRACT

This research study examines the effects of journaling on the extensive reading habits and attitudes of Taiwanese English as a foreign language (EFL) students. The study was conducted with eleven eighth grade students enrolled in a private junior high school in northern Taiwan. Students were asked to submit weekly journal letters online to their teacher about English novels read outside of class. The teacher responded with comments and questions. Data from the study show that using journaling as an activity increased the amount of extensive reading done in English as well as improved many students' attitudes toward extensive reading.

INTRODUCTION

Extensive reading has become an important component of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms due to increasing evidence of its benefits for language acquisition (Krashen, 2004, Grabe 2009). Although many extensive reading programs occur within school hours, this is not always possible for many teachers with limited instructional time and mandated curriculums. This can be a huge obstacle given that extensive reading's benefits can only occur when reading is done in high quantity (Nation, 2009.) Therefore, it is important for teachers in these situations to implement activities that can successfully promote extensive reading outside of school. One activity suggested by researchers is journaling.

This study, conducted with eleven Taiwanese junior high school EFL students, explores two research questions in regards to journaling with extensive reading. First, this study explores what effect weekly journaling had on the amount of extensive reading done by junior high school EFL students. Second, this study examines the students' attitudes toward extensive reading in English before and after journaling was introduced.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Defining Extensive Reading

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Extensive reading, which is also sometimes referred to as independent reading, “is the part of a comprehensive literacy curriculum when students have time to read books of their choosing, whether in or out of school” (Kasten & Wilfong 2007, p. 1). Extensive reading is often done with “minimal accountability, writing brief summaries or comments on what they read” (Mason & Krashen 1997, p. 91). It is “designed to help students increase the time they spend reading and give them continued opportunities to expand and practice reading strategies” (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 116).

Benefits of Extensive Reading

The benefits of extensive reading have been documented in countless research studies. Reported benefits include increased rate of second language acquisition (Elley 1991; Mason & Krashen 1997), vocabulary growth (Lao & Krashen 2001), and an increase in student motivation (Elley 1991; Mason & Krashen 1997; Kasten & Wilfong 2007; Yamashita 2013). Although a thorough review of extensive reading literature is beyond the scope of this paper and has been done comprehensively by other authors (Krashen 2004, Grabe 2009), below are a few studies that illustrate the benefits of extensive reading.

Language Acquisition as a Result of Extended Reading

In the study “Acquiring literacy in a second language: The effect of book-based programs,” Elley (1991) documented the effects of extensive reading, or as termed in the paper, “book floods.” Elley found “children who are exposed to an extensive range of high-interest illustrated story books, and encouraged to read and share them, are consistently found to learn the target language more quickly” (p. 375).

At a time when extensive reading was receiving criticism as a technique that would only be effective with “good” students, Mason and Krashen (1997) studied its effects on a group of Japanese college students who were retaking an English course after failing in a previous term. The researchers compared test results between a control group of second year students in a class comprising a traditional curriculum of reading; comprehension questions; and vocabulary, grammar, and translation exercises” (Mason & Krashen, 1997, p. 92) with an experimental group which was given extensive reading opportunities, both in class and for homework, with graded readers. Although the pre-test revealed a significant gap between these two groups, the extensive reading group achieved far greater gains and nearly closed the achievement gap between the two groups.

Vocabulary Growth as a Result of Extended Reading

In another study conducted at the university level comparing traditional instruction versus extensive reading, Lao and Krashen (2000) found that extensive reading once again proved successful. The study reports that students in the extensive reading group “made superior gains on measures of vocabulary and reading rate, when compared to students enrolled in a traditional academic skills class” (Lao & Krashen 2000, p. 261).

Motivation as a Result of Extensive Reading

There have been many studies that have shown that extensive reading has helped increase learner motivation. Elley (1991) reported that "children appear to...develop positive attitudes toward books" (p. 375). In their study of Japanese students retaking an EFL class, Mason and Krashen (2007) were most impressed to find that extensive reading changed the learning attitudes of the participants from reluctant readers of English to eager ones.

Finally, Yamashita (2013) sought out to focus exclusively on the affective domain of extensive reading, rather than the cognitive domain like many of the previously reported studies. The study looked at the effect of extensive reading on EFL reading attitude in terms of five categories: comfort, anxiety, intellectual value, practical value, and linguistic value. The data showed positive effects on many aspects of EFL reading attitude as a result of extensive reading. Yamashita reported that extensive reading helped increase the comfort students felt with EFL reading, helped reduce feelings of anxiety with EFL reading, and raised the intellectual value students attached to EFL reading.

One reason motivation may increase is due to student choice. Kasten and Wilfong (2007) surveyed 1000 students in Ohio about their attitudes and habits toward independent reading and the factors that encouraged or discouraged reading. Kasten and Wilfong found, "student choice is a critical factor in independent reading because it has been shown to motivate reading" (p. 2). Giving students the option to choose their learning through extensive reading causes them to have more intrinsic motivation.

Journaling as an Extensive Reading Activity

Kasten and Wilfong (2007) define journaling as "free choice uncorrected writing in response to reading books" (p. 4). Kaiser (2003) furthers this definition by stating, "the purpose of these journals is to stimulate authentic discussion about literature between teachers and students" (p. 2).

Fountas and Pinnell (2001) recommend using a reader's notebook to journal with extensive reading by having students write in letterform. The authors state that, "writing letters in a reader's notebook is one way to increase the depth of reader's response" (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 163). They believe the writing of letters is far superior to writing book reports because "the book report doesn't necessarily help students become better readers" (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 165). They recommend that students and teachers write thoughtful responses about the books back and forth once per week.

Journaling has been found to be effective with students, particularly in terms of motivation. In their study of student preferences of extensive reading activities, Kasten and Wilfong (2007) found in their survey of native speaking students that "journaling showed to be a popular strategy, especially with younger students in the elementary schools" (p. 4). In a study with her own students, Kaiser (2003) found that her students "were generally eager to write their response journals" (p. 22) and that "intrinsic motivation often increases because children share with teachers in the inquiry process" (p. 6). These studies show that journaling may be a good choice of an activity to pair with extensive reading.

METHOD

Participants and Research Questions

This study was conducted with eleven eighth-grade Taiwanese students enrolled in a private school in northern Taiwan. The school offers an extended English curriculum beyond the country's requirements with students taking additional reading classes, music, art, PE, and computer science all in English. Although there was a variation in the students' language abilities, the group as a whole would be classified as intermediate level English learners. A few students may have been considered approaching an advanced level as a result of either living abroad for a period of time or being enrolled in dual-immersion programs during elementary school.

This study hopes to answer two questions. First, how does the use of journaling affect the amount of extensive reading done by the students when compared to a previous semester? Second, how does the use of journaling affect the students' attitudes toward extensive reading in English?

Data Collection

To set a base for comparison, students were asked to fill out a survey in regards to their attitudes toward extensive reading in English and their extensive reading habits (Appendix 1). This survey asked students to focus on the previous semester where no extensive reading activities occurred.

Following the survey, students were asked to journal about their extensive reading books once per week. Students used Edmodo.com, a social learning community for teachers, students, and parents, to record their weekly journals. I, acting as both researcher and teacher, responded to their weekly journals with comments and thought-provoking questions to help them think outside of the text.

To prep them for the journaling activity, a lesson was given where I showed an example letter (Appendix 3). This letter has been slightly adapted from one of Fountas and Pinnell's (2001) example letters (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 166). I explained that the letter should include a brief summary of what they read that week, their feelings or reactions to what happened in the story, and a response to my questions from the previous week's letter. Each week, an assignment was posted on Edmodo with the prompt, "Tell me what you've been reading. Don't forget to respond to my last letter."

After a period of three months, students were asked to fill out a follow-up survey (Appendix 2) that was nearly identical to the one filled out at the beginning of the study. This survey focused on the 3-month period of the study, and its purpose was to identify changes, if any, in the amount of extensive reading done and the students' attitudes toward extensive reading in English.

The data from the two surveys were compared, with a focus on changes from the two periods of time. Since the surveys were in English, the students' second language, group interviews were conducted to ensure students were clear on what was being asked on the survey and that the data they provided were accurate. Surveys were marked with the names of the students so that they could be compared between the two time periods and so follow up interviews could be conducted if needed.

FINDINGS

Amount of Books Read

In the semester prior to the study, participants had read an average of 1 book. The most books read by a student was 3, while the least was 0. A total of four students had read 0 books in the previous semester for extensive reading.

Following implementing journaling as an activity for extensive reading, the average rose to 3.3 books. The most books read by a student was 9, while the least was 1. Two students read 1 book, while all others had read more than 1.

Attitude Toward English Reading

In the first survey prior to the study, seven students reported not enjoying English extensive reading, and four students reported enjoying English extensive reading. Those reporting that they do not enjoy English extensive reading cited two primary reasons: "boring" or "too difficult to understand." In the first survey, the term "boring" occurred in four responses, while the term "too difficult", or variations with similar meaning, occurred in three responses. For those reporting that they enjoy English extensive reading, the most common reason was "interesting." The word "interesting" was found in two responses.

Following implementing journaling, the number of students who reported they enjoyed English extensive reading rose to nine, whereas those reporting not enjoying English extensive reading declined to two. As in the first survey, reasoning for both enjoying and not enjoying English extensive reading included "interesting" and "can improve my English." For those who reported enjoying English extensive reading, three used the word "interesting," and three used the phrase "can improve my English." For those who reported not enjoying English extensive reading, the terms "boring" and "too difficult to understand" both appeared in one response respectively.

DISCUSSION

After implementing journaling as an extensive reading activity outside of class, the amount of extensive reading done by the students rose by a little over two books. Although the number rose, one question that must be asked is did it rise enough? According to Nation (2009), for extensive reading to be effective "the quantity of input needs to be close to 500,000 running words per year, which is equivalent to...six unsimplified novels" (p. 50). With Nation's suggestion as the standard, students would have to read 1.5 novels in a three-month period. Two of the eleven students lagged behind this standard by only completing 1 novel in the three-month period. Although this is a clear improvement from eight out of eleven students not meeting the standard in the previous semester, the question remains on how to push those final two students to read a little more without forcing them to achieve a certain number through extrinsic motivation.

As both the researcher and the teacher, the most exciting finding for me from this study is the change in attitudes toward English extensive reading. Five out of the eleven students changed their attitude toward English extensive reading from not enjoying it to enjoying it. Two students' responses to why are very encouraging. Student E initially reported that "[English extensive reading] is boring," but after journaling said, "[English books] are interesting and my English skills are getting better and better." This student discovered that English extensive reading and journaling helped to improve English skills, and therefore, has begun to enjoy English extensive reading for these rewards.

Another student, Student L, also offered interesting commentary. Student L states, "I enjoy reading English novels because I found out it's interesting." Prior to implementing this activity, Student L felt English extensive reading was not enjoyable because of the difficulty of reading English books. However, after journaling, this attitude changed. One could speculate that the written dialogue between the teacher and the student in the journal helped this student overcome past difficulty, as well as making the experience more interesting.

A Note About Journaling's Practicality as a Teacher

Although the focus of this study is not on the experience of the teacher, it is worth noting the struggles a teacher may face in terms of their own time when implementing the activity of journaling. Fountas and Pinnell (2001) state that journaling is "practical and easy to use" (p. 163). However, my experience does not seem to be inline with this. As a teacher, I found writing letters back and forth weekly incredibly time consuming. I could not imagine doing this with a large class, and certainly not with multiple classes. Kasier (2003) confirms my experience. "[Journaling] did consume a great deal of time each evening when it was time for me to respond" (Kasier 2003, p. 27).

Although this study's results suggest journaling has a positive effect on students' extensive reading attitudes and habits, teachers need to look at their own teaching situation in terms of their time commitments before committing to this time intensive activity. If journaling is one of the only homework assignments during a week, I think it is feasible a teacher could set aside time each day to complete a few letters per day. However, if the teaching situation involves multiple classes, all with daily homework assignments and regular testing, the teacher may not have the time to respond adequately.

CONCLUSION

With the amount of evidence that exists in regards to the language acquisition benefits of extensive reading, it is vital for teachers to find activities that will promote good extensive reading habits in their students. In this study, it was found that the activity of journaling with English extensive reading had positive effects on both the amount of books students read outside of class and their attitudes toward extensive reading. However, the practicality of journaling in terms of a teacher's time may not make it feasible in many teaching situations. Future research should look into the effectiveness of other activities that are both practical and promote good extensive reading habits and attitudes for EFL students.

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APPENDIX 1

Pre-Study Survey on Extensive Reading Habits and Attitudes

1. How many English novels did you read last semester?

2. Do you enjoy reading English novels?

Yes No

3. Why or why not?

APPENDIX 2

Post-Study Survey on Extensive Reading Habits and Attitudes

1. How many English novels did you read this semester (September-December)?

2. Do you enjoy reading English novels?

Yes No

3. Why or why not?

APPENDIX 3

Sample Journal Letter For Teaching Purposes (Fountas & Pinnell 2001, p. 166)

August 8, 2014

Dear Mr. Graham,

I am reading *The Helen Keller Story*, by Catherine Owen Peare. In Helen's second winter she gets a horrible fever and she becomes blind and deaf. And because she is so young, she couldn't speak either. Soon she becomes out of control. They go to Boston, then Washington, D.C. They get in touch with Mr. Anagnos and eventually he sends them a twenty-year-old Anne Sullivan.

I think it is horrible what happened to Helen. Helen is extremely lucky that she is getting her wish. She is learning how to talk! I think her mom and dad shouldn't have given in every time she did something. She is getting spoiled. She is lucky she has a great teacher who helps her learn.

Sincerely,
Emily

APPENDIX 4

Collected Survey Data on Extensive Reading Habits and Attitudes

Student	1.1	2.1	1.2	2.2	1.3	2.3
A	2	4	No	Yes	I can't stay on my chairs with out moving. It feels bad when I am reading books I don't like.	I always choose the books I would like to read.
B	1	2	No	Yes	Because it is boring	It's interesting
C	1	2	No	Yes	Because there are usually too many words I don't understand, I can't get the fun.	Because it is more clear than the Chinese books that are translated.
D	1	1	Yes	Yes	I enjoy reading English novels sometimes but I'm really not interested in English.	I like to read novels.
E	0	2	No	Yes	It is boring.	They are interesting and my English skills are getting better and better.
F	1	5	Yes	Yes	Because it is interesting, and it can improve my English.	It can improve my English.
G	3	4	Yes	Yes	I like to read English novels I like, but I don't like to read the English novels I don't like. Novels I like are always really awesome and interesting, so I really enjoy reading English novels I like.	I love to read some English novels but not all of them. If the novel is too difficult for me, then I won't read it. I can read difficult magazines but not novels. I'll lose interest when I'm reading difficult novels.
H	0	2	No	No	I don't like to read English novels because they are too difficult to read.	Too hard to read.
I	0	1	No	No	Because it's boring.	It's boring
J	2	9	Yes	Yes	I say yes but honestly I feel so so about reading English books. I like to read all novels except science fiction.	I like reading English novels because it can improve my writing skills and help me know more vocabulary.
K	0	5	No	Yes	I don't enjoy it because when I open the novel it's full of words and I can't continue reading it even though it's an interesting book.	I enjoy reading English novels because I found out it's interesting.

Note: The numbers at the top of each column are {Survey#}. {Question#}. See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for the survey questions.

Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Team-Teaching Practices in Two Japanese Senior High Schools

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ABSTRACT

In this study I explored the perceptions of local Japanese teachers of English (JTEs), foreign assistant language teachers (ALTs) and their students of team-teaching practices in language classrooms in Japan. Data were collected from two pairs of team teachers and four of their students in two Japanese senior high schools through multiple qualitative methods, including interviews, pair discussions and focus group discussions. Findings suggest that the teachers and students considered team-teaching practices to be: unique, because of the participation of a native English speaker in the team, and also because of the particular nature of teamwork by both teachers; open-ended, due to vague definitions; and less important than other commitments at school. It is noteworthy that the participants had these perceptions with different degrees (from very strong to very weak) and with various, sometimes opposing, attitudes (from very positive to very negative). These participants' complex perceptions derived from their personal experiences, contextual factors and research conditions.

INTRODUCTION

Team teaching is said to facilitate teaching efficiency and learning effectiveness by encouraging the strengths and complementing the weaknesses of each teacher (Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2008). In English language classrooms, benefits of team teaching conducted by Native English Speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-Native English Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) include an increase in the quality and quantity of students' English talk (Bailey, Dale, & Squire, 1992). This collaboration by NESTs and NNESTs in

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the form of team teaching can now be observed in numerous parts of the world on a national level (e.g., Brazil, Hong Kong, Slovenia, South Korea) as well as on a local level (e.g., Taiwan).

Team teaching in Japan conducted by local Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) and foreign assistant language teachers (ALTs) through the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program has received high acclaim both domestically and internationally (Council of Local Authorities for International Relations [CLAIR], 2014b). It has created a "foreign language classroom in which students are engaged in communicative activities" (Brumby & Wada, 1990, p. vi). Despite these positive claims, however, some researchers have reported that team teaching in Japan fails to improve the communicative ability of Japanese students (McConnell, 2000; Reesor, 2002). It might also cost more money and human resources than individual teaching and generate new types of problems such as class scheduling and conflicts between team teachers stemming from different beliefs about team teaching. Even after a quarter of a century since the implementation of the nation-wide team-teaching scheme, very few researchers have conducted in-depth case study, which values participants' real-life contexts, to inquire into the actual experiences of the stakeholders involved in team-taught classes.

Exploring teachers' and students' *perceptions* of team-teaching practices is a necessary step to improve team-taught classes because there is crucial interplay what teachers/students think and what they do (Barkhuizen, 1998; Freeman, 2002). In this study, therefore, I examined team teachers' and students' perceptions of team-teaching practices in two Japanese senior high schools; in particular, I show how the participants considered team-teaching practices to be unique, open-ended and less important than other commitments at school. I also discuss how strongly/weakly and how positively/negatively the participants held those perceptions. I hope my study, by adding particular perceptions of team teachers and students from two specific cases (two senior high schools in Japan), will contribute to the literature of team teaching in language classrooms in the Japanese and other similar contexts.

TEAM TEACHING

According to Sandholtz (2000), team teaching ranges from a simple allocation of responsibilities between two teachers outside the classroom (e.g., separately making lesson plans) to full collaboration inside the classroom (e.g., sharing equal responsibility for delivering lessons). Villa et al. (2008) argue that among the four different types of in-class collaborative teaching (i.e., supportive, parallel, complementary and team teaching), team teaching is the most sophisticated process, which allows teachers to divide their instruction

equally and alternate the leader and supporter role fluidly. Team teaching therefore comes in various forms and levels of collaboration, determined by individual teachers and their circumstances.

Two or more teachers productively collaborating in the classroom provides a range of benefits for both teachers and students. Team teachers, for example, can help each other by cooperatively making plans, implementing lessons and evaluating the results (Benoit & Haugh, 2001). They are also able to capitalize on their respective skills and knowledge (Hourcade & Bauwens, 2002). For students, team-taught classes are considered to improve lesson quality as a result of a lower student to teacher ratio (Benoit & Haugh, 2001). Buckley (2000) points to two other advantages: there are more opportunities for individual or small group support because two teachers are simultaneously present in the classroom, and the classroom could become livelier due to teachers' different personalities, teaching styles and voices. In sum, team teaching, which encourages the strengths and complements the weaknesses of each teacher, facilitates teaching and learning (Villa et al, 2008).

NESTs and NNESTs can learn from each other, not only with regard to linguistic and cultural matters but also pedagogically (e.g., de Oliveira & Richardson, 2004; Gebhard & Nagamine, 2005). This is probably why team teaching by local teachers and foreign teachers has been widely recommended. For example, in 1995 South Korea started the English Program in Korea (EPIK), which had three aims: (a) to improve the English abilities of students and teachers, (b) to develop cultural exchanges, and (c) to reform English teaching methodologies (EPIK, 2014). Similarly, against the backdrop of the pressing need to improve the quality of English teaching and learning, in 1998 Hong Kong began hiring NESTs who held teaching and/or English qualifications (Education Bureau, 2014). Taiwan followed the trend of 'EFL team teaching' (Chen, 2009, p. 31), in which NESTs and NNESTs team teach English to local students, and NESTs have been recruited by the local governments since 2001 (Islam, 2011). Team teaching by NESTs and NNESTs is not only relevant to Asian countries but also to other parts of the globe such as Europe (Slovenia) (see Alderson, Pizorn, Zemva, & Beaver, 2001) and South America (Brazil) (see Corcoran, 2011). The team-teaching arrangement has thus gained increasing attention in language teaching and learning. Some studies, however, have revealed a number of problems with the arrangement, such as lack of planning time for team-taught classes (Carless, 2006) and insufficient collaboration between team teachers (Chen, 2009).

TEAM TEACHING IN JAPAN

Early discussions on team teaching involving JTEs and ALTs have concentrated on descriptive explanations of its advantages and shortcomings. Researchers have shown the benefits to team teachers such as the promotion of cultural exchange and, specifically to JTEs, enhancement of knowledge about communication-oriented approaches (McConnell, 2000). Brumby and Wada (1990) identified benefits of team teaching for students, such as increased interaction in English, more model conversation provided by team teachers and the promotion of cross-cultural awareness. Tajino and Tajino (2000) argue that students' linguistic and interactional competences improve, provided the notion of team teaching is clarified among teachers and students. Negative aspects of team teaching, however, have also been raised. McConnell (2000) found that some JTEs often treat their ALT like "a human tape recorder" (p. 190) and do not see the value of team-taught classes. Iwamoto (as cited in Miyazato, 2009) maintains that JTEs sometimes take a passive role, functioning merely as interpreters. Others (e.g., Hasegawa, 2008) warn that discrepancies exist between the aims and outcomes of team-taught classes and the requirements of student exams.

Empirical studies on team teaching have begun to appear. Adachi, Macarthur and Sheen (1998), for example, collected survey data from nearly 100 teachers and thousands of students. Both the JTEs and ALTs believed that ALTs have positive effects on student motivation, but the student participants considered team-taught classes to be unrelated to and easier than JTEs' solo classes. Exploring the roles of team teachers, Tajino and Walker (1998a) obtained questionnaires from 151 senior high school students. In another study, they collected questionnaires from 20 junior high school JTEs and 18 senior high school JTEs (Tajino & Walker, 1998b). In both studies, they found that the participants had positive perceptions of team teaching. The participants also perceived distinct roles for JTEs and ALTs, the former being grammar instructors and interpreters, and the latter cultural informants and 'authentic' English providers. Mahoney (2004) collected questionnaire data from over 1,400 junior and senior high school teachers. He discovered that participating team teachers were unclear about the roles of JTEs and ALTs. This underlined the lack of clearly defined teachers' roles and responsibilities, which he argues might have contributed to team teachers' doubts about the efficacy of ALTs and the JET program more generally.

Hiramatsu (2005) recruited eight JTEs and one ALT from a senior high school, and conducted interviews and class observations to examine the JTEs' and ALT's perceptions of team teaching. She found that: (a) team teaching could be either a threat or stimulus, dependent on JTEs' confidence with their English; (b) there were rigid team-teaching routines and team teachers' roles; (c) there were few opportunities for teachers to

cultivate collegiality; and (d) teachers faced conflicting tension between communicative English lessons and exams. Collecting questionnaires from 31 JTEs, 14 ALTs and 428 students, Galloway (2009) found that the participants had favorable attitudes toward ALTs and that they felt team teaching increased students' exposure to English and their cultural knowledge.

Miyazato (2012) conducted group and individual interviews with 31 students in three senior high schools to investigate their views on team teachers. They held positive images of the ALTs because of their 'authenticity' as well as their inclusion of activity-instruction in class. However, they perceived ALTs' lack of Japanese language skills and political power in class as a negative. As for JTEs, it was reported that the students appreciated their linguistic, cultural and psychological mediator roles but viewed their lack of target language skills as detrimental to their language learning. Johannes (2012) examined, over a ten-day period, the perspectives of 4 JTEs, 2 ALTs and 112 senior high school students through mixed methods – questionnaires, class observations, individual interviews with the JTEs and ALTs, and focus group interviews with 16 students. The results indicate, unlike previous studies (Mahoney, 2004; Tajino & Walker, 1998b), that JTEs and ALTs did not have conflicting perceptions of team teacher roles and that a wider mismatch existed between students' and teachers' perceptions. That is, the students regarded JTEs as teachers for grammar and examinations, and ALTs for foreign cultures and English pronunciation. However, the teachers did not hold such perceptions. The study also revealed that the students considered team-taught classes to be more beneficial to developing their English skills than their JTEs' solo classes. Johannes suggests that a 50/50 partnership between JTEs and ALTs is necessary to contribute to the instruction of grammar, culture, pronunciation and exam preparation.

As seen, most researchers interested in team teaching in Japan have focused on general perceptions of teacher roles and the benefits and shortcomings of team-taught classes, for the most part through anecdotes, surveys as well as questionnaires. Very few studies have taken into account all the people concerned in team-taught classes (i.e., JTEs, ALTs and their students) or have provided participants' particular personal and contextual information relating to team teaching (e.g., teaching experiences of teachers, age of students and type of school). In my view, one-dimensional descriptions of what team teaching is and how it should be practiced are unhelpful because they do not lead to the unpacking of perceptions and practices of actual teachers and students. My primary interests lie instead in exploring the perceptions of particular teachers and students in their idiosyncratic teaching and learning contexts, as the local contexts in which they teach and learn – social, political, economic, institutional and cultural – are influential in shaping how they think and practice (Barkhuizen, 1998; Johnson, 2006). The following research

question thus guided my study: What perceptions do participating JTEs, ALTs and students have of team-teaching practices in their situated contexts?

METHODOLOGY

The Participants

Two pairs of team teachers (each pair consisting of a JTE and an ALT) from two public senior high schools located in the northern part of Japan participated in this study. Aitani (JTE) and Matt (ALT) – all the names of the people and places are pseudonyms – worked together at Sakura High School. Takahashi (JTE) and Sam (ALT) taught together at Tsubaki High School. Background information on teachers is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Background information on teachers.

School	Sakura		Tsubaki	
Type of school	Vocational		General	
Name	Aitani	Matt	Takahashi	Sam
Type of teacher	JTE	ALT	JTE	ALT
Age	46	32	45	23
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Male
Nationality	Japanese	Australian	Japanese	American
Received degree	Master in English language teaching	Bachelor in visual arts	Bachelor in English linguistics	Bachelor in history education, minor in ESL
Teaching license	Senior high school (English)		Senior high school (English)	
Overseas experiences	Traveled to UK	Traveled to NZ	Lived in USA for 6 months	Traveled to China
Language proficiency	Advanced (English)	Intermediate (Japanese)	Advanced (English)	Beginner (Japanese)

Both Aitani and Takahashi had considerable teaching experience, and for both Matt and Sam, it was their first year to live and teach in Japan. Aitani had taught at four schools with 13 different ALTs over the course of her teaching career. Matt was teaching at eight schools and working with 17 different JTEs. Takahashi had worked at four schools with 10 different ALTs, and Sam was working at three schools with 13 different JTEs. Also in this study were four 2nd-year senior high school students from the two classes (2A and 2B) that each pair was teaching. The JTEs chose two focal students from each class

who were not busily engaged with club activities after school hours. Kanon and Tatsuya were chosen at Sakura, and Sayaka and Yousuke were chosen at Tsubaki (see Table 2).

Table 2. Information on classrooms and focal students.

School	Sakura		Tsubaki	
Class	2A		2B	
Courses	General		International	
Teaching subject	English II		English Expression	
Number of students	40		36	
Focal students	Kanon	Tatsuya	Sayaka	Yousuke
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Male
Club	Student council	Soccer	Japan culture	Student council

Data Collection Methods and Data Analysis

In this article, I describe part of a larger study conducted from December 2011 to March 2012. Multiple data were collected using the following methods:

- Semi-structured interviews (SI): At the beginning and the end of the study, all the teachers and the students took part in individual interviews at each school in their respective mother tongues. The length of each interview was approximately one hour.
- Teacher pair discussions 1 (TPD1): Each pair of team teachers had three separate discussions at each school in English. Each discussion lasted about one hour.
- Teacher pair discussions 2 (TPD2): The two JTEs and the two ALTs had three separate discussions at neutral venues (e.g., a community centre) outside school. The teachers chose the language to be used. All used their respective mother tongues, except when the JTEs had their second discussion in English. Each discussion lasted about a half hour.
- Focus group discussions (FGD): On three different occasions at neutral venues (e.g., a community centre) outside school, all four teachers watched video clips of both pairs' classes and, in English, had a focused discussion about them and

about team teaching in general. Each discussion took approximately one and a half hours.

- Student pair discussions (SPD): Each pair of focal students had three separate discussions at each school in Japanese. The discussions lasted about a half hour.
- Field notes (FN): I kept a detailed record of events, incidents and participants' comments at the research sites.

All the interviews and discussions were either audiotaped or videotaped. I transcribed them and translated the Japanese transcripts into English. Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) in which the focus is on the meaning of the participants' comments. This analytic process was applied to individual participants over time (e.g., Aitani, from the beginning to the end of the study) and across different participants (e.g., Aitani and Matt, two teachers working at the same school; Aitani and Yousuke, a teacher and a student at different schools). Although the participants' perceptions of team-teaching practices varied considerably, I present below salient categories most relevant to the research question. Inevitably, certain categories were discussed more by some participants than by others as they were more pertinent to them. For instance, classroom pedagogy is more relevant to and was discussed more by the teachers than the students.

FINDINGS

Team-teaching practices were considered to be: (a) unique practices because of a native speaker and a team; (b) open-ended practices due to vague definitions; and (c) less important practices as a result of the participants' other priorities and infrequent team-teaching schedules.

Unique Practices

Unlike teaching practices by JTEs alone or by other subject teachers, team-taught classes involved teamwork, including contributions of a native English speaker.

Contributions of a Native Speaker

The teachers and students focused on the fact that there is a native speaker of English in team-taught classes. During the first group discussion, for example, the ALT at

Sakura, Matt, drew everybody's attention to his native English: "the instruction delivered only in English pretty much is the key ... the purpose is for them [the students] to hear a native speaker" (FGD). The JTE at Tsubaki, Takahashi, emphasized the need for English provided by native speakers along much the same lines: "I should expose them [students] to native speakers' English more. They need to get used to listening to native speakers' English" (TPD1). Another example of how the participants valued native English appeared when JTEs prepared class materials. Aitani, the JTE at Sakura, said: "when making reading materials and classroom activities, I ask ALTs to run a 'native check'" (SI). The students also noted the key role that ALTs play. One of the focal students at Sakura, Tatsuya, commented on the native pronunciation of ALTs: "I noticed the difference between the English of Japanese teachers and the English of ALTs.... ALTs came here to show us correct pronunciation" (SI). An explicit response about the presence of a native speaker came from a focal student at Tsubaki, Yousuke: "there is a difference when we have actual foreign people in the classroom" (SI).

Apart from the positive contributions of the ALTs, several participants mentioned possible limitations associated with having them in the classroom. For example, Tatsuya wondered if ALTs could conduct classes with a full understanding of what was taking place, as classroom interaction is sometimes carried out only in Japanese. Yousuke indicated that team-teaching practices could become somewhat unfriendly and create "a space where everybody gets a bit tense" (SI) due to the ALTs' lack of familiarity with their students. On at least one occasion, however, Takahashi did not have any particular opinion about the contributions of native speakers of English. She stated: "Team teaching by Japanese English teachers would also work. We don't have to have native speakers of English. It is now common to incorporate team teaching in math classes or special education schools" (SI).

Although there were some exceptions, the participants recognized that overall 'authentic' English provided by native speakers of English was a key feature of team-teaching practices in the Japanese English language classroom.

Contributions of a Team

The teachers and students described another characteristic of team-teaching practices: two teachers working collaboratively. Aitani commented on how she perceived team teaching compared to her individual teaching:

There need to be differences between team-taught classes and JTEs' solo classes When there are two teachers, we can divide our attention and cover many

students If we are to increase the numbers of teachers, we should increase learning and teaching outcomes accordingly, right? (SI)

The teachers from Tsubaki, Sam and Takahashi, had the following conversation after watching a video clip of a team-taught class at Sakura:

Sam: I think because there were two of you [the teachers at Sakura], while you [Matt] are talking at the front, she [Aitani] can go around and help.

Takahashi: Yeah, it's good for the students.

Sam: And that way, if they won't listen or they are not getting it, then there is somebody to kind of help direct them. (FGD)

The students also identified the value of teachers' teamwork. Kanon at Sakura said: "when there is only one teacher, the teacher only stands in front of the blackboard. But when there are two teachers, one of the teachers always walks around the classroom, so it is easy for me to ask questions" (SI). The benefits of having two teachers in class were also highlighted by Sayaka at Tsubaki: "Team-taught classes are good because we have plenty of opportunities to be exposed to proper English and when we don't understand the difficult English, the Japanese teachers can tell us what it means" (SI). Similarly, Yousuke noted: "The class goes on smoothly because Takahashi plays the role of translating into Japanese, and Sam of translating into English. We can learn a lot also because both teachers interact with each other in front of us" (SI).

The team consisting of a JTE and an ALT seemed to be effective in most cases. It was, however, to be expected that teams would not always function well. For example, Aitani confessed that working with another person necessitated more discussion when planning and conducting classes:

The ALT only comes to my school on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. We cannot discuss things thoroughly ... so there are parts left unfinished sometimes.... When more than one person plans a lesson, we need to negotiate a lot and meet half-way because each person has different ideas. We have to compromise and choose whichever idea we feel is right. This takes a lot of time and energy. (FN)

The fact that JTEs speak English as their second language made negotiation even more of a challenge. Aitani commented: "If possible, we [JTEs] want to avoid having discussions with ALTs about what is to be done in class because we might be hesitant to negotiate in English, which is not our mother tongue" (SI). Interestingly, Yousuke on one occasion stated that he did not see the difference between JTEs' solo classes and team-

taught classes: "In team-taught classes, one teacher teaches, and the other just observes. So team-taught classes are just like the usual JTEs' classes" (SI).

Overall, the participants were positive about the teachers' teamwork mainly because they viewed it to be an advantage having two teachers offering different areas of expertise. Insufficient coordination between team teachers, however, seemed to have sometimes restricted the productivity of the team.

Open-Ended Practices

According to CLAIR (2014a), team teaching provides "opportunities for active interaction in a foreign language in the classroom, enhances the students' motivation towards learning a foreign language, and deepens the students' understanding of foreign cultures" (p. 81). Apart from the reference that the ALTs should not "conduct classes alone, nor be the 'main' teacher" (CLAIR, 2014a, p. 81), team-teaching practices in Japan seem to be quite open-ended. Sam pointed out: "The contract is vague. From what I understand, I am obviously required to go to class, and my work time is set ... everything else is vague" (SI). Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the participants held a variety of views about the roles of teachers and classroom pedagogy.

The Roles of Teachers: Divided or Undivided?

When team teachers work together, they usually divide their roles in terms of planning, instruction and evaluation so that they know how best to contribute to their practices (Villa et al., 2008). As described above, however, the roles of team teachers in Japan do not seem to be clearly distinguished. Moreover, it became apparent in this study that the teachers had limited opportunities to discuss their teaching roles. Matt claimed that his JTEs generally decide his role: "It's up to the JTEs what role we are able to play in team teaching or how much opportunity we are able to be given to lead or design" (SI). For Sam, the role he plays is flexible: "Sometimes I am an assistant, and I don't do anything more than check grammar and read stuff. And sometimes I lead certain activities or help explain things.... So it really depends on the lesson" (SI). The JTEs were also ambivalent about the roles of team teachers. Takahashi explained:

The ALT just came last summer, so we haven't been able to divide our roles successfully yet. As for Oral Communication classes, we conduct classes planned 100% by him.... As for English Expression classes, since he comes to them only once a week, I plan all the lessons. He is basically like a guest. Perhaps what

subject we teach has a lot to do with how we utilize ALTs.... Also it depends on the objective of the subject and on how those classes are usually conducted. (SI)

Both Takahashi and Sam seemed to agree that their teaching roles are variable. They made the following remarks when asked about what distinguished their respective roles:

Takahashi: We don't decide that kind of roles.

Sam: I guess, it depends. Sometimes you lead more, sometimes I lead more.

Takahashi: Sometimes I notice something, sometimes you notice. So whichever teacher who notices the good timing gives feedback first. (TPD1)

Aitani also commented on the changing nature of the roles of team teachers: "The role of ALT and JTE can be changeable. At one time, ALT is the leader of the lesson.... At another time, we both work the same amount.... At still another time, JTE can be the leader" (FGD). Particularly noteworthy here is that Takahashi and Sam believed that the ideal role allocation for team teachers is equal and tried to achieve it. In contrast, Aitani thought the roles of team teachers should not be inflexibly pre-determined.

The JTEs, however, did hold one invariable perception: ALTs should be 'main' teachers in team-taught classes. Both JTEs highlighted the fact that they tend to let their ALT lead the classes. Allowing ALTs to play the role of a 'main' teacher was at odds with the original concept of team teaching in Japan (CLAIR, 2014a). Nonetheless, Aitani said: "In team-taught classes with ALTs, I tend to be an assistant, rather than a person who would explain first" (TPD1). By the same token, Takahashi commented: "I try not to speak.... I want students to listen to Sam speak.... I always offer the role of writing" (TPD1).

Contrary to the teachers, however, the students clearly saw the division of labor in team-teaching practices. For the most part, they regarded the ALTs as 'main' teachers who direct lessons and provide instruction in English while they viewed the JTEs as 'supporting' teachers who sometimes help with Japanese translation. Kanon described an extreme case: "They [JTEs] just watch the ALT's class at the back of the classroom without doing anything" (SI).

The team teachers believed that team teaching was an open-ended practice, dependent on the beliefs and experiences of individual teachers as well as the subject and goal of the class. Some valued the flexible nature of teacher roles, and others attempted to reach an equal division of labor. Nonetheless, the JTEs had one recurring perception of teachers' roles: ALTs should be the main source of the target language in class. In the students' eyes, the roles of their teachers were simpler: ALTs are in charge of team-taught

classes by providing native English whilst JTEs offer occasional assistance in Japanese and sit backstage.

Classroom Pedagogy: Rigid or Flexible?

Classroom pedagogy in team-taught classes was also considered to be open-ended. Some JTEs consistently employed one pedagogical style, and others were more flexible. For instance, in this study the ALTs perceived Aitani and Takahashi to be pedagogically progressive and open-minded compared to other JTEs. Matt said to Aitani in a pair discussion: "I don't think they [other JTEs] think of it [team teaching] as progressively as you do in terms of really being kind of a give and take affair" (TPD1). This view was echoed by Sam when talking about Takahashi:

Takahashi is ... non-traditional.... She would disregard [what two of them had planned], but I know some teachers would be like, "It's in the textbook!" ... if they see it in the textbook, "Oh well, today's topic is cloning, and we use these phrases", and the whole lesson would be about cloning, and it's not useful at all. (TPD2)

In addition to the lesson content and classroom material, another pedagogical issue raised was the use of Japanese. During one focus group discussion, Aitani explained how much and why she used Japanese in her class. Her comment illustrates her changing perceptions about the topic:

I didn't mean to use that much of Japanese at first, but ... when I was explaining the situation ... I thought that it was a little bit unclear, so I unconsciously thought that I should reinforce it in Japanese. But later I changed my mind and thought: "I should just stick to English". (FGD)

In contrast, Takahashi was certain about her use of Japanese: "I use English only in my regular lessons even when I teach alone, and I don't use Japanese so much in team-taught class either" (FGD).

Less Important Practices

The participants considered team-taught classes to be less important than other classes, or other school commitments for that matter. This was mainly due to the limited

time available for JTEs, high-stakes tests for students, and infrequent/tokenistic teaching for ALTs.

Available Time

Available time for team teachers at school was often the focus of teacher interviews and discussions. Matt summarized the situation succinctly: “We don’t get the time to evaluate what is happening and what will happen [in class]” (SI). He felt that substantial interaction with his JTEs was not taking place. His JTE, Aitani, indeed found it difficult to allocate time for him: “When we had winter vacation, Matt and I could not really contact each other. And he was not here yesterday either. So today’s class was almost unprepared. We just dived into the class” (FN). She then admitted: “I feel team-taught classes end up a very low priority compared to other classes” (SI).

Takahashi at Tsubaki was in a similar situation. The demands on her time as a JTE were heavy. She explained: “The lack of communication is because we [JTEs] have to work other things during working hours. It often happens that I don’t have free periods or I have to talk with my students” (SI). She prioritized other work over team-teaching matters. During a pair discussion, Aitani asked Takahashi how she usually prepares for team-taught classes. Takahashi answered: “I don’t have time to prepare for team-taught classes with Sam. I teach just out of mere habit” (TPD2). In a focus group discussion, Takahashi admitted: “[Sam and I spend] one minute [for preparation] ... while we are going upstairs (laugh)” (FGD).

The JTEs thus perceived team-teaching practices to be secondary in comparison with other teaching or school work. This was primarily due to their time constraints and heavy workloads. Communication between the JTEs and ALTs reached only superficial levels.

Testing and Grading

Testing and grading practices inevitably affected the participants’ perceptions of team-taught classes. Matt remarked that although he had once made “a small contribution to their [JTEs’] overall grading” (SI) by creating parts of listening questions, he had never been given other evaluation tasks. Sam mentioned that he could sometimes lose entire classes for a day due to testing: “If it’s a test week next week, almost all my classes would be used to review. You gotta finish some area of the textbook, so all of my classes can get taken over by JTEs” (FN).

Because team-taught classes were not directly related to high-stakes tests, and the academic performance of the students in those classes was not graded as rigorously as

other classes, the students did not view team-taught classes to be of great importance. For instance, in response to a question about the frequency of team-taught classes, Tatsuya said: "I want to prepare for tests.... So it's a bit too much if the ALT comes five times a week. I think having team-taught classes once or twice a week is about right" (SI). Sayaka maintained that team-taught classes could be somewhat troublesome if she had them every day: "I don't want to have team-taught classes all the time, but maybe once a month" (SI). Sayaka added that the content covered in team-taught classes does not appear in term tests, which usually consist of a number of questions associated with translations, idioms and grammar rules.

Infrequent and Tokenistic

Team-teaching practices were also regarded as infrequent and tokenistic. Matt believed that infrequent teaching was the main reason for him feeling underused at his schools: "I do feel somewhat underused. But that's the symptom of being shuffled around different schools all the time. It's just too disjointed to have a more active or more enriched role" (SI). In a pair discussion, Sam was surprised at Matt's teaching schedules (i.e., visiting eight schools). Matt and Sam concurred about how challenging it is for them to build relationships with their students:

Sam: I know some of the kids, but I don't know as many as I probably should.

Matt: I mean, you are not in one school either ... so that doesn't make it easier. I know my situation. It's not really possible to spend much time [with each student].

Sam: Yeah, it's odd that your job is like, big thing is to get more connected to kids and you get so many schools that it's basically impossible. (TPD2)

This perception of team-teaching practices as infrequent was also expressed by Takahashi: "ALTs visit different schools, and it is almost impossible to make a team all the time. So the important question is how we [JTEs] use ALTs who show up very infrequently" (SI). For some students, like Tatsuya, team-taught classes were so few and far between that they did not seem to have a large impact on their lives at school: "I didn't notice the ALT had not come to our class this year (laugh)" (SI).

The participants also considered team-taught classes to be tokenistic. Matt perceived his teaching practice to be "almost a token gesture" and felt that "it is about a foreign presence and just hearing the language a little bit" (FN). Matt told an illuminating story, which describes how ALTs' classroom practices and team-taught classes as a whole are treated:

It was very frustrating, a couple of times lately. Half of the class time has been spent marking their written tests that they have done the week before. And the test was returned to the students and they were given the answer sheet. They spent 25 minutes And then, the second half of the class was just me demonstrating how to say words. Yep, they would do better with the CD that comes with the textbook. (SI)

Token practices also occurred in all the schools where Sam worked. The best example came from 'the best high school in the area' (TPD2). Sam explained his experience in the school to Matt: "I go to three different classes within each period and do like one 10-minute activity. So I basically teach the same, mildly boring activity six times" (TPD2). Matt exclaimed: "Only 10 minutes! What the hell can you do in 10 minutes?" Sam continued:

What I have been doing is I pick news articles ... and I rewrite it, and then we will do a listening activity.... And then, next class I do it again and next class and next class ... it's very boring, very boring. (TPD2)

A small number of benefits, however, were underlined. Matt believed that one upside of the infrequency of his teaching schedules is that the students are able to see "a fresh face" with "slightly different energy" (SI). This view was echoed by Tatsuya: "Aitani is usually the only teacher in the classroom. When that lasts for a long time, I don't get excited. But when an ALT comes, I feel tense in a positive way" (SPD). Matt also highlighted the benefit of working at three different institutional sectors: "I have the luxury of being involved in all three levels of schooling from elementary, junior high, high school I have a nice way of seeing how the education system works through that progression" (SI).

DISCUSSION

The participants in this study, both teachers and students, were cognizant of the unique contributions to their classes of a native speaker of English (see Adachi et al., 1998; Galloway, 2009; Miyazato, 2012) and teamwork in team teaching (see Buckley, 2000; Hourcade & Bauwens, 2002). However, the teachers were confused by the open-ended nature of team-teaching practices and ended up being indecisive about classroom pedagogy and the roles of teachers (see Mahoney, 2004; Tajino & Walker, 1998b). The students, however, appeared to see clearly distinct roles for team teachers: JTEs as

assistants/translators and ALTs as main teachers/English providers (see Johannes, 2012; Tajino & Walker, 1998a). Both teachers and students generally felt that team-taught classes were less important than other classes/school activities due to the limited available time of the JTEs, the concerns the students had about tests, and the infrequent visits of the ALTs (see Hiramatsu, 2005).

Some of the findings reported in the literature were also evident in my data, but others were not. It is particularly noteworthy that in my study the participants had different perceptions of team-teaching practices (i.e., unique, open-ended and less important) to varying degrees (from very strong to very weak). For instance, the Tsubaki teachers were quite convinced that they needed to use the target language only in class (strong perception) – e.g., “I use only English in my regular lessons ... and I don’t use Japanese so much in team-taught classes either” (FGD); the Sakura teachers were not so certain (weak perception) – e.g., “I didn’t mean to use that much of Japanese at first.... But later I changed my mind” (FGD). The participants had different perceptions with various, sometimes opposing, attitudes as well (from very positive to very negative). For example, Kanon at Sakura and Yousuke at Tsubaki had positive views on team teaching – e.g., “when there are two teachers ... it is easy for me to ask questions” (SI) – whereas Tatsuya and Sayaka did not consider team teaching always to be a preferable learning option – e.g., “I don’t want to have team-taught classes all the time” (SI). It also became apparent that contradictory comments came even from the same participants. Although Takahashi said in an interview: “Team teaching by Japanese English teachers would also work. We don’t have to have native speakers of English” (SI), in a pair discussion she remarked: “I should expose them [students] to native speakers’ English more” (TPD1). Yousuke at one time said: “team-taught classes are just like the usual classes” (SI). At another time, however, he told me: “there is a difference when we have actual foreign people in the classroom” (SI).

Findings in previous studies have often been presented in an either-or manner – e.g., “results reveal positive attitudes towards English and the ALTs, that ALTs have increased students’ exposure to English and cultural knowledge” (Galloway, 2009, p. 169), and recommendations to date are sometimes deterministic – e.g., “students ... find team-taught classes more beneficial.... These results suggest the school might want to offer more team-taught classes” (Johannes, 2012, p. 181). In an attempt to compare ALTs’ job satisfaction, Tsuido, Otani and Davies (2012) assessed their questionnaire data collected from current ALTs with that of ten years ago collected from different participants and argue that “the ALTs’ responses indicate that situation [of the ALTs] has improved” (p. 57). These findings and recommendations might not have taken into consideration the particularities of the participants, their surroundings and the processes of data collection. Instead, I maintain in this article that the participants’ perceptions of team

teachers and teaching practices inevitably vary, depending on the participants' individual traits (e.g., age, previous perceptions and previous experiences), contextual factors (e.g., school and class culture) and data collection conditions (e.g., timing/place/methods of data collection).

CONCLUSION

My study investigated teachers' and students' perceptions of team teaching conducted by JTEs and ALTs in Japan. At first glance, the participants seemed to have positive attitudes toward the unique practices of team teaching due mainly to the contributions of a native speaker of English (ALT) and the collaborative work by both team teachers, negative feelings about its open-ended practices because they generated confusion regarding teacher roles and pedagogy, and negative perceptions about the less important status of team-teaching practices. A closer look, however, uncovered the complexity of the participants' perceptions, revealing divergent degrees and attitudes. Individual participants' personal experiences, contextual factors within which they live, and changing research conditions such as the timing of data collection might have affected their perceptions. Therefore it is perhaps advisable that teacher educators and researchers should neither value one team-teaching practice over others nor expect all team teachers to carry out their classes in prescriptive ways. Individual team teachers and students, who are familiar with their particular needs and situations, should often have an opportunity to (re)consider and discuss issues raised in this article (e.g., what team-taught classes mean to them; how the roles of team teachers can be defined; to what extent they should use Japanese; what to include in student tests) without limiting themselves to taken-for-granted conceptions of what team teaching should be. They can create this opportunity on their own in the form of teacher research (Borg, 2013) or with support from the board of education. By doing so, they could compare their perceptions with those of the participants in this study and attempt to alternate their perceptions (and practices) if deemed appropriate.

Although the small number of the participants (i.e., eight) means that the findings of my study will not represent all team teachers' and students' perceptions about team-teaching practices, my study nevertheless adds illuminating cases to the literature of team teaching in language classrooms. Future inquiries should involve several types of teachers and students (e.g., novice JTEs, experienced ALTs, elementary school students) in diversified contexts (more urban/rural research sites) with various data collection conditions (e.g., employing questionnaires) in order to more fully understand the teachers' and students' experiences with their team-teaching practices. Every team-teaching pair is unique, and no teaching practice is black and white.

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Pedagogical implications of discourse analysis: One-on-one teacher-student interaction in a second language preschool class

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ABSTRACT

The study connects two areas of language research: discourse analysis and second language pedagogy. The overall goal of this study is to raise young learners' language teachers' awareness on how to improve the quality of classroom talk in order to make it more comprehensible to students. As professional development is a long process, in this study I will only introduce three techniques language teachers of young children can explore in order to achieve a more comprehensive and engaging language classroom without having to give up natural speech. The language activity chosen for analysis is based on the content-based theory, which allows connecting drawing with language learning in the international preschool context. In the activity described in this research, students were engaged in one-on-one conversations with teachers and answered their questions to show comprehension. Two teachers' interaction patterns were tested in terms of repetitiveness, turn-distribution and reference to the information provided by students. Based on my findings, I recommend three tools language teachers can utilize to modify their interaction style and enhance students' comprehension: systematically repeat key words provided by students, create opportunities for students to initiate conversation and use reiteration to emphasize grammatical patterns. With this study, I hope to open new doors in the field of preschool language acquisition in Japan and encourage more researchers to support second language educators of that age group.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, English language education of young learners has been getting more attention in Japan. Along with the elementary, junior-high and high school immersion programs already introduced to Japanese parents in the late nineties, a new system of English immersion, or so-called international preschools and kindergartens, started to gain popularity as an alternative to the formal Japanese daycare system (Bostwick, 2001).

My study takes place in one of those schools where I have been working as a head teacher and a teacher trainer for six years. Already, at the beginning of my career I encountered important issues, which require the attention of classroom researchers and educators: lack of research in classroom language for this unique setting and the development of communicative strategies for teachers to activate language acquisition devices for their students. This research attempts to fill teachers' practical need for designing language of instruction that will support students on their way to develop aural linguistic skills.

The choice of aural focus for this research was not coincidental. Nunan (2007), in a section pertaining to interaction analysis, first expressed the need for aural focus, an issue especially pertinent to the age group in this research. Nunan provides an important starting point for my study when he suggests applying child-adult interaction analysis in the first language to improve pedagogical methods in the second language. The analysis of interaction between child and adult in the first language can contribute to second language pedagogy as it provides knowledge of conditions under which languages are acquired.

In my study, I designed and piloted a language learning activity that included one-on-one interaction between teacher and student. All interactions were transcribed then analyzed. The activity was implemented in a preschool drawing class for students between ages two and three. This study, using classroom interaction analysis, will attempt to provide a practical response for further linguistic and pedagogical research on teaching English at preschool level in the immersion context (Garcia, 2006). The research question raised is the following: What discourse patterns in teacher talk enhance comprehension in one-on-one teacher-student interaction?

The theoretical background I found relevant to my study includes content and theme based learning theories, language comprehension processes in general and in young learners classroom in particular, and discourse analysis with emphasis on classroom discourse. In the next section, I will provide a short overview of the major research in those areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching environment of L2 teacher in immersion preschool: content-based classroom rationale for immersion preschool curriculum

As it will be seen in the methodology section, the curriculum of immersion preschool is conducted and designed according to the principles of content-based instruction. The daily schedule of the students is divided into subjects such as drawing, phonics, math, crafts, culture and science. Thus, language is introduced to the students through subject contents. In this section of the chapter, I will introduce general ideas regarding the rationale of content-based instruction and its place in the language learning system.

One of the core works in content-based method belongs to Dewey (1943), who saw a general need for unification of all disciplines and for creating contextual and interactive learning frameworks. In the specific field of language acquisition, Graves (1975), Clay (1979) and Zepeda-de-Caney (1980) argued that children do not learn the language arts in discrete instructional context.

There is an important role of inter-subjectivity in the learning process in which valuable connections are made by the students between language classes and other school subjects (Genishi, 1981). Focus on content in language acquisition is supported by Moll and Diaz (1987), who state that children achieve greater comprehension when the focus is on making meaning rather than on the correctness of the utterance.

Gordon (2007) expressed a similar idea in his work when he described successful learning processes of the first language as “exploration of the world by students and discussions of those explorations with adults” (p.132) rather than by means of studying vocabulary and then learning how to use the words. I share Gordon’s (2007) concern and clearly see a need to design experiential activities that provide contextual clues and comprehensive input.

In Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), I found studies that expand on Gordon’s (2007) ideas regarding the curriculum designed on the content-based approach. According to Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), the term “content” can be divided into three different types: “linguistic content, thematic or situational content and subject-matter content” (p.187). While linguistic contents apply to language, thematic or situational approaches emphasize contextualization and meaningful, as well as, relevant use of target language during the learning process. (ibid.)

Several studies (Cameron, 2001; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000) discuss the appropriateness of using theme-based teaching in the primary foreign classroom as an approach that introduces the language as a communicative tool through which children acquire thematic contents. In my analysis of the activity for preschool-aged students in an immersion setting using a theme-based learning approach, I wish to introduce the concept of effective and comprehensive instruction in the target language.

Comprehension: how children process what they hear

Widdowson describes the listening process as “unseen and inaccessible” (Widdowson, 1990, p.108, as quoted in Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p.102). I attempted to access the “inaccessible” (ibid.) by designing a listening activity that offers students an opportunity to demonstrate they can successfully convert part of the information from comprehensible teachers’ input (Krashen, 1985) and make it accessible for their own consumption.

Several studies (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000) describe listening as the most frequently used language skill in everyday life that has both top-down and bottom-up processes. (Anderson & Lynch, 1988, quoted in Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p.102)

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) provide an outlook on both, and reveal the complexity of listening mechanisms. The top-down process is described as an “activation of schematic knowledge and contextual knowledge”. (p.102) As I will show later in the discussion section, the top-down listening process has more weight in the case of young learners. The bottom-up process of listening involves prior knowledge of the language system (phonology, grammar, vocabulary) (ibid.) At the beginning of their first and/or second language acquisition, children might still be in the process of building their knowledge (Lightbrown and Spada, 2006).

Cameron (2001) emphasizes two guiding principles for teaching aural and oral language to young learners: 1) meaning comes first, 2) importance of active student participation in the learning process. My concern is that excessive focus on the delivery of the exact meaning to the students and excessive usage of the first language in the second language classroom can cause a shortage of second language input and/or output, causing a general delay in acquisition as a result (Swain 1995).

Locke (1993, as cited in Cameron, 2001) argues that for infants, language often “plays a secondary role to the social and affective components, and less attention is paid to the actual language content of talk than to its probable social meanings” (p.38) Another point Locke makes is that children inevitably operate with only partial understanding of what they hear, but it does not stop them from communicating and interacting, even in a second language environment (ibid.).

Along with Locke (1993), Donaldson (1978) and Meadows (1993) (all cited in Cameron, 2001), there is research on additional mechanisms such as ‘innate drive to “coherence” ’ (Meadows, 1993, p.72, quoted in Cameron, 2001, p.38) and usage of experience of intention and purpose by children while performing new tasks in various areas such as second language learning (Donaldson, 1978). I cannot fully agree with “innate drive to coherence” (Meadows, 1993) as a sole learning mechanism and will present my arguments in the discussion section.

Research on analyzing classroom discourse

As the focus of data analysis in my study will be on contextual and interactional components of classroom discourse, in this section I will introduce some of the related theories from the field of discourse analysis.

Contextual elements of analysis are represented by the concept of cohesion analysis as implemented by Halliday and Hasan (1976, 1989). The concept of cohesion is semantic and refers to relations of meanings that exist within each text, spoken or written, and defines text as text” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p.4). In my study I will implement part of cohesion analysis elements to identify contextuality, which will be described in further details in the methodology chapter.

Systemic functional linguistics theory based on the model of “language as social semiotics” developed by Halliday and his followers (Eggins and Slade, 1997) contributed to the foundation of my study in classroom interaction analysis as it enables conversational patterns to be “quantified at different levels and at different degrees of details” (ibid., p.45).

Finally, one last component used in my analysis of classroom interaction relies on Halliday’s idea of “primary and secondary positions of actors” (Wells, 1995). In research on classroom discourse, the idea was developed into a model of distribution of roles in classroom interaction (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975).

As for the more specific field of classroom discourse, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) suggested a framework of analysis where exchanges between the teacher and students are framed into I-R-F moves: “I” stands for initiation of the teacher; “R” for response of the student and “F” for feedback or for follow up by the teacher. The teacher can be recognized as a primary actor or a knower who initiates the exchange and provides the evaluation or follow-up to students’ moves. The students’ response is essential, because without it, there is no exchange (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975).

Studies designed by Wells (1981,1995), Hughes and Westgate (1997, 1997a, 1998) and Lemke (1990, cited in Wells, 1995) took the research of classroom discourse analysis a step

further by creating an alternative to the I-R-F method. Lemke (1990) proposed the idea of analyzing the structure of the activity in terms of functions performed by “successive moves in the exchanges through which the activity is realized” (Lemke 1990, as cited in Wells, 1995, p.8). The idea of successive moves in classroom interaction gives me a focus on factors that promote students’ comprehension by identifying the successive moves that are significant to my study rather than just analyzing I-R-F structure.

Studies by Edwards & Westgate (1994), Westgate & Corden (1993) and Westgate & Hughes (1997, 1998) investigate possible enabling strategies in teacher-led talk with young learners. The main concern of the researchers is to identify strategies in student-teacher communication that will take students’ moves to a higher level of initiation and have them be engaged in speculative or interpretive talk.

As for the practical side, I encountered several recent studies that were similar to my research environment. The following studies illustrate the implications of applying some of the theories of analysis I introduced in the theoretical section of classroom interaction research. Although none of the following research is covered in my study, works by Akcan (2005), Wiebe Berry and Englert (2005), Garcia (2006), Gillies and Boyle (2006) and Radford, Ireson and Mahon (2006) identify recent pedagogical trends in classroom interaction structure. Garcia’s work (2006) was especially significant to my study as it refers to the clear need for further research in the field of immersion preschool settings.

Gee, Michaels and O’Connor’s (1992) research provides an example for practical applications of cohesion analysis that combines other elements of discourse analysis. The study describes one-on-one interactions, between teachers and students who are English native speakers, taking place during “sharing time” in American elementary school. Although the study focuses on oral production of students, researchers analyze teachers’ utterances for the purpose of evaluating lexical supportiveness. The idea of lexical analysis of teachers’ utterances inspired me to analyze connections between lexical elements in teachers’ talk and student comprehension.

In the next section I will introduce methods that motivated my choice of research topic that addresses this very question because I feel there is a need to create more practical studies of classroom interaction in the preschool immersion context, a concern also expressed by Garcia (2006).

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to collect qualitative and descriptive information supported by quantitative analysis regarding pedagogical issues related to listening comprehension activities in the immersion preschool second language classroom. I explore the factors that made classroom teacher-student interaction comprehensible and effective for students’ language learning process.

Settings

The data was collected in the classes of an immersion preschool and kindergarten in central Tokyo. Students spend at least five hours a day, five days a week at school interacting in English as the main language of instruction. As it was mentioned in the literature review, the school’s curriculum was designed based on the idea of content-based instruction. The

students are engaged in disciplines such as math, reading, phonics, drawing, crafts, painting, science and culture. A monthly theme is introduced from different disciplines. Examples of monthly themes include seasons of the year, opposites, animals, etc. If the theme of the month is winter, students will accomplish drawing activities related to that theme, count snowflakes in math classes, make winter crafts or learn about winter weather in science.

I found the school to be a convenient research site, as I have been working there as a head teacher for six years and succeeded in building a relationship with the parents and the Japanese director of the school. At the beginning of the project, the school's Japanese director gave an oral official permission for the research. The parents and other caregivers were informed the video material would only be used for research purposes and would therefore not be distributed or presented in research conferences. By doing so, I received their permission for the research. In order to achieve maximal confidentiality, I refrained from using students' names, replacing them, instead, with numbers.

Participants

The participants in the study were a class of five preschool students, all native speakers of Japanese, between ages two and a half and three, two homeroom teachers and myself as an observer and advisor.

Students

The five students were members of the same class. They all entered the preschool and started their second language acquisition in April 2008. I selected the preschool group for several reasons. The students had a similar language background as Japanese was the language spoken at home. All the class members started their formal English acquisition at the same time. Finally, there was a need for curriculum development as the toddlers' program started to function in April 2008. Lack of research in the area of curriculum development for the second language preschool classroom in the immersion context in a non-English speaking country created the need for observation and analysis to enrich the contents, adjust the program to the students' language needs and engage students in the acquisition process.

Teachers

Two female homeroom teachers in their early twenties and with no former teacher training were involved in the project. Both graduated from an American college and majored in Liberal arts. While Teacher Lisa specialized in history of education, Teacher Akriti majored in psychology. Lisa is an English native speaker from the United States fluent in Japanese. Akriti is a bilingual teacher from India who speaks both Hindi and English with minor knowledge of Japanese. Lisa fulfilled the function of senior teacher as she was in the field for a year and a half when the project started, while Akriti had only six months of teaching experience. Both started teaching in the toddlers' class in April 2008.

My role

I'm Russian-born Israeli, a native speaker of Russian and fluent in English, Japanese and Hebrew. I majored in East-Asian Studies and International Relations for my undergraduate studies in Israeli University and completed my graduate studies in TESOL at Teachers

College Columbia University. I fulfilled the role of head teacher in the immersion preschool where the study took place. On a daily basis, I informally interact with the students, outside the classroom, during free play hours. For the teachers involved in the project, I act both as a supervisor and an advisor. My responsibilities are to advise on curriculum planning, language development of students, classroom observation and provide feedback regarding language-teaching issues based on my experience as a graduate student in the field. As I participated in classroom sessions before the project started, my presence as an observer was taken naturally by the students and by the teachers during the project; something that helped to reduce "observer paradox" (Labov, 1972b) and contributed to creating a natural classroom atmosphere.

Procedure

The schedule of the project started at the beginning of November 2008 and lasted approximately three months. The classroom sessions recorded in the project were drawing sessions for five students conducted by two homeroom teachers. Due to the very young age of the students, the toddler program's classes are usually taught by a team of two teachers. One of the teachers fulfills the role of leader and the other of assistant. They switch roles every other session. As I mentioned earlier, both of the teachers started to teach the toddlers' class in April 2008. That way, both were given an equal opportunity to familiarize themselves with the students.

The drawing classes took place once a week and lasted 20 to 25 minutes. Each session is divided into three parts around 8-10 minutes each. In the first part, the leading teacher introduces the theme. In the second part, a free drawing activity, both teachers assist the students by providing paper and color pencils, and by encouraging students in the drawing process. For the third part, teachers talk to students individually about their drawings. Each interaction lasts no longer than 3 minutes. As one of the main goals for this study was to assess the ability of teachers to create comprehensive interactions and keep students engaged, the questions for the interaction were not prepared in advance. Each teacher could freely choose the theme for each interaction and questions for the discussion of the drawings. The only instruction they were given was to encourage students to develop a three-minute conversation. The students' short attention span allowed conducting only one conversation during each session. All sessions were videotaped. After I collected two recorded sessions (with one teacher) of classroom interactions for each of the five students, I transcribed the interactions and analyzed all ten transcripts.

Data Collection and Units of Analysis

The methods of analysis I used in this study combine the elements of classroom interaction analysis based on Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) with elements of cohesion analysis (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, 1985). From the classroom interaction analysis, I partly borrowed the idea of I-R-F structure introduced earlier in the literature review. In this study, I will focus on I-initiation and R-response concepts to analyze the distribution of roles in the setting.

Elements of cohesion analysis, such as reference and repetitions, served as additional tools to analyze the interactions in terms of cohesiveness and existence of contextual ties between lexical items on the text. Cohesion analysis according to Halliday and Hasan (1976) defines the semantic relations in the text and consists of six categories: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, repetition and lexical cohesion. In this study I will focus on

reference and additional category that indicates cohesiveness-repetition. References are divided into two types: exophoric reference-situational references (referring to the situation outside the text) and endophoric references-textual references (referring to the features inside the text). Repetition of lexical items serves as an additional indicator of the cohesive ties in the text and enlarges the impact of lexical meaning (Halliday, 1989). The importance of cohesive devices of repetition and reference for teacher-student interactions will be introduced later in the discussion section.

I analyzed ten examples of teacher-student interactions (Appendix 1). I divided the turns taken by students in each interaction into successive moves (Lemke, 1985) or as I called them *successful student turns* (SST) and *missed student turns* (MST). Successful students' turns referred to all the correct answers of students to teachers' questions that contributed to a flow of the conversation and helped the teacher to proceed to her next turn. The short "yes" and "no" answers and answers in Japanese were accepted as well if they fit in SST category.

For the quantitative part of the study, I calculated the number of SST and MST for each teacher and summarized them in tables 1,2,3 and 4. Based on the number of SST and MST, I calculated the percentage of comprehension. The percentage of comprehension was calculated as the percentage of MSTs from the total number of students' turns in each interaction. Also, I calculated the percentage of repetitions (Table 4) as the percentage of teachers' turns with repetitions of the information provided by the students from the total number of teachers' turns in each interaction. For the descriptive part of the study, I will present the categories of SSTs and MSTs followed by examples of interactions from the transcripts.

FINDINGS

This section of the study identifies factors influencing the level of students' comprehension of teachers' questions. Table 1 shows, in percentage, the level of comprehension of students. Table 2 shows the number of SST and MST for teacher Lisa. Table 3 shows the SST and MST for teacher Akriti. Table 4 shows the percentage of repetitions in teachers' turns.

TABLE 1
Percentage of comprehension

	S 1	S 2	S 3	S 4	S 5
Lisa	97%	96%	93%	100%	100%
Akriti	75%	86%	85%	77%	75%

S = Student

Table 1 shows a clear difference in percentage of students' comprehension within the interactions. In Lisa's case, the level of comprehension is higher than in Akriti's. While all of Lisa's interactions are situated above 90%, Akriti's are below 90%, the highest are 86% (S2) and 85% (S3). The rest of Akriti's interactions are below 80%. While Lisa reached 100% comprehension in S4 and S5 interactions, Akriti attained 77% for S4 and 75% for S5. In

addition to the range in level of comprehension, Table 2 and Table 3 display the gap between the number of SST and MST.

TABLE 2
Number of students' responses (MST AND SST) teacher Lisa

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
SST	26	16	14	11	21
MST	1	1	1	0	1

S = Student

TABLE 3
Number of students' responses (MST AND SST) teacher Akriti

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
SST	9	12	11	11	6
MST	4	2	2	3	2

S = Student

In interactions with Lisa, students' maximal number of MSTs equaled 1. For Akriti, the minimum was 2 and the maximum was 4. I believe the quantitative data in all tables speaks for itself: the gap between interactions has causes and implications. Because numerical values are not sufficient to explain the gap, in the next section I will provide examples for major tendencies in SSTs and MSTs for both teachers, and discuss their value for teaching practices.

TABLE 4
Repetitions

	S 1	S 2	S 3	S 4	S 5
Lisa	48%	47%	44%	42%	45%
Akriti	14%	20%	43%	27%	33%

S = Student

Main features of successful students' turns (SSTs)

Teacher Lisa

In Lisa's interaction with the students I found the following patterns that led students to answer successfully.

Variety of repetitions. Table 4 reveal a highly repetitive style of Lisa's interactions, that is to say, in approximately 45% of her turns, she consistently repeated the most important part of the new information provided by students.

Excerpt from transcript 1². S1 is telling Lisa about his drawing of his interaction with peers from an older group.

4. S1: **Angry!**

5. L: **Angry** at who?

6. S1: Angry at **Sumire!** –new topic

7. L: What did **Sumire** do?

8. S1: Konan **angry** –new topic

9. L: Is he **angry at Sumire**, because Sumire doesn't want to play with him?

In turn 5, Lisa repeats the key word "angry" from turn 4 and asks for clarification about the name of the classmate, the student or one of his classmates, is angry at. In turn 6, the student shares additional information required to continue the interaction. In turn 7, Lisa asks for the reason for the feelings the student experienced and repeats the key item of the previous turn. In turn 8, the student provides the name of the angry classmate and in that way expands teacher's opportunities for interaction.

Reiteration. Also Lisa used the technique of reiteration when she consistently repeated similar grammatical structures in the interactions. The structure "What are/is doing?" was very common in transcript 1. The structure "What is it?" consistently came up in transcript 5. Finally, in transcript 7, the structure "Is it....?" was repeated more than three times.

Emphasis on context. In part of the interactions, the teacher repeated the information provided by the student earlier in the interaction to show her engagement and in order to underline the contextual background of the interaction with the student.

Excerpt from transcript 5. S3 is telling Lisa about a rainy day she drew.

21. TL: **This one** is what?

22. S3: **Rain**

23. TL: And where are you going? To school or outside? Where are you going?

24. S3: To pool.

25. TL: To pool? In the **rain**?

26. S3: Yes

27. TL: And what did you do? Did you go swimming?

28. S3: Swimming.

29. TL: With everybody? And what is it? More **rain**? Lots of colors?

Lisa repeated the word "rain" in turn 25 and 29 after the student introduced the concept in turn 22. As "rainy day" was the key point of the session, Lisa offered additional opportunity for review and kept the dialogue focused by repeating the concept and showing interest in student's theme.

Reference. Along with repetitions, the references to the information provided by students prevailed in Lisa's interactions. In a majority of interactions, I noted the comprehension of endophoric pronominal references, advanced grammatical concepts for non-native students of English in general and toddler groups specifically. Multiple references to the student's

² Repetitions are bolded.

concepts inside the text, supported by consistent repetitions, contributed to a high percentage of comprehension.

Excerpt from transcript 9³. S5 is telling Lisa (TL) about the fish she drew.

6. S5: Snowfish!
7. L: Where?
8. S5: Here
9. TL: And what's the snowfish doing?
10. S5: Santa
11. TL: Santa? What is **it** doing with Santa?
12. S5: Drawing!
13. TL: The snowfish is drawing with Santa?
14. S5: Yes
15. TL: Wow, how interesting and where are **they**?
16. S5: Water

In turn 11, the pronoun "it" refers to the snowfish mentioned by the student in turn 6 and by Lisa in turn 9. In turn 12, the student succeeded in answering the question that referred to the word "snowfish". In turn 15, "They" refers to "Santa" and "snowfish" from the previous turns. The student replied correctly to the questions about "they" as the references were endophoric, thus backed up by nouns in the text. In the text, the nouns were located close enough to the pronouns to emphasize a lexical tie and assist the student in making immediate contextual connections.

In addition to pronominals, Lisa incorporated demonstrative references such as "this", "that" and "these".

Excerpt from transcript 3: S2 is telling Lisa about his classmate's face he drew:

20. TL: And what is this?
21. S2: Circle
22. TL: Circle? And what is this? What is this?
23. S3: Hair
24. TL: What is the blue? This one blue.
25. S3: *Kaminari* (lightning-japanese)

"This", backed up with lexical meanings provided by the student, served as an endophoric reference. It seems that the reference "this" included clear request for specification as the student responded correctly with one lexical item at a time as a response to teachers' questions.

The reference "this" seems to include a clear request for specification, as the student responded successfully to the teachers' questions.

Student in the role of the initiator: The students were given various opportunities by Lisa to initiate the turns. In part of the interactions, the students took the role of the initiator in the opening part.

Excerpt from transcript 7. S4 is telling Lisa about a snake he drew:

1. S4: Snake.

³ References are bolded.

2. TL: A blue snake? A bad snake?
3. S4: Yes, bad snake.
4. TL: Is it scary?
5. S4: Yes, scary.
6. TL: It gets the bad guys?
7. S4: *Namae mo aru yo.* (It has a name-japanese)
8. TL: Does he have a name?

S4 opens the interaction by mentioning the “snake” in turn 1. Lisa acts as a receiver and requests S4 initiator to give more information about the snake in turns 2 and 4. S4 confirms Lisa’s ideas regarding the features of the snake in turns 3 and 5. In turn 7, the student adds information, in Japanese, about the snake having a name. Here, Lisa acts as a receiver. Instead of overlooking the Japanese information, she interprets it into English. By doing so, she demonstrates her curiosity and avoids a breakdown in the conversation, which as I will show in the MSTs section, happens when the student switches to Japanese.

Teacher Akriti

In Akriti’s interactions with students, the patterns of interactions resulting in SSTs were similar to Lisa’s, though her interactions lacked consistency.

Variety of repetitions. Akriti applied the technique of repetition to some extent. Like to Lisa, she repeated the key concepts introduced by the students and expanded on them. Although as table 4 demonstrates, Akriti consistently repeated the main pieces of information from students’ turns in approximately 20% of her turns.

Excerpt from transcript 6⁴: S3 telling Akriti about the ghosts she drew.

1. TA: What is it?
2. S3: **Ghost!**
3. TA: Is there two **ghosts** or one **ghost**?
4. S3: Two **ghosts**
5. TA: Wow and what is the **ghost** doing?
6. S3: **Play**
7. TA: Are they **playing** with each other? Two **ghosts playing** with each other?

As it appears in Table 4, Akriti achieved the highest percentage (43%) of repetitions in this interaction with S3. The highest amount of repetitions explains the highest percentage (86%) of students’ comprehension in the same interaction. In turns 3, 5, 7, Akriti repeats the information provided by the student and shows her curiosity by asking additional questions without changing the subject for three turns. Even when the student starts a new topic in turn 6, she remains focused on the key concept and requests more information to enhance the contextual connections.

Reiteration. In terms of application of similar grammatical structures in the interactions, Akriti was less systematic than Lisa. I noted examples of reiteration in transcript 6 when the student scored 85% of comprehension. The structure “Is the ...” was systematically repeated more than three times during the interaction.

Emphasis on context. In part of the interactions, Akriti repeated bits of information provided by the student earlier in the interaction, so the repetitions did not follow each of the student’s turns, but were spread over the interaction to strengthen the contextual background.

⁴ Repetitions are bolded.

Excerpt from transcript 4: S2 is telling Akriti about a snowman he drew.

9. TA: Is a **snowman** happy?
10. S2: Angry
11. TA: Angry, I can tell!
Are his eyes opened or closed?
12. S2: Closed
13. TA: OK, is **snowman** near school?
14. S2: No
15. TA: Is he near Takumi's house?
16. S2: Yes.
17. TA: And where is Takumi?
18. S2: Not here. Sick.
19. TA: Oh, you're sick! And did you make a **snowman**?
20. S2: Yes

Repetitions of the keyword "snowman" appear in turn 9, 13 and 19. Though there is no consistency in repetition pattern the repetitions are located close enough to each other to keep focus on the main concept and maintain the thematic flow of the interaction.

Reference. References are less common in Akriti's interactions, although I could still identify some referential patterns that added contextual links and supported comprehension.

Excerpt from transcript 6⁵: S3 is telling Akriti about the ghosts he drew.

19. A: What color are the ghosts?
20. R: Black and yellow
21. A: Great
Are **they** Rei's friends?
Do you see **them**?
22. R: Yes
23. A: Cool
Anything else? Are they cool ghosts? Are **they** friendly or scary?
24. R: Scary

Akriti makes use of pronominal endophoric references "they" in turns 21 and 23 and "them" in turn 21 to refer to the word "ghosts" from turn 19. In turn 23, the reference "they" is backed up by the term "ghosts" that appears right before the question with the reference in it. By doing so, Akriti achieved comprehension of the student by referring to the key concepts from the text shortly enough before the pronominal reference and clarifying the context.

Student in a role of initiator: In Akriti's interactions with students, the role-switch took place, though less frequently than in Lisa's case.

Excerpt from transcript 10: S5 is telling Lisa about her Christmas drawing.

5. S5: Akriti
6. TA: Is teacher Akriti talking to Santa and Sae is Anpanman?
7. S5: Yes. Lisa.
8. TA: What is teacher Lisa doing?
9. S5: Lisa - Santa.

⁵ References are bolded

10. TA: Is teacher Lisa talking to Santa?

11. S5: Yes

S5 fulfills the role of the initiator by starting a new topic. Akriti accepts the position of receiver by asking for elaboration in turn 6. In turn 7, unexpected appearance of new information about Lisa in S5's turn requires Akriti to take the role of receiver and request to fill the contextual gap to continue the interaction. In turn 9, the student adds a new character "Santa" to the scene and by doing so, creates the need for clarification from the teachers' side.

In this part of chapter, I introduced the conditions formed by the teachers under which the students generated an extensive number of successful turns. Before starting the discussion, I will highlight the main tendencies in teachers' talk causing students to miss their turns.

Main features of missed students' turns (MSTs)

In this section, I collected all the turns the students missed and explored the possible causes for the misses.

Teacher Lisa

The transcripts revealed two types of conditions under which the MSTs occurred. First, there was the use of ungrammatical structures and informal language in 1 and 2.

Excerpt from transcript 1: S1 is telling Lisa about his peers.

13. L: So what's up with Sasuke doing?

14. S: -

The question presented by the teacher consisted of ungrammatical element "what's up". Possibly the concept was unfamiliar to the student used to a formal style of questions such as "What is Sasuke doing?". As the formal questions were prevalent in the rest of the interaction, a new type of question brought confusion and caused a comprehension gap.

A second type of MST was connected to the semantic complexity of the questions. Two following examples illustrate this complexity.

Excerpt from transcript 3: S2 is telling Lisa about a face he drew.

15. L: Here? Why is a black eye?

16. T: -

It seems like S2 is unfamiliar with the whole range of wh-questions, especially those requiring reasoning. Due to the very young age of the student, that skill is probably has yet to be mastered, even in his first language.

Excerpt from transcript 5: S3 is telling Lisa about the rain she drew.

7. L: From who?

8. R: -

The MST occurred, as the question was asked in the very early stages of the interaction. In addition, it seems as if the student was not provided with enough contextual background to respond successfully to this complex question at such an early stage of the interaction.

Teacher Akriti

Akriti's interactions consisted of a larger number of MSTs than Lisa's. I detected four major categories of conditions that could be identified as possible causes: use of abstract language categories, placing more than one idea in a question, placing more than one question in a turn, lack of the contextual background and sudden switching of roles.

Use of abstract categories. Excerpt from transcript 2: S1 is telling Akriti about a ball he drew.

9. A: What *kind* of ball is it? Does it have a color?

10. S: -

The terms "kind" can be challenging for the student. It is a general term and incorporates multiple possibilities of responses. The student missed his turn due to an abstraction that affected textual unity and caused confusion.

Placing more than one idea in a question. Excerpt from transcript 4: S2 is telling Akriti about a snowman from his drawing.

21. TA: Did you make a snowman and got sick after?

22. S2: -

In turn 21, Akriti placed two events in one question and caused the students to miss the turn.

Placing more than one question in a turn. Excerpt from transcript 4: S2 is telling Akriti about a snowman from his drawing.

23. A: Did you make a snowman and went atchoo and then you went inside? Is that what happened?

24. T: -

In turn 23, I indicated two questions with four events in one turn. Obviously overwhelmed by the amount of information, the student was confused and missed the turn for the second time in a row.

Lack of the contextual background. Excerpt from transcript 2: S1 is telling Akriti about a ball he drew.

21. A: Cool. What's this part? open

22. S: -

The reference "this" in turn 21 is exophoric and not related to the text, but to the situation. S1 was challenged by the question as he was lacking the background textual context.

Sudden switching of roles. Excerpt from transcript 6: S3 is telling Akriti about ghosts he drew.

13. TA: Is the water cold? Or is it cold?

14. S3: -

In the previous turns of the interaction, the student initiated the new topic of his interest - "ghosts". After 12 turns related to the topic, the teacher decided to change the topic to the one the student was unfamiliar with. By doing so, the teacher imposed the role of the receiver on the student and took the role of the initiator. The topic initiated by the teacher was not of student's interest and as a result the student did not respond and missed the turn.

In the next chapter, I will introduce the analysis of the findings and their relation to the main goal of this study: creating pedagogical implications for teachers' professional development.

DISCUSSION

Now I would like to go back to my research question: What discourse patterns in teacher talk enhance comprehension in one-on-one teacher-student interaction?

In my research, I found three conditions that resulted in SSTs: systematic repetitions, providing an opportunity for students to take on the role of initiator and reference. On the other hand, nine conditions resulted in MSTs: lack of consistency in repetition, multiple questions, multiple ideas in one sentence, sudden role switch with new topic introduction by teacher, lack of consistency in reference, use of abstract language, use of informal language, use of ungrammatical structure and lack of contextual background.

Most of the literature on teaching young learners expresses the need for engaging classroom contents in order to activate the language learning process (Genishi, 1981; Cameron, 2001; Gordon, 2007). The findings of my study deliver a very significant message to teachers working with young children in general and second language learners specifically: The teachers' talk in language-learning process cannot be underestimated.

My study emphasizes that the language teacher is responsible for creating output that activates the language-learning process. As it was mentioned in the literature review, comprehension is seen as an initial step in language acquisition (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). This view gives even more weight to teacher talk as a major language-learning tool.

The components of teachers' interaction language that enhanced comprehension and facilitated students' output can be divided into two categories: text-related and interaction style related. Text related factors are the indicators of cohesiveness, endophoric references, and repetitions that prevailed in SSTs. Interaction style related factor deals with distribution of roles that have a supportive function in the classroom. Next, I will discuss the concepts and their implications I found significant for the teaching practices.

Benefits of the cohesive talk

As it was illustrated in the findings, there was a clear gap in the level (percentage) of student's comprehension between the two teachers. Lisa achieved an average level of comprehension above 90%, while Akriti's was around 80%. Although the gap was not very large, what the findings illustrate is that the main difference between the teachers lied in the ability to create cohesive and repetitive narratives that enforces students' comprehension. Why do the elements of cohesion (Hasan and Halliday, 1976) play such an important role as stimulator of comprehension?

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain's (2000) schematic condition of the top-down listening process is achieved by consistent repetition of vocabulary and reiteration of grammatical structures by teachers. In my opinion, variety of repetitions, another aspect of semantic unity

(Halliday & Hasan, 1976, 1989), were the major contributing factor to the gradual formation of students' contextual knowledge through interactions. Repetitions not only strengthened context hints fed to students by teacher, but also provided a learning tool that strengthened new vocabulary and grammatical structures.

The use of endophoric references, or textual references, well implemented by Lisa, resulted in logical chains of narratives in the interactions and supplied students with necessary contextual knowledge. In each interaction, Lisa constructed questions that systematically referred to the information provided by the student. Akriti's referencing style was less consistent and logical ties were not always clear.

Both teachers relied on a good amount of repetition to form meaningful texts that appealed to students' background and supported the processing of teachers' output. Although I could observe a consistent effort to reinforce grammatical structures and vocabulary in Lisa's interactions, in Akriti's case the reinforcements were not as systematic and the amount of reiterations was significantly less.

Contextual analysis in my study proves the importance of the textual component in comprehension processing. As the findings of my research show, second language teachers cannot rely solely on children's innate communication ability guided by social context and intonation (Locke, 1993), 'innate drive to coherence' (Meadows, 1993) or experience of intention (Donaldson, 1978). From the perspective of this study, language teachers have to strive to adopt coherent and strongly repetitive classroom interaction style that will trigger enhance comprehension and trigger students' curiosity to language learning as a result.

Distribution of the roles in interaction and level of comprehension.

As I indicated in the literature review, which was then supported by findings, the distribution of roles in interactions is another vital aspect of classroom dynamics as it improves comprehension level. The amount of research on the subject indicates a definite desire to find new ways to create a supportive and relaxing environment of communication between students and teachers (Wells, 1981, 1998; Edwards & Westgate, 1994; Westgate & Corden, 1993; Westgate & Hughes, 1997).

In my opinion, teachers using the I-R-F, triadic dialogue, (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) are "constricted" by their obligation to use fixed structured conversation style that prevents them from maintaining a flowing conversation. In my study, the nature of the setting allowed teachers to create interactions where student could take on the role of initiator and were then allowed to express their ideas.

Students' drawings were the only source of information available to teachers in structuring a conversation. In other words, they had to center their conversation mainly on the information provided by students. Naturally, teachers being limited to knowledge provided, students then received the status of the knower of information and, by default, the teacher that of the receiver of information.

In Lisa's interactions, student initiating the conversation was a common occurrence. Every bit of new information contributed by the student was carefully recycled, extended and processed by the teacher. In part of Akriti's interactions, she attempted to take the role of initiator by changing the topic of discussions and causing the student to lose the significance of his role.

It seems to me that imposing a new topic on students without clear references to the main topic of discussion may create a communication barrier, as well as hinder comprehension. The students may also receive the message that their subject-matter does not appeal to the

teacher. Psychological factors and motivational factors are not measured in this study, but there is little doubt that along with comprehension, the result of sudden introduction of new topic might bring about a drop in the level of motivation of student to actively participate.

Finally, going back to the context matter (repetition and references) discussed earlier in this chapter, I believe that engagement of students in the role of initiator is a basic condition for cohesive classroom interaction. Students who are offered the role of initiator supply an important source of information that allows for repetitions and references, which can, in turn, be recycled and consumed by teachers.

The study demonstrates that professional development of language educators in the young learners second language classroom does not have to be such a challenging tasks. The factors that influenced comprehension are practical techniques of discourse analysis that can easily be acquired. Raising teacher awareness about the importance of repetitions and references, alternative turn-distribution, systematization of grammatical structures and contextual background will help teachers to achieve more comprehension, obtain better involvement from their young learners and by doing so improve the quality of second language education.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to show how second language pedagogy in young children can benefit from applying concepts from the field of discourse analysis such as cohesion analysis and classroom interaction in order to find patterns in teacher-student interaction that would promote student comprehension. In the process, I also hoping to raise teachers' awareness of the influence they have on their students, as the way they speak impacts the process of interaction. I also wish to show that achieving more comprehensive and engaging language classroom does not necessarily require giving up natural speech.

In my analysis, I discuss a language activity connecting drawing with language learning in the preschool environment, which I designed using the content-based theory. In classroom sessions, students engaged in one-on-one conversation with the teacher and answered the questions to show their comprehension. Two teachers' interaction patterns were tested in terms of repetitiveness, turn-distribution and reference to the information provided by students.

The study has certain limitations as it involves a small group of children guided by only two teachers. The setting then makes it hard to generalize for cases in public Japanese kindergartens and preschools with larger classrooms. Another issue relating to the setting is the number of hours students are exposed to the target language in immersion school, which significantly differs from Japanese public kindergartens that offer English classes on a weekly basis.

The findings that emerged from the experiments describe the nature of SSTs and MSTs. In my research, I found three conditions that resulted in SSTs: systematic and various repetitions, opportunity of students to take on the role of initiator and reference. On the other hand, nine conditions resulted in MSTs: lack of consistency in repetition, multiple questions, multiple ideas in one sentence, sudden role switch with new topic introduction by teacher, lack of consistency in reference, use of abstract language, use of informal language, use of ungrammatical structure and lack of contextual background.

Despite these limitations, the findings of this research can assist teachers in obtaining higher levels of comprehension from students in small classroom settings and should be tested in and adapted for larger classrooms.

I covered a very narrow aspect of teaching English to young learners. The data accumulated in this study can be transformed into further studies. The aspects of praise, personalization, analysis of interaction topics, gender issues, bilingual issues, oral production are all possible future directions of the research. Another dimension can be multimodal analysis of possible connections between the visual component (student drawings) and lexical aspects (comprehension or oral production). All these directions definitely deserve attention in order to support the teachers with their task of raising a generation of fluent English speakers in Japan.

Based on my findings, I recommend four tools that language teachers can utilize to modify their interaction style to enhance students' comprehension: create opportunities for students to initiate conversation, systematically repeat key words provided by students, use reiteration to emphasize grammatical patterns and refer to contextual background. With this study I hope to open new doors in the field of preschool language acquisition in Japan and encourage more researchers to focus on quality of instruction of second language educators of that age group.

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APPENDIX 1

Transcript 1: Lisa (L) – Student 1 (S1)

1. L: Alright Sena, tell me what you have! Who is this?
2. S1: Konan
3. L: Konan! And what is he doing?
4. S1: Angry!
5. L: Angry at who?
6. S1: Angry at Sumire!
7. L: What did Sumire do?
8. S1: Konan angry
9. L: Is he angry at Sumire, because Sumire doesn't want to play with him?
10. S1: Sasuke
11. L: Sasuke? Not Konan?
12. S1: Yes
13. L: So what's up with Sasuke doing?
14. S1 : -
15. L: Is he a butterfly, in the butterfly class?
16. S1 : Yes
17. L: In the butterfly room? What is he doing?
18. S: House! Success
19. L: Playing house? With who?
20. S1 : Sumire
21. L: And is Sasuke daddy?
22. S1: Yes and Sumire mommy!
23. L: And is Sena playing too?
24. S1: Yes, mommy success
25. L: You're mommy? Who is Sumire?
26. S1: Here.
27. L: Oh, on the other side!
- So who is this?
28. S1: Ginjiro
29. L: Is he playing in the house too?
30. S1: No
31. L: No? What's he doing?
32. S1: Mmmmm
33. L: What Gin doing? Is he happy?
34. S1: No, angry
35. L: Who's he playing with?
36. S1: Konan success
37. L: Is he angry because of Konan? What are they playing?
38. S1: Kakurenbo
39. L: Hide-and-seek? clarif
40. S1: Yes
41. L: Oh and is Sumire and Sasuke playing too?
42. S1: Yes
43. L: But they are playing house! Is Sena playing with Sasuke and Sumire or Ginjiro and Konan?
44. S1: Gin and Konan
45. L: And who is the monster?

46. S1: Ginjiro
47. L: Ginjiro?! And where is Sena hiding?
48. S1: Butterfly room
49. L: I see in the butterfly room with Sasuke and Sumire?
50. S1: Yes
51. L: And did Ginjiro find you?
52. S1: Yes
53. L: And then what?
54. S1: Run in butterfly room
55. L: So you weren't hiding in there, but you ran into there?

Successful S's turns: 25

Missed S's turns: 2

S's comprehension : 93%

Teacher's turns: 29

Transcript 2: Akriti (A) – Student (S1)

1. A: What is it?
2. S1: -
3. A: Whats is it?
4. S1: Japan
5. A: Whats ensenshuro?
6. S1: Ball.
7. A: Ball?
- Wow this whole big thing is a ball?
8. S1: Yes
9. A: What kind of ball is it? Does it have a color?
10. S1: -
11. A: Can you do something cool with the ball?
12. S1: Yes, Soccer.
13. A: Wow, it's a soccer ball!
14. S1: Yes
15. A: Do you play with the soccer ball?
16. S1: Yes
17. A: Wow, it's cool!
- So it doesn't have any color?
18. S1: No
19. A: Where do you play with it? House or the park?
20. S1: Park!
21. A: Cool. What's this part?
22. S1: -
23. A: Can you say it one more time?
24. S1: -

- 25. A: Are you gonna fight with somebody?
- 26. S1: Yes
- 27. A: Did you say dark lake? Ok, thank you

Teacher's turns: 14

Successful turns: 9

Missed turns: 4

S's comprehension: 75%

Transcript 3: Lisa (L) – Student 2 (S2)

- 1. L: Ok, Takumi! Do you wanna tell me what you drew? Who is this? What is this? open
- 2. S2: Takumi! Konan!
- 3. L: Oh, Its Konan?
- 4. S2: Scary!
- 5. L: Oh, he's scary?
- Who is this? What is this? open
- 6. S2: Me. (eyes - Japanese)
- 7. L: His eyes? Clarif
- 8. S2: Odeko (forehead-Japanese)
- 9. L: Odeko? Points to her forehead. This? Yes/no clarif
- 10. S2: Points to his head. This.
- 11. L: And what's wrong? Does he have an ouchy? Yes/no clarif
- 12. S2: Yes
- 13. L: Does he have a hat? Yes/no clarif
- 14. S2: No
- 15. L: Here? Why is a black eye? open
- 16. S2: -
- 17. L: Why is his eye black? Is he angry? Yes/no clarify, investigating
- 18. S2: Angry
- 20. L: And what is this? open
- 21. S2: Circle
- 22. L: Circle? And what is this? What is these big lines? Open-specific
- 23. S2: Hair
- 24. L: What is the blue? This one blue open-specific
- 25. S2: Kaminari
- 26. L: Lightning? Thunder reflection
- Why, because you're angry? Open followed by suggestion
- 27. S2: No, Konan is angry.
- 28. L: And blue thunder? investigation
- 29. S2: Jap
- 30. L: Long? clarif
- 31. S2: Yes
- 32. L: Konan is angry and there is blue thunder? Yes/no clarif
- 33. S2: This one and this one and this one.
- 34. L: Do you wanna tell me more about Konan? open
- 35. S2: Here too, here too.

Teacher's turns: 17
Successful S's turns: 16
Missed turns: 1
S's comprehension: 89%
Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.9

Transcript 4: Akriti (A) – Student 2 (S2)

1. A: Ok, Ta-kun, this is so cool!
Is it this way? Yes/no clarif
2. S2: This way -reassuring
3. A: And what did you make? open
4. S2: Snowman, snowman.
5. A: Snowman? Yes/no clarif
6. S2: Yes
7. A: Is it snow falling like this? Yes/no
8. S2: Snowman-
9. A: Is a snowman happy? Yes/no new info-investigating
10. S2: Angry
11. A: Angry, I can tell!
Are his eyes opened or closed. Like this (showing) yes/no clarify-choice
12. S2: Closed
13. A: OK, is snowman near Microcosmos? Yes/no clarif
14. S2: No
15. A: Is he near Takumi's house? Yes/no clarif
16. S2: Yes.
17. A: And where is Takumi? open
18. S2: Not here. Sick.
19. A: Oh, you're sick! And did you make a snowman? Yes/no clarif
20. S2: Yes
21. A: Did you make a snowman and got sick after? Yes/no clarif
22. S2:
23. A: Did you make a snowman and went atchoo and then you went inside? Is that what happened?
24. S2: -
25. A: Cool, I like it! Anything else?
26. S2: Yes
27. A: What? What else? Who else is here? open
28. S2: Happy is not here!
29. A: Ok, alright, thank you Takumi!

Teacher's turns: 15
Successful S's turns: 12
Missed S's turns: 2
S's comprehension: 86%
Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.8

Transcript 5: Lisa (L) – Student 3 (S3)

1. L: This one's an umbrella? How many umbrellas? Yes/no initiation
2. S3: This one. Moon.
3. L: And many umbrellas? Yes/no connector –focusing
4. S3: Many umbrellas.
5. L: Many umbrellas? Confirming yes/no
6. S3: Yes
7. L: From who? open
8. S3: -
9. L: Daddy or Rei-chan? Clarifying the open question
10. S3: Rei-chan, this one Rei-chan.
11. L: Who's is this? open
12. S3: This one Mommy's!
13. L: And who's is this? Open repetitive
14. S3: Mai-chan!
- Mai-chan's pink. Providing more information
15. L: I thought it was the moon. Reflecting -feedback
Moon for Mai-chan? Yes/no request for new information
16. S3: Yes
17. L: Wow! Is it raining? Is that what this is? Yes/no –negotiating the meaning
18. S3: This one agreeing
19. L: And where is everybody going? open-initiating a new topic
20. S3: This one, this one, this one (pointing at different objects)
21. L: What is it? Open-
This one is what?
22. S3: Rain
23. L: And where are you going? To school or outside? Where are you going? open-
providing clue and choice
24. S3: To pool.
25. L: To pool? In the rain? Yes/no request for child's approval
26. S3: Yes
27. L: And what did you do? Did you go swimming? Open- clueing and initiating a new topic
28. S3: Swimming.
29. L: With everybody? And what is it? More rain? Lots of colors? Summarizing and asking
for child's feedback
30. S3: Yes.
31. L: Very nice, thank you Rei-Rei.-praise

Teacher's turns: 16

Successful S's turns: 14

Missed S's turn: 1

S's comprehension: 100%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.9

Transcript 6: Akriti (A) – Student 3 (S3)

1. A: What is it?
2. S3: Ghost!
3. A: Is there two ghosts or one ghost?
4. S3: Two ghosts
5. A: Wow and what is the ghost doing?
6. S3: Obake asobi
7. A: Are they playing with each other? Two ghosts playing with each other?
8. S3: Yes! Obake no mizu asobi!
9. A: Are they playing in the water?
10. S3: Yes
11. A: Wow Are they playing with each other in the water?
Are they cold?
12. S3: -
13. A: Is the water cold? Or is it cold?
14. S3: -
15. A: Cold or hot?
16. S3: Hot
17. A: Hot water! Wow
18. S3: Yes
19. A: What color are the ghosts?
20. S3: Black and yellow
21. A: Great
Are they Rei's friends?
Do you see them?
22. S3: Yes
23. A: Cool
Anything else? Are they cool ghosts? Are they friendly or scary?
24. S3: Scary
25. A: Scary, but they're friends with Rei!
26. S3: Yes
27. A: Good job Rei!

Teacher's turns: 14

Successful S's turns: 11

Missed S's turns: 2

S's comprehension: 85%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.7

Transcript 7: Lisa (L) – Student 4 (S4)

1. S4: Snake-child –initiated
2. L: A blue snake? A bad snake? Clarification – yes/no questions
3. S4: Yes, bad snake. Success-answer, followed by clarification

4. L: Is it scary? Yes/no initiating a new topic-personalization of experience
5. S4: Yes, scary. Success-Complex answer
6. L: It gets the bad guys? Yes/no –asking for details
7. S4: Japanese
8. L: Does he have a name? yes/no-bringing back the focus-personalizing
9. S4: Yes-agreement
10. L: What's his name? open-request for details
11. S4: Bob
12. L: Interesting. Bob. Is there one snake? Feedback yes/no question, asking for more details
13. S4: Yes
14. L: Only one? Yes/no –more clarification
15. S4: Yes
16. L: is it big or small? Choice question, avoiding the breakdown
17. S4: big
18. L: And where does he live? Does he live in Takao's house? Open followed up by yes/no - clarification
18. S4: Yes. This one. Success- referring to his picture-personalization
19. L: In your toilet? Yes/no –initiating a new topic , personalizing
20. S4: this one – reinforcing
21. L: where is this? Here? In your kitchen open – request for details
22. S4: This one in takao's house- complex answer
23. L: Good, let me write it down. Feedback

Teacher's turns: 12

Successful S's turns: 11

Missed S's turns: 0

S's comprehension: 100%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 1

Transcript 8: Akriti (A) – Student 4 (S4)

1. A: What did you make Takao?
2. S4: Ultraman
3. A: Who's that?
- What did this Ultraman do? What did he look like? Red?
4. S4: ...
5. A: Does he wear red cloth?
6. S4: Yes
7. A: Where is he? Show me!
8. S4: ...
9. A: He lives there?
10. S4: Yes
11. A: Where is he? Show me?
12. S4: Here
13. A: Oh, cool?
- Whats' this one? A toy? An Ultraman toy? What kind of toy is it? Does it look like a car?
14. S4: ...
15. A: A house?

16. S4: Yes, house.
17. A: Cool. What's this one?
18. S4: Daddy
19. A: Is Daddy in Ultraman's house playing with his toys in the toy house?
20. S4: Yes
21. A: What's this?
22. S4: A snake.
23. A: Is it a toy snake or a real snake?
24. S4: Real snake.
25. A: Scary! Is the snake a friend or is he fighting the snake?
26. S4: Fighting
27. A: My god, that's scary! And what's this purple line?
28. S4: Gonja- name of the character
29. A: Alright, thank you Takao!

Teacher's turns: 15

Successful S's turns: 11

Missed S's turns: 3

S's comprehension: 77%

Transcript 9: Lisa (L) – Student 5 (S5)

1. L: Ok, Sae what is it?
2. S5: Snow
3. L: This is a snow?
4. S5: Yes
5. L: Snow and what?
Snowflakes? Snow and fish?
6. S5: Snowfish!
7. L: Where?
8. S5: Here
9. L: And what's the snowfish doing?
10. S5: Santa
11. L: Santa? What is it doing with Santa?
12. S5: Drawing!
13. L: The snowfish is drawing with Santa?
14. S5: Yes
15. L: Wow, how interesting and where are they?
16. S5: Water
17. L: Wow, how interesting! Snowfish in the water!
18. S5: Yes
19. L: Funny! And it's snowing off the water?
20. S5: Yes
21. L: And is Saeka here or no?
22. S5: No
23. L: Oh, she's just watching?
24. S5: Yes
25. L: Anything else?
26. S5: Yes, wash?

27. L: Wash hands in the water?
28. S5: Yes, with soap!
29. L: With soap? Who's washing in the water?
30. S5: Fish
31. L: Funny, the fish?
32. S5: Yes
33. L: Is he washing his fin and Santa helping him?
34. S5: Yes
35. L: Funny
- Do you want to tell me anything else?
36. S5: Yes, toilet.
37. L: What about it?
38. S5: Fish - Japanese
39. L: Is fish in the toilet washing his hands?
40. S5: Yes
41. L: Oh, my! Isn't that dirty?
43. S5: Yes
44. L: Give five! Funny story

Teacher's turns: 22

Successful S's turns: 21

Missed S's turns: 1

S's comprehension: 100%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.95

Transcript 10: Akriti (A) – Student 5 (S5)

1. S5: Akriti.
2. A: Is that teacher Akriti? What is teacher Akriti doing?
3. S5: -
4. A: is teacher Akriti talking to Santa.
5. S5: Akriti
6. A: Is teacher Akriti talking to Santa and Sae is Anpanman?
7. S5: Yes. Lisa.
8. A: What is teacher Lisa doing?
9. S5: Lisa- Santa.
10. A: Is teacher Lisa talking to Santa?
11. S5: Yes
12. A: What are they talking about?-twice
13. S5: -
14. A: Are they talking about Caterpillars?
- Are they showing Santa who's naughty and nice?
15. S5: Nice
16. A: They are telling Santa about the Caterpillars presents.
- Wow, good job, Saeka!
- Is Saeka gonna get a present?
17. S5: Yes
18. A: We'll tell Santa to get you Anpanman.

Teacher's turns: 9

Belobrov, A. (2015). Pedagogical implications of discourse analysis: One-on-one teacher-student interaction in a second language preschool class. *Accents Asia*, 7 (2), pp. 67-96.

Successful S's turns: 5

Missed S's turns: 3

S's comprehension: 63%

Co-efficient of efficiency: 0.7