Pan SIG Journal 2020

Edited by

Patrick Conaway and Duncan Iske

PanSIG is an annual conference held in May, and organized by many of the Special Interest Groups (SIGs) of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT).

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

The 19th Annual PanSIG conference was held online using the website Eventzil.la on June 20-21, 2020. The conference had many obstacles to overcome due to the covid-19 pandemic. Thanks to the blood sweat and tears of many volunteers, the conference was able to successfully bring together educators to share their research and practices despite being separated by physical distance. Although a main goal of the conference was to provide a way for language educators to continue their professional development while remaining in their respective homes and offices, we were also able to reduce the carbon footprint of the conference due to the lower energy demands of meeting online compared to traveling to a physical venue. PanSIG 2020 featured over 80 presentations and forums ranging across teaching contexts, pedagogies, and SIG topics, and including several presentations specifically focused upon teaching in an online context. The conference was a collaborative effort from the 26 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) with the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT). The conference enabled participants to attend presentations on a variety of topics in a wide range of fields in language teaching and learning.

This journal represents the sixth edition of the annual PanSIG Journal in its latest form – following 14 years of proceedings publications beginning with 2002 – which includes a selection of articles based on presentations from the 2020 conference. With a detailed and supportive blind peer review process, authors were able to produce high quality articles. The challenges posed by the pandemic in 2020 undoubtably made it difficult to make the time to write, review, and revise articles but our authors rose to that challenge. The articles finally selected for publication in the 2020 PanSIG Journal effectively represent the diverse range of topics presented at the PanSIG conference. Although the reader can only observe the final product of the selected articles, the effort and care of the authors and reviewers to help the submissions reach their full potential clearly show that the PanSIG Journal is just as much a place to grow as a novice author as for the language teaching community to share new ideas.

I would first like to give my warmest thanks to the authors and reviewers of this publication. It was an opportunity for me to read and learn about topics that I may not have encountered if left to my own devices. Seeing the detailed and supportive reviews, as well as the authors' thoughtful and inventive responses was truly inspiring. It made me excited to watch as the articles evolved before my eyes. I would also like to thank Duncan Iske, the associate editor of the 2020 PanSIG Journal for his help and advice. Special thanks to Bill Pellowe for helping me get familiar with the PanSIG website and Mark Brierley for inviting me to get involved with the PanSIG conference. The success of this edition is a cumulative effort from a number of hard-working people who have invested their time and mental energy into the creation of this journal. We hope that you will enjoy reading the articles, and that they may stimulate productive thinking. Congratulations to all the contributors to this edition of the PanSIG Journal.

May 5, 2021
Patrick Conaway
Editor-in-Chief, PanSIG Journal 2020

The PanSIG is an annual conference held in May, and organized by many of the Special Interest Groups (SIGs) of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT). The conference brings together leading scholars and practitioners in language education from Japan, Asia, and throughout the world. It is meant to be a smaller, more intimate conference than the annual international JALT conference (which is held each fall), and is a place where SIG members can network with each other.

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Selected articles from the 2020 PanSIG Conference

Artwork courtesy of James Dunn

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PanSIG Journal 2020

PDF Version

Conference info

PanSIG 2020 was held June 20 - 21 online using the platform Eventzil.la to host Zoom meetings and Youtube video premiers. Thank you to everyone who helped make this conference a success!

Website: http://pansig.org/Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/JALTpansig/Twitter: https://twitter.com/JALT_PanSIG

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PanSIG is the annual conference for Special Interest Groups of the Japan Association of Language Teachers

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The 2020 PanSIG Journal

Study Abroad: Interest, Preferences, and Awareness

Andrew Thompson
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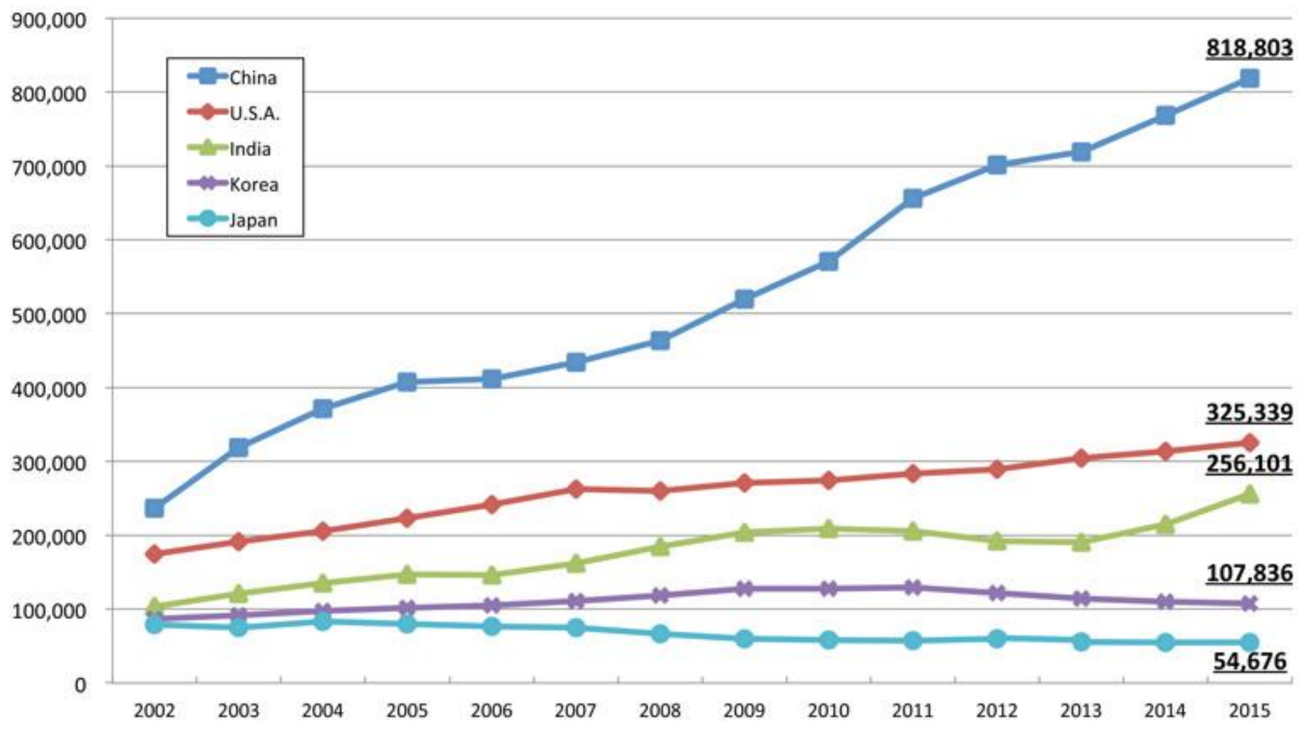
There has been an increased focus in Japan on the importance of studying abroad and its role in the internationalization of universities and the making of human resources able to play an active role in a global community (Tsuneyoshi, 2005; Take & Shoraku, 2018). The purpose of this pilot study was to examine (a) student interest and intent in studying abroad, (b) student preferences relating to studying abroad, and (c) student awareness of opportunities made available through university programs. The study involved 64 (61% male and 39% female) first and second-year students. This study's findings indicate that most participants (61%) wanted to study abroad; however, preferences and study abroad program awareness varied based on academic major and year. Suggestions are made to improve student interest and awareness of opportunities made available through Japanese universities.

日本では、大学の国際化やグローバルコミュニティで活躍できる人材の育成において、留学の重要性とそれらのプログラムが果たす役割がますます注目されています(Tsuneyoshi, 2005; Take & Shoraku, 2018)。この研究の目的は、（a）留学に対する学生の関心と意欲、（b）留学に関する学生の優先事項、（c）大学のプログラムを通じて得られる留学の機会に対する学生の認識。この研究には 64 人（男性 61%、女性 39%）の 1 年生と 2 年生が参加しました。この調査の結果、参加者の大多数（61%）が海外留学を望んでいたことがわかりました。ただし、留学に関する学生の優先事項、および大学の留学プログラムに対しての認識は、学部専攻や学年によって異なりました。日本の大学を通じて提供される留学の機会において、学生の興味と認識を向上させるための提案をします。

The growing influence of the English language both domestically and internationally has seen the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) promote university initiatives designed to increase Japanese students studying abroad. MEXT's budget for study abroad scholarships has increased from 600 million yen in 2009 to 8.1 billion yen in 2017 (MEXT, 2017b). The most recent of these initiatives is the "Project for Establishing University Network for Internationalization" (known as Global 30) to promote the internationalization of universities and the "TOBITATE! (Leap for Tomorrow) Study Abroad Initiative" (2013a) that aims to double the number of Japanese students studying abroad to 120,000 by 2020. The "Tobitate" initiative, according to the official website, is a public and private sector program for developing the future of Japan. However, the number of Japanese university students choosing to study abroad is low compared to other developed countries and has actually decreased since the "Leap for Tomorrow" study abroad initiative was introduced (Figure 1).



Source: https://tobitate.mext.go.jp

Figure 1. Number of Japanese students studying abroad 2003 – 2015 compared to other countries

Research Questions

This pilot study addressed the following research questions:

- Do Japanese university students have an interest in studying abroad?
- What factors may influence a student's decision to study abroad?
- Are students aware of university study abroad programs?

Education and Studying Abroad

Studying abroad has played an essential role within Japanese education policy for several centuries. According to Katori (2016), the primary purpose of studying abroad in China during the 6th century was to learn new technologies, laws, or religious teachings. China remained the primary country for Japanese students seeking to study abroad until the 14th century. From the end of the 19th up to the start of the 20th century, Germany became the destination for Japanese students to gain scientific, technological, and cultural information. Students in these early government programs had an exact role, to bring their learning back to Japan to help develop the country. Today, studying abroad in a Japanese university context is mainly related to experiencing new cultures and languages. Such experiences have positively affected the second language acquisition of students in several ways. In reviewing the literature on what is known about second language acquisition (SLA) as it relates to studying abroad, Freed (1998) noted that it is expected students that have studied abroad come back to their home countries with both improved language skills and increased cultural awareness. A report by Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute (2012) supports this claim, stating that the main reasons for studying abroad among Japanese students are "language learning" and "international exchange experiences." Short-term study abroad programs are the most common type of undergraduate study abroad programs offered by universities in Japan. In 2013, 97% of the 69,869 Japanese studying abroad were on courses of less than one year (MEXT, 2015c), and a recent survey conducted by JAOS (Japan Association of Overseas Studies) indicates that most study abroad experiences (56%) are for less than three months.

According to ICEF Monitor (2018), the decline in the number of Japanese students studying abroad over recent years was not the result of the "students' outlook" but several barriers that do not incentivize studying abroad. These included the failure of the education system to prepare students for studying abroad adequately; Japan's economic stagnation; surplus enrollment capacity of Japanese universities; institutional restraints due to the academic calendar and transferring university credits; and the hiring practices and preferences of Japanese companies, which do not see studying abroad as an advantage.

Education and Student Interest

Studies relating to student interest continue to link interest levels to vital components of education, for example, attention, persistence, recall, and the quality of learner outcomes (Hidi & Berndorff, 1998). Interest has more recently been shown to be associated with positive achievement and, more importantly, how interest may influence what learners choose to study and do in future years after university (Harackiewicz & Hulleman 2010). Research into the development of interest has seen Hidi and Renninger (2006) propose a four-phase model of interest development. This model describes four phases in the development and establishment of student interest. These phases are Triggered Situational Interest (TSI), Maintained Situational Interest (MSI), Emerging Individual Interest (EII), and Well-Developed Individual Interest (WDII). Educators need to be aware of how student interest is triggered and maintained to develop students' long-term interest in studying abroad truly. Considering the significance that interest plays in learning and its influence on positive academic and future decisions, it is hoped that Japanese university educators and administrators can trigger interest in studying abroad, and by doing so, potentially develop "active" student interest in studying abroad.

Method

The purpose of this pilot study was to examine (a) student interest and intent in studying abroad, (b) student preferences relating to studying abroad, and (c) student awareness of university study abroad programs.

Participants

The study involved 64 first (n=41) and second-year (n=23) students (61% male and 39% female) from a private university in southwest Japan. Participants were non-English majors and came from three university faculties (Commerce, Engineering and Humanities). Participants were studying within a compulsory EFL program consisting of two 15-week semesters per academic year with a 90-minute Listening and Speaking class per week. The participants' English proficiency on the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) ranged from elementary level A2 to upper-intermediate level B2.

Instrument

The online survey included seven items (see below). Four student interest items were measured on a 6-point Likert scale from *1. Not true at all* to *6. Very true for me*. The remaining three items were open-ended questions. The survey focused on four areas: student interest in studying abroad, student awareness of the university's study abroad programs, student likelihood of joining a study abroad program, and important points regarding a study abroad program. Interest items were adapted from Thompson et al. (2015) to focus on studying abroad as the previous study was a measure of interest in English. Items were initially constructed in English and then translated into Japanese. Back-translations of items (Brislin, 1980) were conducted to ensure translation fidelity. Student responses were analyzed to detect descriptive statistics and coded based on frequencies of themes.

1. Student Interest Measure

1. I think study abroad would be personally meaningful.
2. I think study abroad would be fun.
3. I think study abroad would be useful.
4. I think study abroad would be interesting.

2. Student Awareness Question

1. Do you know about the study abroad program at this university?

Yes or No

If yes, what do you know?

3. Study Abroad Program Question

1. Would you like to do a study abroad program?

Yes or No

If yes, why is that?

If no, why is that?

4. Study Abroad Preferences Question

Choose two important points regarding a study abroad program for you?

1. English Skill
2. Study Abroad Duration
3. Study Abroad Location
4. Study Abroad Price
5. University Credit

Procedure

The online survey was completed in the first 10 minutes of the lesson in the first and fourteenth class of the semester during the 2019 academic year. The online survey took students approximately 5 minutes to complete. Student responses to open-ended questions were translated into English, and the accuracy of the translation was verified using back-translation procedures. No problems were encountered in either the translation or the back-translation of the student responses. In order to guarantee the anonymity of the participants, no personal information was collected when agreeing to participate in this study.

Findings and Discussion

This pilot study's preliminary findings indicate that students' interest levels in studying abroad slightly increased over the semester (see Table 1) with students. It should be noted that as this was a pilot study, no specific treatment was introduced to students during the semester. The findings from this study also indicate that the majority of participants (see Table 3) did want to study abroad; however, program awareness (see Table 2), intent levels, and program preferences (see Table 4) varied based on academic major and year.

Table 1

Students' interest levels in studying abroad

	M	*SD*	*N*
Week 1	4.92	1.16	62
Week 14	4.99	1.32	63

Notes. M = mean; *SD = standard deviation*.

Unfortunately, the findings also show that students have little awareness of the university's study abroad program (see Table 2). Not surprisingly, most students who were aware of the university's study abroad program were second-year students from the Humanities Faculty. These students were aware of the study abroad program locations, durations, and entry requirements.

Table 2

Percentage of students' that are aware of the university's study abroad program

	%	*N*
Yes	27	17
No	73	45

Notes. % = percentage; *N = number of respondents*.

Interestingly, even though student awareness of the university's study abroad program was low, just over half of the students stated they would like to study abroad (see Table 3).

Table 3

Percentage of students' that would like to study abroad

	%	*N*
Week 1	52	62
Week 14	61	64

Notes. % = percentage; *N = number of respondents*.

See below examples of student's comments on whether they would or would not like to study abroad and why. The themes identified across the student responses were cultural experiences, language skills, future employment, and financial cost. Participants (39%) that did not want to study abroad mainly noted the financial costs and language skills associated with studying abroad. In contrast, those that did want to study abroad highlighted the potential benefits of improving English, experiencing new cultures, and future employment benefits.

Cultural Experiences:

I think that studying abroad will not only improve language skills but also learn about other cultures and have a positive influence on your thinking.

By directly touching foreign cultures and languages, I think that my world will be expanded, and my way of life will be enriched. I think that study abroad programs can only be used during student days, which will be a valuable experience.

I can imagine having the anxiety of living in a different culture.

Language Skills:

I want to be able to speak English because I feel my English is not good enough.

I want to do it, but I do not think I can do it with my English.

I'm not very good at English.

Future Employment:

I think studying abroad would be useful for future employment. Listening to authentic English would improve my listening skills. Also, it would directly help me learn about the culture.

In today's global society, I want to acquire a certain level of English proficiency and expand my future work.

I think the overseas experience will definitely help in the future.

Financial Costs:

Because it costs money.

It takes money to study abroad.

I have no courage to go and no money.

It may be useful, but it is expensive.

It seems that students' foremost consideration regarding studying abroad is the perceived language skills required and also, not surprisingly, based on their open-ended responses, the associated financial costs of studying abroad (see Table 4). Given that many universities can support the costs associated with studying abroad, it seems that students are mostly unaware of this fact. Interestingly, the university students surveyed put very little importance on obtaining course credit while studying abroad. As mentioned earlier, it should be noted that short-term study abroad experiences are the most common type of undergraduate study abroad programs in Japan, and therefore obtaining credit may not be seen as a priority or viable option among many Japanese students. Not surprisingly, the perceived language proficiency required for studying abroad by Japanese students and the associated costs were the most significant factors influencing whether students intended to join a study abroad program in the future.

Table 4

Important considerations regarding a study abroad program for students

	%
English Language Skill	33.33
Study Abroad Costs	30.08
Study Abroad Duration	17.07
Study Abroad Location	13.82
Study Abroad Credit	5.69

Notes. % = percentage; *N*=62.

Limitations

This short paper is based on a pilot study, so the number of participants was not significant. Therefore, more data, from a larger sample group; utilizing preliminary and follow-up surveys in association with student interviews are needed to confirm or refute this pilot study's preliminary findings. Thus, the results of this study are not generalizable.

Conclusion

This pilot study aimed to better understand students' interest in studying abroad. The students shared their opinions, perceptions, awareness, and intentions relating to study abroad programs. Not to mention the factors that may influence their decision to study abroad someday. The preliminary findings suggest that Japanese university students do have an interest in studying abroad. The students in this study did see the merits of studying abroad.

However, only 61% showed genuine intent to study abroad. As with any study conducted within one university, the external validity of the results awaits further testing. This study was the first phase in the potential development of study abroad teaching materials designed to promote studying abroad to Japanese students. It is recommended that the Japanese Ministry of Education, university administrators, and educators continue to investigate Japanese university students' specific needs to better develop and support future study abroad initiatives once the "Leap for Tomorrow" study abroad initiative comes to an end.

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Using a Learner Corpus to Design a Placement Test

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Corpora have become essential tools to write test items in recent years. The research reported here demonstrates a method to extract and analyse data from an academic corpus and learner corpora in the process of writing test question items. An example is provided for the grammatical item “as” in the context of a placement test for Japanese learners. The value of the data collection and analysis is illustrated through the consolidation of the data into a reference table that can be used when writing test items. The reference table helps the test writer to write questions while relying less on intuition and more on evidence about learners’ knowledge and errors at different proficiency levels. This research is evaluated in terms of the needs of test writers.

近年、コーパスはテスト問題の記述に欠かせないツールとなっている。本研究では、テスト問題の記述過程において、学術コーパスと学習者コーパスからデータを抽出し、分析する方法を示した。例として、日本語学習者のプレースメントテストの文脈での文法項目「as」を挙げている。データ収集と分析の価値は、テスト項目を書く際に使用できる参照表にデータを統合することで示されています。この参照表は、テスト作成者が、直感に頼らず、学習者の知識や誤りについての証拠に頼りながら問題を作成するのに役立ちます。この研究は、テストライターのニーズという観点から評価されています。

One key consideration when placing students into language courses is learners’ ability to control grammar. Writing a placement test for grammar usually involves the definition of grammar constructs. Purpura (2004) notes that providing construct definitions is necessary for the test writer to adequately evaluate whether the test items are measuring what they are intended to measure. However, such construct validity is not always simple to establish. Hughes (2003) defines the term construct as “any underlying ability (or trait) that is hypothesized in a theory of language ability” (p. 31) and argues that it is impossible to demonstrate construct validity if an ability has not been established to exist in prior research. Fortunately, in the area of grammar, research exists which strongly suggests grammatical ability does indeed exist in learners.

O’Keeffe and Mark (2017) describe the English Grammar Profile project, which uses learner corpora of responses to the writing components in the Cambridge suite of tests to determine the proficiency level at which learners are deemed to have adequately acquired a given grammar item of interest. Callies (2015) refers to this approach as a corpus-based approach in that both native and learner corpora are compared to provide evidence that can help operationalize proficiency. He also describes the corpus-informed approach which Barker, Salamoura and Saville (2015) claim is useful for validating test-writer intuition about whether a construct has content-validity. In Hughes’ (2003) terms, content validity refers to whether the item being tested is an item that is used in the learners’ target context. For example, learners who will study in academic English at the graduate level will likely need to develop abilities in a wide range of grammar that is used in writing papers. Academic corpora can be used to identify the particular grammatical content that is likely to be found in academic writing and that learners are therefore likely to need.

Defining a valid construct of grammar ability for placement test purposes, then, depends on both the grammatical items of a target domain, such as academic writing, and the proficiency of learners. Purpura (2004) offers a clear definition for the construct of grammatical ability as the ability to accurately use grammatical form, meaning and pragmatics in a given context (pp. 83 – 99). He further offers an analysis of some well-known tests and describes the grammatical items chosen by the test writers to represent the ability that learners need in a given domain. One specific example concerns a placement test in which the learners are required to know the form of relative clauses and the meaningfulness of defining and non-defining clauses. While it is certainly possible to specify form and meaning when defining the construct of grammatical ability, the missing key in this type of construct definition is proficiency.

O'Donnell (2015) showed that it is possible to order the difficulty of the tense-aspect structure of English based on frequency of usage at different proficiencies in a learner corpus. He argued that this information can help sequence the items within a curriculum. Similarly, Thewissen (2013) tracked learner errors in English across a wide range of proficiency levels for three first-language groups (French, German and Spanish). She identified error development profiles, and found that intermediate and advanced learners make progress in reducing or stabilizing their error production, while an increase in errors is noted as a sign of learners' development of grammatical complexity.

It is not difficult to extend these approaches to the case of test writing. Purpura (2004), in fact, points out that assessments involving the distinction between meaning and form, as well as incorporating information about errors "may require innovation" (p. 257). The approaches above have the potential to help test writers to understand which forms and meanings are used at which proficiency levels, and what errors are made at what levels. Armed with this information, test writers can rely less on intuition and more on item design. In the case of placement tests, this can help to avoid false positives, in which a student may miss the opportunity to receive English support, and false negatives, in which a student who didn't need support is required to enter a program (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007).

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the use of corpora in the refinement of construct definitions for grammatical ability, focusing on the item "as", a common adverbial signal. Two learner corpora and one academic corpus is used to analyse the underuse, overuse and errors in both form and meaning among Japanese learners at different proficiency levels. The analysis is consolidated into a reference table which can be used as a description to help write test items for "as".

Methods and Materials

A seven-step process is described here for the design of grammar test items in the context of the design of a placement test for learners of academic English.

Step One: Preparation of Materials

Corpora and dictionaries were prepared first. The selection of corpora should be in keeping with the idea that a corpus represents the discourse community of interest (McEnery, Xiao & Tono, 2006). Since successful academic writing was taken as the target context for learners, the British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus was accessed through Sketch Engine to provide content validity for the decision to test the use of *as*. Similarly, since the learners in question had varying proficiency levels and were required to write in an academic style, a corpus of learner writing in this context would give the most valid results. Since such a learner corpus was not available, publicly available corpora were selected that best represented this context. Two corpora, ICNALE (Ishikawa, 2013) and ICLE (Granger, Dupont, Meunier, Naets & Paquot, 2020) were selected.

The written portion of ICNALE (International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English) contains approximately 1.3 million words of written learner texts by learners from ten countries in Asia, each between 200 and 300 words in response to an argumentative essay prompt. The writing is focused on two topics around the issues of smoking in restaurants and part time jobs for students. Each text is tagged for proficiency on the CEFR scale as either A2, B1-lower, B1-upper and B2.

ICLE (International Corpus of Learner English) contains approximately 5 million words of mainly argumentative essays written by high-intermediate to advanced learners of English from 26 mother tongue background. While these are not tagged for proficiency, assessment of 20 texts from each language background showed that these texts represent proficiency on the CEFR scale at B2, C1 and C2, with around 65% being at the advanced (C1 and above) levels (Granger et al., 2020).

An important step in selecting publicly available corpora is to ensure that the corpus contains the type of data needed to tackle a given research question. More often than not, corpora are designed with a specific purpose in mind, so it is necessary to check that they can be used in a different research context. Of interest in this research is Japanese learners' writing, so the distribution of words in the Japanese sub-corpus of ICNALE was examined. Table 1 shows the token and type counts at each proficiency.

	A2	B1_lower	B1_upper	B2	Full corpus
Tokens	68,529	79,591	22,390	8,532	179,042
Types	3,110	3,269	1,696	1,026	4,625

Table 1: Token and type frequencies for ICNALE: Japanese sub-corpus

	A2	B1	B2	Full corpus
Tokens	68,529	101,981	48,192	218,702
Types	3,110	3,593	3,761	5,980

Table 2: Token and type frequencies in the combined ICNALE and ICLE Japanese sub-corpora

As can be seen in Table 1, B1-upper and B2 levels contain very few words in comparison to the lower levels. Since normalization (e.g. number of occurrences of *as* per 10,000 words) is a procedure used to compare sub-corpora, the small number of words at higher proficiencies might introduce bias due to the effect of a Zipfian distribution which cannot be accurately predicted (Bestgen, 2019).

To deal with this, first, the B1-lower and B1-upper proficiencies were combined into a B1 proficiency. Second, 65 texts from the Japanese sub-corpus of ICLE that were approximately B2 level were selected and added to the ICNALE corpus. One condition for the selection of texts from ICLE was that they had to be written under timed conditions, which matches the conditions of the ICNALE corpus. However, there are some differences to be noted. First, ICNALE focuses on essays about only two topics, whereas there are many more topics in ICLE. Second ICNALE essays tend to be around 200 to 300 words in length, whereas essays in ICLE are generally longer at approximately 600 to 900 words. Nonetheless, given that the placement test being designed is interested in separating lower-level learners (A2 and B1: those who need academic English support) from the upper-level learners (B2), this trade-off seems reasonable. This is because any variation in usage of *as* could be attributed to proficiency differences as well as topic differences and text length differences. The distribution of words in the combined Japanese learner corpus is shown in Table 2. The ICNALE corpus also contains an English Native Speaker (ENS) sub-corpus, which allows for comparison with the learner sub-corpora.

As can be seen from Table 2 and Table 1, the word types count increased by approximately 1,300. This could be due to the increased text length at B2 level, increased proficiency of the learners and the wider range of topics. In fact, Granger (2013) pointed out in an analysis of ICNALE that if a corpus narrowly focuses on just a few topics, a bias towards highly frequent words might emerge.

Step Two: Preparation of Tools

This step should occur simultaneously with step 1 in that the choice of corpora will also determine the choice of tools used. Antconc (Anthony, 2019) is freely available concordancing software which is useful when the researchers have corpora available in the form of text files. Sketch Engine (https://www.sketchengine.eu), another tool, provides access to a wide variety of corpora, including BAWE and the Open Cambridge Learner Corpus. Both tools allow for the extraction of frequency data and concordance lines for the construct in question. This frequency data and the concordance lines can be analysed in Excel or Google Sheets, and if more rigorous statistical analysis is necessary, the software package R can be used to handle data efficiently. The present research employed AntConc and Excel.

Step Three: Preparation of Items

The target corpus is useful here to prepare items that potentially meet content validity, i.e., those items found in the target context (BAWE). Therefore, Sketch Engine was used to search for *as* in BAWE. Since BAWE is tagged for grammatical parts of speech using the CLAWS7 tagging system, Sketch Engine can count the frequency for different uses of the word *as*. There are a total of 20 tags for the word *as*. Seven tags attribute to *as* the form of subordinating conjunction (CS), and include expressions such as *as far as*, *as if*, and *as though*. Six tags (e.g. RR and RG) label degree and general adverb usage of *as*, and six tags (e.g. II) show *as* as a general preposition, capturing expressions such as *as well as*, *such as*, and *as to*. Table 3 shows the frequency data for some parts of speech tags attributed to *as* in BAWE.

From this, three form-based categories are proposed for the use of *as* in academic writing:

1. subordinating conjunction *as* (including *as if, as though*)
2. preposition *as* (including *such as, as to*)

3. *as* ~ *as* expressions

According to the Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (Biber et al., 1999), these three categories are all subsumed under the term “adverbial”, in which subordinate clauses and prepositional phrases can be adverbials within a sentence. Additionally, these three categories may have face validity on a placement test since they are regularly taught in English language programs at all proficiency levels. Similarly, they are easy for a test writer to recognize and code in a learner corpus.

Word	Tag	Frequency
as	CSA	30,453
as	II	19,186
as	II22	6,886
as	II31	2,625
as	RG	2,293

Table 3: Examples of parts of speech tags and their frequencies for the word *as* in BAWE. Retrieved from Sketch Engine.

ICNALE/ICLE sub-corpus	Raw Frequency of “as”	Normalized Frequency
A2	236	34.4
B1	364	35.7
B2+	278	57.7
ENS	724	79.9

Table 4: Raw and normalized frequencies of *as*. Normalization is per 10,000 words.

The distribution of the word *as* at each proficiency level for Japanese learners and English Native Speakers is shown in Table 4. These tables show that A2 and B1 learners have approximately the same distribution of usage but as proficiency increases, usage also increase.

Step Four: Coding the Data

Using Antconc, the word *as* was searched in each of the proficiency levels of the combined Japanese ICNALE and ICLE sub-corpus. The output was saved as a text file and opened for coding in Excel. Each concordance line was then coded as one of the three form-types: subordinating conjunction, prepositional phrase, or as ~ as structure. Figure 1 shows a screenshot of the coding process. The existence of errors was also coded. Further coding was carried out to classify the functional usage (meaning) of the structure. Biber et al. (1999) provide a useful list of categories for adverbials which can be applied to each of the concordance lines in Figure 1.

Step Five: Analyzing the Data

Following coding, simple functions in Excel were used to quantify the variations of forms, errors, and functions (meanings) to be quantified.

Focus on Forms

Figure 2 compares the distribution of the forms of *as* as a proportion of all sentences at each proficiency level. As can be seen, 71.9% of A2 sentences containing *as* are used as prepositions. These decrease as proficiency increases, although B1 and B2 levels show roughly the same proportion. The proportion of *as* as a conjunction rises with increasing proficiency and B2 learners are roughly at the same level as the ENS group. The use of *as* ~ *as* expressions seems to vary in proportion, and this may be due to learners experimenting with the forms.

It has been noted in the learner corpus literature that as learners acquire new forms, they tend to experiment with them, and that this can also increase the opportunity for errors (Thewissen, 2013; O’Donnell, 2015). The next stage of the analysis involves focusing on errors, and the findings about errors may go some way to explaining the fluctuation in the proportion of *as* ~ *as* expressions.

Focus on Errors

After all the errors are coded, Excel can be used to aggregate the proportion of sentences which contain an error. Table 5 shows the proportion of sentences containing errors at each proficiency level. Interestingly, both A2 and B1 level learners have the same proportion of errors, but the proportion of sentences with *as* containing errors reduces at the B2 level.

Proficiency	Percentage
A2	26.1
B1	26.1
B2+	17.6

Table 5: Percentage of sentences that contain an error with the use of *as* in ICNALE/ICLE

A key question to answer is where exactly these errors occur. Again, using Excel, the proportion of each form (preposition, conjunction, as ~ as expression) containing errors can be calculated. Table 6 shows the proportions. The proportion of errors drops between A2 and B2 for both prepositions and conjunctions, with conjunctions showing the largest reduction as a proportion. However, errors for *as* ~ *as* expressions increase at B1 level, which may be consistent with the idea above that B1 learners are experimenting further with these expressions. There is a drop again at the B2 level to a proportion below that of the A2 level. Nonetheless, the error proportions are quite high in comparison with the proportions for prepositions and conjunctions.

	A2	B1	B2+
Preposition	23.3	19.2	16.0
Conjunction	20.0	19.7	10.6
as ~ as	43.8	52.4	37.1

Table 6: Proportions of each form containing errors at each proficiency level

A	B	E	H	I	J	K	L
	fullSentence	docId	AdvCl	PP	as ~ as	function	Error
1	Therefore it is quite better to earn by ourselves as much as possible .	W_JPN_PTJ0	0	0	1	Circumstance:Contingency:Extent	0
2	As for me , I can live without working if I ask my parents to support me but I chose to work .	W_JPN_PTJ0	0	1	0	Stance:Epistemic:Perspective	0
3	Part time job could be only one place that student can learn about society as working adults .	W_JPN_PTJ0	0	1	0	Circumstance:Process:Limiting	0
4	If they want to earn a lot of money in a short time , they should work as a cram school teacher .	W_JPN_PTJ0	0	1	0	Circumstance:Process:Limiting	0
5	For example , if the students work as waiter or waitress , they can learn polite word and good manner .	W_JPN_PTJ0	0	1	0	Circumstance:Process:Limiting	0
7	They can use that money as they want .	W_JPN_PTJ0	1	0	0	Circumstance:Process:Manner	0
8	As this , there are many reasons for students to work .	W_JPN_PTJ0	0	1	0	Circumstance:Contingency:Comparison	1

Figure 1: An example of coding the concordance lines for form, function (meaning) and error

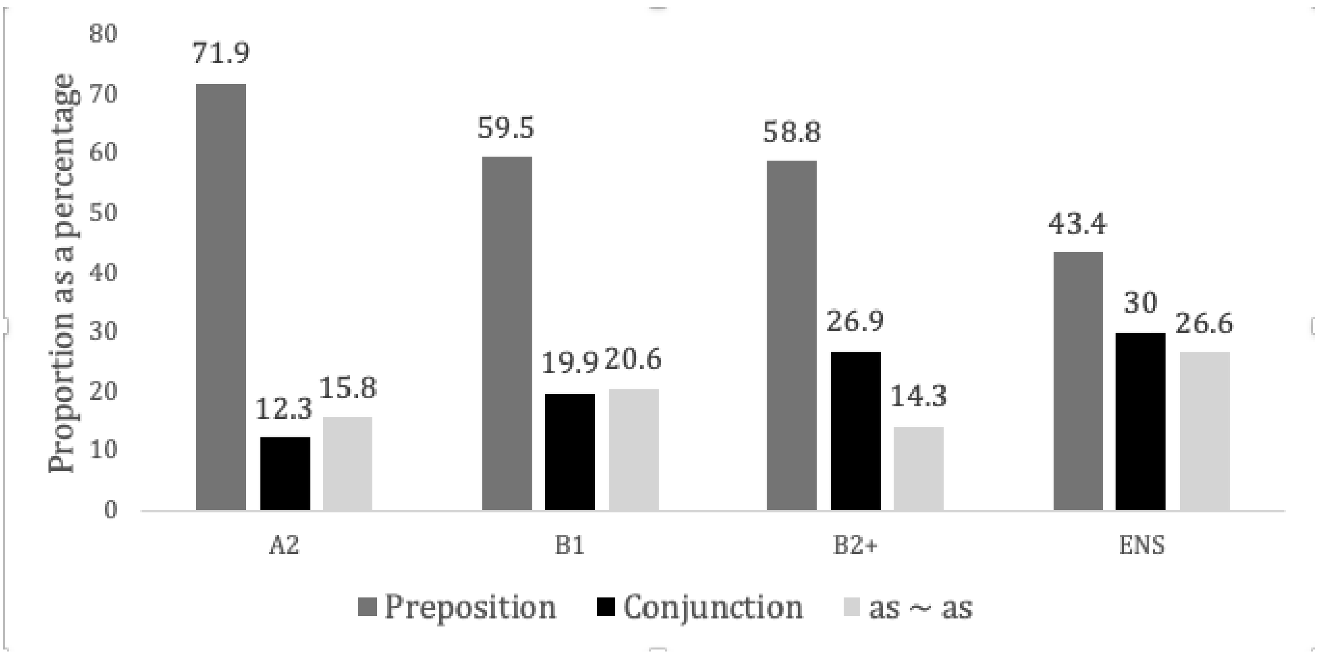

Figure 2: Variation in the use of *as* across proficiencies compared with the English Native Speaker sub-corpus (ENS)

Proficiency	Syntactic or usage error
B2 (prep)	Before I started to work <u>as</u> a part time, I thought that money is … (W_JPN_PTJ0_009_B2_0.txt / ICNALE)
B1 (as ~ as)	Smoking at all the public places should be banned <u>soon as</u> possible. (W_JPN_SMK0_215_B1_1.txt / ICNALE)
A2 (conj)	Only one thing I can do is to serve foods and drinks to the guests <u>as</u> said. (W_JPN_PTJ0_327_A2_0.txt / ICNALE)
B2 (conj)	It became so small and light <u>as</u> we can take it in our pocket. (JPWA1013.txt / ICLE)
B1 (prep)	A nonsmoker smokes indirectly if people surround him snoke in a small place <u>as</u> a restaurant. (W_JPN_SMK0_236_B1_1.txt / ICNALE)
A2 (as ~ as)	The restaurant must make customers <u>as much as possible</u> be satified with service and kindness. (W_JPN_SMK0_114_A2_0.txt / ICNALE)

Table 7: Notable errors in forms at different proficiency levels

Notable errors can also be extracted qualitatively. This involves using the Excel sheet to tag error corrections to each concordance line which contains an error. Table 7 provides a snapshot of some notable errors. It is important here not to argue that these errors are common, since the numbers do not necessarily justify calling them common. Nonetheless, they are likely to concur with a test-writer's intuition and experience of learner writing that these are important and can be used when writing test questions. Adverbials of time, extent (as much as possible), comparison (the same as), result (as a result), and apposition (as mentioned above), as well as adverbials which limit the scope of the verb or noun it is attached to (I work as a waiter; English as a second language) are just a few among a wide range of functions for adverbials (Biber et al., 1999). Each concordance line from the learner corpus and ENS corpus can be coded for its function. Figure 3 shows the proportion of sentences at each proficiency level in which the word *as* fulfills the particular function.

As can be seen in Figure 3, 56.7% of sentences containing *as* at A2 level fulfill a limiting function. This is the most common function at all proficiency levels, but it is particularly high at A2 and B1 levels. The expression "I work as…" is quite common. This is likely a reflection of the part time jobs topic in the ICNALE corpus. Nonetheless, even though the B2 corpus is made up of a variety of topics from the ICLE corpus, the usage of the limiting function is still quite high, and higher still than the ENS portion of ICNALE. Native speakers make greater use of the result function than the learners, but B2 learners are approaching the same proportion as native speakers in their use of the comparison function. B1 learners seem to be overusing the perspective function (as we all know), whereas B2 learners appear to be overusing the apposition function (as mentioned above). The overuse of these types of fixed expressions may be due to learners discovering their potential and experimenting with new discursive functions in their writing.

Step Six: Consolidating the Analysis

The next step involved taking the analysis and putting the information into a reference table. Table 8 provides an example of the reference table that can be created from the above analyses. The table indicates where overuse and underuse of form and function occur and highlights where errors tend to occur in form. The table also includes information about notable errors. All of this information can then be used in writing test questions around the three constructs related to *as*.

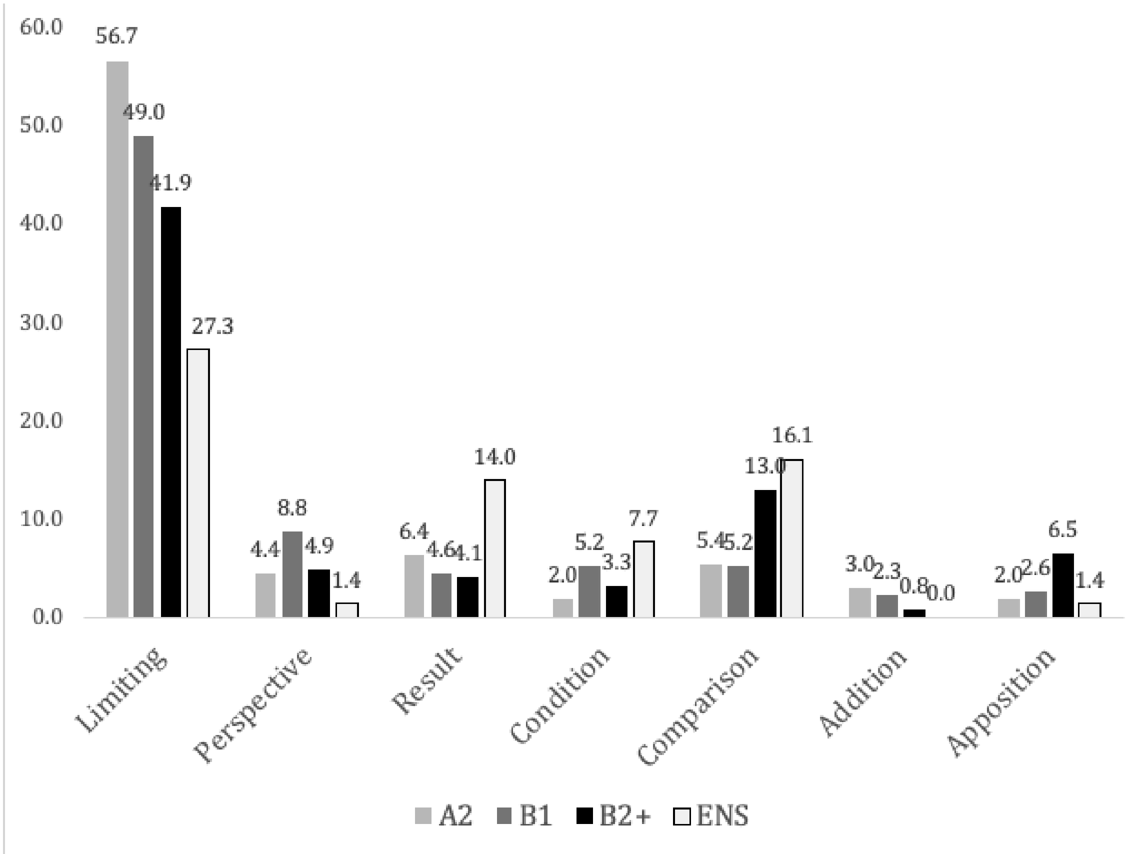

Figure 3: Percentage of sentences with *as* fulfilling different functional roles and distributed across proficiency levels

	Overuse	**Underuse**	**High Error rates**
A2 and B1 Learners	Form: Prepositions Function: Limiting	Form: Conjunctions Function: Comparison Function: Result	Form: Prepositions Form: Conjunctions Form: "as ~ as"
B2 Learners	Function: Limiting	Function: Result	Form: Prepositions Form: "as ~ as"
	Notable Errors		
A2 / B1	I worked as a part time job. We can increase association such as parties (example does not match category). As conclusion (In conclusion) This is as same as … make food as hard as they can (wrong adjective) Do it even as you feel bad (wrong form: even if / even though) As buying it there is no benefit for us. (Dependent clause alone)		
B2	I worked as a part time job (this error persists) We should do it as far as there is a lot of money (as long as) As they can choose when they work. (Dependent clause alone) As the reality / As the effect (wrong fixed expression) Can't speak as native speaker (as if we were)		

Table 8: Reference table created from the analysis. This can be used as a reference when writing test questions

Step Seven: Writing the Test Questions

The reference table is designed to show the difference between lower-level learners (A2 and B1) who would likely need support in an academic English program, and higher-level learners (B2). We can use observations from the table to help us write test questions. Two samples are provided as examples:

Question 1: This question is based on the observation that "worked as a part time job" is a persistent error from A2 to B2 and "as same as" seems to be an error at lower levels.

Which underlined word A, B, C or D is a mistake?
When I was the[A] same age as[B] you, I worked as[C] a part time job at[D] a restaurant.

Options A and B may act as distractors for lower-level learners.

Question 2: The observation that both B1 and B2 learners sometimes choose the wrong form for conjunctions like *as if* and *as though*, that B2 learners may be more familiar with a wider range of forms, and that B1 learners tend to make more errors with as ~ as forms allows us to write a question like this:

We can't speak English ________ English is our first language.

A. so as
B. as if
C. as
D. as long as

We could predict that this question may be quite difficult for the lower-level students and thus better discriminate between the lower and higher-level groups.

Conclusion

This study attempted to demonstrate a process for writing grammar test items which provide content validity and allow the test writer to address proficiency in terms of meaning, form and errors. The data for the use of *as* was coded according to three main forms: prepositions, subordinating conjunctions, and as ~ as expressions. Errors and functional usage were also coded. The analysis was consolidated into a reference table of observations that provides the evidence for the test writer to construct questions. Each test question is essentially a hypothesis about what the learner knows and what types of errors learners are likely to make. The choice of three forms was convenient at the time of coding the data. It is certainly possible to code other forms such as multi-word expressions with *as*, including *as if, as though* and *such as*. This would provide a more fine-grained analysis, but care must be taken not to introduce too many categories as this can introduce sparsity into the data. The combination of two different corpora should also be treated with caution as this introduces variables into the analysis which are not easy to control, such as text length differences and variation in the topic, which may potentially affect the distributions of items across proficiencies. The best approach would be for each institution wanting to write a test to create its own specific learner corpus. However, if time and resources are constrained, then using open corpora, such as ICNALE and ICLE, can provide a reasonable proxy for question writing. It should also be noted that test questions created in this way provide only hypotheses for what we believe learners know, don't know and the errors they make. Essentially, this process covers the first three stages of test writing outlined by Hughes (2003) and does not involve trialling on native and non-native speakers, calibrating the test and then validating the test.

Finally, the amount of time required to code and analyse the data was considerable. Approximately 650 sentences were coded and analysed in this study and took approximately 20 hours in total. While a large number of questions could be generated from the reference table, a judgement needs to be made about how efficient this process is. Certainly, more work is required to refine and streamline this process, but hopefully this research has demonstrated the potential of this approach and provides a first step in a more data-driven approach to item writing.

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ICNALE: http://language.sakura.ne.jp/icnale/

Using Japanese Psychology to Promote Cultural Awareness and Self-Reflection in University Classrooms

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With the push to internationalize university departments, Japanese students are encouraged and, in some cases, required to participate in study abroad programs. This paper will provide a description of a pre-study abroad program, which contains aspects of both Western and Eastern psychological counseling modalities, that supports students' mental health and encourages cultural awareness and self-reflection while they are studying abroad. Exercises that are based on Japanese Psychologies, and that are used in this program, will be provided, along with ideas on how they can be incorporated into a variety of university courses.

大学における国際化の動きの中で、多くの日本人学生が留学プログラムへの参加を奨励されており、時にはこうしたプログラムへの参加が必須のものとなっている。本稿で紹介するのは、西洋と東洋の心理カウンセリング手法を取り入れた留学準備プログラムで、留学中の学生のメンタルヘルスを支援し、異文化理解と内省を促すことを目的としている。このプログラムで用いられる、日本の心理学に基づく実践について、これを大学のコースへいかに取り込むかという視点と共に述べる。

Japan, along with many other countries, has been trying for many years to internationalize its higher education system. The process of Internationalizing Japanese universities can be seen in government programs such as the Top Global University Project (スーパーグローバル大学創成支援), previously known as the Global 30 Project, which encourages Japanese students to study abroad (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology, 2020).

Most universities hold orientations or short courses to better prepare Japanese students for study abroad. This paper will briefly explain one pre-study abroad counseling program, and then share three activities that can be adapted to classrooms in order to further support cultural awareness and growth.

Classroom Activities Based Off Japanese Psychologies

Before diving into the exercises, it is important to briefly discuss an important question: What exactly is Japanese psychology? One website claims that “Japanese Psychology blend[s] together beautifully with a contemporary Western life-style and all mainstream religions and belief systems” (Indigo Intentions, 2016). Another website claims that Japanese psychology has many common points in common, such as “similar approaches based on the principles of Oriental philosophy, Buddhism, self-improvement, and resilience (Exploring your mind, 2018).

For the sake of completeness, an extremely simple definition will be given: “Psychology that is practiced in Japan.” This definition may be unsatisfying to those seeking concrete answers, but this is precisely the point—there is no concrete answer to this question, and the definitions that exist are sure to be rejected by some and accepted by others. Let us allow the various Japanese psychological modalities to represent themselves.

One of reasons why Japanese psychologies were chosen is because psychology and counseling were not widely accepted in Japan due in part to the aforementioned stigma that has been attached to mental health care for so long. According to Harvin (2016),

> Years after the development of the Japanese Psychological Association, the psychologists begun to focus more on the development of a curriculum that focused on introducing clinical psychology and counseling. It was not until the early 1990s that this strong demand surfaced. Although

> [counseling] was not easily received, it could have been a lot better if more professionals assisted in the process and if the theories applied to the Japanese culture. It was hard for Japanese people to determine the true meaning of counseling.

There has been much progress in Japan, with indigenous psychologies emerging from the field, and becoming recognized, and widely used in many countries. It should be noted that while many of these methodologies have been labeled by various scholars and practitioners as "psychologies" or "therapies," it is left to the discretion of the reader whether you agree that these are psychologies. With that being said, for the sake of continuity and clarity, they are referred to as psychologies in this article.

The following section contains three sub-sections on three well-known Japanese psychologies. They are briefly explained, and then a connected activity is given. It is important to note that these activities are part of a larger pre-study abroad counseling program that has been conducted for the last four years with four different cohorts. The counseling program is 3-months long, and consists of three modules (roughly one month each), and within each module are exercises and activities that are paired with the psychological modality used for that period of time. For example, module 1 utilizes traditional psychotherapy; module 2 uses Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy methods; and module 3 draws upon Japanese psychological modalities, mainly Morita Therapy. Participants in the program are informed of the overarching goal—to help them succeed during study abroad—and the exercises and activities are presented as tools they can use both during the pre-study abroad period as well as during and after their time abroad. The details of the activities based on the three Japanese psychologies will be shared.

Kaizen Therapy

Kaizen Psychology (also known as Kaizen Therapy or Kaizen Method) is a program of organizational development based on "continuous improvement, worker participation, and a humanized approach to increased productivity" (Krech, 2014, p. 52). The word *kaizen* (in Japanese, かいぜん, カイゼン or 改善) means "improvement" or "change for the better." Psychologist Robert Maurer first discussed applying Kaizen to personal change: start small and make changes over time, what is often referred to as taking "baby steps."

A great activity to use in classrooms and professional development sessions is titled "New Year's Resolution," and is a simple yet effective activity that both teaches the fundamental principles of Kaizen while helping participants understand more about themselves and appropriate goal-making strategies. The instructor poses two questions: What is (or was) your New Year's Resolution, and what is (or was) your plan to achieve this goal? Allow the class to discuss their answers in pairs or small groups, and then have people share their answers if they choose to do so (some may be embarrassed by their resolution, so it is important not to force everyone to share).

After some or all resolutions and plans have been presented, and provide the following instructions: *Look back at your resolution, and write a new plan to reach your goal by breaking it into smaller steps and creating time frames to achieve each smaller goal.* An example you can provide is a person who wants to quit smoking, but instead of giving up cigarettes immediately (going "cold turkey"), he or she can reduce the number of cigarettes smoked each day by 5 each month while incorporating small exercises or meditation sessions into their daily or weekly routine. While this method may not produce 100% success rates, there are multiple opportunities for smaller success (for example, a reduction in the number of cigarettes smoked or the introduction of an exercise routine) that can be celebrated.

Naikan Therapy

While Kaizen has its root in and is most commonly used in business, Naikan Psychology, or Naikan Therapy as it is most commonly referred to, is probably closer to an actual psychological practice. Created by Ishin Yoshimoto (1916-1988) in the 1950s, Naikan is based on a strict method of self-examination that is rooted in Buddhism. Through intense self-examination, one develops "a natural and profound sense of gratitude for blessings bestowed on us by others" (Reynolds, 1989, p. 13). Although various Naikan activities have been developed to assist with self-examination, one stands out with its ability to be applied to a multitude of therapeutic and educational settings.

Before describing the activity, it is important to understand the differences between Naikan Therapy and traditional Western therapy. Western therapies typically focus on helping clients:

- increase their self-esteem;
- focus on their feelings;
- revisit hurt and mistreatment in their past;
- understand their personal experiences;
- consider others' roles and responsibilities in current problems; and
- understand analyses and interpretations of their experiences. (Naikan Therapy, n.d.)

Naikan Therapy, on the other hand, helps clients:

- increase appreciation;
- focus on facts;
- revisit how they've been cared for and supported;
- understand the experiences of others;
- take responsibility for their own actions and decisions, and how those may have caused others problems or distress; and
- self-reflect. (Naikan Therapy, n.d.)

Now that an understanding of Naikan Therapy has been established, the activity can be introduced with a firm understanding of where it is grounded. The activity is titled Three Questions, and presents participants questions that seem simple, but are actually quite intense and through-provoking. The questions are:

1) What have I received from _____?
2) What have I given to_____?
3) What troubles or difficulties have I caused_____?

The questions are simple, but provide a doorway that leads to deep discussions and self-discover. Krech (2015) explains this activity best:

> These questions provide a foundation for reflecting on all relationships, including those with parents, friends, teachers, siblings, work associates, children, and partners. You can reflect on yourself in relation to pets, or even objects such as cars and pianos. You can reflect on a specific period of time, one day or a holiday visit to your family. In each case, you acquire a more realistic view of your conduct and the give-and-take that has occurred in the relationship.

Morita Therapy

The final Japanese Psychology is the most widely spread and practiced therapy that originated in Japan, with its own training centers and in-treatment facilities scattered across the world, and its own international organization or practitioners—the Japanese Society for Morita Therapy (JSMT). Developed by Shoma Morita (1874-1938) in the 1910s to address anxiety-related problems, Morita believed anxiety should be seen as "natural" phenomenon (compared to Western notions of "this is wrong, and therefore must be cured"), and should therefore be added to the human perception of nature.

Critics of Morita Therapy argue that this implies passive resignation, but it is quite the opposite—an active accepting of the natural, including one's fears of the future, imperfections, and other existential concerns. Dissatisfaction in life comes from "confronting, opposing attitudes" rather than an attitude of harmony, which is connected to the Buddhist concept of "no-self." In Morita Therapy, there are three fundamental principles designed to "bring clients inside the rhythm of our natural environment": accept feelings, do what needs doing, and know your purpose (Levine, 2019). Ishiyama (2003) adds, "While Morita Therapy has generally been regarded as a culturally embedded model of mental health, it has been argued that Morita and other indigenous therapies offer meaningful perspectives on, and alternative conceptualization of, mental health issues" (p. 217).

Classic Morita Therapy (CMT) is quite intricate, requiring a great deal of time to devote to complete isolation, journal writing, talk sessions, and physical labor. CMT requires at least a month to complete, and consists of four stages that last a week or more:

- **STAGE ONE:** Seclusion, silence, and rest in a contained space.
- **STAGE TWO:** Light, repetitive work with limited conversations
- **STAGE THREE:** Labor-intensive work and diary writing, with limited talking.
- **STAGE FOUR:** Reintegration back into regular life.

This structure is obviously not conducive for classrooms or professional settings, such as workshops or professional development sessions, nor is it able to be applied to the busy lifestyle of the modern-day university student. A shorter version, called Brief Morita Therapy, was created, but this also proved to be inadequate for use in these settings, as the program consisted of three 50-minute therapy sessions aimed at quickly reducing anxiety (Ishiyama, 1986, p. 59). Therefore, a revised version—Revised Brief Morita Therapy (RBMT)—was created by the author.

In RBMT, the four stages are recreated to capture the essence of CMT, but manageable for busy students or working professionals. Each session, or exercise, usually requires one class period and is more extensive than the previous exercises presented in this article. The sessions below can be compared to CMT, and blended to create a unique experience based on personal preference of group dynamics. After each session is described, an example classroom activity is given.

- **SESSION ONE: PERIODS OF SILENCE**: "Excessive periods of silence could simulate absolute bedrest, during which the client would sit or lie alone for 30 minutes with her or his anxiety and discomfort" (Ogawa, 2013, p. 190-191). While this appears to be counterintuitive, Aldous (1994) points out that a practitioner of Morita Therapy would "challenge the anxious client to try to feel the anxiety as much as possible [and] paradoxically, when the person tries to feel anxious (i.e., wants the anxiety as opposed to being panicked and fearful of it), the anxiety does not increase and often is reduced" (p. 244). This period is silence is followed by journal writing, which should also be completed in silence, and then a discussion of the experience with the larger group.
    - **Sample Classroom Activity**: Turn off the lights, make sure all cell phones are switched off, and have the class sit in complete silence for 10-30 minutes. The time will depend on class size, as well as student personalities, issues, etc. For teachers using this type of mindfulness exercise for the first time, a recommended time to begin with is 10 minutes, as this allows students to experience the anxiety that accompanies silence (5 minutes) followed by a period of accepting and working through the silence. Students are encouraged to confront and accept feelings of discomfort and anxiety (Nakamura, 2010), understanding that these two feelings are normal parts of daily life, and should be embraced. When the time expires, turn on the lights, and have the students immediately begin writing their thoughts and experiences in their journal. This transition should be done in silence, as it helps students focus on processing and expressing their feelings and experiences. After 10-15 minutes of writing, have students share their experiences in small groups or in a roundtable session with the entire class. They may also read from their journals. The act of verbalizing their thoughts and feelings helps to further process the experience, and sharing can also help build trust among the group. The teacher should prepare to summarize the experience by reminding them of accepting one's discomfort and anxiety rather than fighting to "fix" it (Nakamura, 2010).
- **SESSION TWO: OBSERVATION EXERCISES:** Take an isolated walk once a day in total silence; no phone, MP3 player, etc., and no direction or goal (for example,

a walk to the convenience store to buy something cannot be considered an isolated walk with no direction.). This is followed by journal writing, and then group discussion.

- **Sample Classroom Activity**: Have students take a 10-15-minute walk around campus. They must be separate (no pairs or small groups of friends—and this can usually be accomplished by having a route, and letting each student leave at 30- to 45-second intervals. The start of the walk should begin at the classroom door, and the end of the walk should be their desk (after walking through the campus). Once students reach their desk, they should immediately begin writing. What did they see? What did they hear? Overall, what was their experience/thoughts/feelings? After 10-15 minutes of writing, have students share their experiences in small groups or in a roundtable session with the entire class. The teacher should, again, prepare to summarize the experience by reminding them of accepting one's discomfort and anxiety rather than fighting to "fix" it (Nakamura, 2010), but also of the importance of being mindful of the world around them, and reconnecting their bodies and mind to the natural things around them.

- **SESSION THREE: ASSIGNED ACTIVITIES**: Multitasking has become a part of modern life, so providing a time to focus on one activity, alone and in silence, will promote what Ogawa (2013) refers to as "self in the moment" reflection (pp. 190-191). This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, but traditionally is done through daily chore that doesn't require too much thinking (e.g., washing dishes, folding laundry). Depending on your school's setting, administrative flexibility, and students' willingness to participate, certain chores can be done around campus (as explained below). If this is not possible, Levine (2016) suggests "Art-making activities…that enhance the experiences of a client's inherent capacity or talent" can be used, as "such activities move into social engagement with a purpose" (p. 6). This is followed by followed by journal writing, and then group discussion.
    - **Sample Classroom Activity**: Any small chore in the classroom or around campus involving physical movement, and can be accomplished in silence, can be used for this exercise. Chores could range from cleaning the classroom to gardening in a campus garden to picking up trash around the campus. If this work is not possible, simple art projects, such as drawing, painting or making collages, can be used. Students should do the work separate from each other, with no eye contact or talking, focusing only on the work that is being done. Students should actively engage in the process that is being done, and try not to be distracted by people or things around them. Once students finish (and return to the classroom if they have left), they should immediately begin writing about their experience of engaging in and completing the task. After 10-15 minutes of writing, have students share their experiences in small groups or in a roundtable session with the entire class. The teacher should prepare to summarize the experience by reminding them of accepting one's discomfort and anxiety rather than fighting to "fix" it (Nakamura, 2010), the importance of being mindful of the world around them (including the tasks they are engaged in), and reconnecting their bodies and mind to the natural things around them.

- **SESSION FOUR: APPLICATIONS IN DAILY LIFE**: The last session provides the opportunity for students to evaluation the entire experience. This activity could include a discussion on reduced symptoms and accompanying psychological distress, changes in the student's lifestyle, and any behavioral problems and adjustments. The overall goal is to reach new levels of self-awareness, self-acceptance, and insight (Ogawa, 2013).
    - **Sample Classroom Activity**: The goal at this stage is for students to be able to reflect on their progress and present it in some form (essay, presentation, artwork, etc.). Because of the intimate progress that may have occurred, an essay or art collage is recommended (the less academic, the better), with informal presentation or discussion being optional. Based on the author's experience, most students have chosen to write an essay, and only a few students have opted not to speak during the discussion time. An important part is maintaining an atmosphere of respect and support, even when students choose to remain silent.

It should be noted that any part of CMT and RBMT can be incorporated into a classroom or professional context, and can be conducted in participants' native tongue (L1) or their second language (L2). For this pre-study abroad program, English was mainly used since almost all students were going to be using English at their study abroad destinations, but Japanese has also been used in a psycho-education course, with the results showing Morita Therapy exercises "brought about a clarification of problems, an understanding of Morita psychotherapy, and a change in college students' consciousness and character understanding" (Aoki, 2014, p.1).

While traditional Morita practitioners might argue that CMT should not be altered in any way (LeVine, 2018), the core of Morita Therapy should always be the center of the activities. In other words, the entire process is designed to bring the participant into a deeper connection with the self, and remove the need to solve their "problems," instead focusing on functioning in every-day situations (e.g., work, studies) even when facing high levels of stress and anxiety. As Chen (2010) explains, "Morita therapy emphasize the importance of accepting the inconvenient thoughts and feelings as the basic staring point and constructive therapeutic means upon which one can normalize thinking and feeling toward a gradual process of coping and healing" (Chen, 2010, p. 74).

Discussion

The recent coronavirus pandemic has caused a shift in the way people study, work, and travel. Coupled with the intense pressure to internationalize education programs, study abroad programs are suffering, with no relief in sight. With borders closing and international movement restricted, recent study abroad programs have been canceled, halting the opportunity for students around the world to participate in a unique educational experience in a foreign country. However, as unimaginable as it may seem now, study abroad programs will one day resume. The coronavirus has profoundly changed our way of living, working, and traveling, which may add to the normal stress associated with studying abroad. Therefore, is it important for universities to support students to the best of their abilities well before they arrive at their destination. This can be accomplished through pre-study abroad counseling programs, such as the one mentioned, coupled with activities that will guide students to better understand themselves, their own culture, and different cultures around them.

With a little creativity and time management, these exercises can be adapted to classroom settings, including English-language classes or classes where the majority of students do not speak English as their native language. These exercises could also easily be incorporated into Zoom classes (conducted live on Zoom or other applications) or on-demand lessons (pre-recorded and posted on YouTube or another video-sharing website). Even after the coronavirus pandemic is over, online education may become a regular part of the global education system (Idrisova, Idigova, and Alikhadzhiev, 2020), so it will be important to diversify lessons.

It is with great hope that mental health care will become a common part of pre-study abroad orientations and courses, and that students can safely and openly explore themselves while further developing critical thinking, intercultural communication, and cultural sensitivity skills.

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Genius Hour: A Case Study Implementing an inquiry-led project

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"When students are able to be curious, and explore their interests and passions, innovative work happens" (Juliani, 2014, p. xvii). Teachers are constantly faced with the challenge of how to engage their students in meaningful learning and spark intrinsic motivation. Through the use of a case study, this paper presents an overview of an approach to inquiry-led learning that can be used with a range of ages and levels. An inquiry-led learning approach commonly known as 'Genius Hour' or '20% time', gives students autonomy over their own learning whilst also creating a reason to learn. In turn, it offers an alternative way to approach course design. The paper draws primarily on Inquiry and Innovation in the Classroom (Juliani, 2014). It will be of interest to teachers of young learners as well as undergraduate university professors.

「生徒が好奇心を持ち、興味や情熱を探求できるとき、革新的なことが起こります」（ジュリアーニ、2005、p. xvii）教師は常に有意義な学習に学生を巻き込み、本質的なモチベーションを刺激する課題に直面しています。この論文では、ケーススタディを用いて、さまざまな年齢やレベルで使用できる探求型学習へのアプローチの概要を提示します。「20%の時間」とも呼ばれる「探求型授業（天才アワー）」は、学生に自分の学習に対する自律性を与えながら、学ぶ理由を創出します。さらに、コース設計にアプローチする別の方法を提供します。この論文は、教室での探求と革新（ジュリアーニ、2015）と探求型学習に関する文献に基づいて書かれています。これは、若い学習者の教師だけでなく、学部の大学教授にとって興味の持てるものとなっています。

Genius Hour has grown to become an educational tool used in classrooms around the world, from North America to international schools in Hong Kong and Singapore, including Nagoya International School as recently as September 2020. Dunphy (2017) suggests that inquiry-led learning like Genius Hour can help develop the skills needed in the 21st century classroom, such as creativity, leadership and critical thinking. During Genius Hour, students work on projects or research topics that interest them, allowing them to "follow their own questions and curiosities" (Coke, 2018, p.27). Students choose a topic they are passionate about, and decide how they will explore it and what questions they want to answer themselves. Therefore, it is completely student-driven, personalised and does not involve a textbook. Moreover, it is inclusive, as each learner controls how they participate depending on their linguistic level. This type of inquiry-led learning allows students to be in control of their own learning, prioritising student choice. Each week or lesson, a set amount of time is dedicated to Genius Hour in which learners have a chance to further their area of research. The next section will address the theory behind adopting inquiry-led learning.

What are the benefits of inquiry-led learning?

Student choice is the driving force behind inquiry led learning. Consequently, lessons are student-centred rather than prescriptive and teacher-led. Teacher-led classrooms are often characterised by rote learning approaches, where students play a passive role in the learning experience in order to accumulate knowledge for assessment. By contrast, a student-centred classroom, in which learners play an active role in their own learning, fosters a more inclusive learning environment and appeals to all learners. Whilst there might be value in teacher-centred classrooms in some instances, this approach does not always successfully cater to all students, individual student interests or learning preferences.

A principal benefit therefore is that inquiry-led learning gives students a chance to engage in learning that contrasts with more traditional teacher-centred approaches students are often used to. Dunphy suggests that in order to move away from the traditional rote learning experience, teachers must provide their students with “more authentic, thought-provoking, and relevant learning opportunities” (Dunphy, 2017, p.1).

A further benefit is this type of learning experience can be thought of as small-scale research, or a mini-thesis. Allowing students the chance to choose a topic to research and to explore different avenues of investigation, gives students an opportunity to experience what research is like by simulating the research process, albeit on a smaller scale. In turn, learners develop skills related to carrying out research, such as self-reflection, perseverance as well as learning how to deal with setbacks or failures.

Another benefit is related to student motivation. When teachers are faced with how to motivate students, there are two generally accepted types of motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic. Teachers are often expected to include both types of motivation in a course design. Rhem points out, “intrinsic motivation remains inextricably bound to some level of choice and control. Courses that remove these take away the sense of ownership and kill one of the strongest elements in lasting learning” (Rhem, 1995, p.4). The element of control and choice of Genius Hour not only appeals to intrinsic motivations, but can also be closely aligned with the first phase in Winnie and Hadwin's four-stage model of motivation (figure 1), getting learners to notice a gap in their knowledge (Winnie & Hadwin 2008, as cited in Hattie, 2012).

A final benefit is that students can learn about themselves and their peers. Learning should be a collaborative process and therefore teachers should foster an environment that allows for peer-to-peer interaction and discussion (Hattie, 2012). Depending on how Genius Hour is designed, peers can be involved with peer feedback. The next section draws on the case study to illustrate how the project could be designed.

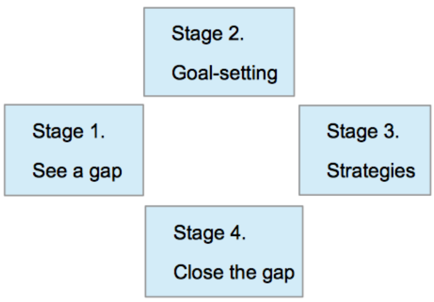

Figure 1. Four-stage model of motivation

The Case Study

Background

The author was involved with a pilot of Genius Hour in the spring of 2017 at a language school in Lisbon, Portugal. The class chosen for this case study consisted of twenty 16 and 17 year old students at CEFR C1 level. The author met with the class once a week for three contact hours, with students spending approximately 45 minutes working on their project each week. The final week of the semester was dedicated to presenting the final outcome to another Genius Hour class in the pilot.

Planning the project

Teachers met at the beginning of the pilot and again periodically throughout the semester to reflect on the progress of the project with individual classes. At the initial planning stage questions that arose included, how long the pilot would last, what classroom ground rules should be established in terms of student participation and lastly if students could work alone, in pairs or in small groups. Firstly, it was decided that the pilot would run for the duration of one 12-week semester. It was the final semester of the academic year and therefore students had built up a good rapport with their peers as well as with the teacher throughout the term. Secondly, teachers agreed that there should be three main ground rules that should be established at the beginning of the term. The first was that whenever possible, students should carry out research and share their ideas in English. Secondly, it was felt that students should try and maximise their time for speaking in English and agree not to waste time during the time dedicated to Genius Hour. Both of these ground rules were in-keeping with the all-English environment policy of the school. Lastly, It was decided that it was best to allow students to decide themselves whether they would work individually or in pairs.

Example projects from the case study

Some Genius Hour project examples from the chosen class included:

- Why do we smile? This pair of students interviewed their friends on camera and analysed when and why they smiled. The videos formed part of their final presentation.

- What is a black hole? This student worked alone. He made a cross section of the universe and added objects to help him explain his research.
- What is skin? This student made a model to represent the structure of skin to show during her presentation.
- The New Zealand All Blacks. This student gave a PowerPoint presentation and showed a short clip to analyse the team's strategy.

Although Juliani (2014) suggests that students begin with a research question to be answered it should be noted it is not necessary to begin with a question. For example, the last project listed above is a topic rather than a question. The participating teachers felt that with lower levels or younger students, researching a topic rather than a research question might be more suitable.

Breakdown of the semester

Figure 2 shows the different stages of the projects over the course of the semester.

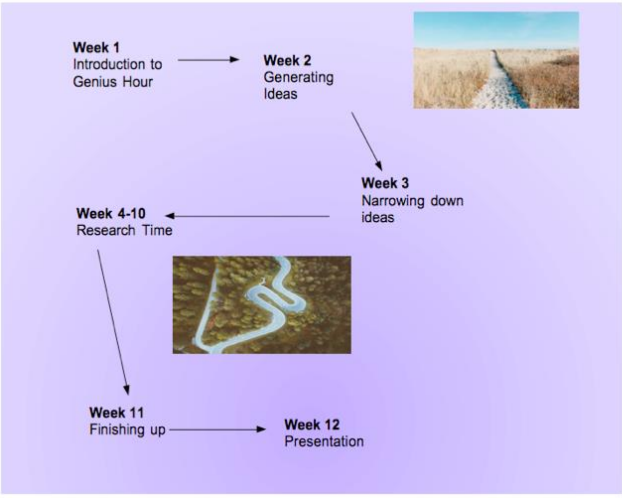

Figure 2. Breakdown of semester

Week 1 – Introduction to Genius Hour

In week 1 students were introduced to the concept of Genius Hour. The students were told that for this semester only they would be working on a special project. They were shown an animated YouTube video that explained the idea of Genius Hour. At this point it is also important to show example projects in order to generate interest and enthusiasm. Teachers can also consider introducing their own Genius Hour Idea as an example for the students. Students were told that in the following lesson they would start thinking about their topic. In week 1, the classroom ground rules were introduced and established.

Week 2 – Generating ideas

In week 2 students were given time to think of different areas of interest such as sport or technology. In order to illustrate the activity, the teacher demonstrated the process of brainstorming initial categories of interest on the board. The teacher then added sub-categories. In some cases, it might be possible to add another more specific category to the interest. After the students complete their own spider diagram, they can show their diagrams to a partner to compare ideas. Figure 3 shows an example spider diagram that can be used for this activity.

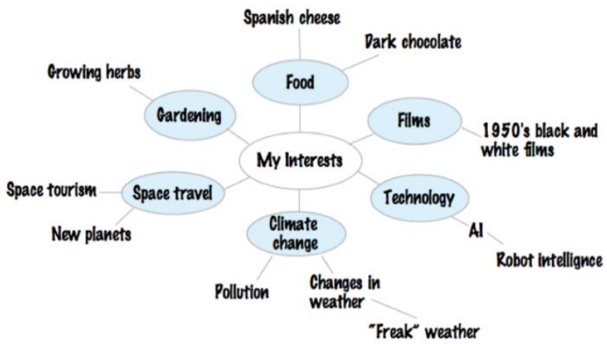

Figure 3. Example of completed spider diagram

Week 3 – Narrowing down ideas

A crucial step in the semester came in week 3. First, students had to choose their final area of research based on the ideas they had thought of the previous week. Students were asked to narrow down their initial ideas by choosing their three preferred areas of research, before making their final decision. At this stage, students can show their diagram again to a partner to help them decide the final topic. Once students had chosen their final topic, they were asked to think of research questions related to the topic. A method that can be used for this stage is a 'Know', 'Want to know' and 'Learned' chart, or a KWL chart. A KWL chart is an effective method of allowing students to assess what they already know about a topic, what they want to learn about the topic, and what they have learned about the topic. As with the ideas generating stage, it can be useful for students to see an example of the activity. The KWL activity can be demonstrated by inserting the teacher's chosen idea (Figure 4). By the end of this activity students should have various questions from which to choose. Depending on the linguistic level of the students, the teacher might need to help students formulate the questions in the second column, however there should not be an over emphasis of accurate language use at this stage as this could detract from the purpose of the activity. The third column should be left blank for students to complete at the end of the project.

Name........................ Esther Topic.................................. Robot Intelligence

K (What I know already)	W (What I would like to know)	L (What I have learnt)
Robots can help humans Robots can do jobs Robots can drive Robots cannot feel emotions like humans can	Are robots really useful for humans? Will robots ever be able to feel emotions like humans!? What would the world look like if robots did everything?	

Figure 4. Example of completed KWL chart

Other possible driving research questions have been suggested by Doss (2018) such as “How do you build a house?” and “How can I create a two-dimensional platform (video game)?” (p. 113). The process of completing a KWL chart maps onto Winnie and Hadwin's four-stage model of motivation (figure 1). First, learners notice a gap in their knowledge, illustrated in the first column. Next, they set goals to access that knowledge, which is represented in the second column. Finally in the third column, the gap of knowledge is closed (2008).

Lastly in week 3, students were asked to write an initial timetable for their research (Figure 5). Writing a timetable engages students in thinking about how exactly they will need to carry out their research, which aligns with Winnie and Hadwin's third stage of motivation, strategies to acquire knowledge. Students often find moving from the first phase to the second phase is the most difficult (Hattie, 2012). Using activities such as a KWL chart and a timetable, help learners become aware of their learning goals and ultimately develop the necessary cognitive strategies to succeed in their learning.

It was also necessary to reassure students that the timetable could be changed later depending on how the project unfolded. For example, during weeks 4 and 10, students could revise some of the steps and adapting the timetable with more rows if necessary. The below example is taken from Juliani's version.

Action steps What will you learn? What will you make?	Timeline When will it be completed by?	Resources What do you need?	Potential barriers What could go wrong?	Completed When this stage is completed, mark an “X” in the box.
Step 1:				
Step 2:				
Step 3:				

Figure 5. Timetable template

In week 3, students were also asked to start thinking about how they would like to present their project at the end of the semester. At this stage, it was important to show a wide range of example final projects as this provided clear models of expectation. Examples included a PowerPoint, a homemade model, a demonstration, and a poster. It should be noted here that it is important for teachers to emphasise the fluidity of the project. For example, if students cannot contact someone they had planned to interview as part of their research, they might have to change that part of the research. Similarly, if a student cannot access a particular material needed for their model they are planning to make, they might have to consider an alternative solution for their final outcome. Students need to be reassured it might be necessary to change the stages in the research, or even the final project.

Weeks 4 – 10 – Research time

The teachers involved in the pilot agreed that teacher input between weeks 4 and 10 was also a crucial aspect of the project. It was felt that while the teachers took on a facilitator role and the classes became less teacher-centred, it was still essential that teachers helped keep students on track. Teachers involved in the pilot noticed that motivation towards the project fluctuated during these weeks. It was felt this was a result of two possible reasons. First, external factors unrelated to their Genius Hour project such as poor motivation towards taking extra-curricular English lessons in general. Another external reason affecting student motivation might have been apathy towards such a student-driven project especially since it was a different style of learning from the regular curriculum. Second, teachers noticed that students became less motivated during particularly challenging stages of the research. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to try and keep students motivated by showing interest in their project or giving guidance about where to look for information. An obvious obstacle was also that some students took more time than others and therefore peer feedback was not always possible since students were progressing at different paces. Students were told peer feedback was not compulsory every week. However, it was agreed it was beneficial to try and incorporate peer feedback as well as weekly self-reflection. It was felt that regular reflection helped students to progress by thinking about their learning, which in turn reinforced the notion that iteration is inherent the learning process. It should be noted however, peer feedback was already an integral part of the curriculum at the school. In the Japanese context, peer feedback might require separate preparation.

Thinking about learning

Between weeks 4 and 10 students answered self-reflection questions at the end of each session. Students kept notes to their questions in a separate Genius Hour folder. After each session, the teachers could look at the self-reflection sheets. It was agreed that this was helpful for teachers to identify ways to help certain students in the following weeks and also notice students lacking motivation. Some guiding reflection questions used were:

- What did I find out today?
- How did I find this out?
- What was difficult? Why?
- What I would do differently next time?
- What do I want to find out next week?
- What can I do to find this out / How can I find this out?

Metacognitive learning such as this helps enhance and develop a learner's perception of their own learning process. However, it should be noted that it can be beneficial to have students do reflection activities in their mother tongue or shared classroom language. Allowing learners, especially children, to reflect on learning in a different language, is no less beneficial than using the target language. Doing so helps build a child's self-expression and encourages children to express themselves without boundaries (Ellis & Ibrahim, 2015).

Weeks 11 and 12 – Finishing up and presentation

In week 11 the students spent the Genius Hour time finalising their projects for the presentation in week 12. Students were able to finish their final project outcomes, practise their talks in small groups and also answer any questions from other students. For the presentation class in week 12, the class met with another participating Genius Hour class for the final hour of the semester. The classroom was set up to resemble an exhibition space with students either sat or stood at a table while the other students walked around the room talking to each student. Depending on the context it might be possible to invite parents and other students to the final presentations.

Getting Started: Practical Implications and Obstacles

Perhaps the biggest initial obstacle when starting Genius Hour is gaining buy-in and support from teachers. Since this case study only involved a small group of volunteer teachers, the teachers were already invested. Careful consideration is required in order to gauge interest and garner support. However, teachers might also decide to implement Genius Hour as independent action research. Getting buy-in from parents is also essential for Genius Hour. Parents need to be informed about the benefits and rationale of Genius Hour. A suggested way to achieve this might be to publish information about the project on the school website. Blogs can also be used to publish updates throughout the project. Students might also be invited to create their own blog documenting their progress. Similarly, the students involved also need to understand the rationale behind the project. In many contexts, students are accustomed to more teacher-led classes. Therefore, it might be necessary to coach the students about the benefits of a student-driven inquiry-based project. Although the case study involved young learners aged 16 to 17, the author feels that Genius Hour could also be adapted for other age groups, for example undergraduate students.

Reflection and Feedback

Lack of formal assessment

As the case study shows, although reflection formed an integral part of the learning process each week, formal assessment was not a component. The subjective and highly personal nature of Genius Hour means that student achievement cannot only be based on the final outcome, rather it should focus on what students have achieved through the whole learning process. Consequently, Genius Hours lends itself to reflection self-assessment rather than formal assessment.

Reflection

The author feels that it would be possible to assess Genius Hour from a reflective point of view by which teachers provide summative and formative feedback on the reflective stages of the project. As presented in the case study, students were invited to reflect on their progress and learning process throughout the project by using weekly guiding questions. Teacher feedback on students' ongoing weekly reflection could be combined with feedback on a final longer summative reflection at the end of the project. Teaching reflective writing as a genre, such as how to express personal experiences and use personal pronouns for example, very often forms part of higher education programmes. The questions below (Figure 6) present some possible prompts for a final reflective piece of writing. Students can also revisit their KWL chart completed in week 3, which can form a basis for the reflective piece.

A short introduction about your topic.	What was the task? What did you choose? Why did you choose your topic?
Problems and solutions.	What problems did you encounter? How did you solve them? If you were to do the same project again, what would you change?
Say what you learned overall.	Did anything surprise you? Why? Why not? What was most interesting for you? Why?

Figure 6. Final reflection prompts

Constraints and Limitations

The author is aware that the European context of the case study may raise questions about feasibility in Japan. The following three considerations might be taken into account when implementing Genius Hour in a Japanese context.

The first point that should be considered is how to best support the learners during the project. During the research weeks, teachers might consider grouping students by area of research. For example, students whose research area is technology could be grouped together. This could encourage a feeling of group support, which might help students feel less isolated during the project. Grouping students in this way means that like-minded students have the opportunity to share ideas and give peer feedback at all stages of the project.

A second consideration also concerns the learners involved. As well as the need for support and guidance whilst working on their individual projects, Japanese learners may also need reassurance of their progress. Reminding learners that there is not necessarily a correct answer to a research question, and that instead their research should be a fluid process can help reassure learners of the purpose and goal of the project.

Finally, considerably more thought might be required as how best present the concept to peers and colleagues in each specific educational setting. The idea of getting buy-in from other teachers is mentioned in Getting Started: Practical Implications and Obstacles, however educators in Japan might find they are faced with more resistance to a project such as this. Therefore, it might be necessary to present such Genius Hour with evidence-based research of the benefits and advantages of inquiry-led learning. With these considerations in mind, the author hopes that this case study might inspire other educators to experiment with Genius Hour in their own context.

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The why and how of teacher created podcasts for EFL/ESL students

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Podcasts have become ubiquitous in all aspects of modern life, including the English language classroom. There are many podcasts made specifically for English learners. However, sometimes there is a gap. Maybe students' interests and abilities do not align with anything available. In this paper, I discuss the practical aspects of creating, editing, and sharing a podcast. This includes the basic equipment and internet resources needed. I also share how I have used my own podcasts for extensive listening practice, as well as ways to help students learn how to access and best utilize the podcast format. I also discuss the reasons for making a podcast specifically tailored to your students' needs and interests. Podcasts need not be limited to students at an intermediate level and above. I show how to get past the hurdle of getting started, making it possible for every teacher to also be a podcaster for students.

ポッドキャストは、英語教室を含む現代の生活のあらゆる面でユビキタスになっています。英語学習者のために作られたポッドキャストはたくさんあります。しかし、時にはギャップがあることもあります。もしかしたら、生徒の興味や能力が、利用可能なものと一致していないのかもしれません。本論文では、ポッドキャストを作成し、編集し、共有するための実践的な側面について論じます。これには、必要な基本的な機器とインターネットのリソースが含まれています。また、私が自分のポッドキャストを使ってリスニングの練習をした方法や、学生がポッドキャスト形式へのアクセス方法や活用方法を学ぶのを助ける方法についても紹介します。また、学生のニーズや興味に合わせて特別にポッドキャストを作成する理由についても説明します。ポッドキャストは中級以上の生徒に限定する必要はありません。すべての先生が生徒のためにポッドキャスターになることを可能にする、始めるというハードルを乗り越える方法を紹介します。

Podcasts, digital audio programs, usually episodic, have grown greatly in the past decade. According to Edison Research, the percentage of United States residents who have listened to podcasts at some point in their lives has increased from 23 percent in 2010 to 55 percent in 2020. The percentage listening weekly is now 24 percent. (2020)

Given the nature of podcast production, along with the newness of the medium, it is very easy for TESOL teachers to create their own podcasts, tailor made for their students and extensive listening (EL) activities. This paper will both address the rationale for making podcasts as a teacher of English and explain the practical steps needed to create a podcast.

What is a podcast?

As mentioned in the introduction, podcasts are digital, audio media. While it is something of an oversimplification, it is useful to think of a podcast as something similar to a radio program. Some content that is labeled as podcasts is, in fact, traditional radio programs distributed via digital channels. Podcasts exist in a wide range of genres, such as scripted serialized fiction, talk shows, science, and true crime, to name but a few. With the increase in popularity of podcasts, many of the hosts of podcasts now are professional podcasters, with a few notable names such as Joe Rogan and Marc Maron being some of the recognizable names. Of course, given the ease of producing and sharing podcasts on the internet, many more podcast creators and hosts are amateurs, including myself. Additionally, given the simplicity, podcasts offer a useful tool for language teachers looking to create more extensive listening opportunities for their students.

Why use podcasts for EL?

Extensive listening, modeled after the idea of extensive reading, is defined by Yeh as "an individualized listening activity with large amounts of target language input of learners' interests and at their levels" (135). And as Brown notes, EL is beneficial for students because the high level of aural language exposure leads to “automaticity of recognition of words in their spoken form, in turn leading to improved aural fluency and thus improvement in overall comprehension” (15). Podcasts offered an excellent opportunity for students to engage in EL even as far back as 2006, when Chinney noted, “Myriad subscriptions are available to English and other language learners” (13). The volume of listening options is important because, as Ridgway notes, “Practice is the most important thing. The more listening the better, and the subskills will take care of themselves as they become automatized” (183).

Podcasts are, in fact, being used in university settings for EL practice all over the world, as evidenced by Alshaikhi and Madini in Saudi Arabia, Yeh in Taiwan, and Gonulal in Turkey. In Alshaikhi and Madini’s study, both students and teachers expressed a positive attitude towards the usage of podcasts, noting that both groups preferred short podcasts, with a variety of difficulty levels, covering a wide range of topics that matched students’ interests (44). Similarly, Yeh found that students were satisfied with podcasts for EL in part due to the freedom of choice in their listening materials (97). Beyond students and teachers enjoying podcasts, they show promise of measurably improving students’ listening performance. In Gonulal’s study, students' listening test scores doubled with the usage of podcasts for EL (312).

When I first used podcasting in my general education required language classes, I gave students weekly assignments with the choice of either EL or extensive reading (ER). For the EL options, students were provided with links to the podcast episodes I had created as well as links to other appropriate resources. Students were also allowed to find their own options, allowing students the maximum possible choice for the assignment. They were asked to complete a Google form every week, and included in the form was a 5 point Likert scale, indicating whether or not they enjoyed their choice for the week. Figure 1 summarizes the responses from the academic year 2019-2020. The number of students who chose to listen to my podcast in the first year of my using them was relatively small at only 133 out of a total 1560 listening responses. However, the rate of positive response to the podcasts I created, with approximately 76% of responses saying they loved or liked the podcasts, compared to other listening choices is strong enough that, while small, I feel is worth investigating further.

To answer the question of why podcasts are useful tools for EL, it is useful to consider Krashen’s pleasure hypothesis. Krashen posits that “those activities that are good for language acquisition are usually perceived by acquirers as pleasant” (300). The argument is that the more a person enjoys an activity involving the use of a non-native language, the more likely it is that the activity promotes acquisition of the new language. The above cited studies from Alshaikhi and Madini, Yeh, and Gonulal would seem to support this hypothesis. Students reported overall positive feelings about podcasts. Additionally, students in the Gonulal study showed measurable improvement in their listening abilities.

How I use podcasts in my classes?

For me, I began my first podcast as a hobby, but I quickly realized that it would be a great resource for my classes. Initially, I made a podcast wherein I interviewed my colleagues about their personal journeys and how they ended up teaching in a university in Japan. These initial podcasts were not intended for my students. I was interested in my colleagues’ stories of how they ended up where we all were - teaching English in a university in the Tokyo area. These podcasts became a truly authentic listening activity for my advanced students that I was teaching at the time. The students would listen to one podcast of their choice every week. Near the end of the semester, I then asked students to emulate the podcasts and interview someone in English and record the conversation. After I changed schools, I knew that I wanted to continue using podcasts in class as a listening activity, but due to the different student population in my classes, I also knew that I would need to change the format of the podcasts to make them more useful as a listening practice resource to my students.

Figure 1

	All responses	ER only	All EL (including my podcast)	My podcast only
Total responses	3094	1534	1560	133
I loved it	802	383	419	45
%	0.2592113769	0.2496740548	0.2685897436	0.3383458647
I liked it	1350	744	606	57
%	0.4363283775	0.4850065189	0.3884615385	0.4285714286
It was OK	822	344	478	31
%	0.265675501	0.2242503259	0.3064102564	0.2330827068
I didn't like	109	60	49	0
%	0.03522947641	0.03911342894	0.03141025641	0
I hated it	11	3	8	0
%	0.003555268261	0.001955671447	0.005128205128	0

What to record?

Podcasts are a versatile medium, with podcasts existing for almost every interest and niche. As a language teacher creating podcasts for language learners, three common themes have emerged in my own podcasting: 1. Personal information, 2. Cultural comparisons, 3. Language facts. While I fully understand that most students do not have a deep seated desire to know more about my personal life, by sharing personal information, it allows students to connect more with the podcast because it is not about an unknown person, but rather their teacher, someone who they interact with on a regular basis. And just as language textbooks are full of cultural comparisons, these comparisons are a natural part of language study, as it is difficult to separate language from culture. Sharing facts about language, such as loan words between Japanese and English or information about wasei-eigo terms, also seems a natural topic for language classes. And all three of these themes begin to point at the answers to the question of why. Why create, as a language instructor, podcasts for your own students in the first place?

Why record a podcast for students?

As stated above, my first podcast began not as a listening exercise for students, but as a hobby that grew into a listening activity for high level students. After a change of schools and with it a very different student population, I wanted to continue podcasting for students. One of the chief reasons was a desire to give students an alternative to extensive reading. While I understand the benefits of extensive reading, one thing that is often omitted from the discussion with extensive reading is the fact that many students are not readers in their first language. If the idea of ER is that it is "the more leisurely reading of longer texts, **primarily for pleasure**" (Thornbury 191; emphasis added), a student who does not read for pleasure in their first language will likely have difficulty reading for pleasure in a second language. To that end, I offer my students the opportunity to complete either extensive reading or extensive listening tasks, and this is where I directed my podcast creating energy after my change of venues as a teacher.

It is also important to note that research has also indicated that podcasts are a useful tool, showing positive effects on learners' listening skills. In research carried out in Saudi Arabia, Al Qasim and Al Fadda concluded that "that the use of podcasts can make a positive and significant difference to the listening comprehension for EFL higher education students" (39). Given the ease of creating authentic, or at least quasi-authentic, listening materials and the indication that podcasts have a positive effect, it is a simple conclusion to say that they are worth the effort of a language teacher.

Personally, in my classes, I have not limited my students to only the podcasts I create; rather I offer my podcasts as a starting point for students who want to do extensive listening assignments. Of course, there are a plethora of podcasts on the internet, including many aimed at English language learners. So the question becomes, why should I add to the vast number of options available? And the answer is manifold. Perhaps the chief facet of the answer for me came down to the problem of ability and appropriateness. That is to say, for many lower level students, the level appropriate materials I was able to find were seemingly of little interest to university aged students. The materials were largely aimed at younger children. Conversely, the interesting topics were largely too difficult for the lower level students within the groups that I teach. The ability to create my own materials through a podcast helped to fill in a gap that I found in materials.

To break it down more specifically, there are five reasons for creating a podcast as a teacher in the TESOL realm. These are relevance, timeliness, personalization, appropriateness, and extendability.

Relevance

By creating original content, it is possible - simple even - to make content that is relevant to what students are studying. If a certain topic is covered in the textbook and even a few students show interest in that topic, it is quite simple to create further content, aimed specifically at the students who are interested in the topic. There is no need for every student to listen to the same content for extensive listening. In fact, based on the definition of extensive reading being done for pleasure, it stands to reason that extensive listening would follow the same guidelines. Students have varied interests, so podcast episodes will not appeal to the entire class. As Chan, et al. noted, that students expressed a wide variety of interests and stated, "It would appear that striking the right balance between different topics of interest would be the best approach to take in selecting and determining podcast content" (332). This personalization can make English listening more pleasurable.

Timeliness

Another benefit of creating podcast content for students is that it can be timely, much more so than is possible with textbooks and the accompanying audio elements. While traditional textbooks can take years to develop and publish, the time limits of podcast creation and publishing are determined only by the creator, in this case the instructor. It is possible to create a podcast and have it available to students to download on their devices in a matter of hours. This facet of podcasting makes it especially useful in addressing current events, news, or even topics that arise during class.

Personalization

By utilizing some sort of simple request form, the teacher can personalize podcasts in a way that is only possible with teacher created content, and by utilizing it in a manner such as for extensive reading, it is possible to create content for each and every student and their own interests. It also gives teachers a way to share with students a side of themselves that students would otherwise be unlikely to see, which can help students connect with their teacher in ways that are not possible through in person interactions.

Appropriateness

As mentioned above, one of the driving forces for the creation of my podcast for students was the issue of level appropriateness. By creating the materials, it is possible for instructors to create materials that are both interesting and level-appropriate for students, as well as being an appropriate length, something that Chan, et al. found was something that students had strong opinions about, noting that in their study of Chinese and Korean language students in Singapore, “a considerable number of learners had indicated a wish for shorter podcasts” (331). These considerations are all simple to take into consideration when creating a podcast for students. Given enough time, it is even possible for instructors to create multiple versions of the same basic content for different ability levels. If this approach is utilized, it is then possible for students to push and stretch their abilities by challenging themselves to move up the ladder of levels within a single listening topic.

Extendability

While podcasts are most obviously a listening activity, as with almost any classroom material, they are adaptable to multiple types of activities. Perhaps the most obvious extension activity is to have students imitate what they have been listening to and create their own podcasts. As noted above, I have done so with students in the past, when I asked students to interview someone in English in a similar manner as my podcasts that they had been listening to for homework assignments. Other extension activities include reaction papers to the episodes they listen to or even research projects based on their favorite episodes. Based on the ability to personalize materials to students' interests and the ability to be timely and relevant, it is very simple to use podcasts as a springboard for many other classroom and homework assignments.

Recording and distributing a podcast

In terms of the practical side - the how of podcasting - there are essentially three stages to making a podcast; the recording stage, the editing stage, and the uploading or hosting stage. While it might seem creating a podcast is a daunting and expensive task, neither of these things are necessarily true. With podcasting being a well-developed medium with more than two decades of existence, inexpensive and even free tools exist to make the creation and sharing of a podcast simple. While high end equipment and software can be prohibitively expensive, podcasting need not be expensive, as a relatively inexpensive microphone is potentially the only expense needed to really begin. From personal experience, the microphone is the only equipment or software that I have purchased for podcasting.

Recording

With regards to recording, the would be podcast creator must consider both software and hardware issues.

To record, the most important hardware for the would-be podcaster is, of course, their microphone. While most computers are equipped with built in microphones, for a teacher aiming to produce multiple recordings with good sound quality, the built in microphone is usually insufficient for these needs.

When confronted with the choice of microphones, there are seemingly endless possibilities, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Do you need an XLR or a USB microphone? Should you use a dynamic or condenser microphone? While these differences might be of greater concern for someone who has already learned the basics of podcasting, for a teacher looking to start making podcasts for the first time, these differences are not of critical importance. If a quiet place is available to record, a simple USB microphone with a stand is often the simplest, and often cheapest, option.

USB microphones utilize standard USB connectors, meaning that they require no extra hardware, plugging directly into most computers. This ease makes them perhaps the best option for many beginner podcasters or podcasters who do not have the time to master the other hardware required with other types of microphones. Multiple microphone setups are possible with USB microphones, though they require more technical knowledge of the computer system being used.

If the podcaster is using a USB microphone, the next step is to plug it into a computer, and begin recording using some sort of digital audio workstation (DAW).

A large number of DAW options are available, both of the paid and free varieties. One of the most popular options is a free software application called Audacity. Audacity is a free and open source software application, meaning that besides the software being free of charge, the source code for the software is made publicly available, allowing the software to be distributed, modified, and used for any purpose without the need to secure any rights. Audacity allows for recording and editing, with versions available for MacOS, Windows, Linux and Unix-like operating systems, making it accessible to almost all computer users. Of course, other DAW are available, such as Adobe Audition, Pro Tools, and GarageBand, to name but three popular examples. However, these examples are not free software, meaning that cost can become a barrier to entry, though GarageBand is included with Mac computers. Regardless of which DAW you choose, they all allow for recording and editing.

Editing

Editing, while not absolutely necessary, gives the product a more polished sound, something to consider, especially if you intend to post the product so that is available to the general public, not just your students. It is also a good opportunity to add any needed missing information or to provide corrections. Additionally, in the editing and post-production process, it is possible, desirable even, to add intro and outro music. When making the decision to add music, it is imperative to be aware of copyright issues. There are also several services that allow free usage of music in content. One widely used is that of composer Kevin MacLeod. His Imcompetech Music website offers over 2000 pieces of music that can be used for free so long as the content creator gives proper credit. When searching for music options, it is best to search for public domain free music or Creative Commons labeled music. Creative Commons is a non-profit organization that offers copyright licenses that allow the creator of the work to retain copyright, while allowing others to freely use the work, provided proper credit is given. One last option is using your own music if you have created original compositions, or asking permission from friends or acquaintances who are musicians. While music is not a requirement, it does lend the podcast a certain air, one that can potentially change students' perception of the media from "here is something my teacher recorded in her office" to "here is a legitimate, professional product for my listening pleasure and education."

Hosting

Once the podcast has been recorded, edited, and is fully produced, it is time to put the finished product somewhere students can access it. Here too there are multiple options, each with its own positives and negatives. And just as with recording and editing software, both free and paid options are available. One option available to university instructors or instructors in institutions with their own web domain is to host the recordings within the institutional domain. This option is perhaps best for controlling who has access to the files. There is also the option to host the recordings on a personal website, though this can require greater technical knowledge, especially if you want to distribute your podcasts using a RSS feed. RSS, or really simple syndication, is a method commonly used to distribute media such as news stories or podcasts to news readers and podcast aggregators respectively.

The final option is to use a podcast hosting service such as Anchor, Podbean, or Castbox, all three of which are free services. By uploading your finished product to these services, distribution to podcast aggregators such as Apple Podcasts or Spotify is very simple. For podcasters who would like to make their podcasts available to the general public, podcast hosting services are the best answer, removing the need to develop your own RSS feed, while allowing the widest audience access to the podcasts. Using one of these free options is also perhaps the simplest method to get the podcast to students. Once hosted, all of these services can be submitted to sites such as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and other podcast distribution sites, which are the most likely points of access for students.

Of course, for a teacher making a podcast, the primary audience is the students. Once the podcasts are available, the method of getting students to access them is the next item to be taken care of. Whether it is done through an internal server, a personal website, or a podcast hosting service, the simplest answers as to how to get students to access the episodes are to share direct links on a class LMS and to share a QR code with students. Above all, to encourage students to access the podcasts, it is best to make it as simple and painless as possible to listen to the podcasts.

Conclusions

Podcasting for students requires a teacher to answer two questions: Why podcasts? How do I make podcasts? Understanding how to podcast might seem to be difficult to someone who feels uncomfortable with technology. However, the reality is that the technological knowledge needed is not that great. Utilizing internet resources such as podcasting user groups and simple web searches, anyone can record and share a podcast with the world. And as to the question of why, this paper has laid out at least five reasons for doing so: relevance, timeliness, personalization, appropriateness, and extendability. Podcasts are easily producible teacher generated content that can also become student generated content. While the level of authenticity of the language might be variable, teacher produced podcasts can be authentic listening material, and authentic listening materials have a positive impact on student learning, as Dewi showed: "After analyzing the data, the result showed that the students who were taught by using authentic materials got better achievement than those taught by using non-authentic materials" (73). Even if authentic materials do not make up the entirety of a course, they should be, and can easily be, included, as they are easily produced. There is no reason for a class to be constrained to publisher developed content in the twenty-first century. Just as services like YouTube, SoundCloud and Spotify have revolutionized music distribution, podcast services offer that same possibility to language teachers. The gatekeepers have been removed.

One barrier that at least some people feel about creating a podcast is the worry about what to say. And while I understand this worry, there is something that my sister once said about her late husband. He was an English professor and essayist, and it was at least partially words my sister had once written about her late husband that inspired me to begin my podcasting. She had written about him, “One of the greatest talents he had was to get everyone to believe that they had a story worth telling -- and he could get anyone to share that story with him. He listened with keen interest and compassion to everyone he met, whether they were his students, his colleagues, the people he met while working as a reporter, or simply people he met in passing.”

And everyone does have a story to tell. Those stories can involve many disparate elements, and telling those stories well takes practice, but all of those elements can be included in a podcast to create something worth listening to for students.

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Teacher's Anxiety, Burnout, and Stress (ABS) Management Through Self-Compassion

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This paper examines the effectiveness of self-compassion techniques on English teachers' Anxiety, Burnout, and Stress (ABS) in Japan from 2018 to 2019. A total of 30 educators, sourced through word of mouth and snowball effect in Tokyo and Tohoku participated in the study. A qualitative methodology involving written questionnaires, interviews, and guided practice of self-compassion techniques, such as emphasizing the idea of 'being-kind-to-oneself' was adopted. Overall feedback from respondents after they were introduced to self-compassion concepts and activities suggests that this is a highly promising avenue for helping teachers deal with the kinds of workplace-generated emotional instability that many encountered. Moreover, the study found that accepting one's own mistakes is particularly useful in alleviating respondents' ABS-related difficulties, and that practicing self-compassion can increase awareness of one's own needs, self-acceptance, and self-appreciation.

本研究は、2018 年から 2019 年までの日本の英語教員の不安、燃え尽き症候群、およびストレス（ABS）に対する自己同情技術の有効性を調べた。東京と東北の口コミと雪だるま式効果から供給された合計 30 人の教育者が参加しました研究。書面による質問票、インタビュー、および「自分に優しくする」という考えを強調するなど、特定の自己同情技法のガイド付き実践を含む定性的方法論が採用された。さらに、人間であることの一部として間違っていることや失敗していることを受け入れる能力は、回答者の ABS 関連の困難を軽減するのに役立つことがわかった。これらの結果は、自己同情を実践することで、自分のニーズに自己認識を与え、自己受容し、物事を積極的に受け入れて手放すことは、教員の間で否定的なことを前向きに認識するのに有益であることを示唆している。

This paper examines teachers' stress through the lens of self-compassion. At the outset, this idea can be understood as "being open to and moved by one's own suffering, experiencing feelings of caring and kindness toward oneself, taking an understanding, non-judgmental attitude toward one's inadequacies and failures, and recognizing that one's own experience is part of the common human experience" (Neff, 2003). Self-compassion (SC) also has a positive, celebratory dimension (Desmond, 2017; Zessin et al., 2017), and emphasizes the importance of human relationships, as suggested by the term's underlying etymology (with compassion coming from the Latin *com,* meaning "with" or "together*",* and *pati,* which means "to bear", or "to suffer"). Hence, at the heart of the English word compassion is a sense of suffering with or together, while being compassionate is being sensitive to one's own suffering and that of others, and its causes, with a commitment to relieve and prevent it (Irons & Beaumont, 2017).

Although numerous descriptions of teacher stress and its impacts have been published (Bano & Malik, 2014; Fisher, 2011; Flook & Goldberg, 2013; Jepson & Forrest, 2006; McCarthy et al., 2009; Ocampo 2017), less research has focused specifically on what kinds of interventions, such as the deliberate application of self-compassion, can assist in reducing the negative outcomes associated with teacher stress and burnout. This situation motivated the current study, which sets out to probe whether or not teachers who have a self-compassionate way of responding during times of stress actually experience fewer negative effects of Anxiety, Burnout, and Stress (ABS).

In recent studies, teacher stress has been characterized as "a negative, unpleasant emotional experience resulting from an aspect of teachers' work," (Weir, 2018) involving decreased life satisfaction (Bano, 2014), burnout (Fisher, 2011), and perceived lack of autonomy (Benson et al., 2003). Bora et al. (2013) have focused on the dysfunctional behavior that emerges in teachers' workplace relationships and teaching activities. Beyond recognizing the experience of stress and its manifestation in teachers' behavior, it has been suggested that teachers' subjectivities: their underlying beliefs and attitudes, perhaps more than external conditions, strongly influence stress. In this connection, Noddings (2003) has pointed to the belief that teaching involves not only helping learners to construct their own knowledge of subject matter but is also a moral act motivated by the perception of a longing for care on the part of the learner.

Moreover, teachers who feel an overarching sense of mission to educate and protect students, while attempting to maintain a faultless moral and professional image, sometimes forget that they, too, are vulnerable. They face the significant combined impact of pressure, workload, students' disruptive behavior, and workplace environment. It is from the standpoint of teachers' subjectivities, and the kinds of beliefs referred to above, that the current study reaches towards positive intervention that may assist in reducing the negative outcomes associated with teacher stress and burnout. Such subjective adjustments involve a move towards being more compassionate towards oneself.

A link between SC and mindfulness has been suggested by Flook & Goldberg, (2013). Here, being mindful of what is going on "at this moment", "right here", and "right now", helps one to forge a positive disposition towards the openness of one's nature. The givens of our nature; love, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity, are four potentials in us. They exist within us no matter what the circumstances. We only have to be aware of them (Richo, 2008).

The rich array of ideas presented above support the claim that SC offers educators a promising tool for stress management intervention, which warranted further investigation in the current study.

Methodology

In order to probe teachers' subjective experiences, beliefs and perceptions, in this study a generally qualitative methodology was adopted. This involved a combination of preliminary survey which includes the Self-report Questionnaire Package (SQP) and Map to Self-Compassion (MSC) to improve their ability to motivate themselves with kindness, be resilient during life's challenges, let go of self-criticism, and be more present and compassionate with others. (Desmond, 2017). Having participants complete SQP prior to MSC helped to gauge how they felt in general. Follow-up interviews with two of the respondents were also conducted after the SC meditation to further interrogate its effectiveness on their wellbeing.

Self-report measures have several advantages, including their ability to measure a range of emotions, and relative ease of administration. Such measures have been described by Harley (2016) as the 'gold standard' for measuring psychological phenomena in many disciplines. Table 1 shows the result of participants' SC factors according to a 26-item measure. The self-compassion scale (SCS) (Neff, 2003) is composed of 26 items grouped in six factors: self-kindness, self-judgment, awareness of common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and over-identification. Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (almost never), 2 (rarely), 3 (sometimes), 4 (often), and 5 (almost always). The total SC score was calculated by reversing the negative subscale scores.

The participants were all teachers of English in Japan and were sourced through word of mouth and personal introduction between February 2018 and March 2019. A preliminary survey was conducted in which a total of thirty English Language Teaching (ELT) educators from Tohoku and Tokyo participated. Due to participants' time limitations, only fourteen of these were able to fully complete the questionnaires and compassion practices. The group of thirty respondents were made up of tertiary level (25%) and elementary and secondary level (75%). Half identified as males and half as females. In terms of race/ethnicity participants were Asian (57.1%) and White/Caucasian (42.9%). Of this group, again, with time constraints given as a reason, only 14.3% did the self-compassion practices in full, while 85.7% did not complete them.

The Self-report Questionnaire Package

Participants' consent form, SQP package, and MSC guide were provided with a return envelope. Questionnaires included in the SQP package were: (1) SCS questionnaire (Neff, 2003), (2) Shared and disparate views of teachers on teaching, (3) Stress and burnout symptoms checklist, and (4) Coping strategies to combat ABS. Some of the questions used were taken from a questionnaire used previously by the author (Ocampo, 2017).

Results and Discussion

(1) Self-Compassion Factors

In Table 1, the Means and Standard Deviations (SD) show that participants were almost always clinging to common humanity related such as the idea that failings and difficulties were part of the human condition, resulting in increased positive affect and overall life satisfaction. See Appendix A for the SC questionnaire details.

Table 1

Mean and SD of Self-Compassion Factors F1-F6

Self-Compassion Factors	Composite Likert Scores	
	Mean	SD
F1: Self-Kindness (Items 5, 12, 19, 23, 26)	3.65	0.22
F2: Self-Judgment (Items 1, 8, 11, 16, 21)	2.90	0.48
F3: Common Humanity (Items 3, 7, 10, 15)	4.30	0.62
F4: Isolation (Items 4, 13,18, 25)	2.77	0.55
F5: Mindfulness (Items 9, 14, 17, 22)	3.85	0.75
F6: Over-identification (Items 2, 6, 20, 24)	1.95	0.42

These results report extent to which (from almost never to almost always) participants claimed to adopt or experience a behavior or attitude (from the 26 measured, grouped within SCS factor categories F1-F6), and the percentage (%) of overall participants who reported the particular behavior or attitude. As displayed detailed in Table 1, the *self-kindness* factor revealed that participants often (21.9%) give themselves caring, tenderness, and kindness they need in times of hard time and experiencing. Sometimes (19.2%) they felt emotional pain, were tolerant to their own flaws (19.2%) and patient towards aspects of their own personality they don't like (19.2%). In the *self-judgement* factor, participants were often (25.9%) intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of their personalities they don't like. They were sometimes (74.1%) disapproving and judgmental about their own flaws and inadequacies, tended to be tough on their selves in difficult times, got down on themselves when they saw something they didn't like, and were slightly cold-hearted towards themselves when they were experiencing suffering. In terms of *common humanity*, participants noted that when they feel inadequate in some way, they almost always (28.9%) try to remind themselves that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people and see failings as part of the human condition, while they often (50.7%) perceived that difficulties as part of life and shared by most people. Finally, participants sometimes (20.3%) reminded themselves that there were other people in the world experiencing the same feelings as them. In *isolation* factor, participants often (30.2%) felt like other people must be having an easier time, when they themselves were struggling and sometimes (69.9%) thought about their inadequacies that separate them from rest of the world, felt that other people are happier than them, and felt they were alone when they fail. For *mindfulness* factor, participants reported often trying to keep their emotions in balance when something upsets them (29.5%), trying to balance their view about the situation (27.9%), keeping failure in perspective (24.6%), and sometimes approaching themselves with curiosity when they were upset (2.8%). Finally in the *over-identification* factor, of the respondents sometimes (32.3%) tended to exaggerate the event when something painful happens, and rarely (25.8%) obsessed over everything that was wrong. Participants almost never (41.9%) felt inadequacy in their failures and were carried away by their upset feelings.

Follow up interviews were conducted to further understand the responses, and these revealed that self-kindness helped participants gain a more positive view of life. One of the respondents shared the positive impact of being aware of one's own feelings and emotions: "I used to prove [*sic*] and ignore the negative feelings I had in the past by diverting the attention to other things. I even mastered to hide the pain and disappointments in life. It helped me a lot though, but the negative feelings caused by past experiences were still there." In terms of learning to incorporate self-compassion beliefs, this respondent also cited positive benefits as accruing from the acceptance of Richo's five givens of life. Namely, "everything changes and ends, things do not always go according to plan, life is not always fair, pain is a part of life and people are "not loving and loyal all the time (Richo, 2008)." These findings were in line with Boyer (2007), who described them as processes that promote genuine communication skills, both towards oneself and with others on the level of heart and feeling. This involves comfortable and enjoyable ways to open oneself up and deepen the expression of positive, enriching feelings that bring deeper meaning and joy to our lives.

(2) Shared and Disparate Views of Teachers on Teaching and Stress

Participants completed the four scale items of teachers' Shared and disparate views on teaching and stress (Ocampo, 2017) to assess how they perceive teaching stress (e.g., I find it challenging to teach lowly motivated students) and disparate views (e.g., I feel stress when the employer always monitors my class by asking students indirectly). They rated each item on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Interestingly, respondents claimed that they still had time to prepare lessons for students' sake, despite experiencing negative factors including: Perceived lack opportunities for promotion and staff development, anxiety about how their colleagues evaluate them, concerns about a fair relationship with immediate superiors, lack of professional recognition of their effort, lack of involvement in decision making, and lack of effective communication among co-workers.

They also shared through personal interviews that despite the aforementioned, they still had a clear sense of what their roles were as educators. It appeared that merely introducing the 'positive side of being negative,' not only towards students, but also with themselves, mattered a lot. Disempowering factors, which participants felt directly influenced their academic performance included the following: Feeling stressed when students called them by their first name, having no autonomy on how to implement their lessons, teaching methods that were too demanding or that contradict their beliefs about teaching (such as, ‘English should be taught in English), and having Japanese ability too limited to deal effectively with student’s needs. In addition, these respondents revealed that they felt stress when employers constantly monitored their classes, and asked students indirectly about their teacher’s performance in the classroom.

(3) Anxiety, Burnout, and Stress (ABS) Symptoms

ABS was assessed using Stress and Anxiety Symptoms and Burnout questionnaires. For the Stress and Anxiety assessment, respondents rated each item on a scale from 1 (hardly ever) to 4 (often), and while assessing Burnout Symptoms, a scale from 1 (never) to 4 (always) was used (Ocampo, 2017). In reporting results below, the percentage % of participants reporting an item is indicated, and for some items, the percentage (%) is reported in combination with the extent to which the item was present (based on the scale from 1-4).

Anxiety Symptoms. Of the respondents in this study, 60.5 % revealed they avoided people, ate too much food to relieve stress, had trouble concentrating on the job, had headaches, easily caught colds, lost interest in things, and became forgetful. Over a third of the teachers in the study felt stomach upset occasionally, were afraid of losing control of their job, felt confusion, had panic attacks, burst into tears, sweated excessively, experienced heart-pounding, had nightmares and felt dizziness. These findings are cause for concern, since teachers play a major role in maintaining an effective system of education, and their effective performance is the key to the successful running of this system. It is clear that job-related stress experienced by teachers can adversely affect their performance, and reduce occupational commitment, in line with Jepson & Forrest (2006).

Stress and Burnout Symptoms. The results revealed that of respondents never (23.5%) consumed alcohol in excess nor used drugs. Neither were they denied the privilege to take sufficient breaks, sick leave, and vacation. Moreover, they did not have excessive absences when totally burned-out and feeling that their job demanded long periods of their time. The remaining participants admitted that they rarely (76.5%) had the following symptoms: Feeling tired even if they had enough sleep, dreading going to work, avoiding having a conversation with co-workers, recurring headaches, stomach upset and back pain, feeling overwhelmed, always checking the time, and increased alcohol consumption. The belief that their employer paid them too little, that the workplace environment lacked a social-professional support group, that they had many different tasks to cope with, and rapid program changes rarely added to these teachers suffering from burnout. In informal follow-up interviews respondents revealed, “I always have back pain which is unusual” and “every time I got nearer to the school campus, I felt throat spasm.” However, these respondents did not appear to suffer much from burnout, and this result strongly suggests that merely having awareness of self-compassion can support every individual and help them obtain a feeling of relaxation.

(4) Coping Strategies to Combat ABS

Participants were assessed on how they responded when difficult or stressful events happen in their lives. They were asked what they did to cope with ABS, rating each item on a scale of 1 (I usually don’t do this at all) to 4 (I usually do it a lot) (Ocampo, 2017). As in (3) on ABS, the percentage % of participants reporting an item is indicated, and for some items, the percentage (%) is reported in combination with the extent to which the item was present (based on the scale from 1-4).

Experiencing some anxiety is normal - even healthy, and just like stress, it can motivate and push us to finish the task at hand (Boniwell, 2012). However, when too much stress and anxiety cause symptoms that interfere with our ordinary lifestyle, then proper management is necessary to prevent ABS from ruining one’s wellbeing. Such symptoms cannot be eradicated easily, nor cured overnight. Facing and treating anxiety requires a long-term plan and changing one’s working habits and lifestyle.

When viewed considering three broad coping strategy groups; problem-focused (PF), emotion-focused (EF) and avoidance-focused (AC) (Carr, 2004), of the respondents in the current study usually (33.5%) applied following PF coping strategies to a medium degree: Took additional action to try to get rid of the problem and thought about how they might best handle the problem, made a plan of action, faced problems and challenges one step at a time, and took additional action to get rid of the problem. Those using these approaches were making efforts to learn and grow as a person as a result of their experiences. With regard to EF coping strategies, the following items applied to 21.6% of the respondents: Feeling a lot of emotional distress and finding myself expressing those feelings a lot, accepting that the negative event has happened and that it can't be changed, putting one’s trust in God’s help, trying to elicit sympathy, talking to someone who could do something concrete about the problem, learning and growing as a result of the experience, and looking at the positive side of the problem.

Finally, half of the respondents used the following AC strategies: refusing to believe the negative event had happened, sleeping more than usual, drinking alcohol to think less about problems, accepting that the situation cannot be changed and quitting trying, watching movies and television, and simply not thinking about the problems. Some of the respondents shared their personal coping strategies, which included surfing job openings on the Internet, and relaxing using aroma scents.

The strategies applied by participants fall under three broad coping categories and can be characterized as either functional or dysfunctional (Boniwell, 2012). Functional problem-focused strategies include dealing with stress, while simultaneously looking at the positive side of stressors; a realistic action plan. Moreover, individual strategies to cope with stress are what teachers are left with in the absence of improvements to structural issues or working conditions and environment. Also constructive are EF ways of coping such as sharing feelings with someone and seeking sympathy from someone you trust.

AC strategies, however, can only be useful in the short term and unattended problems do not sort themselves out but tend to become worse with time. In the current study, several respondents often used such avoidance strategies just to be able to continue on functioning in their present jobs. For these respondents, the only recourse left them was these kinds of temporary individual strategies. This was due to structural issues such as the absence of improvements to working conditions and educational environment. Obviously, paid employment is necessary to support basic human needs, and if there is no other alternative, then one must bear with the circumstances, accepting the consequences of emotional instability. However, it has become clear as a result of this study that a basic alternative to dealing with stresses is available. That is, learning to be self-kind and compassionate.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study further confirmed the wide variety of stressors that teachers' experience, and at the same time showed that SC techniques offer a useful avenue for alleviating these difficulties. Embracing the idea that self-awareness and being compassionate to one's own needs are equally important was strongly highlighted by the participants. Furthermore, participants' realization that accepting things positively and 'letting things go' is of great importance led to feelings of happiness and wellbeing.

One significant thread that arose in this study was the idea of teacher autonomy, an area that warrants further investigation. For educators, becoming autonomous in an Asian context, as in the current study, has tended to emphasize the relevance of a "western" idea of autonomy including those from "non-western" cultural backgrounds. It is interesting to consider the fact that even though more than half of the participants in the current study identified as Asians, their words suggest that their minds were bound by fixed notions of autonomy, which affected their perception of having freedom in implementing their personal techniques in the classroom. These teachers' self-expectations might be contradicted by the culturally related beliefs of their employers. Here too, it is possible that stepping back from a rigid need to 'be right' could ameliorate such a situation. With sufficient resilience and wisdom all participants in the educational process could learn to firmly accept the idea of being wrong more positively, recognizing that the power of autonomous choice is itself more valuable than any particular outcome.

In the near future, a series of before and after SC workshops for teachers are planned. Through such ongoing work, the valuable idea underlying this paper can be propagated. Namely, that gentle yet firm self-acceptance has the clear potential to help teachers perceive negative things positively.

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Appendix A

Self-Compassion Questionnaire (Neff, 2003)

1. I’m disapproving and judge-mental about my own flaws and inadequacies.
2. When I’m feeling down I tend to obsess on everything that’s wrong.
3. When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through.
4. When I think about my inadequacies, it tends to make me feel more separate and cut off from the rest of the world.
5. I try to be loving towards myself when I’m feeling emotional pain.
6. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by a feeling of inadequacy.
7. When I’m down and out, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am.
8. When times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself.
9. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.
10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.
11. I’m intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don’t like.
12. When I am going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.
13. When I’m feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.
14. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.
15. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.
16. When I see aspects of myself that I don’t like, I get down on myself.
17. When I fail at something important to me I try to keep things in perspective.
18. When I’m really struggling, I tend to feel like other people must be having an easier time of it.
19. I’m kind to myself when I’m experiencing suffering.
20. When some-thing upsets me I get carried away with my feelings.
21. I can be a bit cold-hearted towards myself when I’m experiencing suffering.
22. When I’m feeling down I try to approach my feelings with curiosity.
23. I’m tolerant of my own flaws and inadequacies.
24. When some-thing painful happens I tend to blow the incident out of proportion.
25. When I fail at something that’s important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.
26. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my own personality I don’t like.

Virtual Presentations at ELT Conferences

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This study examines the proportion of conferences in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) and related fields that permit virtual presentations. Additionally, for conferences which permit virtual presentations, the mode of virtual presentation is also examined. The main finding is that, of more than 200 conferences examined, approximately 12% of them permit virtual presentations. The results of this study are contextualized with a discussion of what benefits virtual presentations may provide, why there may be reluctance for conference organizers to allow virtual presentations, and how these the study's findings may be read in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, a normative argument is made that more large conferences should permit virtual presentations.

この研究では、バーチャルプレゼンテーションを許可する英語教育の分野と関連分野の学会の割合を調べます。さらに、バーチャルプレゼンテーションを許可する学会では、バーチャルプレゼンテーションのモードも検討されます。主な結果は、200 以上の調査された学会のうち、約１２％がバーチャルプレゼンテーションを許可していることです。バーチャルプレゼンテーションのメリット、学会の主催者がバーチャルプレゼンテーションを許可することに抵抗がある理由、および COVID-19 のパンデミックに照らしてこれらの結果をどのように読むことができるかについてのディスカッションによってこの研究の結果が文脈化されています。併せて、大きな学会ではバーチャルプレゼンテーションを許可するはずという規範的な議論がなされています。

Are virtual presentations permitted at many English Language Teaching (ELT) conferences, or at conferences in related fields? The study presented here examines how common it is for conferences to permit virtual presentations, and what formats such presentations may take when they are permitted. In addition, an argument that large conferences should be obliged to consider permitting virtual presentations is offered.

Background

A virtual presentation (VP) is defined here as an ICT-based presentation that does not require the presenter(s) physically to be in the same location as the audience at the time of the presentation. There are various modes of VPs, including synchronous and asynchronous modes. Synchronous mode, in this paper, refers to presentations occurring in real-time with the presenter(s) in one location and the audience in at least one other location; the presenter(s) and audience are spatially, but not temporally, remote. Asynchronous VP modes are characterized in this paper, on the other hand, by involving both spatial and temporal distance. Asynchronous VPs can, for instance, be pre-recorded presentations that are later broadcast at a certain time and place; or they might be hosted in a digital space that the audience can access at any time.

Mixed modes are possible, too. For example, the slides and talk portion of a presentation may be pre-recorded, but an ICT-based question and answer session could be conducted in real-time at a pre-designated time following the broadcast or uploading of the pre-recorded portion of the presentation. Thus, VPs are not only a modern presentation option that offers an alternative to traditional presentations, but are themselves variable.

From the perspective of presenters, there are several reasons why choosing a VP might be preferable to traditional presentation modes, such as: personal preference, ease of sharing, climate/environmental concerns associated with travel, competing time-commitments, boycotts. Additionally, in some cases the reasoning that leads to a preference for a VP has less to do with a sense of choice, and is more about necessity, such as: financial constraints, political and/or administrative restrictions on travel, disability, familial obligations, or concerns over personal safety in certain locales. That a presenter may wish to choose to do a VP, however, depends on whether conferences permit VPs.

Nevertheless, in ELT and related fields, are there reasons for conference organizers to resist permitting VPs? What factors might make conference organizers reluctant to permit them? In a survey of education conference organizers, for instance, Jacobs et al. (2018) identified seven issues with VPs raised by conference organizers: Concerns regarding the availability of appropriate facilities, lack of optimal hardware and/or software, lack of knowledge about how to use virtual presenting tools, a lack of flexibility (compared to in-person modes), difficulties arising for proper facilitation, interactivity (or lack thereof), and potentially reduced revenue for conferences. I will condense the first six of those issues into two basic categories for discussion in this paper: value and capacity. The other issue they identified, focused on the topic of revenue, is important but not particularly germane to this paper.

Some conference organizers may be hesitant to accept VPs because they do not perceive them as having enough value, or prestige, to justify permitting them. For instance, VPs may be seen as inferior to traditional presentations in terms of career development and building a CV. Academic travel, particularly air travel, is sometimes thought of as a necessity for career progression. Indeed, presenting at conferences is beneficial for CV building (Borg, 2015). But the key is that *presenting* is key to career progression for many academics, not travel itself. Academic travel may be reduced without sacrificing academic productivity (Wynes, Donner, Tannason, & Nabor, 2019). Deriving career-progression value from presenting does not entail physical presence at conferences.

By providing flexibility through the permitting of VPs, conference organizers help academics and others who need to present, but will not or cannot be physically present for whatever reason(s), to participate in career-progressing activities. As long as vetting procedures are the same as those for traditional presentations, the quality and rigor of VPs will be comparable to traditional modes of presentation, so they should be seen as having similar if not equivalent value in terms of career progression and CV building.

Concerns about the value of VPs might also revolve around worries regarding interaction. Borg (2015) notes that many conference attendees highly value the opportunities for face-to-face networking and sense of community they get from conference attendance. Indeed, for many attendees, conferences are important venues for maintaining and developing relationships. But this is not the case for all presenters. For some, disseminating their research may be their primary, or even sole, concern. That is, not everyone seeks the same degree or type of interactivity that comes with sharing a physical space with others. The affordances of modern ICT offer the possibility that presenting or sharing research at a conference does not require physical attendance at that conference.

Moreover, VPs do not inherently reduce interaction, although they might change the nature of interaction. With sufficient preparation and the use of complementary ICT resources, there are many options for encouraging interaction around VPs inside and outside of a conference (Moore, Fisher, & Baber, 2016; Jacobs et al., 2018). Even fully virtual conferences—where the entire conference is held in a virtual/online space/format—can be highly interactive and generate many interactional benefits typically found at traditional conferences (Fraser, Soanes, Jones, Jones, & Malishev, 2017; Stephens, Dewing, Brown, Middleton, & Neville, 2016). If a fully online conference can have a high degree of interactivity, then surely a traditional conference can permit VPs without compromising interactivity.

The question of capacity is one of logistics, expertise, and access to technology. Smaller conferences that generally attract local presenters, for example, might balk at the suggestion that they need to permit VPs. Organizers of such conferences may have low budgets and few staff familiar with the technology needed to manage VPs. Conference venues may not have reliable internet access. Necessary software or hardware needed for VPs may be lacking. As such, smaller conferences may soundly reason that they should focus on providing the best conference that they can in a traditional format.

Larger conferences, on the other hand, should have few to no problems with logistics, expertise, or access to technology. In other words, there is no excuse, capacity-wise, for larger conferences not to consider permitting VPs. Arguably, with capacity a non-issue, permitting of VPs by larger conferences should be seen as obligatory. This sense of obligation especially arises in regard to conference organizers' responsibility for maximizing inclusivity/access (e.g. Brown, Thompson, & Leigh, 2018; Fleming, 2019) and the eco-ethics of academic travel and conferences (e.g. Baer, 2019; Hickel, 2018; Jäckle, 2019).

This brings us to the present study, which examines the acceptance of VPs at conferences in and related to the field of ELT. It also investigates which VP modes are preferred when they are permitted. I am unaware of any prior studies that focus on the acceptance, or lack thereof, of VPs at ELT conferences. Therefore, this study's purpose is to establish a quantitative base of how widespread is the acceptability of VPs at ELT conferences; this base may then inform further exploration of a heretofore under-researched topic.

Following the description of the study's results, this paper also includes an explicitly normative argument for why more ELT conferences—especially large conferences—should consider permitting VPs regardless of the pandemic situation.

Analysis

What percentage of ELT and ELT-adjacent (e.g. applied linguistics, education, etc.) conferences permit virtual presentations? To investigate, I collected data on ELT and ELT-adjacent conferences with language education tracks which were held or were to be held from June 2019 through May 2020. Policies on the types of presentations permitted were collected from conference websites and calls for papers/presentations of conferences known to me, shared with me by colleagues, or listed on websites that collect and distribute information about ELT-related conferences (e.g., eltcalendar.com and eltevents.com). Only conferences that had open calls were considered (i.e., if a conference had an invitation-only format, it was not included in this study). Furthermore, if a conference was found to permit VPs, then whether VPs were specified to be synchronous, asynchronous, or either or a mixture of modes was checked and recorded. The conferences that fit the criteria, and their published policies on permitted presentation modes were stored in a spreadsheet. Data collection took place between June and November 2019. If a conference changed its policy after November 2019, that change is not included in the data. This makes the data a snapshot of policies as of November 2019.

In total, data for 211 conferences matching the search criteria were collected. Of these conferences, 26, or 12.3%, have policies permitting VPs. Two of the 211, or 0.9%, specify synchronous VPs; 21, or 9.9% specify asynchronous VP; and three, or 1.4%, allow either or a mixture of modes. These statistics are also included in Table 1 below.

Table 1. *Percentages of ELT Conferences Permitting Various Modes of VPs (n=211)*

Permit Synchronous VPs	0.9% (2/211)
Permit Asynchronous VPs	9.9% (21/211)
Permit a mixture or either VP mode	1.4% (3/211)
Permit VPs (total)	12.3% (26/211)

Restricting the analysis to only those 26 conferences which permit VPs, 7.7% permit specify synchronous VPs, 80.8% specify asynchronous VPs, and 11.5% allow either or a mixture. These statistics are also included in Table 2 below.

Table 2 *The Distribution of Modes Allowed Among ELT Conferences Which Permit VPs (n=26)*

Synchronous mode only	7.7% (2/26)
Asynchronous mode only	80.8% (21/26)
A mixture or either mode	11.5% (3/26)

Discussion

Discussing the Findings

The data and findings presented here are subject to a peculiar caveat. The COVID-19 pandemic has upended the world of academic conferences. Policies at conferences around the globe regarding mode of presentation are being altered. Many conferences in the spring and summer of 2020 have tried to incorporate VPs into their programs, if not go fully digital, as happened with PanSIG2020. This is a "peculiar caveat" for the present study because the data and findings are from before the onset of the pandemic. Thus, this study should be understood as a snapshot of policies prior to the pandemic, and read with the understanding that many of these policies are now in a state of flux and may change, or have already changed, in significant ways.

The results reported above are purely descriptive, and there is considerable leeway in how they may be interpreted. Is 12.3% a large or small—or larger or smaller than one would expect—percentage of ELT-related conferences permitting VPs? The relatively simple methodology employed here does not lend itself to answering questions such as this one. My own impression is that this is a rather low percentage, but it is not at all clear what would be a non-arbitrary or objective amount for such a judgment. It may be that my impression of 12.3% being low is a function of the fact that I believe more conferences should permit VPs (I will address this belief more directly in the next sub-section).

One thing that does appear clear in the data is that when a conference permits VPs there is a strong tendency to prefer asynchronous modes. Why this is so is not known, although it may be that asynchronous VPs are perceived as being easier to manage (Jacobs et al., 2018). For instance, the technology needed for broadcasting a presentation in real-time may be perceived to require more expertise and on-the-spot effort—leading to concerns about complexity and possible complications—than the technology required to share a presentation asynchronously and which may be as simple as, say, opening a video file that had been delivered by the presenter(s) ahead of time or directing attendees via web links to the pre-recorded presentation(s). Additionally, synchronous VPs may be difficult for both presenters and organizers if they are in different time zones, whereas this poses no issue for asynchronous VPs. Of course, these potential reasons for preferring asynchronous modes are based on assumptions about the manageability of different VP modes, not differences in the quality or value of the different modes.

There is also the matter of the aforementioned "peculiar caveat" arising from the pandemic: Many conferences have moved to integrate VPs, or even go fully digital, such as PanSIG2020. However, this situation does not render the present study's findings moot since many of the effects of the pandemic on how conferences are organized are yet unknown. For instance, is the move to integrate VPs or hold virtual conferences a one-off occurrence due to the pandemic? Are VPs just a temporary fix? Will conference organizers keep these changes in the future, or will they revert to pre-pandemic policies? Other questions arise, too. Do other concerns (for example, increasing access for presenters with mobility issues) not matter enough to warrant normally including VP options, i.e. are pandemic conditions the only factor strong enough to warrant more consideration of VPs by organizers? The pandemic may have changed the perceived salience of VPs for the moment, but has it altered the underlying motivations or attitudes for offering (or not offering) VP options in general?

More Conferences Should Permit VPs

Some hold that virtual conferencing offers so many benefits which outweigh any drawbacks when compared to traditional conferences that there should be significantly more conferences held in completely virtual modes (Sá, Ferreira, & Serpa, 2019). While not strictly disagreeing, here I am suggesting something more limited: Traditional, large conferences should permit VPs. However, even this limited suggestion has not been embraced, under non-pandemic conditions, by many large ELT-related conferences. This is unfortunate because the lack of acceptance of VPs poses both ethical and strategic problems.

On the ethics side, it has been noted above that conferences arguably should feel a sense of obligation to permit VPs because of concerns around inclusivity/access and eco-ethics. Concerns about inclusivity/access are especially acute because some kinds of access issues are largely invisible and organizers often fail to think of them (Perry, 2015). Since large conferences often carry a certain degree of prestige and reach, they are valuable for presenters in terms of visibility, career progression, and other professional benefits. Borg (2015) reports that conference attendees gain a sense of community that neutralizes feelings of professional isolation that sometimes arise. Presenting, which gives a sense of accomplishment, is an element of the process of becoming part of an academic community. Large conferences that do not permit VPs deny such benefits to potential presenters who are among the most likely to be isolated and would benefit greatly from access to platforms of the scale provided by large conferences. Such potential presenters include those who cannot physically attend due to disability or other mobility issues, who work or live in political contexts where travel is restricted or dangerous, who are members of a vulnerable demographic where the conference is held, who work in underfunded or resource-poor situations, and many others. Not permitting VPs, even though large conferences have few or no capacity barriers to doing so, further marginalizes already severely marginalized potential presenters. Allowing VPs is one way for large conferences to work toward an ethical obligation to maximize inclusivity/access.

The other significant ethical obligation, in my view, concerns eco-ethics. As a general axiom, the larger one's contribution to ecological breakdown, the more responsibility one has to reduce their impact. ELT-related conferences are obviously not the primary drivers of global ecological crises like climate change; nonetheless large conferences do have heavy ecological and carbon footprints that contribute to adverse ecological effects. For example, one estimate is that the CO2 emissions for the 2018 JALT International Conference were nearly 800 tonnes (Jones, 2019). According to the United States' Environmental Protection Agency's Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator (U.S. EPA, n.d.), that is the equivalent of driving an average passenger vehicle almost 2 million miles (3.2 million kilometers) or the amount of carbon sequestered by nearly 1000 acres of forest in one year. Normatively-speaking, if one were to agree with a moral principle that "it is *prima facie* wrong to perform an act which has an expected amount of harm greater than another easily available alternative" (Hiller, 2011, p.352), then we can grasp the eco-ethical value of permitting VPs because their expected amount of harm in eco-ethical terms (e.g. via CO2 emissions) is less than requiring physical attendance for all presenters. This is because some presenters who would otherwise travel to the conference could opt to not physically attend. While fully virtual conferences would be even more eco-friendly (Fraser et al., 2017) and nearly carbon-neutral conferences are possible (Hiltner, 2018), permitting VPs at traditional conferences remains a valuable commitment that can reduce both the overall travel to a conference and resource use at the conference location. Since VPs can play a role in reducing the ecological impact of ELT and

ELT-adjacent conferences, permitting them is one way for large conferences to work toward their eco-ethical obligations.

The strategic problems associated with the lack of acceptance of VPs at ELT and other conferences derive from the same foundations as the ethical issues of inclusivity and access: By limiting presentations to those who physically attend, conferences have limited themselves and their ability to achieve their objectives because of the exclusion of particular voices. Research that may be of interest and value to other participants will not be shared at the conference. Standpoints and views that bring unique and important insights to bear on discussions and debates will not be heard at the conference. Opportunities for many to learn about particular contexts, such as underfunded and remote contexts, in which ELT researchers and practitioners are working will be lost. Essentially, not allowing VPs means that not only are remote participants deprived, but that those physically in attendance are deprived, too.

This deprivation can be illustrated succinctly by the fact that allowing VPs does not need to affect traditional programs at a conference in any obvious way. If VPs are asynchronous, for instance, then they can be broadcast at a time that does not conflict with other conference events or even simply be hosted on a virtual platform that conference participants can access at any time. VPs can be a kind of value-added feature joined to the rest of the traditional conference program. The opportunity cost involved for large conferences appears small, and there is a potentially huge upside for both virtual presenters and other participants.

However, VPs should not be understood as a panacea for the aforementioned issues. For instance, potential presenters in underfunded contexts may have difficulty not only traveling to a conference, but also locally securing the hardware/software and ICT access needed to present virtually. In such cases a distributed conference format—in which a conference is held in multiple locations simultaneously and linked via ICT—may be more likely to maximize access than simply permitting VPs at a traditional conference. Nor are VPs automatically a sound strategy for accomplishing some conference objectives. Because it is possible policies for VPs may be suboptimal and their integration into traditional conference programs carelessly handled in a manner that actually results in ill effects, permitting VPs at more conferences will require careful planning by organizers. The main point is that the arguments for permitting VPs are contingent and may be superseded by alternatives depending on the specific context.

Furthermore, although this paper has focused on the permitting of VPs by ELT-related conferences, there are other actors and stakeholders that have important roles to play in determining the trajectory of the acceptance of VPs at ELT-related conferences. Universities and other institutions, for instance, could do more to encourage or incentivize faculty and staff to sometimes present virtually rather than travelling to distant conferences. Established practitioners and researchers who routinely attend and present at conferences might experiment with VPs and by doing so signal the validity of alternative presentation modes to other stakeholders. These are just some examples, and though a fuller examination of the roles of other actors is outside the scope of this paper, future discussions on the potential roles and obligations of other actors regarding VPs is certainly warranted.

Future Research

There are several avenues of potential follow-up research to the present study. For example, researchers could analyze policies of only large conferences, or compare and contrast policies of conferences based in different regions, or compare and contrast pre-pandemic policies with post-pandemic ones (or policies since the onset of the pandemic). Alternatively, there may hard-to-quantify aspects of in-person presentations that, in some circumstances, might counter some of the arguments in this paper; thus, future research might try to illuminate in richer detail the affordances and drawbacks of all kinds of presentation modes. This is not an exhaustive list of research avenues, but merely an illustration that there is a variety of avenues. The prospect of VPs becoming more widespread, and thus opportunities to identify how they are handled and what best practices may look like, is unlikely to vanish.

Conclusion

The present study investigates the prevalence of ELT and ELT-adjacent conferences permitting VPs, and whether those that do permit VPs specify them to be synchronous, asynchronous, or permit either mode or a mixture of modes. Of the conferences examined (n=211), 12.3% permit VPs. Of those conferences that permit VPs (n=26), 7.7% specify synchronous modes, 80.8% specify asynchronous modes, and 11.5% permit either or a mixture of modes.

The reason for the preference of asynchronous modes is unknown, but it may be due to a perception that asynchronous VPs are easier to manage. The reason that more conferences do not permit VPs is also unknown, though it may be due to concerns about the value of VPs and a conference's capacity to manage VPs. Revenue concerns, while not addressed in this paper, also exist (Jacobs et al., 2018).

Furthermore, I argue that concerns about value in terms of both the prestige and interactivity of VPs may be disproportionate—i.e.

they may be sincere and reasonable, but are not generally strong enough to justify prohibiting VPs—and concerns about capacity, in the case of large conferences, are not persuasive in terms of justifying the lack of acceptance of VPs. Rather, large conferences should permit VPs because they have eco-ethical and inclusivity/access obligations with which VPs would help, and because permitting VPs makes strategic sense in achieving some conference objectives.

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Case Study of a Pre-Departure Orientation for Studying in the U.K.

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This research aimed to explore how the newly developed pre-departure orientation that focuses on the culture and language of the host country (the Orientation) would benefit students from studying abroad perspectives. The study adopted a qualitative case study to investigate the perceptions of five undergraduates enrolled in a university in Japan; pre-departure reflective journals and pre-and post−study abroad interviews were used to collect data for triangulation purposes. Four key themes were identified: 'The participants found the Orientation rewarding and were encouraged to study abroad.'; 'The participants found the culture session of the Orientation rewarding and that it increased their interest in British culture.'; 'The participants found the English session of the Orientation rewarding and that it increased their motivation to study English.'; and 'The participants wanted to have had more English sessions and learn about practical matters on the U.K. to overcome difficulties abroad.' Overall, it was found that the Orientation was beneficial for those planning to study in the U.K., although there is a possibility that it can be improved by including more sessions to improve their English and incorporating practical matters on the U.K.

本研究の目的は、留学先の文化と言語に焦点を当てて開発された渡航前オリエンテーションが学生に与える有益性について留学の観点から探るものである。日本の大学に在籍する５名の学部生の見解を調査するために質的ケーススタディを採用し、渡航前の振り返り日誌と渡航前後のインタビューを実施したところ、4 つの主要テーマが明らかとなった。「参加者はオリエンテーションに価値を見出し、留学への意欲を高めた。」「参加者はオリエンテーションの文化レッスンに価値を見出し、イギリス文化への興味を高めた。」「参加者はオリエンテーションの英語レッスンに価値を見出し、英語学習への意欲を高めた。」「参加者は留学中の困難を克服できるよう、より多くの英語レッスン及びイギリスに関する実用的事項の学習を望んだ。」概して、英語力を高めるレッスンを増やし、イギリスに関する実用的事項を取り扱うべきである改善の余地があるものの、開発されたオリエンテーションはイギリス留学を計画する者にとって有益であることが明らかとなった。

It is commonly believed that study abroad programs are ideal for students to be immersed in the target language and culture, giving them an opportunity to interact frequently with native speakers and experience the authentic culture (Martinsen, 2011; Pellegrino, 1998). Summerfield (1993) pointed out, however, that the philosophy of education-abroad programming cannot be limited to the actual time spent in another country. According to Cox (1996), those without a good pre-departure orientation may be ill-prepared for or overwhelmed by their study abroad experience, respond inappropriately in the new culture, or fail to benefit from potentially available study abroad opportunities.

Indeed, several authors have discussed the importance of a pre-departure orientation. For example, Highum (2014) suggested that a pre-departure orientation helps students travel safely with knowledge of the host country and learn effectively from studying abroad. English (2012) and Summerfield (1993) also argued that it helps students develop cultural sensitivity and prepare for a new cultural environment. Additionally, Van Amelsvoort (1999) stated that intensive language training before departure would alleviate students' concerns about communicating while abroad. For these reasons, a pre-departure orientation is believed to create meaningful and successful experiences for students studying abroad (Summerfield, 1993).

Despite the importance of pre-departure orientations, however, Barber (2014) and Koernig (2007) noted that there appears to be a lack of research about what should be included and the effectiveness of particular components of orientations in enhancing study abroad outcomes. In particular, it appears that Japanese universities have not succeeded in implementing well-structured comprehensive pre-departure curricula in terms of cross-cultural and linguistic development (Hockersmith & Newfields, 2016). Rather, the content of pre-departure orientations provided by many Japanese universities is likely to be limited to travel logistics (Hockersmith & Newfields, 2016) and students could end up regarding studying abroad as merely traveling, rather than as educational opportunities (Hockersmith & Newfields, 2016).

Therefore, faculty members leading study abroad programs are encouraged to hold pre-departure orientation sessions to help students understand the host culture and improve their language (e.g., Marshall University, n.d.; Montana State University, n.d.; University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, n.d.). However, this information specifically relates to what American universities do; Japanese universities do not put focus on these academic matters and lack in-depth and well-structured sessions to make overseas experiences more meaningful from cultural and language perspectives (Hockersmith & Newfields, 2016). This study therefore aimed to explore how pre-departure orientations that focus on the target culture and language would benefit students enrolled in a university in Japan.

Context of the Research

I developed a pre-departure orientation for a two-week study abroad program in the U.K., which was composed of a general English language course and a homestay in the U.K. The orientation aimed to help students attending the study abroad program understand British culture and improve their English language skills before their departure. Specifically, the orientation consisted of a total of five 60-minute sessions as follows (see Appendix A for the syllabus):

1. Session I: British Culture (Four Nations);
2. Session II: British Culture (British Food);
3. Session III and IV: Intensive English (Survival Homestay English); and
4. Session V: Intensive English (Survival Airport English).

To that end, the following research questions were posed to guide this study: What are the students' perceptions of the newly-developed pre-departure orientation that focuses on British culture and English language (hereinafter referred to as 'the Orientation')?

Methods

Participants

The participants were five CEFR A2 level undergraduates (one Chinese, one Korean, and three Japanese students) enrolled in a private university in Japan as shown in Table 1. They attended the study abroad program in the U.K. from late February to early March 2018 (two weeks). To prepare for studying abroad, the participants took part in the Orientation, which was held once a month from October 2017 to February 2018 (five sessions in total).

Table 1. *Demographic Characteristics of Study Cohorts*

Participants	Gender	Nationality	Major	University Year[a]
A	Male	Chinese	Business	3
B	Female	Korean	Business	2
C	Male	Japanese	Tourism	1
D	Female	Japanese	Tourism	2
E	Male	Japanese	Business	4

[a] This refers to the students' year of study at the time of their involvement in this study.

Study Design

This research was undertaken as a qualitative case study to explore and understand a group of students' perceptions of the Orientation (Kumar, 2014; Moule & Goodman, 2009; Polit & Beck, 2004; Riazi, 2016).

Materials

Two types of materials were used for this research: (1) one-to-one, semi-structured interviews and (2) reflective journals. The former is believed to be well-suited for case studies and yield significant amounts of information from an individual's perspective (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). The latter was used for triangulation purposes because case studies often involve investigating the actions of the past and participants may forget or reconstruct their interpretation (J. W. Creswell & J. D. Creswell, 2017; Newby, 2013; Polit & Beck, 2004; Riazi, 2016); participants' recall is more likely to be precise at the time of the experience, and thus, diaries would offer greater accuracy than interviews (Merriam, 2009; Moule & Goodman, 2009).

Procedure

First, I explained to each participant about the research project and informed that their privacy would be protected at all times. The participants then agreed to voluntarily take part in the study and signed a consent form accordingly.

The interviews were conducted twice; the first interview was conducted in February 2018 right after the Orientation ended, while the second interview was conducted in March 2018 after students returned from the UK. However, Participant D was unavailable in March 2018 and was therefore interviewed in May 2018. Each interview session lasted for about five to 15 minutes. All interviews were recorded to ensure that the data were the actual verbatim responses of the participants (Polit & Beck, 2004), and the audio recordings were transcribed. Additionally, the participants wrote a reflective journal after each orientation session between October 2017 and February 2018 (a total of five times). Finally, both reflective journals and interview transcripts were translated from Japanese to English.

Although Participants A and B were not native Japanese speakers, both were able to communicate well in Japanese and translators were not available for this study. Thus, one-to-one interviews and reflective journals were conducted and written, respectively, in Japanese.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was conducted to reduce the vast quantities of textual data collected from reflective journals and interviews (Moule & Goodman, 2009): (1) the text was divided into smaller parts called meaning units, which were condensed further (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017); (2) subsequently, the condensed meaning units were coded (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017); (3) the codes were then grouped into categories (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017); and finally, (4) these categories were clustered together as themes (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017). The codes, categories, for Theme 1 are summarized in Table 2. See Inoue (2020) for more details on how to conduct content analysis for study abroad research.

Results

Orientation as a Whole

As shown in Table 2, the results of the three sources, the reflective journals (RJ), the first semi-structured interviews conducted before the participants' departure (SSI-1), and the second semi-structured interviews upon their return from the U.K. (SSI-2), suggest that the participants found the Orientation rewarding and were encouraged to study abroad.

Table 2. *Theme 1 with Codes and Categories*

Codes	Categories	Theme 1
Beneficial	Perceptions of the Orientation	Orientation was rewarding and encouraged us to study abroad
Necessary		
Motivated	Perceptions of studying abroad	
Relieved		

Firstly, two participants (Participants A and D) indicated that the Orientation was beneficial for them:

> "The Orientation was really necessary. I wouldn't be able to go to the U.K. without attending it" (SSI-1: A); "It was really necessary for my studying abroad" (SSI-2: A)
>
> "...everything I learned was definitely useful for studying abroad...I learned what was necessary before going to the U.K., so it was very rewarding…" (SSI-1: D).

Secondly, four participants (Participants A, B, C, and E) stated that the Orientation helped mitigate their concerns about studying abroad. For example, Participant E mentioned, "...my concerns got relieved compared to before, and I feel a little better…no matter how bad a person's English is, I've come to think anyone has a chance" (SSI-1: E). Furthermore, two of the respondents (Participants A and C) showed their motivation to study abroad:

> "Thank you very much for holding the Orientation! I think that studying in the U.K. is such a rare opportunity. I'm really looking forward to it" (RJ: A).
>
> "Taking full advantage of the Orientation, I want to try hard in the U.K." (SSI-1: C).

Culture Sessions

As shown in Table 3, the results of RJ, SSI-1, and SSI-2 suggest that the participants found the culture session of the Orientation rewarding and that it increased their interest in British culture.

Firstly, all five participants expressed that learning about British culture was beneficial for them. For example, Participant B said, “I was able to know more about the U.K., so the lessons were very beneficial” (SSI-1: B). Furthermore, Participant D stated, “What the culture session taught me was what should be learned before departure” (SSI-1: D) and “my host mother taught me about four nations…As a topic for conversation, the lessons were very useful” (SSI-2: D).

Additionally, three participants (Participants A, C, and D) indicated that they became interested in British culture. For example, Participant C noted, “...I’ve found that there are cuisines of various countries in the U.K., and I’ve become very interested…I didn’t know anything about British culture before…” (RJ: C).

Table 3. *Theme 2 with Codes and Categories*

Codes	Categories	Theme 2
Beneficial	Perceptions of British culture sessions	Culture sessions were rewarding and increased our interest in British culture
Necessary		
Useful		
Interested	Perceptions of British culture	
Unfamiliar		

English Sessions

As shown in Table 4, the results of RJ, SSI-1, and SSI-2 show that the participants found the English session of the Orientation rewarding and that it increased their motivation to study English.

Four participants (Participants A, B, C, and D) reported that learning English was beneficial for them. For example, Participant A stated, “If I had not participated in the lessons, I probably wouldn’t have known how to converse…I studied a lot about conversational English. I think this is really good.” (SSI-1: A). Further, Participant C expressed, “At immigration, I had a conversation in a similar way, so it was very useful” (SSI-2: C).

All five participants mentioned that English was difficult. For example, Participant C mentioned, “…I practiced a conversation at the airport…Today, I already knew the questions in advance, so I was able to answer them, but I thought that it would be difficult when thinking about actual situations” (RJ: C). Nevertheless, four participants (Participants A, C, D, and E) indicated that the English sessions increased their motivation to study English. For example, Participant E noted, “By practicing English conversation, studying abroad in the U.K. is starting to feel more real…I look forward to actually using the phrases I learned…I’ll study harder” (RJ: E). Additionally, two participants (Participants A and B) mentioned that the English sessions helped relieve their concerns over English: “I’m really worried about communicating with Britons in English…By attending the English sessions, I learned how…I’m relieved” (SSI-1: A) and “I had concerns about English before going to the U.K. …By memorizing what I learned, I would be confident with my English in real-life situations” (RJ: B).

Table 4. *Theme 3 with Codes and Categories*

Codes	Categories	Theme 3
Beneficial	Perceptions of English sessions	English sessions were rewarding and motivated us to study English
Necessary		
Useful		
Confident	Perceptions of English	
Difficult		
Motivated		
Relieved		

Potential Improvement

As shown in Table 5, the results of SSI-1 and SSI-2 suggest that the participants wanted to have more English sessions and learn about practical matters on the U.K. to overcome difficulties abroad.

Firstly, three participants (Participants A, C, and E) mentioned that they wanted more sessions to improve their English. For instance, Participant E stated, “There were not enough orientation sessions, so even if I’m not good at English, I wanted to have tried more, to be honest” (SSI-1: E). In addition, two participants (Participants D and E) stated that they wanted to know more about practical information about the U.K., including British personality, British transport, and the host area:

> “It's good to study abroad, but you’ll be defeated if you’re not mentally strong... while staying in the U.K., I found British people generally assertive. Those who are

planning to go to the U.K. next time should be prepared mentally before their departure" (SSI-2: E).

"You could have shared the information about a shopping street near the host institution…and how to take a train…I wanted to learn about the knowledge outside of the context of an English lesson" (SSI-2: D).

Secondly, all five participants expressed that they had difficulty in English while in the U.K. Participant A had trouble understanding British pronunciation, saying "The British English pronunciation was a bit unfamiliar, so sometimes I didn't understand well" (A, SSI1-2: A), and the other four had difficulty in speaking. For instance, Participant C reported, "I faced difficulties outside general situations…For example, we went to McDonalds together once, but it was very difficult…we couldn't order a combo meal because I didn't know how to order it in English… (SSI-2: C). Moreover, Participant D mentioned, "At homestay…I was not sure if I made myself understood…I said something, but when they replied in a different way from what I expected, I couldn't say anything. I couldn't even say, "That's not what I mean" (SSI-2, D). Furthermore, two of the respondents (Participants C and D) indicated that they had trouble using British coins, which they were unfamiliar with. For example, Participant D stated, "There were a wide variety of British coins...I had a lot of coins left...I tried to pay by coins, but because people were waiting behind me...I couldn't use coins much…I wish I had learned about coins in advance" (SSI-2: D).

Table 5. *Theme 4 with Codes and Categories*

Codes	Categories	Theme 4
More English sessions	Students' needs	Wanted to have more English sessions and learn about practical matters to overcome difficulties abroad
British personality		
British transport		
Host area		
British pronunciation	Difficulties abroad	
Speaking English		
Unfamiliar coins		

Discussion

As for the research question, the identified four themes show that the participants' perceptions of the Orientation were generally positive; however, the Orientation seems to require some improvement in the contents. The first three themes suggest that the Orientation was rewarding for the participants because it encouraged them to study in the U.K. by increasing their interest in British culture and motivated them to study English. These findings prove the arguments made by English (2012), Summerfield (1993), and Van Amelsvoort (1999), who suggested that a pre-departure orientation would help students fully benefit from studying abroad in terms of cultural and language development. However, theme 4 suggested that the Orientation should have included more sessions to improve the participants' English and cover practical matters on the U.K. to help them overcome difficulties they would face while abroad. These findings indicate that although there were no strong negative reactions from the participants, the Orientation should be improved further by additional language training and explanation about practical matters on the U.K.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate students' perceptions of the newly developed pre-departure orientation that focuses on British culture and English language (the Orientation). The study adopted a qualitative case study to explore the perceptions of the five participants enrolled in a private university in Japan. Two types of data collection instruments (semi-structured interviews and reflective journals) were used for triangulation purposes, and the data were analyzed by content analysis.

As a result, four key themes were identified from the study: 'The participants found the Orientation rewarding and were encouraged to study abroad.' (theme 1); 'The participants found the culture session of the Orientation rewarding and that it increased their interest in British culture.' (theme 2); 'The participants found the English session of the Orientation rewarding and that it increased their motivation to study English.' (theme 3); and 'The participants wanted to have more English sessions and learn about practical matters on the U.K. to overcome difficulties abroad.' (theme 4).

Overall, it is suggested that the Orientation would be valuable for those planning to study abroad in the U.K. because the culture sessions would help increase their interest in British culture and the English sessions would help increase their motivation to study English. Nevertheless, there is a possibility that the Orientation can be improved by including more sessions to improve their English and incorporating practical matters on the U.K. to help them overcome potential difficulties while abroad. Considering that pre-departure orientations that focus on the host culture and language are unique in Japan, the findings would help educators gain insight on how to develop an effective pre-departure orientation for students planning to study abroad.

However, five limitations of this study need to be acknowledged. First, the findings might not be fully generalized beyond the case mainly because of the small sample size. Future studies may include a larger number of students to help generalize the findings. Second, although the study context was set in Japan, the study participants included two non-Japanese students, which might have affected the findings. Future studies can investigate whether the perceptions of international students differ from that of the Japanese students. Third, content analysis is subjective, and the data could be interpreted differently (Julien, 2008). Future studies may analyze the same data to explore different perspectives. Fourth, the coding process of this study was not detailed, showing only the final codes triangulated from interviews and journals due to the vast amount of collected data. Future studies could describe how the final codes were created from the original sources. Last, the fact that the English sessions of the Orientation only covered homestay and airport situations might have affected the participant's perceptions of the Orientation. Future studies should investigate a pre-departure orientation that would cover a wider variety of situations.

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Appendix A

Syllabus of the Newly Developed Pre-departure Orientation

- **Duration:** 5 sessions (60 minutes each)
- **Course objectives:**
  - To develop cultural knowledge about the U.K.
  - To improve English skills to facilitate communication in the U.K.
- **Course Schedule:**

(1) British Culture: Four Nations

- Students watch a video clip about the four nations of the U.K. (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland), which summarizes each nation's culture, customs, and/or history. After watching the video, students complete the relevant worksheet to check their understanding of the video.

(2) British Culture: British Food

- Students watch a video clip that not only shows traditional English food but also a wide range of food from many countries to introduce the cultural diversity of the U.K. After watching the video, students complete the relevant worksheet to check their understanding of the video.

(3) & (4) Intensive English: Survival Homestay English

- Students complete the worksheet to learn English phrases used in homestay situations. After the exercises, each student selects one of the homestay situations and performs roleplay with the instructor who pretends to be a host mother.

(5) Intensive English: Survival Airport English

- Students watch a video about immigration and airport check-in to learn English phrases used at the airport. Subsequently, students are asked to replace model answers with their own answers and perform roleplays with the instructor.

A Case for Scaffolding Self-reflection

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Self-reflection is a valuable tool in becoming an effective learner often leading to a greater capacity for self-organizing effective learning behaviors (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This paper will argue the need for more scaffolded self-reflective pedagogies based on Self-Determination (Ryan & Deci, 1987) literature, and provide three mini-case studies on how self-reflection can be implemented in university settings. The first of these mini-case studies outlines materials developed for a reflective workshop conducted with 200+ sophomore students. The second will explore how written reflections when revisited with a critical eye, results in deeper, more transformative reflective reports. The final case-study will provide insight into how group discussions can help build supportive classrooms and raise self-awareness. Each of these mini-case studies will demonstrate how student self-reflections elicited clearer goals and encouraged self-endorsed learning. The paper will conclude with a call for more carefully scaffolded reflective activities in the language classroom.

自己内省は効率的な学習者になるための価値のあるツールである。自己内省の出来る者はそれが出来ない者と比べ、自身の行動を管理する能力に優れている(Ryan & Deci, 2017)。本研究は、*自己決定理論* (Ryan & Deci, 1987)に基づいた自己内省を促す足場掛け作りの必要性について、大学で実践された３つの小研究事例と共に述べる。第１の事例は、200 名以上の大学２年生を対象としたワークショップの概要を紹介する。第２はリフレクションを再考することで批判的かつ熟考的で、より変容的なものになるのか探る。第３はディスカッションと通しクラス内での所属意識および自己認識の向上に役立つか考査する。各小研究は、学生の自己内省がどの様に明確な目標を導き出し、自己承認型の学習を促進するか提言する。本研究は、授業内で足場掛けが施されたリフレクションの必要性について呼びかけるとともに、それを結論とする。

Reflection or reflective practice has been discussed in education for decades (for an overview see Farrell, 2019; meta-synthesis of studies on learner reflections, see Loo & Sulankey, 2019). Despite this, scholars are yet to arrive at a consensus regarding a definition. Reflection does however appear to go beyond the mere act of 'thinking'. Early on, it was conceived by Dewey (1944) as the revisiting of past experiences with substantial thought. Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) expanded on this notion by adding that new perspectives could be constructed by re-evaluating the actions, ideas and feelings associated with the revisited memories. These new perspectives could then lead to changes in behavior going forward. In support of these concepts, modern research has demonstrated that reflection on the self aids learners in understanding their values, beliefs and learning style (Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Moon, 1999), identifying and challenge assumptions (Golombek & Johnson, 2004, Moon, 1999), generating personally-relevant solutions to problems (Ryan & Deci, 2017), and enacting the behavioural change necessary to be an effective learner (Murray, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Self-Determination Theory and Self-reflection

Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT), a sub-theory from Ryan and Deci's incredibly influential Self-Determination Theory (1987, 2017), views self-awareness as a foundation for individual well-being and potential, and through substantial self-reflection, self-awareness can be achieved. More specifically, BPNT proposes that individuals are best served when they are able to experience feelings of *autonomy*, *competence* and *relatedness*. Simply, autonomy is the need to be able to self-regulate one's own experiences and actions, often with a sense of volition. Competence is considered to be the sense an individual has of being capable. In other words, to be able to challenge themselves, develop mastery and occasionally succeed. The final component of an individual's tripartite needs is relatedness which is viewed as feeling part of a community. This brings us back to self-awareness which could come in the form of autonomy-support whereby educators are responsive to the perspectives and concerns of those within their care. By giving learners a space, either physical or mental, and a voice with which to share their experiences, fears and desires, self-awareness can be facilitated. This awareness then acts as a base for learners to engage in behaviors that are congruent (to varying degrees) with their values and psychological needs.

The provision of opportunities for individuals to develop their self-awareness through reflective practices thus appears integral to their overall development as psychologically secure learners equipped with the knowledge necessary to achieve their full potential.

In this paper, we will be making our case for greater attention to be paid to the reflective opportunities we afford our students here in Japan, many of whom come from a background that favours high-stake testing (Sugimoto, 2014; Wicking, 2017). In high-stakes testing, the focus is on product rather than the process, making it less conducive to the teaching of reflective practices. Moreover, since self-reflection is in part a developmental process and requires a purpose (Gustafson & Bennett, 2002; Moon,1999), learners must firstly have the capacity to interpret situations before understanding what they are reflecting on and why it is beneficial for them to do so. We believe that without the appropriate scaffolding and opportunities to develop their capacity in these areas, our learners may be limited in understanding their needs. To support educators in creating opportunities for self-reflection, we will introduce three mini-case studies conducted at Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS), Japan. This will be followed up with a discussion of lessons learned and suggestions for the future scaffolding of self-reflection activities.

Before outlining the cases studies however, a brief exploration of self-reflection in the educational context of Japan will be provided.

Self-reflection in Japanese Education

Due to the culture of high-stake testing in Japan as well as our experience in the university system, students who enter Japanese universities frequently rely on test scores as a metric of their language learning and growth. In our experience, the dependency on test scores as the main gauge of learning appears to negatively impact students' motivation, affect, and goal setting abilities. Through self-reflection learners are able to become less dependent on exams and other external assessments (i.e., extrinsic motivations) and more influenced on internal assessments (i.e., intrinsic motivations). Additionally, students can use test results and the testing ordeal as a whole as a part of their reflections. This shift of dependence from external to internal factors allows students to feel more effectance on their learning process while giving them opportunities for self-endorsed learning behaviors.

Based on our past teaching experiences, contrasted with our current university environment, Japanese junior and senior high school learning environments tend to rely on motivating students extrinsically through "controlling teaching behaviors" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 368) — this is not a negative critique of Japanese schools but a comparative observation. Additionally, the concept of self-reflection in our institution, which is influenced by positive psychology (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014), might differ from students' understanding of self-reflection in regard to the concept of *hansei*. As Suzuki (2013) highlights, hansei can be understood as a form of "negative self-reflection" (cf. Izumi-Taylor, Lee, Moberly, & Wang, 2010).

Therefore, when students enter our institution, they experience a "rupture" (Zittoun et al., 2013, p. 262) in regard to the autonomy fostering environment and at times become overwhelmed within such a learning climate. Students are benefited through dialogic interactions with peers and educators during their transition into new environments. A significant part of this process is achieved by means of self-reflection advising strategies, activities, and workshops that are powerful tools for students to deal with the ruptures that they go through. These self-reflection interventions aren't limited to advising but are done collaboratively in class with peers and in private (e.g., reflective diaries).

As noted above, a common misconception about reflection is that it is a description and retelling of events as well as being focused solely on areas of needed improvement (e.g., hansei). However, this is not the case as there are a number of models of reflective practice, which can be achieved through different levels of reflection or by approaching reflections through differing typologies (Farrell, 2019). If students just retell the process of events, they will not be able to reap the full benefits of self-reflection. Therefore, the objectives of the scaffolded self-reflection activities covered in this paper were to help learners deal with the new autonomy supportive environment in a constructive way and to nurture self-reflective skills. Further, in addition to students' current learning environment, learners are equipped with the ability to self-reflect and this serves as a holistic approach to learners' well-being. As students become accustomed to self-reflection it can be scaffolded to other aspects of their lives such as time management, motivation, affect, and community.

Position statement

Our role as Learning Advisors at KUIS places us in the unique position to dedicate much of our time to supporting our students through the trials and tribulations of language learning through reflective dialogue. When learners speak to us, they share with us their struggles and concerns, but also their successes. Our advising sessions are not limited to the topic of language learning either. Affective concerns such as motivation and confidence, academic aspirations to studying abroad, career pathways and curiosity about social and political issues interweave themselves into our sessions. Part of our interactions with learners also take place in the language classroom on the behest of the lecturer. Thus, our job requires us to take on a holistic approach which is facilitated greatly by our students' self-awareness and volition. The materials and interventions discussed in this paper are therefore imbued with the values and beliefs we hold as Learning Advisors.

Case study 1: Reflective workshop

Our first case study outlines the materials developed for a reflective workshop conducted with between 200-250 sophomore students. The rationale behind this workshop was that by scaffolding self-reflective questions and then providing opportunities to ask and respond to such questions collaboratively, students would be able to become aware of the process made in language learning, realize their capability, and finally share common experiences with each other. Further, we believed it would be more impactful if students worked collaboratively (Myskow et al., 2018) in a way that allowed them to separate the self-reflective process into easily digestible steps rather than risking the issue of them struggling to answer reflective questions independently. Taking that into consideration, we conducted four 60-minute workshops that consisted of three pair activities which were accompanied with a worksheet (Appendix 1) detailed in the corresponding sections below. Each section of the worksheet provided a scaffold for the students' interactions.

Thinking back

In the first part of the workshop students were introduced to the concept and purpose of self-reflection and then were given time to think back on their past year as students focusing on their accomplishments, obstacles, and realizations. This section was then concluded by an active listening activity where the pairs were given 10 minutes to share what they had accomplished, struggled with, and realized. While one shared, the other listened and took notes on aspects of their partner's reflection that they thought were interesting—notably, aspects that were similar or different from their own experience. During this activity, the advisors walked around the room and assisted students who were having any difficulties and asked questions aimed at promoting further elaboration such as "How did that accomplishment make you feel?" or "Had you experienced a similar obstacle before?" The language used in supporting the students was conducted primarily in the target language (English) however support was also provided to students in their L1 (Japanese).

Where are you now?

In the next section of the workshop students were asked to reflect on their current situation and any issues they were dealing with by answering questions meant to scaffold their reflection such as "What happened?" or "What were you thinking and feeling at that time?" While the other student was tasked with asking "How" and "Why" questions in order to collaborate with their partner in deepening the reflective process. Similar to the previous section, pairs had 10 minutes in total to complete the activity.

Thinking ahead

The final step of the workshop concluded with a 10-minute activity where students thought about ways in which they could overcome any obstacles or challenges they were facing, and create a plan of action on how to do so. This was achieved providing students with a series of reflective prompts, adapted from Gibbs Reflective Cycle (1998), which they used as a scaffold to reflect and a means to address the issues they had. As the previous activity this was done while having a dialogue with their partner who also was tasked with asking questions meant to elicit further reflection at a deeper level. At the end of the workshop students were encouraged to meet with a learning advisor to further elaborate on their action plan.

Throughout the workshop students were highly engaged while working collaboratively with their peers in all three parts of the workshop. From the perspective of BPNT, we believe students were able to identify points of effectiveness by identifying past accomplishments. In terms of feeling a sense of relatedness with their partners, working collaboratively through active listening and asking reflective questions to one another provided them with this opportunity. Finally, by making their own plan of action that was relevant to their current situations, and which was self-endorsed and congruent with their values, they were able to attain a degree of autonomy.

Case study 2: Reflective training

The second of our case studies derived from changes made to a 15-week elective module on self-directed learning. Since many of the reflections we had been receiving were generally descriptive with occasional explanations, explicit scaffolding was introduced to the first two weeks which we dubbed 'Reflective training'. Our goal in developing the materials was to encourage more in-depth, critical reflections through easy to implement reflective practices, so we opted for a revision approach in the first week. How and Why questions seemed to be the simplest route to elaboration, so we built these into the revision process. In the examples we provided to the learners (Image 1), we made the conscious decision to focus on questions that would allow for exploration of thoughts, feelings and beliefs, rather than focusing solely on action.

Image 1. An example of the scaffolding provided for reflection revision

Activity 2: Modifying your reflection

One of the best ways to improve your reflective writing is to re-read your original reflection and ask yourself two questions:

- Why ...?
- How ...?

For example:

This week I read 10 pages of *Harry Potter* in an hour so I think my reading speed is improving. Next week I shall try to read 15 pages in an hour.

Why ...?	How ...?
Why 10 pages? Why *Harry Potter*? Why do you think your reading speed is improving? Why 15 pages and not 20 pages?	How did you read? (Looking up words or ignoring words?) How did you feel about your reading? How interesting was the strategy? How will you feel if you read 15 pages?

Twelve students enrolled in the module and using the scaffolding provided, all students bar one showed evidence of increasing competence through the composition of more sustained reflections (Table 1). In terms of sophistication, seven of the students moved beyond a simple revisiting of their study to providing explanations for their thoughts, feelings and actions. An additional two students took their reflections to an even higher level by exploring the relationship between their actions and their learning, while one student was able to show evidence of a fundamental change in their thinking in regards to how they studied. Only two from the group failed to make any changes to the depth of their reflections.

In the second week, our module takers were provided with a double layer of scaffolding. This was achieved by asking the students to complete one of nine pre-existing activities that encouraged the challenging of beliefs or the broadening of perspectives. The work they had completed individually was then revisited during a meeting with a learning advisor. Due to the nature of advising sessions, questioning, justifying and perspective switching are common features of the

discussion. Each of these features align with the features we sought to instill in our learners as part of their growing competence in reflective practice, making advising sessions an integral part of the scaffolds provided.

Following this advising session, the students were then asked to complete a reflection of their learning over the past week. Two students didn't submit their reflections despite attending the advising sessions, however this round of reflections revealed that two of the students were critically considering the wider implications of their language learning processes while an additional two students had begun to explore the relationships between their learning and study behaviors. All remaining students either maintained or progressed to providing explanations for their thoughts, feelings and actions.

Overall, the scaffolds put in place appeared to have had some impact on the written reflections we received from our students. Word counts were generally higher, and the later rounds of reflections generally displayed greater depth with students offering clear reasons for their thoughts and actions rather than perfunctory descriptions. A caveat to this case study lies in the length of exposure the students had to reflective scaffolding. Two weeks of scaffolding may qualify as an introduction to reflective practices but there is a need to explore what sustained support could do in the development of our students' reflective capabilities.

An additional limitation to these findings can be found in the layout of our module documents. In discussing the increased word counts, text box size was considered as playing a possible role in students' perceptions of how much they were expected to write. The text box for the initial reflection composed by the students was almost half the size of the space provided for the later reflections. While the module was delivered through the online platform Moxtra which permits the resizing of fonts, the influence of the space provided for reflections must still be considered. Word count did not however appear to play a significant role in the depth of the reflections.

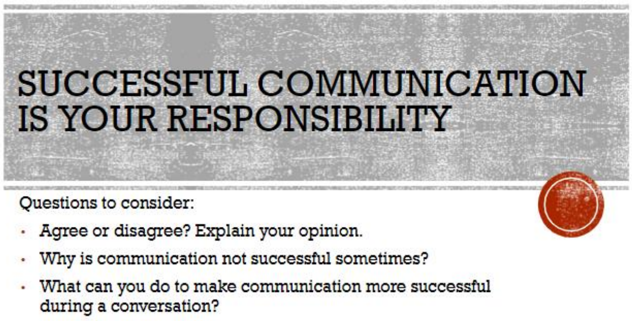
Table 1 *Reflection word counts*

Student	Wk 1. Initial	Wk 1. Revised	Wk 2. Double layered
S1	40	98	90
S2	40	128	N/A
S3	158	394	142
S4	75	72	159
S5	78	217	165
S6	55	93	130
S7	29	88	84
S8	46	62	51
S9	128	145	49
S10	72	178	165
S11	84	163	384
S12	116	147	N/A
	77	**149**	**142**

Case study 3: Discussions for reflection

Case study three derives from a six-week intervention study (Yarwood, Rose-Wainstock & Lees, 2019) designed from a BPNT perspective. The aim of the intervention was to facilitate autonomy-supportive classroom environments and raise learners' self-awareness through peer-to-peer discussions about language learning. Reflection was scaffolded through the use of discussion prompts, follow-up questions (Image 2) and collaborative knowledge building. Discussions in this study were instituted on a twice-weekly basis in two Freshman classes, and on a weekly basis in one other Freshman class. All the classes were mandatory English classes for non-English majors. Students were grouped into groups of 4-5 and asked to discuss the prompts amongst themselves for 10 minutes. This was then followed up by a whole class discussion to clarify any questions and summarize the ideas, experiences and opinions brought up during the discussion time. The classroom teacher was advised to stay out of the discussions as much as possible to allow the students to have a true peer-collaborative experience, and ameliorate any desire to impart 'expert' knowledge that could stymie active reflection of the students' own thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Image 2. An example of the discussion prompts and follow-up questions



The discussion prompts were generated from our advising notes which documented the frequency of language learning issues experienced by her advisees over the course of an academic year. Rather than providing a single discussion prompt, it was decided that by breaking down the main prompt into additional questions, students would be empowered to view an issue through multiple lenses before arriving at a conclusion. While these additional questions were mostly developed for the lower-tier students, anecdotal evidence suggests they proved valuable for the higher-tier students who while linguistically capable, didn't always have extensive life experience. Evidence from focus groups conducted revealed that discussion prompts related to the students' lived experiences were easier for them to reflect on a length, while more complex conceptual prompts such as 'Who controls your learning' resulted in less sustained reflections and greater silence within the discussion groups.

Survey data and focus groups conducted at the end of the 6-week period revealed that the discussion prompts were successful in developing an autonomy-supportive environment where learners felt comfortable to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences (Yarwood, Rose-Wainstock & Lees, 2019). Through reflecting in a collaborative environment, they were also able to re-evaluate how they viewed various language learning issues. For some students, changes in their fundamental beliefs grew from listening to their classmates' comments and drawing comparisons between what they heard and what they themselves had observed or experienced. Furthermore, these collaborative reflection experiences resulted in transformative action with some students changing their study behaviors following discussions.

Discussion

While implemented in varying contexts, each of the case studies outlined offer some insight into how reflective activities can be scaffolded. Using BPNT as a framework for this discussion, we will highlight some of the key ways in which the scaffolds were used to help catalyze self-awareness.

Competence

For reflection to be effective it requires a purpose. Sustained benefits may additionally require that purpose to be seen by the learner as being achievable and relevant to their immediate or long-term needs. Unstructured reflection could therefore undermine the value of reflection as a whole in the eyes of learners (Farrel, 2019; Loo & Sulankey). Without structure, they may not know what memories to re-visit, what kinds of evaluations to make, or how to connect past experiences with feelings, thoughts, or future motivations. Structuring reflections through the use of temporal spaces (past, present and future) as done in Case Study 1 can help to activate memories associated with particular time periods. It can also provide clear connections between past memories and present or future action. The structuring of questions as shown in all case studies provides another support for students. Time for reflection is often limited in classrooms, and so provision of prompts or a body of questions from which learners can choose from, allows for smoother reflective practices to take place. As the learners are exposed to a wider variety of thought-provoking questions, they start to build a repertoire which can lead to a boost in confidence and skill in identifying which questions to apply to their own thoughts.

The benefits gained from the structured practice observed in the second and third case studies highlight the necessity of repeated opportunities to reflect. Moreover, mixing writing reflections with dialogic ones or individual with collaborative reflections could work to allay stagnation while still providing students with the space to familiarize themselves with, and gain competencies in reflective practices. The greater enjoyment and success learners have in reflecting on their learning, the more they may come to self-endorse the activity.

Relatedness

As shown, particularly in Case Study 3, discussions among students pertaining to their language learning experiences can help to create bonds between learners. Through the act of sharing, learners are exposed to a range of learning behaviors, goals and emotional experiences which can spark transformation. Even in the cases where behaviors remain unchanged, values, beliefs and goals may undergo a re-evaluation resulting in a greater self-awareness.

When bolstered with an autonomy-supportive specialist, either a learning advisor or educator, students are able to experience the validation that comes with having an older, respected individual listen to, and aid in their reflection. The self-directed nature of reflections means that learners have the potential to fall into recursive thought patterns; ones that their peers may not have the know-how to deal with. However, educational specialists are more likely to pick up these patterns, and dialogically guide the learner onto more productive paths.

Autonomy

Given the personal nature of self-reflection, and the possibility for it to be conflated with a self-exploration of one's limitations, it is no wonder students may be reluctant to engage in reflective practices. However, because individuals have the freedom to target matters personally relevant to their learning, reflective activities can be incredibly autonomy-supportive. Even in structured activities such as those outlined in this paper allow learners to choose which experience, aspects of their learning or opinions they wish to share. Discussion opportunities with peers or specialists were evaluated as beneficial because they gave individuals the chance to gain a better understanding of what was important. In Case Study 1 and Case Study 3, this led to clearer goals, and action plans that while we had no substantial evidence of being implemented, still spoke to the students' self-organising behaviors.

Identifying areas that are relevant to students through surveys or student-generated reflective prompts are ways in which reflective practices in the classroom could engender endorsement by the very students who are expected to engage in the practices. As each of the case studies began with an explicit rationale detailing the purpose of the activities involved, our learners knew from the start how we conceptualized self-reflection and the benefits our activities were intended to produce. Special attention was paid to establishing reflective practices, especially those that were collaborative, as personal, non-judgemental and process-focused.

Conclusion

Across these three cases of scaffolded self-reflection here are some areas that we found of salience. We noticed that providing students with reflective questions and prompts with clearly defined aims was more effective than instructing them to reflect with no supplementary support. In addition, the opportunity for collaboration with their peers allowed students to feel a sense of relatedness throughout the reflective process. Subsequently, with the help of discussion prompts, discussion with peers and autonomy-supportive specialists, deeper levels of reflection (e.g., re-evaluation of learning beliefs) were achieved. While such opportunities for workshops and peer interactions dedicated to scaffolding students’ self-reflective processes are not always possible, the scaffolding and development of students’ reflective capabilities can be supported as a part of a course as seen in Case Study 2 and Case Study 3. However, it must be mentioned that scaffolding self-reflection will be more beneficial for students when done consistently to further develop their reflective capabilities. Coupled with the benefits afforded to students, as educators we were also able to enrich our understanding of our students and exercise facets of our teacher autonomy (Smith & Erdoğan, 2008). Therefore, due to students achieving deeper levels of reflection, satisfying their basic psychological needs, and facilitating self-endorsed learning behaviors, we believe the benefits of scaffolded self-reflection were evident. Lastly, with the significant number of reflection typologies and models, the ways in which scaffolded self-reflection can be implemented in classrooms, self-access learning centers, or any other learning environment are extensive, and with ample research opportunities.

Note: Parties interested in the materials associated with each of the case studies should contact the authors at the email address provided above.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Reflective workshop worksheet

My partner is _______________and _________________________ makes them feel good.

Thinking back – listen to your partner and write down what you find **interesting** and **important** about their past 2 years at KUIS.

Where are you now? – Ask your partner some **reflective questions** about their current obstacles and/or challenges:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking and feeling?
- What did the situation mean to you?
- What else could you have done?
- If it happened again what would you do?

OPEN	HONEST
CURIOUS	RIGOROUS
PATIENT	

How? Why?

Thinking ahead

Listener - listen to your partner's **action plan** (i.e., how they plan to overcome their challenges) while asking **reflective questions**.

Sharer – how will you overcome your current challenges (what is your **action plan**)? Here are some ways to express:

- I found I was able to ... / I felt **motivated because...**
- I can see now why **I like** ... / I can see now why **I don't think** ...
- I find that **I feel** ... / **I tend to**... / I like to **consider**...
- A simple **action I can take** is ... this will **help me to** ...

Notes

Please, share your action plan with us or another learning advisor!

Etymology and Vocabulary in the Classroom

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Students of English often face uncertainty when confronted with a large amount of synonymous or near-synonymous vocabulary about what is most appropriate to use. A common reason for this is how synonyms often have different root languages in English. With a little awareness of etymology in English we can help our students overcome this barrier to learning and make their vocabulary-building more efficient. We as teachers can also be more aware when presenting and teaching vocabulary to our students. After looking at the most common origin languages in modern English and issues therein, we examine how teachers and students can raise their language awareness in the classroom both inside and outside lessons.

英語を学ぶ生徒がよく直面する問題の一つに、数ある同義語や類義語の中から、一体どれを使ったらいいのか分からない、ということがある。それは、同じような意味の単語でも、元々はそれぞれ異なる言語に起源があり、そこから派生して英語になったケースがよくあるからだ。英単語の語源について少し意識することで、生徒が抱えるこうした悩みを克服するのに役立ち、また生徒たち自身がより効率的に語彙を増やす手助けにもなる。また我々教師も、単語の語源を意識しながら教えることができる。本稿では、現代英語のルーツとされている数種類の言語と、そこにある問題について言及したのち、どのようにして教師と生徒が授業中または授業以外の場面で、語源を意識して英語を学ぶことが出来るか検討する。

A common problem that students have when looking for vocabulary in English is the number of synonyms or near-synonymous words they find. When we try to steer them towards the most suitable words, we as teachers can sometimes be at a loss to explain or fully understand which words are better for use. We must attribute this to the long and winding history the English language has had. It is often a surprise to students of English, as well as a few teachers of English, just how rich and varied the linguistic origins of modern English are. Rather than being purely a matter for linguists and scholars, a consideration for the origins of modern English can be a helping hand to those who would teach and learn it.

In this article, we will have a very quick tour through the history of the English language before examining each of the major origin languages for points of use and interest. Then we must ask ourselves: how can we use a knowledge of etymology in our classrooms? Do I, as a teacher, have to learn Latin or Greek?

What is Etymology?

Etymology is the study of the origins and historical developments of words and their meanings (Ross 1969). This is distinct from philology, which is the study of the origins and historical development of languages and language systems. The origin and history of a word itself is also its etymology. The field of etymology looks at wide range of mechanisms through which words have come into modern use from the past. This includes the borrowing of words from other languages, often known as loanwords, and changes in semantics i.e. changes in how an extant word is used.

For the purposes of English language instruction as covered in this article, loanwords are too purely foreign to help provide students insight. *Zeitgeist*, for example, has been borrowed directly from German and has no connection to other words in the English language. This is often why languages adopt loanwords when there is no concise vocabulary in the native language. Semantic change has also a "one-to-one" process where changes in word meanings, sometimes idiomatic ones, are linear and have no application to other words in the language. Blank (1999) describes the types of semantic changes most used in English.

Why Use Etymology in the Classroom?

Ausubel (1968) defines 'meaningful learning' as learning that takes place via a process of relating new ideas and events to pre-existing knowledge and ideas. A student with even a rudimentary understanding of etymology would allow them to apply new words they learn in lessons or vocabulary books to words that they already know, even if the word is entirely new to them, making it more meaningful learning as opposed to rote learning which is common in Japanese high schools. The meaningfulness of the learning will also aid retention (or subsumation) unlike rote learning which often leads to words being learned almost arbitrarily in isolation i.e. without any basis on previously-learned vocabulary. Meaningful learning could be most simply described as learning something by connecting it to what you already know (Thelen 1986).

The "meaningful learning" aspect to the use of etymology in the ESL classroom could be considered two-fold: Firstly, knowledge of word origins themselves (i.e. being able to recognize that the *cir-* in words like *circus* and *circuit* comes from the Latin preposition for 'around' *circum*, without having to look it up) and being able to analyse new vocabulary (the student should not be stymied by such new words as *circumnavigate* or *circumference*). Secondly, an understanding of etymology works alongside the current method of rote vocabulary learning rather than in opposition to it, as it can be considered a skill set rather than a separate vocabulary learning method. It should therefore be practiced alongside rather than instead of existing classroom vocabulary learning. This author has received a great deal of positive feedback from students who have had etymology and language awareness introduced to them in the manner described in this paper.

The role of etymology in the ESL classroom has been discussed before (Boers & Lindstromberg 2008, MacDonald 2016, Noroozi & Salehi 2013, Pierson 1989) with little consensus that etymology in the classroom has a clear efficacious role in ESL vocabulary instruction. However, much of this research has been aimed at university students learning English whereas I propose that it could have more use in junior high- or high-school classes where students do not learn field-specific vocabulary (MacDonald looked at Japanese university students studying medicine, for example).

A Brief History of English

This is a very brief overview of how the English language on the British Isles, where English grew up, came to be. For the purposes of this article, it has been greatly simplified and is intended to impress on how numerous and frequent its major influences have been rather than as a historic or linguistic discourse.

The first known literate culture to emerge on the British Isles was that of the Romans after their annexation of Britain to their Empire in AD 43. They brought, among other things, Latin (Baugh & Cable 2003 p.70). After the Roman Empire left in the fourth century there began decades of influx and invasion by tribes from Scandinavia. They brought their own languages with them, generally grouped as Teutonic, and this period saw the birth of Old English. This is the age of the likes of the Venerable Bede and Beowulf. In 1066 England was conquered by William I of Normandy who brought Norman French with his new aristocracy. The language of England by 1200 was now a mix of Teutonic, Latin, Old English and French (Baugh & Cable 2003 p.114).

The vast majority of people in history were illiterate and spelling was by no means defined. It was not until the genesis of the printing press that spelling began to settle, sometimes arbitrarily. The Enlightenment brought words coined from Latin and Greek for the latest discoveries in science. Despite being ancient languages, these words were brand new. By the time

Samuel Johnson published his dictionary, one of the most important in the English language, in the middle of eighteenth century the language had begun to settle (Baugh & Cable 2003 p.239). English had also by now reached the furthest corners of the British Empire. A teacher intending to introduce etymology to their classroom may find giving such a brief explanation to their students will settle the aforementioned frustrations - the student who finds English unintuitive may now reassure themselves that there is a reason. Now we have a little historical context, we can tentatively apply it to an imagined real-world scenario. We will now look at some practical applications before a brief consideration of the root languages in English.

Choosing the Correct Synonym

Let us look at an example of two sentences which can be interchangeable depending on the intended use and context, and how we might explain to a student which would be better in everyday spoken English:

Warm welcome

Cordial reception

It may be clear to the teacher that the first sentence is better but they need some justification and understanding in saying it is so, and wish to give the student some means to help them next time they come across a similar quandary. Without giving a long history and linguistics lesson we can nonetheless use one of three levels of 'immersion'.

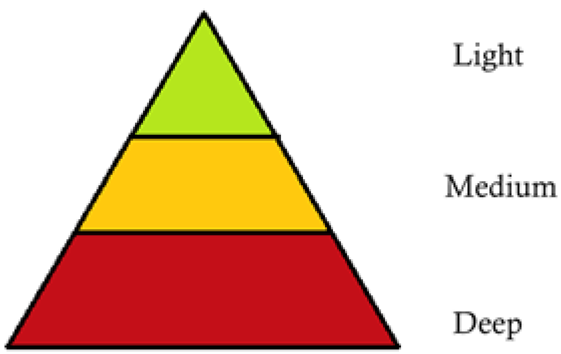

Figure 1: The three levels of immersion

The simplest 'Light' answer is that *Warm welcome* is shorter. In English the tendency is for the shorter synonym to be the more in everyday use and come from a Teutonic root (Figure 2).

Teutonic-based word	**Latin-based word**
Beg	Supplicate
Behead	Decapitate
Drink	Imbibe
Bitterness	Asperity
Greedy	Rapacious
Harmful	Deleterious
Hate	Abhor
House	Domicile

Figure 2: Synonyms and their roots (Green 2008 p.21)

A 'Medium' answer would be that *cordial reception* is longer and much more formal. Here we must be cautious of our student's understanding of the difference between 'formal' and 'polite'. The 'Deep' level answer is that *cordial reception* is made up of words of French origin and that French words, thanks to our aristocratic Norman invaders, are used for more formal language.

Rules for Clear English

What this example has done is steered the student away from the lovely, exotic and formal language and towards something which is much more suitable for the student's needs. A keen student may chafe at being led away from using longer words but it would do good for them and us to look at what George Orwell, in his essay 'Politics and the English Language' published in 1945, considered to be the rules for anyone wishing to be a good English communicator:

i. Never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
ii. Never use a long word when a short one will do.
iii. If it is possible to cut a word out, cut it out.
iv. Never use the passive when you can use the active.
v. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word or jargon if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
vi. Break any of these rules sooner than saying anything outright barbarous.

(Orwell 2013 p.19)

For the sake of this discussion, we need to be particularly mindful of points ii and v: try to use shorter words, and avoid foreign words and phrases whenever possible.

Although as teachers we ought to be mindful of all six when we are teaching. Orwell wrote his essay and made these rules as an appeal for English to be used with clarity. If even professional writers in the English language need help from such a prominent writer, then our students must be very much at sea in a maelstrom of synonyms. Should a student need a more formal synonym, when preparing for the written part of an English exam, for example, we can allow longer synonyms and foreign words.

Root Languages

Herein will be a discussion of the major root languages in modern English, what facets of those we can consider and how to draw our students' attention to them so the students can better develop 'language awareness'. Within English teaching, language awareness is defined as the development in learners of an enhanced awareness of the forms and functions of language (Carter 2003). Students are encouraged to actively look at how the English language, in our case, has been put together. Our concern is how individual words come about in English, rather than syntax or grammar.

Latin

Latin was the *lingua franca* of Europe for many centuries and was the state language of the Roman Empire and later the Western Roman Empire. It remains the official language of Vatican City. It the common descendent of Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian and French and has a large presence in the English language (Gwynne 2014 p.3).

Many Latin words in English often have 'fixed' prefixes i.e. the 'un' in 'unimportant' is not fixed because we can remove it and still have a whole word, but we cannot remove the prefix 'con' from 'convene'. Latin words with the same fixed prefix tend to have the same nuance of meaning. For example, *superlative, supernatural* and *superior* are all about being the highest above something else. *Contain, concentrate* and *convene* are used when we bring something into one place, be it something real like people or something abstract like our thoughts. A teacher could skim a learner's dictionary or their students' textbook to find the most common Latin prefixes and familiarise themselves with their shared meanings in preparation for teaching.

As well as roots that share prefixes, there are Latin suffixes that share roots. For example, the Latin root *–port* from the Latin noun *portus* is found in words like *transport, export, import* and *passport*. These words share uses in the movement of things and people from one place to another as if these things were like a doorway if we were to go to the 'Deep' part of the pyramid in Figure 1. It may seem that such thinking is rather too fanciful but creating images in the student's mind may help them to remember vocabulary better. A mode of *transport* is almost literally like a moving door – you step onto the train, the train (and door) moves, you step out. To use another example, *translate* has the Latin prefix *trans-* and the root *–late* which comes from *latus* as in *lateral* and *latitude*. If we wished to use etymology to explain *translate,* we can say that it literally means something moving across from one language to another.

French

There have been two main waves of French influence on the English language, one in the 11th century and the second in the Middle Ages when Paris became one of Europe's great literary centers, although French has continued to trickle into English (Bodmer 1944 p.233.

Due to its heritage as a language of the nobility and literate classes (Baugh & Cable 2003 p.103), most French words in modern English are in government, the Church, war, law, fashion, food, learning and medicine (Bough & Cable 2013 p.164-6) and therefore outside much of everyday English. The passage of time has led to some words losing their French pronunciation and becoming Anglicised e.g. *carriage.* The teacher can help the student lost as to this discrepancy between spelling and pronunciation by explaining this origin and change. In many cases, however, the French pronunciation has been kept. The ‘ch’ in words like *machine, chauffer* and *chef* is pronounced /ʃ/ rather than /tʃ/. The final sound in *massage, beige* and *montage* is the somewhat rare /ʒ/.

Unlike in Latin or Greek, there are fewer troublesome synonyms between words of French and English origin due to the particular fields the French words are used in - we would be hard-pressed to find synonyms for words like *lieutenant, cathedral, mayor* or *treason.* Therefore, the main difficulty with English words of French origin is likely to be pronunciation and spelling.

Greek

While there are some lines of influence going from Greek to modern English through other languages (*kubernetikos* came via French to become *government*, for example), it was The Enlightenment and the age of invention where great thinkers created English words of Greek origin. They stuck together Greek roots, stems and prefixes to make vocabulary which was brand new. *Kubernetikos* was lifted directly to make the English word *cybernetics*, for example.

Thus, it is in the realms of the sciences, technology and medicine that a lot of modern English words of Greek origin can be found rather than in everyday English. There are, however, plenty of long Greek synonyms for everyday English. C*acophonous*, for example, could be comfortably replaced by the more everyday *loud*. Although we could draw our attention to two features in the word *cacophonous*. The first being the pronunciation of ‘ph’ as /f/ since the English alphabet does not have the Greek letter phi. The other is the second half of the word, which is also found in words like *telephone, phonology* and *symphony*. An astute student would hopefully see the theme of sound and noise between all four. Other Greek root words which are commonly found in daily English include *graphos* (in *graphics, photography* and *calligraphy),* and *logos* (found in academic fields such as *technology, astrology* and *logarithm)*.

Teutonic/Germanic

It is the ‘nuts and bolts’ of English that we find Teutonic words. This is including, but not limited to: pronouns, articles, auxiliaries, adjectives both demonstrative and possessive, most prepositions and conjunctions and most numbers except million, billion etc. Since these words are such important parts of sentence structure and grammar, there are almost always no synonyms and their rules of use are fixed. A student looking for synonyms for a word like *of* or *him* will be greatly disappointed. This is the kind of language Orwell talked about in his list as it has been the language of the British Isles for centuries. In contrast to Latin leaving many prefixes, noun suffixes such as *–hood*, *-ship*, *-dom*, and *–er* (as in *writer*) owe themselves to the Teutonic languages.

What This Means in the Classroom

By now, we as teachers are better prepared to help raise our students’ language awareness. There is a brief discussion of just how much teachers should immerse ourselves later on. There are many activities one can introduce to students as part of their vocabulary studies, either in lessons or school English clubs. A good class project is the creation of posters and “maps” showing how the spelling of words has changed, or of the origins of synonyms and homonyms. Students in groups can choose a theme and work together to produce an informative poster. This not only encourages students to develop skills in raising their own language awareness but the posters stand as shared peer-taught products that will sit on the wall all year. They also generate interest by making the language feel more alive and organic.

In-class activities to help raise language awareness while studying vocabulary can include students finding synonymous 'pairs' for any new words they have been tasked to study. In most cases this is finding the other half of a formal/informal pair, like our *cacophonous/loud* pair earlier. Thus, a student learns twice the vocabulary without the extra cognitive load of learning twice the definitions, and they have a chance to use their new vocabulary better. Staying with formal/informal pairs, a classroom reading activity could involve giving students a text with words highlighted and they have to find a more suitable synonym depending if the text requires formal or less formal language. In all cases, we can choose how immersed we want the students to be based on the pyramid in Figure 1.

Fortunately, classroom vocabulary books such as Stock 4500 (Seki 2018) now have notes on word origins in their margins so we can encourage students to use them. We can also encourage them to use online search engines to fins the etymologies of words and decide therein the suitability of the vocabulary for their own purposes. Once we have developed our own sense of language awareness, we should try to foster self-motivated language awareness development in our students rather than a direct top-down teaching style. Group work, pair work, and solo work ought to be enough to make students self-sufficient.

One activity can be part of an ongoing syllabus or separate if the teacher includes it in their language awareness. Students are given a text with several gaps of words that might be difficult or lesser-known by the class. In a separate box, the words are given with accompanying simple etymology. The words chosen can either be new ones that has aspects of etymology that the teacher wishes to introduce e.g. Latin prefixes or ones that have already been introduced and are now being reviewed. Students, alone or in small groups, must find the right word for the space and what features of the word make it suitable. Students then share their answers as a class.

How Deep Should We Go?

When it comes to teachers taking it upon themselves to broaden their knowledge of English's origin languages, the question is just how far we should go down the rabbit hole. The simple answer is that it is up to the teacher. I would say, however, that more is better. There are resources aplenty both online and in bookshops for the self-studier to teach themselves Latin, Greek, French. German or even Old English. There are books for general readership (e.g. Baugh & Cable 2003, Green 2014) which any teacher looking to expand their knowledge of etymology would do well to read.

Conclusion

English is a living language that has grown for many centuries. Just as a botanist looks at a plant from stem to root or the dendrochronologist sees the life of a tree through its rings, so we as teachers can do to English for our benefit and the benefit of our students. The use of etymology in the English language classroom is an aid to the comprehension of vocabulary. It provides points of focus and lines of relation when words seem to have been laid down and created arbitrarily. With a little consideration and preparation, we can feel more confident in helping our students learn new and better vocabulary.

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Teaching an EFL Communication Course through Film and Short Fiction Analysis

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Research has shown learners often value film and reading activities more than instructors (Harlow & Muyskens, 1994). By studying language through film and literature, students are able to not only practice their listening and reading but also develop their vocabulary and gain exposure to unfamiliar accents, dialects, and cultures. Therefore, the writer created an accessible film and literature discussion course with a class of Intermediate to upper-Intermediate students at a Japanese university. This article will outline the topics, format and pedagogical methods adopted, as well as discuss the chosen texts used in the course. It will also present and assess some of the activities used to make authentic, ungraded film and short fiction accessible, engaging and a source of prolific discussion for students.

研究は、学習者がしばしばインストラクターよりも映画や読書を重要と感じていることを示しています (Harlow & Muyskens, 1994)。映画や文学を通して学ぶことで、リスニングや読書の練習ができるだけでなく、語彙を増やし、聞きなれないアクセント、方言、文化に触れることができます。そこで作者は、日本の大学で中級から中・上級の学生を対象に、アクセスしやすい映画・文学のディスカッションコースを作ることを希望していました。この記事では、採用されたトピック、形式、教育的方法の概要を説明し、コースで使用される選択されたテキストについて説明します。また実際の、学年別に分類されていない映画や短編小説をアクセス可能にし、魅力的で、学生のための多くの議論の源にするために使用される活動のいくつかを提示し、評価します。

A primary concern for language teachers is generating interest and sustained engagement with students. Two resources teachers may fall back on are film and literature, but, while there is a plethora of graded materials available to EFL teachers, there is much debate as to the efficacy of using ungraded or native-level media. One argument is that ungraded materials expose students to more authentic vocabulary and ideas absent in graded materials. On the other hand, ungraded materials are often criticised for being overwhelming or too difficult for language students. This article will outline an English communication class taught in a Japanese university that used film and literature to generate discussion and teach students how to effectively analyse and discuss different aspects of narrative texts.

Rationale for using Film and Literature

In a study by Harlow and Muyskens (1994), instructors and intermediate language students were asked to rate a list of nineteen common activities and media used in the language classroom in order of their perceived importance. Interestingly, students rated film and video fourth and reading seventh, above other activities such as grammar exercises, oral presentations, role plays and games. This contrasts with the instructor's ratings, who placed film and video in twelfth position and reading in ninth position. These results imply that intermediate students often place a higher relevance on film and reading in language learning than instructors. More recent studies have proven a sustained efficacy and importance in the use of film (Ramazan, 2017;

Rouxel-Cubberly, 2014) and literature (Rahman and Arju, 2013; Alfauzan and Hussain, 2017) in language acquisition.

Film and literature can provide a depth and meaningfulness absent or lacking in textbook and graded materials. As written by Rouxel-Cubberly (2014) in reference to teaching French through film, "Where textbooks often limit [students'] scope to the presentation of vocabulary and grammar items with a culture note, films allow for a meaningful exploration of the themes presented" (p. 119). This statement may apply to literature as well. Through these media, culture is viewed and learnt in an authentic way, which can help generate a level of interest and engagement EFL-specific materials cannot. Students can also gain exposure to unfamiliar but contextualised grammar and vocabulary, as well as different accents and dialects in film.

Finally, students feel a sense of accomplishment when finishing a native-level text. In a post-course survey conducted with students from the class in 2019, 78% of students expressed a sense of achievement after watching each film while 94% of students expressed a similar sense of achievement after finishing each short story. This suggests the challenge of completing and understanding the texts was overall more motivating than deterring for the students. Also, in a pre-course survey, students were asked which of the four language skills was the most difficult. The majority of students (63%) responded that reading was the most difficult. Then, when surveyed at the end of the course, over half of the students (52%) felt that reading was the skill they had improved the most during the semester.

Approaches

Different approaches to teaching film and literature were adopted in order to facilitate student engagement and comprehension, and to maximise the amount of discussion in the class.

First, a reader-response approach suggests readers comprehend better when meaning is interpreted individually and imaginatively, with the reader's feelings and personal response in mind (Spiegel, 1998). In the course, the approach was adopted through previewing activities assigned to help activate student schemata, thereby allowing students to use their prior knowledge and own experience to give meaning to the texts. This was done in different ways throughout the course, in particular through prediction activities based on specific images, characters, or the titles from the texts. Some examples of questions used were: "Look at this picture from the film, who do you think the characters are? What do you think the plot will be about?" and "The title of the story is: Lamb to the Slaughter. What do you think this means? What do you think the story will be about?". Another activity was for students to create mind maps based on a setting or topic in the narrative. Students were also asked to relate themes and plot points to their own experience, for example "When was the last time you…? How did you feel?", which helped students empathise with the plot and characters. Through empathy, students generated strong opinions which they brought to the classroom.

Second, a flipped-classroom approach was applied. Flipping the classroom means reversing standard teaching practices so that input is conducted individually by students at home. Developed by Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams for the L1 classroom, it allows classes to be better tailored to students' collective needs and therefore leads to an increase in student-student and student-teacher interaction. This was originally done by recording lectures for students to watch in their own time so that when they came to class the content input stage was already done (Bergmann & Sams, 2002). When applying the concept to this course, students were given the texts to read or watch and a worksheet as homework, which was then checked, discussed, and built on in class activities and discussion. Only very short sections of the texts were watched or read in the classroom for in-depth analysis. By removing the time-consuming task of reading or watching from the classroom, students were able to focus solely on articulating and discussing their opinions in class time. It also allowed students to absorb the texts at their own pace, and to watch or read sections multiple times as individually needed. This method was particularly successful because it ensured students came to class prepared and ready to discuss the week's text, often with specific questions regarding comprehension, or with fully formed opinions to share with the class.

Finally, another approach used was to identify and isolate the Story Grammar of a narrative: "the system of rules used for describing the consistent features found in narrative texts" (Amer, 1992, p. 712). This was done by separating the plot into identifiable structured parts such as exposition, rising action, climax, and resolution. Therefore, as an introduction to the course, the first two lessons focused on plot and plot structure. The course began with eliciting and studying vocabulary to describe a conventional plot arc (Appendix A), which students then applied to films and stories they already knew. Descriptions were kept vague (without character names or unique settings) and were then used in a group guessing game as an ice breaker activity. This led into the first homework assignment in which students used the vocabulary to break down the plot of a familiar short story into parts. By beginning with plot structure, students were able to identify the story grammar of a narrative from the beginning which aided comprehension of more difficult texts later in the course.

Course Information, Goals and Topics

The course was a free elective English Communication class that met once a week over a thirteen-week semester. Students were of intermediate to upper-intermediate level, and class sizes were between twelve and eighteen students. Using the set course texts, the goals of the course were to: a) expose students to new ideas, themes, cultures, vocabulary and narratives; b) provide extensive listening and reading practice; and c) facilitate critical thinking through in-class discussion.

The main analytical topics the course focused on were (in this order): plot, characterisation, setting, themes and symbolism, and culture. Each topic spanned two weeks, in which students discussed both a short story and a film. For assessment, along with in class participation and homework worksheet submissions, students wrote an essay and gave a presentation at the end of the semester (one on a book or short story and one on a film of their own choice).

Selected Texts and Rationales

Whilst selecting the texts to use in class, it was important that each was accessible to students. Some aspects considered when selecting the texts were length, linguistic difficulty, social and cultural relevance and interest to the students, and appropriacy to the lesson topics. In terms of length, selected films were under two hours long and short stories were four pages or less. Since students were watching or reading one text a week, texts had to be of a manageable length. With social and cultural relevance, texts were selected from a variety of genres and portrayed different cultures, settings, and periods, in order to give students exposure to and generate interest in unfamiliar content. One film and one short story was also grouped with a topic, providing students with a single, clear aspect of the text to focus on. Therefore, it was important that each text lent itself to its lesson topic.

The films selected for the course were *Forrest Gump* (1994), *Gladiator* (2000), *Lost in Translation* (2003), Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960), and *East is East* (1999). The short stories used were a selection of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* (1812-1858), Roald Dahl's *Lamb to the Slaughter* (1953), the first chapter of Haruki Murakami's short novel *After Dark* (2004), and *Désirée's Baby* (1893) written by Kate Chopin.

The course began by considering plot, familiarising students with common plot features, structures and story grammar. *Forrest Gump* and *Grimm's Fairy Tales* were selected because both plot structures are relatively easy for students to follow and describe. With *Grimm's Fairy Tales* in particular, students were already somewhat familiar with the plots and were able to summarise them easily due to their familiarity with adaptations produced by Disney.

To study characterisation, students watched *Gladiator* and read *Lamb to the Slaughter. Gladiator* was chosen because much of the characterisation is visual (through costume and action) and each of the three main characters have clearly defined roles, following the traditional tropes: hero, heroine, and villain. The accents in the film are also neutral, aiding comprehension, and the plot contains the stages of a conventional narrative structure: exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action. In contrast to this, *Lamb to the Slaughter* is a humorous story in which a woman kills her husband with a leg of lamb. However, through its characterisation, the story makes the reader sympathetic to the wife (the 'villain') and unsympathetic to her adulterous and irrational husband (the 'victim').

Next, the course focused on setting and students watched *Lost in Translation* and read the first chapter of *After Dark.* Both texts are set in Tokyo, which, because of its familiarity, aided student comprehension. However, Tokyo is portrayed from different points of view (*Lost in Translation* from a foreigner's point of view and *After Dark* from Murakami's). In the beginning of *After Dark*, two mysterious characters meet for the first time in a family restaurant, which contrasts with the Hilton hotel featured prominently in *Lost in Translation*. The language used to describe both Tokyo and the family restaurant uses vivid imagery and led into the next topic of the course.

The penultimate topic of the course was theme and symbolism. Students watched *Psycho* and read *Désirée's Baby*. Symbolism was one of the most challenging topics for the course but was important for students to learn to recognise in texts to lift their comprehension closer to that of a native reader. In *Psycho*, Hitchcock uses an abundance of symbolism. One particular symbol is the bird which symbolises women and Norman's view of them. In one particular scene, Norman makes an observation that Marion 'eat[s] like a bird' and that 'only birds look well stuffed because they're kind of passive to begin with' while a bird of prey on the wall looms over him, symbolising his mother's influence. *Désirée's Baby* provided a lot of discussion of its themes of race, colonialism, and identity, which led into the final film of the course well.

Finally, once the students were familiar with the basic narrative elements, the course ended with a film that challenged them to interpret a culture different to theirs. Students watched the British comedy film *East is East,* which portrays a half-Pakistani immigrant family living in Northern England. This film was perhaps one of the most challenging for students because of its use of Pakistani and Northern English dialect and accents, as well as the unfamiliar setting. However, the film uses themes of cultural identity, racism, family, and self-acceptance which students were able to identify, analyse and discuss in depth.

Activities outside the classroom

Homework comprised of watching or reading the week's text whilst completing a corresponding worksheet. Each worksheet was broken up into three sections ('before', 'during' and 'after') each with different goals and emphasis. Some examples of the worksheet activities are shown in the appendices.

The 'before' activities were intended to help students activate schemata through context, allowing students the opportunity to mentally prepare for the text by engaging with the themes, settings and ideas. This was achieved through a variety of activities, such as self-directed research into themes and settings (examples included researching Ancient Rome for *Gladiator* and parts of Pakistani and Muslim culture such as arranged marriage for *East is East*) and prediction tasks based on the title, a screenshot, or even a short excerpt of the text (see Appendix B for the 'before' questions for *Lost in Translation*).

Vocabulary activities were also an important tool in aiding student comprehension which, as well as giving students a head-start on difficult vocabulary they would encounter, helped students predict the content of the narrative. For example, as part of the 'before' activities for *Gladiator*, students were given a vocabulary-definition matching activity that included the following words: empire, dictatorship, senate, corruption, gladiator, and hero. After completing this activity, students had a strong indication of how the plot might unfold.

With literature, research suggests that, unlike L1 readers, "most L2 readers do not seem to use visual imaging very much whilst reading" but "the few students who reported using visual imaging tended to achieve greater comprehension and recall than those who did not" (Tomlinson, 1998, p. 363). Tomlinson continues by outlining activities to facilitate visual imaging including character drawing, connection activities, using illustrations to form their own visualisations, and miming. Therefore, based on these ideas, visual imaging activities were incorporated into both the 'before' and 'during' sections of the short story worksheets. This worked particularly well with characterisation as students were asked to draw a picture of the main character as they read the story and then annotate it with descriptive adjectives (Appendix C).

The 'during' activities also allowed students to consider the texts with their associated topics in mind. For example, as students watched *Psycho*, they were asked to write down descriptions of anything they saw related to the prevalent symbolism of birds, mirrors, and eyes. After, they were asked to reflect on what each symbol meant. 'After' activities were designed to accomplish two things: a) provide a chance for students to reflect critically on the text and b) consolidate students' understanding of the text and prepare them for the in-class discussion.

Activities inside the classroom

As previously mentioned with reference to the flipped classroom model, the goals of the in-class activities were to check comprehension of the texts as well as share and discuss the aspects of film and literature considered in the homework assignments. Some in-class activities included group and class mind mapping, text/scene analysis, and mini-student presentations.

The group mind mapping allowed students to share and discuss ideas informally whilst also helping to peer-check comprehension. This was used successfully when discussing characterisation in *Gladiator* and *Lamb to the Slaughter*. Students collectively drew big mind maps on the blackboard comprised of descriptive adjectives, reasons why, and how the text conveyed the characteristics (for example, through speech, actions, looks, etc.). This gave students the opportunity to step back and view the complexity of a single character and, with *Lamb to the Slaughter*, compare the predictions made in the visual imaging activities with their classmates.

Text and scene analysis gave students the opportunity to analyse a short excerpt in detail, and focus on aspects such as language, body language, camera angle and film technique. This worked particularly when discussing imagery and symbolism in *Psycho*, through which students were able to dissect the use of each symbol in the film and were guided to their own interpretations. With setting in *Lost in Translation*, students re-watched in class the scene in which Charlotte travels to Kyoto alone. As they watched, the students were asked to compare how Kyoto is portrayed in the film with Tokyo, and to consider the impact the scene has on Charlotte's character and the film as a whole. They were also asked to consider how the scene was shot, it's camera angles, and what they could or couldn't hear.

Finally, at the end of the semester, student presentations allowed students to apply the analysis techniques learnt in class to a film, book, or short story of their own choice. Many students expressed their enjoyment in re-watching a film or re-reading a story analytically and noticing small details of characterisation or symbolism that they hadn't seen before.

Student Feedback

At the end of the semester, students were given a post-course survey in order to provide feedback on the course. 14 students (20%) said that they preferred studying films over short stories, with explanatory comments such as "My reading skill is not really good to understand [the] entire content of the stories, but when I watch the film it's easier to imagine" and "Films have sound and movement that can help me understand more than reading short stories". Conversely, 6 students preferred short stories, one student commenting that "stories are easier because I could read at my own speed and read parts many times." It is therefore evident that film and short stories presented different challenges, which students responded to differently, but also provided a variety of opportunities for learning which appealed to different interests and abilities. The students' positive feedback towards film concurs with a recent study by Ramazan (2017), who reported 80% of students 'strongly agreed' that "watching movies in English has a beneficial effect on improving [their] English" (p.123).

When asked about the texts, *Psycho* was the most popular film followed by *Gladiator*. Positive comments for *Psycho* included: "*Psycho* was my favourite because I watched [an] old movie for the first time. It was awesome. I want to watch Hitchcock's other works" and "It was an amazing film even if it was black and white. The story and techniques were very new for that time and the music makes me feel excited." A positive student comment regarding *Gladiator* was "I enjoyed *Gladiator* the most because it had an ancient theme and through several settings made the characterisation appealing".

On the other hand, students gave the most negative reactions to *Lost in Translation* writing comments such as "there is no climax", "it shows many wrong things in Japan and I didn't like the plot", and also "this film only talks about […] bad culture in Japan, so it's only one side of Japan." However, the negative reactions to the film were also a catalyst to some interesting discussion in class. For example, when discussing *Lost in Translation*, the negative reactions many students had led into discussion on native versus outsider perspectives of Japan as well as the importance of inambiguous closure in a movie (as some students were dissatisfied with the ending). Another example of this was when students discussed their opinions of

Grimm's Fairy Tales, some students disliked the sinister plot twists when compared to Disney iterations, which led to reflection on why the stories were changed.

Changes applied for online teaching in Spring 2020

Given the global pandemic and the subsequent move to online instruction, changes needed to be made the following year in order for the course to be adapted to a shorter semester, online teaching and a large, mixed ability class (of over thirty students). Therefore, in order to shorten the course, and to make the course more cohesive, the content was adapted to only focus on film, with students watching one film every two weeks. Choosing film over short stories seemed a logical choice considering the feedback from the previous year. Since it was imperative all students had access to the texts, and distributing DVDs and screenings on campus weren't possible, only texts that were available on Netflix were used. Any student without a Netflix account was given access to a shared account provided by the teacher. This then added flexibility in how the students watched the films and, with the class being of mixed-ability, students were encouraged to assess their own ability and watch each film without subtitles at first, then with English subtitles, or with Japanese subtitles.

Instruction was partly done through an online LMS platform where the weekly homework assignments were posted and on which students also had access to an online blog/thread for each film: a space for students to discuss their thoughts and ideas and peer-check their comprehension in preparation for the class. For classroom work, lessons were conducted over Zoom and for group work and discussion, students were put into breakout rooms and used a shared whiteboard to present their ideas. This also allowed the teacher to see and question their ideas whilst monitoring the rooms.

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, graded readers and videos are a great way of introducing students to topics, target vocabulary and grammatical structures. However, as language learners progress, they may reach a point where graded materials may become too easy, predictable and uninteresting. Transitioning from graded to ungraded materials can then be both challenging and motivational and care is needed by teachers in doing this. Teachers should carefully select texts which are of suitable length, cultural relevance, and interest to the students. When reading or watching the text, students can focus on a specific narrative element (such as characterisation or setting) so as not to be overwhelmed in the class discussions. Finally, teachers should utilise effective techniques (such as visual imaging and a reader-response approach) which will allow students to express their thoughts and opinions on the texts more freely. By using ungraded materials in this way, students can be exposed to content which is both engaging and exciting.

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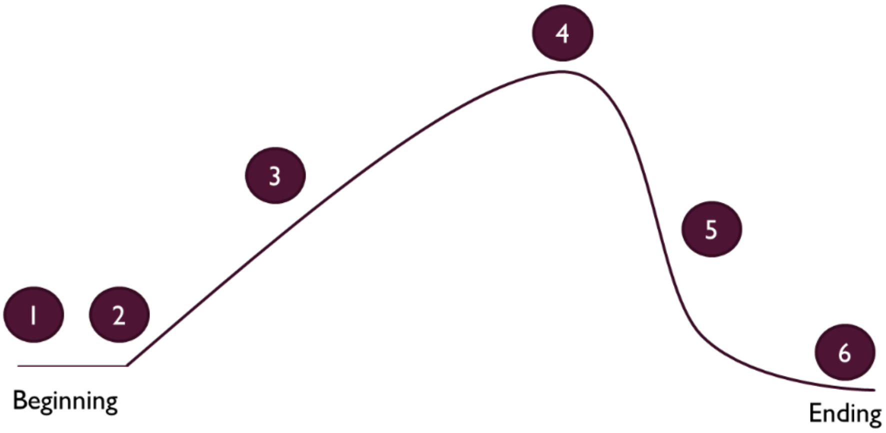
Appendix A

<u>Describing a plot</u>

A) Vocabulary. Look at the conventional story arc below. Use the words to complete the plot stages.

- Conflict
- Resolution
- Exposition
- Falling action
- Climax
- Rising action



Read the story and <u>underline</u> the main events.

Then use the headings below to summarise the main plot. Try to not copy!

Share the story plot with your group.

Exposition	
Conflict	
Rising Action	
Climax	
Falling Action	
Resolution	

Appendix B

Lost in Translation (Setting)

Before you watch

A) Preview Questions. Think about the title of the movie *Lost in Translation*, as well as the setting, Tokyo.

1. What do you think the title means?

   ....

   ....

2. What do you think will happen in the movie?

   ....

   ....

3. How would you describe Tokyo? What locations do you think will be used in the film?

   ....

   ....

Appendix C

Lamb to the Slaughter (Characterisation)

While you read

Character Drawing. As you read the story, draw a picture of the main character.

	Adjectives

After you read

Character Adjectives. Think of adjectives you would use to describe her. Write them in the box on the right.

Assessing the Effectiveness of a Global Approach in a Japanese University

Tim Andrewartha
The British Council

Calls to prepare students to participate in the global workforce have been increasing, leading to the term global jinzai (human resources) being stated as a desired goal for Japanese universities. As well as English ability, understanding other cultures is seen as important. Therefore, it is necessary for English teachers to consider how to realise this in the classroom. A possible solution is a global approach, combining elements from global Englishes and intercultural communication, aiming to help Japanese learners communicate with people all over the world. This study assesses the effectiveness of the approach which was implemented in an English class at a Japanese university. This was done by assessing the reflective writing done by students after a lesson on English in Singapore and a lesson on individualism versus collectivism. The results suggest that the approach may be effective in increasing awareness and respect for global Englishes and cultural differences.

国際的なビジネスパーソンを求める機運の高まりを受けて「グローバル人材の育成」を目標に掲げる日本の大学においては、英語力だけでなく異文化理解能力も重要視されている。よって英語教員には、この能力を授業の中でどう伸ばすかを考究することが求められる。その答えとなり得る 「グローバルアプローチ」は、グローバル諸英語と異文化間コミュニケーションの要素を組み合わせたものであり、日本人学習者が世界中の人々とコミュニケーションできるよう手助けすることを目的としている。本研究では、日本の大学の英語クラスにおいて実践されたグローバルアプローチの有効性を評価する。この評価は「シンガポールにおける英語」および「個人主義対集団主義」を扱った授業後に学生が書いた課題レポートを基に行った。導き出された結果では、このアプローチがグローバル諸英語や文化の違いへの理解・尊重を深めることに有効と思われることが示唆されている。

It is becoming increasingly important for Japanese universities to prepare students to participate in the global workforce and communicate with people from all over the world (Yonezawa, 2014). One reason for this is Japan's aging society which is making it imperative for Japanese business to expand globally. This has led to global jinzai (global human resources) becoming a popular term and goal in tertiary education in Japan, and since the government's definition includes the ability to understand other cultures, it is necessary for English teachers to consider how to realise this in the classroom.

Global Approach

A global approach, combining global Englishes and intercultural communication, has been suggested as a way to help Japanese learners prepare to communicate with people from all over the world (Andrewartha, 2020). In particular, this approach draws on suggestions by Galloway (2017), who has done research about teaching global Englishes in the Japanese university context, as well as suggestions by Yoshida, Yashiro & Suzuki (2013), who have done research about teaching intercultural communication in Japan. Galloway (2017, preface) suggests that English lessons should "raise awareness of Global Englishes" and "emphasise respect for diverse culture and identity" while Yoshida, Yashiro & Suzuki (2013, p. 79) suggest that Japanese learners should develop "awareness of themselves as individuals, their own culture, and cultural differences".

Global Englishes

Global Englishes includes different varieties of English which have developed in different countries around the world, reflecting their unique cultural identities, as well as English as a lingua franca (ELF), now the most common use of English, which has a fluid nature as it is used flexibly depending on the situation (Jenkins, 2015). Kachru's three circle analogy which includes the inner circle (where English is their first language), the outer circle (including post-colonial countries which use English as an official language) and the expanding circle (where English is studied as a foreign language) (Kachru, 1992) is a popular way to show the spread of English (Jenkins, 2015) and understanding the role of English in Singapore is seen as beneficial to understand the connection between varieties of English and cultural identity.

English in Singapore

Singapore is a multicultural society which has been praised for the way the different ethnic groups cooperate and live together in harmony (Yeo & Pang, 2017). While there are many different languages spoken in Singapore, English is one of the official languages and it is often used, including for communication between the different ethnic groups. There are two varieties of English, standard Singaporean English, which is used in formal situations and is closer to British English, and Singlish, which is a combination of English and the mother tongues of the different ethnic groups which live in Singapore (Jenkins, 2015). As Singlish is difficult for people from other countries to understand, the government attempted to stop Singaporeans from using their unique variety. However, this attempt was met by refusal from the local community as they claimed it was an important part of their cultural identity as Singaporeans.

Intercultural Communication

While global Englishes looks at the different ways English is used around the world, intercultural communication looks more deeply at the way culture affects our feelings and behaviour. Hofstede's cultural dimensions can be used to compare the cultures of different countries and they include individualism, power distance, long-term orientation, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and indulgence (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). While there has been criticism that studying the cultural dimensions could lead to an essentialist view of culture in which people are judged based on where they come from rather than the way they express themselves (Holliday, Kullman, & Hyde, 2017), it is felt that as long as they are taught responsibly and learners are made aware that not everyone from a particular culture will behave in the same way, then learning about the cultural dimensions can provide valuable insight.

Individualism Versus Collectivism

In particular, it has been suggested that understanding individualism versus collectivism is essential in understanding the difference between western and Asian cultures (Servaes, 2016). In individualistic cultures people put priority on looking after themselves and their immediate family whereas in collectivistic cultures people are loyal to larger groups such as the extended family or the local community. In individualistic cultures, communication is direct and it is important to have your own opinion which you express whereas in collectivistic cultures communication is indirect and harmony within the in-group is important (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). According to Hofstede's research, Japanese culture is more collectivistic than western countries, but more individualistic than some Asian countries and while it has been reported that Japanese culture has been becoming more individualistic, there have been suggestions that the concept of individualism is perceived negatively in Japanese culture (Ogihara, Uchida & Kusumi, 2014).

Global Method

A method was designed which could be used to implement the global approach in the classroom. This involved choosing content from the global Englishes or intercultural communication literature, a reading text for introducing the content, questions to check understanding and then a discussion. While there are many varieties of English such as Jamaican English, Kenyan English and Indian English which could provide suitable topics, English in Singapore was chosen. This was because understanding about the role of Singlish and local resistance to The Speak Good Movement is a clear way for learners to understand the connection between varieties of English and cultural identity (Jenkins, 2015). Also, while the other cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov (2010) would also be suitable topics for understanding other cultures, individualism versus collectivism was chosen because this cultural dimension is seen as essential in understanding the difference between western and Asian cultures (Servaes, 2016).

Research Design

In order to assess the effectiveness of implementing the global approach in the Japanese university context, it was felt that it was necessary for research to be conducted which may give an indication of the thoughts and feelings which the approach has stimulated in the learners. Qualitative research can help us to get a deeper understanding than quantitative research as it allows the thoughts and feelings of participants to be revealed more naturally and one way this can be done is through analysing the writing of participants (Dörnyei, 2007). Therefore, it was felt that asking students to do some reflective writing in English after the lessons may provide valuable data into the effectiveness of the global approach.

Research Questions

What kind of awareness and attitudes do learners show towards global Englishes after the global approach has been implemented?

What kind of awareness and attitudes do learners show towards cultural differences after the global approach has been implemented?

Methods

The study consisted of seventeen first-year students from the same intermediate level English for academic purposes class at a Japanese university. They received two lessons in which the global approach was implemented. One of them mainly focused on English in Singapore as well as introducing Kachru's circle analogy (Kachru, 1992) and ELF. The other lesson focused on individualism versus collectivism and how this cultural dimension can affect communication (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). After discussing the topics in the lesson, the students were given some questions and asked to do some reflective writing in English to post on the website Edmodo where the other students and the teacher would be able to read them. Their posts were then coded and analysed to assess the effectiveness of the global approach.

Results

Global Englishes

After discussing about English in Singapore, the students then moved onto Kachru's three circle analogy (Kachru, 1992) and the following question which, after discussing it in the lesson, is what they needed to write about for homework: Do you agree that people in the outer and expanding circles should speak English in the same way as people in the inner circle?

Table 1 Global Englishes

People in the outer and expanding circles should speak English like people in the inner circle.	
n	17
agree	1
partly agree	3
partly disagree	1
disagree	12

Students that agreed or partly agreed

Out of the 17 students, only one agreed and three partly agreed that people in the outer and expanding circles should speak English like people in the inner circle.

In their posts, it was said that the "*main purpose of using English is to communicate with people around the world"* so they *"should speak in accurate English when they talk with others from different countries if their common language is English"* otherwise *"English won't play its role as a lingua franca".* An example was given of a Brit and a Singaporean, claiming that "*The former may not be able to understand what the latter says because each of them speak English but a little different from each other."*

The issue of Japanese dialects was also mentioned as a comparison with different varieties of English, with one student stating that although there are many regional dialects, standard Japanese is used for smooth communication, and, therefore, claiming *"dialects are similar to English spoken in the outer and expanding circle and the same is true of the English."* However, another student claimed that the Osaka dialect is actually used and understood in Tokyo and other parts of Japan, saying *"most of them like their dialect, they still use it after they move to Tokyo or other places in Japan. Nevertheless, we can communicate with them and few people think that using the Osaka dialect is bad."*

It was also suggested that while inner circle English should be used for communication with people from other countries, it was OK to use it in their own way locally, suggesting local uses of English in Japan and South Korea as well as in Singapore. One student wrote that *"To compel them to change their language may seems to ignore their identity. Therefore, people in the outer and expanding circles don't have to correct their English unless they talk with other people from different country using English as a common language."*

Students that disagreed or partly disagreed

Out of the 17 students, twelve disagreed and one partly disagreed that people in the outer and expanding circles should speak English like people in the inner circle.

In their posts, it was pointed out that *"it is almost impossible for the outer and expanding circles to speak English in the very same way as people in the inner circle"* and their *"mother tongue affect their English"* so their pronunciation is *"similar to their first languages"* and since *"recognizing it is very difficult"* then *"trying to change it is not necessary".* Furthermore, it was mentioned that *"the number of people who in the outer circles are larger than the number of people who in the inner circle"* meaning *"that it has been common to speak English in the different ways from the way of the inner circle."*

They also stated that the main aim was ELF, so the most important thing was for them to be understood. One student said that *"a few differences in pronunciation or grammar between them is not worth questioning"* while another student said *"we can communicate with each other by using English, although the way of speaking English is different".* Instead of trying to sound like someone from the inner circle, it was argued that they *"should not turn consciousness to perfect accuracy of English but just conveying their opinions in some way".*

While it was said that *"If people all around the world spoke English in the same way, the communication would be smoother"* it was argued that the different varieties showed their identity, and since *"Life and culture vary from country to country"* and, therefore, *"the words which is used are different depending on the place people live"* meaning it was natural for them to create unique expressions for their situations (such as in the case of Singlish) and that these expressions were *"beautiful or funny"* so *"they should cherish them."*

Therefore, it was argued that they had the right to use English in their own way, as *"languages are deeply rooted in people's lives and form each culture"* otherwise if they were forced *"to use 'correct' English"* it could *"lead to a loss of cultural diversity"* as *"language forms our sensitivity"* and *"we use different emotional expressions depending on the language we speak … And if our sensitivity becomes similar, many cultures may be standardized."*

Cultural Differences

The following questions were discussed first in the lesson and then the students were asked to write about them for homework: Do you think Japanese culture is more individualistic or collectivistic? Why? How might this affect communication with people from other countries? What can be done to make communication smoother?

Table 2 Cultural Differences

Do you think Japanese culture is more individualistic or collectivistic?	
n	17
It is more collectivistic	14
It has become more individualistic	3

Do you think Japanese culture is more individualistic or collectivistic?

While 14 students said Japanese culture is more collectivistic, three students said it has become more individualistic.

Reasons why they thought it was collectivistic included the importance of harmony and a tendency not to say their own opinions. One student wrote that *"most of us think of ourselves as a part of a group"* while another student wrote *"we have had collective responsibility and a sense of solidarity with not only our family members but also classmates, co-workers and local residents"*. Therefore, *"Japanese are good at working with others"* and *"they think it is good to protect the harmony of the groups"*. However, since they *"have been required by adults to conform with others and not to stress our unique characters"* it was argued that *"Japanese people often hesitate to talk directly"* because they *"tend to feel pressure to conform to others"* and *"even though they have their own opinion that is different from others', they tend to adjust to people around".* It was written that this leads to not speaking out in class or giving their group's opinion as their own. Since there is a tendency not to say opinions directly, it was argued that *"reading situation is important in order to make good relationship with others in Japan"*.

Reasons why some students thought Japanese culture has become more individualistic included that *"Japanese comes to insist their opinion more clearly than before. That will be because more Japanese come together with foreign people and they have noticed its importance."* Other reasons given were related to business and employment, with one student writing that *"a lot of post-war institutions are influenced by American ones"* and *"the US is the country which is seen as the token of individualism"* while another student wrote *"the idea of lifetime employment is disappearing, and many people change their job a few times."*

How might this affect communication with people from other countries?

In the posts that stated that Japanese culture was more collectivistic, it was suggested that *"we are likely to agree with their opinions without saying our opinions"* which *"won't lead to constructive discussion"* and *"high-context communication can cause some problem when Japanese have a conversation with people from overseas, because who are familiar with low-context will be upset that they cannot understand what Japanese people are truly thinking."*

Furthermore, it was pointed out that Japanese people might feel uncomfortable when someone says their opinion clearly. Also, one student wrote *"people from individualistic countries can feel annoying if we don't say our opinions"* while another wrote *"they may feel we lack independence."* Another student wrote *"By these actions, people from other countries cannot catch their ideas. They sometimes feel doubtful and Japanese people and people from other countries cannot sometimes make agreement."*

It was also mentioned that Japanese people treat people from other countries differently from other Japanese people. One student wrote *"Japanese people regard them as different people from us. In fact, when a student came to our class in my elementary school, we communicated with him in unusual way. I think it was more difficult to make friends with individualistic people than collectivistic people."* Also, it was mentioned that collectivism stops them from expressing who they really are as they need to say what has been decided by their group. *"It can get difficult to communicate who I am. Communication are likely to become formal. Collectivism forces us to hold down our personality and to communicate only what is already decided to say."*

However, in the posts that stated Japanese culture has become more individualistic, while there was a belief that this would generally help, with one student writing *"it might have a good effect on communication with people from other countries"*, it was also pointed out that *"individualism in Japan may be selfishness in other countries. So we have to understand the real meaning of individualism."*

What can be done to make communication smoother?

There was a belief that if they do not know about cultural differences, they will just behave naturally without adapting to the situation. One student wrote *"we can try to understand their culture and background"* while another student wrote *"understanding may be difficult, but knowing depends on personal* *efforts and can be done."* Another student wrote *"the knowledge of other culture can make communication smoother. If they understand the difference of culture, they won't have conflict. Instead, they will respect each culture"*.

It was suggested that they need to make an effort to communicate, with one student writing *"it is natural that communication does not go well, so you should communicate with other people a lot even if the communication is not smooth. It is getting a lot of experiences throughout many communications that makes communication smoother."* It was also suggested that by talking freely and showing their feelings and responding properly, they can build good relationships. While they should not argue, they should not be afraid to show their opinions clearly. One student wrote *"we should not be scared to be different from other and should make effort to communicate our own opinion to others clearly"* while another student wrote *"balance is the best"* explaining that even though *"they want to avoid arguing because it can make the situation more complex"* that *"it might bring about a hassle if they do not argue"* and therefore it is important to *"give the sign to other people about what you think"* because *"others cannot know what people think unless they give the sign"* so they need to *"be assertive."*

Discussion

Global Englishes

According to Galloway (2017, preface), lessons should "raise awareness of Global Englishes" and "emphasise respect for diverse culture and identity" and in their posts the students showed awareness of both of these. The students acknowledged that there are different varieties of English in the outer and expanding circles and that the different varieties of English express the culture and identity of the speakers. While it was acknowledged that ELF was the most common use of English, so being able to communicate and be understood was a more important goal than speaking English like people in the inner circle, it also seemed that there was some belief that using English in the same way as people in the inner circle would lead to communication being smoother. This suggested they were unaware that, as stated by Jenkins (2015), ELF is used in different ways from inner circle English and, in fact, it is difficult for people in the inner circle to use English in this way, suggesting that using English like people in the inner circle would not lead to smoother communication. However, the majority of the students expressed a belief that everyone should be able to use English in their own way, with the expression of cultural identity being seen as a key factor. Therefore, it seems that focusing on Singlish was a good way for the students to understand the connection between varieties of English and cultural identity, but in future lessons there may need to be more of a focus on the fluid and flexible nature of ELF as this would help students adapt to the situation while also expressing their identity in future ELF encounters.

Cultural Differences

According to Yoshida, Yashiro and Suzuki, learners should develop: "awareness of themselves as individuals, their own culture, and cultural differences" (2013, p. 79) and in their posts the students showed awareness of these. Although a few of them did express the view that Japanese culture has become more individualistic, most of them considered that Japanese culture was collectivistic. In particular, many of them said that there was a tendency to avoid giving their opinions and that it was important to read the air in order to infer what was implied. While they stated that this was in order to maintain harmony, they expressed a concern that this might cause problems when communicating with people from more individualistic cultures, so they should try to express their ideas more clearly. While this showed they had developed some cultural awareness, most of them focused on communicating with people from more individualistic cultures, with even those who believed Japanese culture has become more individualistic generally seeing this as a good thing which would help intercultural communication, although there was acknowledgement that this could be seen as selfishness. This suggests that some students may be unaware that other cultures are collectivistic and there may be problems when communicating with people from these cultures. Therefore, in future lessons it would be beneficial to encourage them to consider that while some cultures may be more individualistic than Japanese culture, some cultures may be more collectivistic, and, in fact, as stated by Hofstede, et al. (2010) collectivism is the norm around the world, rather than individualism. However, it would also be important to make sure students are aware that, as argued by Holliday, et al. (2017), they should be careful not to judge individuals based on the cultures they come from, but that they should keep an open mind and treat them based on the way they choose to express their cultural identities.

Conclusion

This study analysed the reflective writing by a class of university students after they received lessons in which a global approach, combining elements from global Englishes and intercultural communication, was implemented, in order to assess the effectiveness of using the approach in university English classes in Japan. While this study was conducted over a short time frame with a small number of participants, and there was no control group to compare them with, it is felt that this study has given some insight into the attitudes and awareness of the students, suggesting that this approach may be useful in preparing university students in Japan to communicate with people from all over the world. Therefore, it is recommended that more research should be carried out to assess the effectiveness of the approach further.

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Pre-/Post-Study Abroad Learning in the Local Community

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Pre-/post-study abroad learning for college students does not have to limit itself to classrooms. Given the current situation in Japan, with an expanding foreign resident population, a new opportunity has arisen, namely language exchange between college students and foreign residents in the local community. A preliminary trial called Kokubunji Local was conducted in Kokubunji, Tokyo. It is a weekly Japanese-English language exchange meeting among people in the Kokubunji area that includes college students. Kokubunji Local provides Japanese college students with opportunities to talk to people in the local community from various regions of the world, many of whom speak fluent English. It helps promote language awareness and career perspectives of Japanese college students as it resembles a study abroad environment. It also provides a vital option for students who do not have enough opportunities on campus. Possible challenges for similar trials would be to find a right venue and organizers.

留学を志す大学生のための留学の事前・事後学習の場所は教室だけにとどまらない。近年，日本の各地において外国人住民が増加しているため，大学生が地域の外国人住民と交流しながら外国語を学ぶチャンスが生まれている。本稿では「国分寺ローカル」の実践を取り上げる。国分寺ローカルは東京都国分寺市で毎週行われている日本語と英語による交流会である。参加者は大学生を含む地元住民である。国分寺ローカルの活動は，言語に対する意識を高め，国際的なキャリアについて考える機会を提供するため，大学生の留学の事前・事後学習の一環として機能する。特に、キャンパス内での事前・事後学習の機会が不足している学生にとっての選択肢となり得る。同様の会を催す際の主な課題は，適切な場所やオーガナイザーを確保することである。

Pre-/post-study abroad learning is important for having a successful study abroad experience. Many pre-/post-study opportunities are provided on campus, where students have options, such as taking designated language courses and practicing conversation at language lounges. However, not every university can provide enough opportunities on campus due to a lack of resources. The purpose of this paper is to describe a preliminary trial of Kokubunji Local, a language exchange group among locals that includes college students. Kokubunji Local has provided opportunities for Japanese college students to prepare for their study abroad as well as enhance their learning upon return.

The paper is organized as follows. The second section discusses the problems of pre-/post-study abroad learning on campus. When a limited number of students go study abroad, it is difficult for universities to provide organized options for pre-/post-study abroad learning. The third section describes current demographic changes in Japan. Japan’s population has been more diverse than ever, and this applies to the city of Kokubunji, Tokyo as well. This provides a new opportunity for college students to learn languages and culture with foreign residents in the local area. The fourth section describes the activities of Kokubunji Local, a language exchange group in the city of Kokubunji. The fifth section contains a list of suggestions based on the experience of Kokubunji Local for similar trials.

Problems of Pre-/Post-Study Abroad Learning

Lack of Pre-/Post-Study Abroad Learning

Although the number of college students studying abroad has been increasing, students do not experience enough pre-/post-study abroad learning. The problem especially concerns short-term programs (Yokota et al. 2018 among others). This is partly because significant pre-/post-study abroad learning is difficult to schedule unless one has a long-term plan. The Japanese Student Services Organization (JASSO) (2020) reports that about 50% of Japanese college students who participate in study abroad programs organized by their institutions choose short-term programs of less than three months.

The benefits of such short-term programs may be limited unless accompanied by pre-/post-study abroad learning. Kobayashi (2017) points out that the only visible effect of short study abroad programs for Japanese college students is to increase motivation for foreign language learning. In order to obtain considerable results, it is essential to incorporate pre- as well as post-study abroad learning. Yamauchi (2015) gives exemplary descriptions of activities for pre-/post-study abroad learning, arguing that various pre-/post-study abroad learning had some visible effects on students' TOEIC scores. Ohta, a scholar of international education in Japan, published an opinion article on *Nikkei* in May 2020 and argued that it is time to re-consider the role of studying abroad, and that it is essential to provide effective pre-/post-study abroad learning opportunities.

Limited Resources on Campus

The abovementioned limitation of pre-/post-study abroad opportunities applies to Tokyo Keizai University, the author's affiliation. During the academic year 2019, 299 students at Tokyo Keizai University participated in study abroad programs made available by the institution, and 63.5% chose programs that were one month or less. Some programs with 20–30 participants come with some pre-study abroad sessions. The two-week Marion-Flinders Community Exchange Program comes with a four-day pre-study abroad session on campus conducted by native speakers of English. The five-month Global Career Program comes with designated pre-/post-study abroad courses with credits. For other programs on campus, no significant pre-/post-study abroad sessions are held other than a short workshop on travel tips and safety issues.

Most of the students at Tokyo Keizai University who study abroad are left on their own, and they normally seek on-campus resources. The two main options are English courses and Cotopatio, a language lounge where students can practice English conversation with native speakers. However, it is not easy for students to find services that match their needs. Commonly expressed comments are: "The content of regular English courses does not match what I need for my study abroad" (third year student, p.c. in June 2020) and "Cotopatio is always crowded when I go there. I know it is less crowded in the morning, but I need to go to class then" (second year student, p.c. in December 2019).

What could be the option for those who need more opportunities for their pre-/post-study abroad learning? In the section after the next, I will introduce a trial of language exchange among people in the local community that includes students at Tokyo Keizai University.

Increasing Diversity in the Local Community

Changing Population in Japan

In this paper, I argue that pre-/post-study abroad learning does not have to limit itself on campus. Japan's population is more diverse than ever. According to the Ministry of Justice (October 25, 2019), the number of foreign residents in Japan in June 2019 is about 2.5 million—an increase of 3.6% from 2018. It is the highest number ever, and it corresponds to about 2% of the total population of Japan. The top five home counties of foreign residents are listed in Table 1.

This demographic change gives rise to a new opportunity, namely language exchanges between Japanese residents and foreign residents. In what follows I will briefly mention some examples of language learning activities between Japanese residents and foreign residents. However, to my knowledge, the documented examples of language learning activities between Japanese college students and foreign residents are scarce.

Table 1. Top five home countries of foreign residents in Japan in 2019

Home country	number	ratio
1. China	786,241	27.8%
2. South Korea	451,543	16.0%
3. Vietnam	371,755	13.1%
4. Republic of the Philippines	277,409	9.8%
5. Brazil	206,886	7.3%

Source: Ministry of Justice (2019)

A well-known example of language exchange is Xingqiri hanyu jiao ("Sunday Chinese on the corner") organized by Yuezhong Duan. According to its website, Xingqiri hanyu jiao started in 2007, and it had held 629 meetings by February 9, 2020. The purpose of this activity is to promote mutual understanding between Chinese and Japanese people. Participants get together at a park in Ikebukuro and have conversations in Chinese and Japanese. Interested readers can refer to a newspaper article by Duan (November 4, 2010) on *Nikkei*. To my knowledge, such mutual language exchanges are relatively minor. Major forms of language learning activities between local Japanese people and foreign residents are represented by Japanese classes often organized by local international associations. The Agency for Cultural Affairs (2019) reports that out of 579 organizations that offer Japanese language lessons, 23.5% are international associations, and 19.5% are voluntary groups.

One example worth mentioning is the Shibazono Kakehashi Project, an organization mainly run by college students in Kawaguchi, Saitama Prefecture. In the town of Shibazono, foreign residents have outnumbered Japanese residents since 2016, according to the Shibazono Kakehashi Project (n.d.). The Shibazono Kakehashi Project has been run mainly by college students to promote communication among the residents of the town, and their activities are not limited to language learning. Nevertheless, it is a good example where Japanese college students are involved in activities with foreign residents in the local community and raise cultural and language awareness.

Kokubunji City

The number of foreign residents has also increased in Kokubunji, a city located in the western part of Tokyo Prefecture and known as a commuter town. According to the statistics by the city of Kokubunji, the number of foreign residents in the city is 2,564, about 2% of its population, as of August 1, 2020. The Kokubunji International Association (2020) reports that they are from 65 nations and regions. The top five home countries are listed in Table 2 blow.

Table 2. Top five home counties of foreign residents in Kokubunji in January 2020

Home country	number	ratio
1. China	1,173	45.6%
2. South Korea	387	15.0%
3. Nepal	202	7.9%
4. Vietnam	121	4.7%
5. Republic of the Philippines	106	4.1%

Source: Kokubunji International Association (2020)

In Kokubunji, the Kokubunji International Association has been taking a leading role in promoting mutual understanding between Japanese and foreign residents. According to its website (n.d.), the association was established in 1991, and Japanese language classes run by local volunteers have been its major activities. Students at Tokyo Keizai University in the city of Kokubunji have occasionally been involved in the events promoted by the Kokubunji International Association. However, long-term participation has not been reported.

Kokubunji Local

History and Members

Kokubunji Local launched in July 2019 as a Japanese and English language exchange group among people in the Kokubunji area. Its original members attended the Japanese language classes run by the Kokubunji International Association. The author herself is also an original member. The group then started inviting more people, including students at Tokyo Keizai University. Kokubunji Local provides valuable opportunities for the students, especially those who plan to study abroad or have returned to Japan after their study abroad programs.

During an organization meeting of Kokubunji Local, a question was raised as to whether it would be a good idea to set Japanese and English language exchanges as the purpose of their activities because, for many of the members, neither language was a native language. However, the initial members agreed that Japanese was their common language, and English was a language that everyone was interested in; thus, the two languages would be beneficial to everyone.

As of August 2020, the Kokubunji Local has 35 members from 11 countries and regions; 15 members are from Japan, including eight students from Tokyo Keizai University, and 20 are foreign residents. The members are native or near-native speakers of at least 12 languages, which are listed in Table 3. Notice that for non-native speakers of Japanese, English may not be their native language.

Table 3. Languages that members of Kokubuji Local speak as native or near-native speakers

Language	number of native/near-native speakers
Japanese	15
English	12
Mandarin Chinese	4
Spanish	2
Hindi	2
Mongolian	1
Slovak	1
Italian	1
Min'nan Chinese	1
Tagalog	1
Indonesian	1
Finish	1

As shown in Table 3, Kokubuji Local has a relatively large number of English speakers. This is because many non-Japanese members are computer engineers and use English as their working language. They work for high-tech firms in Kokubuji and its neighboring areas, such as Hitachi, Renesas Electronics, and the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology. Another group of English speakers among the members comprises English teachers working in high schools and universities. Note that even if the members do not include many native speakers of English, that is unlikely to be a major challenge, as English is widely spoken by a great number of people other than native speakers.

Activities

The activities of Kokubunji Local are organized in the following manner. Members get together at a café called Café Local near the Kokubuji Station of the JR Chuo Line once a week for one hour (Zoom meetings have been held during the coronavirus pandemic.) The group has two organizers, one of whom is the author of this paper. The organizers of the day divide participants into small tables with three to four people, and time is divided into two 30-minute sessions. The first session is used to practice either English or Japanese, switching language for the second session. As the organization is quite simple, anyone can act as organizer.

As of July 2020, 32 meetings (including eight online meetings) have been conducted with a total of 207 participants—an average of 6.5 participants per meeting. Meetings are held during semesters and paused during long breaks because the venue is located near Tokyo Keizai University, which is often far from home for the students of Tokyo Keizai University.

Benefits for Japanese College Students

Kokubunji Local provides Japanese college students with opportunities to learn many things that they are unlikely to come across on campus. First, it creates situations that are somewhat similar to study abroad circumstances. For instance, participants speak English with accents as it is a foreign language for many of them; they also use much more casual English compared to that spoken in English courses on campus. This is particularly useful for students who plan to study abroad as they are likely to encounter similar situations. For most of the participants from Tokyo Keizai University, Kokubunji Local is the only place where they have a chance to practice English with someone who is not an English teacher. This is important because students generally wish to practice English with friends rather than with teachers.

Second, Japanese college students have the opportunity to hear exchange students of their age speak English. Among the members, a college student from China and another student at a Japanese language school from Mongolia speak English fluently. Neither of them has studied in English-speaking areas, and they both learned English through school education only. They set a good example and give extra motivation to Japanese college students.

Third, Japanese college students have the opportunity to interact with people who speak English and work across countries. For instance, among the members, an IT engineer from Indonesia who studied in Malaysia and speaks fluent English came to Japan to work for an IT firm. Although her Japanese is still limited, it is not a major obstacle for her to work in Japan. She came to Japan to experience the culture, but she would like to go to Europe when given the chance. More or less similar circumstances apply to other participants with good IT skills. One Japanese college student says, “I want to work globally as they do. They are my dreams come true.”

Needless to say, Kokubunji Local has its limits. Language exchange for one hour per week is not enough to bring any significant improvement in terms of proficiency. It should then be considered as a measure to help develop language awareness.

Benefits for Non-Student Participants

Non-student participants also benefit from the activities of Kokubunji Local. For those who came to Japan, Kokubunji Local is a place to practice casual conversations in Japanese. Many members who are IT engineers or English instructors mention that they do not have many opportunities to improve their Japanese skills at their workplaces. They also say that it is quite interesting for them to learn about the lifestyles of Japanese college students in detail, which are quite different from what they experienced in their home countries.

For non-student participants from Japan, Kokubunji Local serves as a place to brush up their English as well as make friends in the local community. Four of them have received formal or informal training in teaching Japanese as a foreign language and are willing to help participants with limited Japanese skills.

Suggestions for Further Trial

How to Get Started

One option is to advertise through local international associations to draw initial members, if one wishes to be conservative. Advertising via social media is, of course, an option, though it may be associated with some risk. Kokubunji Local started among members of the Kokubunji International Association and invites new members upon referral from current members.

Venue and Time

Unless a meeting is exceptionally large, a corner on a college campus or a spacious café serves as a venue. More importantly, the selected venue should have good access to public transportation. For students, it is best to find a place with no cost; if it is difficult to find a free space, a café with a cup of coffee can be acceptable for students. As far as I have determined, weekday evenings suit college students the best as they do not come to school when they do not have classes to attend. For this reason, Kokubunji Local pauses its activities during long breaks.

Carrying Conversation

To carry out meaningful conversation, it is important to encourage long-term participation. When the group started in July 2019, participants spent most of the time introducing themselves to one another. However, as they got to know each other more, they found common interests such as anime, books, travels, etc., allowing the conversation to become much more fruitful. As it can be difficult for participants to find topics to talk about, organizers may set a topic for each meeting. Alternatively, they may prepare a box with topics written on small strips of paper, and participants may randomly draw one in each session.

If possible, it is beneficial to have a language teacher at each table as they generally know how to get all the participants involved in the conversation. In Kokubunji Local, eight members have experience as language teachers of either English or Japanese. College students are also encouraged to volunteer to organize meetings and post reminders to the members. They can also play an active role in keeping Facebook and other social networking sites.

Involvement of Instructors

As an instructor of English at Tokyo Keizai University as well as one of the co-organizers of Kokubunji Local, I have attended most of its meetings. Based on my experience, I suggest instructors join meetings at least for the first few times, so that students with low proficiency in English feel safe. Once students are used to attending meetings, this may be discontinued, although occasional participation could be useful. Some involvement of college instructors also gives non-student members a sense of security.

It should be pointed out that not every instructor would be willing to volunteer to be involved in off campus activities for free. What would be the benefit for instructors? Activities in local areas provide instructors an access to recourses for potential international activities/guest lectures on campus. I myself benefitted much from Kokubunji Local, and I have invited some members as guest speakers to my linguistics courses and English courses.

Conclusion

This paper documents a relatively rare example of language exchange called Kokubunji Local among people in the Kokubunji area, which includes Japanese college students. Kokubunji Local has been providing a study abroad-like environment, serving as an additional pre-/post-study abroad learning opportunity. At present, Kokubunji Local remains a small trial. However, it has the potential to become a leading place for mutual understanding in the diverse local community that Japanese college students can be part of.

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Can the LMS promote self-regulated learning and cooperative learning? Students' Perception about the LMS in an English Course at a University

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The spread of Covid-19 required many university English classes to be offered online, which has increased the need for Learning Management Systems (LMS) because students can access important information for a course, manage and submit assignments, and interact with a teacher and among students. In 2019, a learning management system (LMS) called Manaba was used to promote students' self-regulated learning and cooperative learning in a four-skill-integrated English course for first-year university students. The LMS was used to share PowerPoint slides for every class and assign grammar questions, writing tasks, and group presentations. A questionnaire survey and a focus group interview were conducted to investigate whether the LMS use helped them manage their learning and work cooperatively with classmates. The questionnaire and interview results showed that the LMS helped manage their learning and work cooperatively with classmates. The study was conducted before Covid-19, but it showed the use of the LMS for their learning management and cooperative learning helped the students be ready for sudden changes to online classes.

Covid-19 の拡大により多くの大学の英語授業がオンラインで提供されるようになったことで、学生がコースの重要な情報にアクセス、課題を管理・提出、教師や学生間の交流ができることから、学習管理システム（LMS）の必要性が高まった。2019 年に、大学 1 年生を対象とした 4 技能統合英語コースにおいて、学生の自己調整学習や協働学習を促進するために Manaba と呼ばれる学習管理システム（LMS）を活用した。この LMS を用いて、毎回の授業のパワーポイントスライドを共有し、文法問題、ライティング課題、グループプレゼンテーションの課題を課した。LMS の利用が学習管理やクラスメートとの協働学習に役立っているかどうかを調査するために、アンケート調査とフォーカスグループインタビューを実施した。アンケート調査とインタビューの結果、LMS は学習管理やクラスメートとの協働学習に役立っていることが示された。本研究は Covid-19 以前に実施されたものであるが、LMS を利用した学習管理や協働学習が、急なオンライン授業へ変更への準備に役立ったことが示された。

The importance of integrating technology in education to promote effective learning has been emphasized recently. One of the technologies widely used in universities in Japan is Learning Management Systems (LMS). The spread of Covid-19 required many university English classes to be offered online, which has increased the need for LMS because students can access important information for a course, manage and submit assignments, and interact with a teacher and among students. Three main functions of LMS are learning skill tools to assign quizzes and presentations, communication tools to help students interact with a lecturer and between students, and productivity tools to manage documents (Kasim & Khalid, 2016). Thus, the use of LMS is expected to promote students' self-regulated learning and cooperative learning. Self-regulated learners are defined as "metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning" (Zimmerman, 1986, p.308)". Self-regulated learners metacognitively can plan, organize, monitor and organize their learning, motivationally can perceive themselves as competent, self-efficacious, and autonomous, and behaviorally can select, structure, and create environments to optimize their learning (Zimmerman, 1986). Cooperative learning emphasizes students' social aspects in a heterogenous group and aims to improve student performance by working together in small groups to complete a task (Nilakusmawati et. al., 2021). It is reported that the use of LMS can increase students' self-regulation by increasing students' academic outcomes, reducing dropout rates, and giving more learning opportunities (Mtshali, Maistry & Governder, 2015) and help students set goals (Kitsantas & Dabbagh, 2004). LMS use can also promote cooperative learning and develop social skills and achieve academic tasks while working cooperatively (Nilakusmawati, et. al., 2021). Helping students be self-regulated learners and learn cooperatively with other students in English classes is important because skills for self-regulated learning and cooperative learning can be applied to other areas of education and even to their future careers. Therefore, it will be meaningful to investigate whether an LMS use can help students promote their self-regulated learning and work cooperatively with classmates. This study aims to investigate whether students think an LMS used for a course helped manage their learning and work cooperatively with other classmates. The research questions of this study are the followings.

1. Whether students think the LMS helped manage their learning?

2. Whether students think the LMS helped work cooperatively with other classmates?

Methods

A questionnaire survey and a focus group interview were conducted to answer the research questions. In this section, first, participants in the course and an LMS used in the course will be explained. Following that, the information about how the LMS was used to promote self-regulated learning and cooperative learning will be provided. Then, the questionnaire respondents and the data collection and analysis of the questionnaire are explained. Finally, the information about the interview participants and the data collection and analysis of the interview are presented.

Participants in the Course and the LMS for the Course

Participants of the study were 20 first-year students in a four-skill integrated English course, and their English proficiency was about 700 points on TOEIC Listening and Reading. The university I work for introduces an LMS, Manaba. Manaba is a convenient and useful LMS because students can work on quizzes, reports, and projects set on Manaba by an instructor. Thus, it is expected the use of the LMS can help students manage their learning effectively. Students can also work cooperatively with other students and prepare for their group slides on the LMS when they make a group presentation.

The Use of the LMS for Self-Regulated Learning and Cooperative Learning in the Course

In this course, in order to help the students to manage their learning and work cooperatively, the LMS was used to share PowerPoint slides for every class, and assign grammar questions, writing tasks, and group presentations. In the spring semester, I handed the copied PowerPoint slides. However, in the fall semester, I shared them on the LMS to have the students access class materials before a class and review them after the class easily.

PowerPoint slides with detailed explanations of grammatical points and questions related to grammatical points were also assigned on the LMS. One of the main reasons for assigning grammar questions on the LMS was to study grammar on their own at home and have more communication time in English in the class.

Writing assignments were also shared on the LMS. Examples of writing assignments were to describe the neighborhood where they live and to write a message to a partner to get advice about their worry or concern. They worked on the assignments individually at home and they read a partner's writing and had the partner read their writing on the LMS in the class and give and receive feedback in the class.

A group presentation project was assigned on the LMS for the students to work cooperatively with other members. On the LMS, different groups can be created for one project; thus, 20 students were divided into five groups for the group presentation project. They communicated with other students by writing comments on the project part of the LMS while they were preparing for PowerPoint slides.

Questionnaire of Students' Perception about the Use of the LMS

To investigate students' perceptions about using the LMS, I conducted a questionnaire survey after the final class in the academic year of 2019. For the questionnaire survey, 19 students among the 20 students responded to it. Questions were Do you prefer to have PowerPoint slides shared on paper or Manaba? (Q1), Was sharing PowerPoint slides useful for preparing for and reviewing classes? (Q2), Was submitting assignments on Manaba helpful in managing your learning? (Q3), Were the grammar assignments on Manaba helpful in reviewing and learning grammar? (Q4), Was sharing the writing assignments on Manaba helpful in communicating with classmates in English? (Q5) and Was preparing for a presentation on Manaba helpful for collaborative work? (Q6). Q1 was to ask their preference about the distribution method of PowerPoint slides, Q2, Q3, and Q4 are related to whether the LMS was helpful for managing their learning and Q5 and Q6 are related to whether the LMS was helpful for learning cooperatively. For Q1, answer choices were on paper or Manaba. An open question to ask the reason for their preference was added after Q1. Answer choices from Q2 to Q6 were very helpful, a little helpful, not so helpful, and not helpful at all.

Interview of Students' Perception about the Use of the LMS

A focus group and semi-structured interview using ZOOM were also conducted to investigate students' perception of using the LMS in the course. It was conducted in June in 2020, five months after the course. Two male (Student A, Student B) and two female students (Student C and Student D) were the interview participants. The students were the first-year students while taking the course, and they became the second-year students when the interview was conducted. Interview questions prepared were related to whether setting assignments on the LMS helped them manage their learning and work cooperatively with classmates. The interview was conducted in Japanese, the interview data were transcribed, and the data were coded and analyzed using content analysis. Coding is a technique for identifying statements by attaching one or more keywords to a text (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The coding I used was based on self-regulated learning and cooperative learning. For self-regulated learning, Online Self-Regulated Learning Questionnaire (OSLQ) was used as a reference (Barnard et al., 2009). For example, if utterances were related to goal setting, environmental structuring, task strategies, and time management, I underlined sentences on the transcription and coded (GS), (ES), (TS), and (TM) respectively. I added a coding of (LM) for learning management inductively. As for cooperative learning, I underlined sentences on the transcription and coded (CL). Coded sentenced were translated from Japanese to English.

Results

Results of the Questionnaire

Figure 1 shows results of the questionnaire survey about the use of the LMS. As shown in Figure 2, nearly 90 % of the students preferred to have PowerPoint slides on the LMS, Manaba. To the open question about the preference, among the students who preferred to have PowerPoint slides on the LMS, there were answers such as *I don't have to be worried about losing it.*, *Having data is easy to manage*. , *If I have a cellphone at hand, I can look at it (PP slides on Manaba) and it's more useful*. , *I can save the trouble of managing the materials and look at it anytime.* For many students, having PowerPoint slides' data on the LMS helped manage the class materials. The result infers that simply changing the distribution methods from paper-based materials to the LMS-based materials helped the students access the materials easily and manage them effectively.

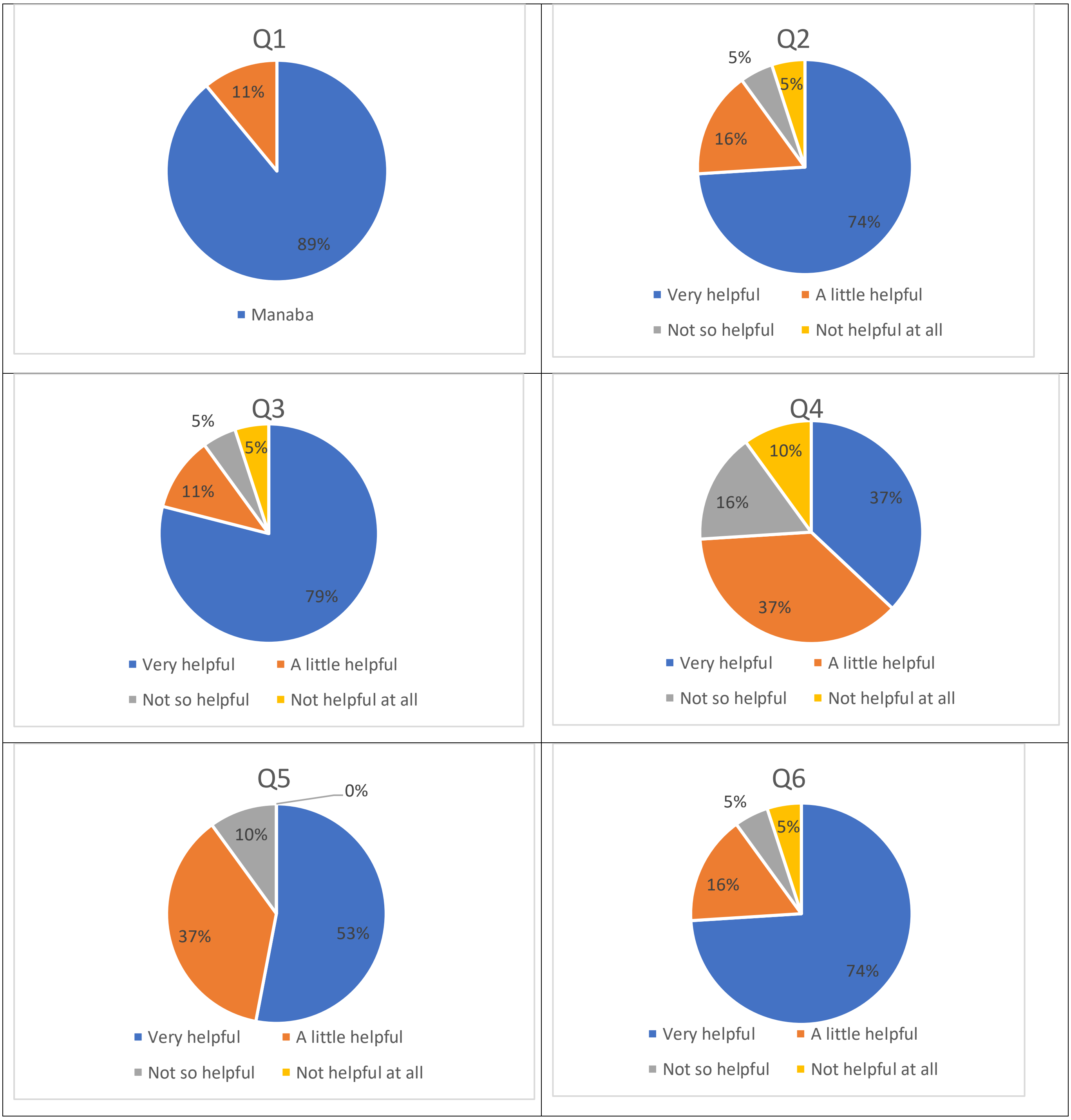

Figure 1. Students' Perception about the Use of the LMS

As shown in Figure 2, most of the students found that sharing PowerPoint slides on the LMS was useful for preparing and reviewing classes. While I was distributing paper-based handouts, I gave them the handouts after a class began. However, the use of the LMS enabled me to share class materials before a class. As a result, the students were able to prepare for the class. At the same time, sharing the class materials on the LMS may have increased their time to review the class contents as in the one student's comment about easy accessibility to the materials on the LMS.

As for the grammar assignments, more than 70 % of the students found it very helpful or a little helpful, while more than one-fourth of the students found it not so helpful or not helpful at all. Although I shared PowerPoint slides with detailed explanations of grammatical points and quizzes related to grammatical points, many students found it not helpful. This implies that for students to learn grammar and work on quizzes on the LMS, improvements in assigning quizzes may be needed.

Ninety percent of the students think that sharing the writing assignments on the LMS was very helpful or a little helpful in communicating with classmates in English. For the writing assignments, the students opened their PCs, read one student's writing on the LMS, and gave feedback on it in the class. The use of the LMS made it easier for the students to access the classmates' writing. Although writing assignments were not group work but pair work, it seemed helpful in communicating with classmates in English.

About preparing for a group presentation on the LMS, 90% of the students found it very helpful or a little helpful for collaborative work. In fact, after the project of the group presentation was set, the students were interacting with other members by writing messages on the project page of the LMS and some groups resubmitted PowerPoint slides several times after revisions reflecting comments through the interaction.

Results of the Interview

In this section, the results of the interview based on the coding are presented with original Japanese utterances and their translation in brackets.The results of the interview showed the use of the LMS was helpful in goal setting as Student B mentioned, "グループでプロジェクトをやりましょうっていうふうに提示されることで、自分たちでやっていこうという動機付けになった。"(A project in a group being presented (on the LMS), we were motivated to do it on our own). As the utterance shows, the group project assigned on the LMS motivated them and helped them take the initiative of their learning and move forward to the same goal.

Regarding environmental structuring, Students B commented: "ラーニングコモンズだったりだとか、そういった施設の利用の仕方を覚えていたっりだとか、そうゆう学部の利用の仕方について、すごい理解が深まった." (I learned how to use the Learning Commons and other facilities, and I gained a deeper understanding of how to use such facilities). The Learning Commons is the facility at the campus where students can work together such as practicing a presentation. The student was a first-year student then, and his comment infers that the group project allowed the student to look for an environment at the campus to prepare for the project.

It was also helpful for learning management as one student mentioned that all group members could obtain the same data on the LMS, which saved the trouble of sharing the data. Also, student C mentioned sharing the course data was helpful because she could check the data on the LMS with her PC easily. She also commented that the LMS function for students to receive emails after a task is assigned became a reminder, which helped him manage assignments.

The use of the LMS seemed helpful in time management as Student A mentioned: "レポートの提出期限が載っているので、きっちりスケジュール管理をしなくてもなんとなく、いつ何を出せばいいのかっていうのが分かりやすかった." (The due dates for the reports are listed (on the LMS), so it was easy for me to know when and what I should submit without having to keep a strict schedule). Student D also added the convenience of the LMS's integration with Google Calendar in terms of time management.

The group project assigned on the LMS also helped them work cooperatively with other students as Student C commented: "あの manaba 上での資料配布からのグループワークみたいなのは、割と私にとっては、グループワークって結構、おっきな、大変なプロジェクトっていうイメージだったんですけど、結構やりやすくて、その点はすごい良かったです."

(I had an image of group work as a big and difficult project, but it was quite easy to do, which was a good point) .

Another comment by Student D also shows that the project promoted cooperation among the members: "どうやって共有するのか、みんなでスライドを共有して作るのかっていう、そういうところも自分たちで工夫しながらとか、みんなで話す機会が増えたなとは思います." (I think we have more opportunities to talk about sharing and creating slides together and devising our own ideas).

In this course, PowerPoint slides to explain important grammar points, and grammar quizzes were shared on the LMS to maximize class time for communicative activities. Student D commented about working grammar quizzes as an assignment: "自分たちでできることは自分たちで学んで、課題としてあればやるので大丈夫だと思います。授業なので、皆さん、せっかく時間をつくって参加してるってことなので、積極的に双方向の時間になれたらなと思います."（I think it's okay for us to learn what we can do and to do it as an assignment on our own. Since this is a class and everyone has taken the time to participate, I hope we can make (the class time) a positive interactive time). Her comments infer that she thinks the grammar assignments on the LMS was helpful for them to learn on their own and to increase interactive time in classes.

Discussions and Implications

This study investigated whether students think the LMS was helpful in managing their learning and working cooperatively with other classmates. The past studies showed that technology could promote students' self-regulated learning (Hu& Gramling, 2009; Kitsantas & Dabbagh, 2004). LMS can increase students' self-regulation by increasing students' academic outcomes, reducing dropout rates, and giving more learning opportunities (Mtshali, Maistry, & Governder, 2015), and help students set goals (Kitsantas & Dabbagh, 2004). In this study, the students perceived the use of the LMS helped prepare for and review a class, work on assignments keeping deadlines in mind, move forward to achieve a goal of making a group presentation, and look for an environment to work on the group presentation efficiently. In the interview, one student said that she used the reminder function by receiving emails not to forget the deadlines. Using the calendar feature of LMS to provide automated reminders about project dues is recommended (Terry & Doolittle, 2006). The student's remark implies that the use of the LSM helped her be a self-regulated learner and made her think of finding a more efficient way to manage her learning while she was using the LMS.

One of the main functions of LMS is to help students interact with a lecturer and between students (Kasim & Khalid, 2016). The past study (Nilakusmawati et. al., 2021) showed that LMS could also promote cooperative learning, develop social skills, and achieve academic tasks. The questionnaire and the interview results showed that the use of the LMS helped motivate them to move forward to the same goal, prepare and review the class contents, increase interactions with the group members and even reduce pressure to do the group project.

In order to create more interaction time in classes, I intentionally introduced flipped learning, a type of blended learning in which class time is typically reserved for discussion related to the contents covered in assignments outside of class (Shine & Heath, 2020) and had them work on the grammar assignments outside of class. Students' favorable opinions about MOOC-based flipped learning were reported in the study by Wang and Chang (2019). Although more than one-fourth of the students found the grammar assignments on the LMS not so helpful or not helpful at all, one student in the interview mentioned that the grammar assignments on the LMS meaningful because she thinks that they can have more interactive time in classes by doing the grammar assignments on their own. However, more connection with grammar assignments that they do on the LMS and communicative interactions using the grammar might be needed. The rationale for having grammar assignments on the LSM to create more interaction time in classes may need to be explained explicitly to students.

Conclusion

This study investigated whether the first-year university students perceived using the LMS in the English course was useful for managing their learning and working cooperatively with classmates. The results of the questionnaire survey and the interview showed that the LMS helped them prepare for and review a class, work on assignments, achieve a goal, and look for an environment to prepare for the group project efficiently. In terms of that, the use of the LMS promoted their self-regulated learning. The results also showed that the LMS enabled the students to motivate them to move forward to the same goal, prepare for and review PowerPoint slides for the group project and interact with the group members. Therefore, using the LMS was helpful for them to work cooperatively.

However, this study did not investigate whether the use of the LSM helped them be self-regulated learners. Therefore, a questionnaire survey about self-regulated learning can be conducted before and after a course where the LMS is integrated. In addition, a weekly journal related to self-regulated learning after each class can be added to investigate changes in their self-learning behaviors. Regarding cooperative learning, one student commented that the group project enabled her to work on group projects in other classes effectively, which shows the application of cooperative learning to other classes. Therefore, what effects of group work projects assigned on the LMS may have on students' learning outcome needs to be investigated.

The spread of Covid-19 forced many university students to take online classes. In the interview, one student mentioned that he has been able to adapt to online classes to a large degree because he was used to using the LMS. Sudden changes to online teaching and learning have made the use of technology inevitable in implementing English classes. In addition, LMS has become an essential tool for students to access important information for a course, manage and submit assignments, and interact with a teacher and other students in online classes. Even after Covid-19, universities may continue to offer online or blended learning courses considering their benefits. To maximize online or blended learning, effective use of LMS will be essential. Though limited functions of the LMS were used in this course; however, to promote self-regulated learning and cooperative learning, multiple functions of LMS may need to be used by instructors, and benefits of using different functions may also need to be investigated.

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JALT Special Interest Groups & the PanSIG Conference

Bilingualism

Our group provides support to families who are bringing up children in two or more languages in Japanese contexts. Our newsletter, *Bilingual Japan*, includes practical information about bilingual parenting, as well as academic and theoretical issues. The SIG's annual forum and banquet at the national conference provide an opportunity for members to network with other bilingual families. Further information can be found at www.bsig.org.

Business Communication

The JALT Business Communication (BizCom or BC) SIG represents a group of like-minded teachers intended to develop the discipline of teaching English conducive to participation in the world business community in Japan. To facilitate this, we aim to provide instructors in this field with a means of collaboration and sharing best teaching practices.

CEFR and Language Portfolio

CEFR & LP SIG wants to discuss the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and European Language Portfolio (ELP), and other similar frameworks andtheir relevance for Japan. There is an emphasis on developing materials to support educators who would like to use these pedagogic tools; the bilingual Language Portfolio for Japanese University is available on the SIG website.

College and University Educators

Our goal is to provide a forum for the presentation and discussion of educational activities, ideas and research of broad interest to college and university educators in Japan. If you are involved in tertiary education and are committed to professional development, you are CUE too.

Computer Assisted Language Learning

The CALL SIG serves the interests of language teaching professionals who are interested in bringing together knowledge and skills of technology and language learning. CALL practitioners work in a variety of educational settings: private language schools, elementary and secondary schools as well as colleges and universities.

Critical Thinking

The Critical Thinking (CT) SIG was established for the purpose of providing a clear but ever-reforming definition of critical thinking; to provide a forum for the discussion of critical thinking and praxis; to provide research opportunities to language educators interested in promoting critical thinking; and to provide an area where language teachers can enjoy friendly, professional and engaging examination of the rationale, validity and, furthermore, the critical importance of its instruction in various environments.

Extensive Reading

The ER SIG exists to help promote extensive reading (ER) in Japan. Through our website, our newsletter, the ERJ Journal, and presentations throughout Japan we aim to help teachers set up and make the most of their ER programmes.

Gender Awareness in Language Education

The purpose of the GALE SIG is to research gender and its implications for language learning, teaching, and training. We welcome submissions for our newsletter (spring, summer, and fall issues) on topics, both theoretical and practical, related to the SIG's aims. Book reviews, lesson plans, think pieces, poetry -- basically anything related to gender and language teaching is welcomed. To see our past newsletters, please visit our website at www.gale-sig.org.

Global Issues in Language Education

GILE aims to promote global awareness, international understanding, and action to solve world problems through content-based language teaching, drawing from fields such as global education, peace education, environmental education, and human rights education. The SIG produces a quarterly newsletter, organizes presentations for local, national, and international conferences, and maintains contacts with groups ranging from Amnesty International to Educators for Social Responsibility to UNESCO.

Intercultural Communication in Language Education

This SIG aims to explore various ways language teachers could help shape their students' intercultural minds, raise their students' cultural self-awareness, and educate for intercultural understanding. It promotes discussion about various approaches to teaching intercultural communication in a language classroom, allowing educators to become better informed about language intercultural education theory. We also promote the development of resources appropriate to a foreign language teaching environment while considering the practical challenges of taking culture into account in the language classroom.

Japanese as a Second Language

日本語教育研究部会（JSL SIG）の役割は、第二言語としての日本語指導、日本語学習、日本語教育研究の向上を目指し、指導、学習、研究のための資料や情報を与えることです。日本語の指導者、学習者、研究者の皆様加入大歓迎です。発表の援助をし、ニュースレター と論文集を発行するので論文・記事の寄稿を歓迎します。

The mission of the Japanese as a Second Language (JSL) SIG is to serve as a resource for promoting JSL teaching, learning and research. We welcome JSL teachers, learners, and researchers to join and take an active role in our SIG.

Learner Development

The Learner Development SIG is an active and supportive community of individuals with a broad range of personal and professional experiences, all sharing an interest in exploring learner (and educator) development. We encourage anyone with similar interests to join us. To find out more, please visit our SIG's website, ld-sig.org.

Lifelong Language Learning

We offer a bright future to our aging society. The energy of older learners who wish to lead active lives is flowing all over Japan. LLL (**Life Long Learning**) is willing to help these older learners enrich their lives through language learning. LLL also provides resources and information for teachers who teach English to older learners by holding events and publishing online newsletters.

Literature in Language Teaching

Hi! A hearty welcome to the Literature in Language Teaching SIG. We started up this group to encourage and promote the use of literature in the language classroom. Literature provides real content to engage and to motivate our EFL students.

Materials Writers

The MW SIG was established for the purpose of helping members to turn fresh teaching ideas into useful classroom materials. We try to be a mutual assistance network, offering information regarding copyright law, sharing practical advice on publishing practices, including self-publication, and suggesting ways to create better language learning materials for general consumption or for individual classroom use.

教材開発研究部会 (MW) は、メンバーが日々の教育の場で得た新しいアイディアを教材にしていく助けとなることを目的に設立されました。著作権に関すること、自費出版を含めた出版に関する実践的なアドバイス、広く一般学習者または特定の授業のためにどうしたらより良い語学教材が作れるか、といったことに関するアイディアを共有しお互いを高め合える部会であることが願いです。教材開発についてもっと知りたい、自分のアイディアを形にしたいという方、入会大歓迎です。一緒に活動しませんか。

Mind, Brain, and Education

The Mind, Brain, and Education SIG is a forum for language educators and researchers to share insights in neuroscience. We hope to be a driving force in bringing relevant new discoveries in psychology, cognitive neuroscience and neurolinguistics into language teaching in Japan.

Mixed, Augmented, and Virtual Realities

Mixed, Augmented and Virtual Realities (MAVR) is not a new concept or area of study, but it an area that is beginning to be implemented at a larger scale in many other fields. There are those of us working in this area connected to education here in Japan and more specifically language education in Japan. Our SIG is not just about the technology, it is also looking into what these technologies mean for how we communicate and learn as we create and augment our own reality.

Other Language Educators

Hello; dobr denj; kalimera; ni hao; guten tag; anyong hashimnikka; bonjour, buenos dias; hyvää päivää; bom dia; haisai; konnichiwa!

In a time when we can easily understand where and how other people live, there is still only one surefire way to find out what they think individually or as a culture: to learn their language. As every culture contains specific patterns of thought and mindsets which cannot always be put into English or translated easily from one language to another, learning its language opens the door to that culture and the countries using it. The purpose of the OLE SIG is to serve the special needs of such learners and teachers.

Performance in Education

The mission of the Performance in Education (PIE) SIG is to provide a forum for teachers and academics to discuss, research, and implement oral interpretation, speech, debate, and drama in language education. The main activities are creation of a newsletter and sponsoring a National Speech, Drama, and Debate Contest. Future activities may be the sponsoring of workshops and conferences, and supporting local and regional speech, drama, and debate contests or festivals.

Pragmatics

The Pragmatics SIG welcomes members who are interested in both research and practical teaching issues related to "how people do things with words." The group's newsletter, *Pragmatic Matters*, is published electronically three times a year. Our *Pragmatics Resources* series offers practical and theoretical papers on language in use. If you do anything with language, you are using pragmatics! So, come join us!

School Owners

Language School owners have always played a significant role in JALT both at national & local levels. The SO SIG is where owners can share ideas, experiences, and solutions to the academic and commercial challenges they face which cannot be addressed through other SIGs. If you have questions or would like to learn more about what the SIG provides, please contact us at so@jalt.org or visit our website at https://jaltsosig.wixsite.com/home.

Study Abroad

The Study Abroad SIG welcomes anyone interested into its wide membership, domestically and overseas. The aim is to facilitate an active and working network of faculty, staff, and students who can share and exchange experiences, knowledge, and knowhow on how to plan, prepare, implement, and evaluate different study abroad programs/experiences. Study abroad includes all categories of inbound and outbound, one-way study abroad, exchange, internships, experience, and cultural programs. The goal for many SIG members is to network, to collect and share data and information for future collaboration, research, presentations, and papers in the area of study abroad.

Task-Based Learning

The JALT Task-Based Learning (TBL) SIG is a Special Interest Group aimed at teachers who currently use, or are interested in using, task-based approaches in the classroom. The SIG focuses in particular on issues related to Task-Based Language teaching and learning in the Asian EFL context, where TBLT has yet to enter the mainstream of language pedagogy. We hope that the SIG will serve as a useful forum for the exchange of practical teaching ideas, theoretical discussion, and academic studies of TBLT issues.

Teacher Development

The Teacher Development SIG is a group committed to helping ourselves and our peers to become more effective language teachers in order to better serve learners. As such, our varied activities and interests include forums, conferences, and journals about professional development, practitioner research, and reflective practice. Our SIG offers opportunities for teachers from different educational settings to come together for careful and critical reflections and explorations of their practice, with a view to developing as professionals. The TD SIG is a flexible group, open to new ideas and potential collaborations.

Teachers Helping Teachers

The THT SIG began from the charity work of the late Bill Balsamo and we organize 4 overseas conferences in Laos (Feb/Mar), Vietnam (Early August), Kyrygystan and Bangladesh (Sept, date depends on Ramadan) as well as work to develop overseas volunteer opportunities. Participants pay their own way, and are asked to prepare 2-3 presentations (practical presentations are most welcome) that they may present multiple times to organize and fill out the conference schedule. For more information, please contact thtjalt@gmail.com.

Teaching Younger Learners

The TYL SIG is for teachers of younger learners. This SIG was formed by the merger of the JALT Teaching Children SIG and the Junior Senior High SIG in February 2015. The goal of the TYL SIG is to support those involved with or simply interested in the teaching of languages to learners aged 0-18. We publish a bilingual newsletter with columns by many of the leading teachers in the field.

Testing and Evaluation

The Testing and Evaluation SIG aims to provide avenues for research, information, and discussion related to foreign language testing and evaluation both from within JALT membership and with other professional organizations which have common interests and goals. Please visit our website at www.jalt.org/test.

Vocabulary

The Vocabulary Special Interest Group (Vocab SIG) provides a forum for focused research and discussion in specific regard to vocabulary acquisition. We offer both teachers and researchers a place to connect regarding how learners improve vocabulary knowledge, how to test their knowledge, and how these theoretical aspects connect to classroom practice. The Vocabulary SIG aims to be a driving force for both current and future research in the field of how vocabulary can be taught, learned, and tested in an increasingly global context.

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